

Words of Help

from the Scripture of Truth

Vol. XLIX

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WORDS OF HELP

A Monthly Magazine for Believers

EDITORIAL

FROM the moment he experienced the healing power of the Name of the risen and exalted Jesus Christ of Nazareth, life was completely changed for the unnamed cripple of Acts iii. Nothing could ever be the same again for him, and he celebrated his emancipation from the restrictions of the past by walking, leaping and praising God.

He walked—the evidence for all to behold that his disabilities from birth had disappeared; his dependence upon his fellow-men ended; every barrier to a full and useful life removed. He could now walk uprightly, as his Maker intended he should do.

He leaped—no longer burdened with the cares and uncertainties of an existence which dragged wearily on, unrelieved by the hope of better times to come. He was now the possessor of a joyful spirit which prompted him to the exuberance of a healthy youth.

He praised God—as well he might, for the mercy shown him by the One from Whom all blessings flow. The language of the Psalmist befitted his lips—"What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me?"

May the blessed Source of all grace through Christ our Saviour, by the strengthening of His Holy Spirit, enable all our readers throughout the year on which we now enter to walk in newness of life, rejoice evermore, and offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of their lips giving thanks to His Name. May the ministry of WORDS OF HELP be used of the Lord as a means to this end.

LORD'S DAY REFLECTIONS**XXIV "Lo, I am with you" (Matt. xxviii. 20)**

THERE are sights we see in this world so vivid, tragedies sometimes so spectacular, that no lapse of time can obliterate them from our minds. Moreover, their immediate effect upon us is so profound that, even though we might wish in later life to apply a maturer degree of judgment to the facts, the impressions formed at the time persist with overwhelming power. Long after the scene has changed completely, the stark reality of what we saw with our own eyes haunts the memory.

Such was the character of those things the disciples of the Lord Jesus had witnessed at Calvary. For some three years or more previously they had watched the storm clouds gather over their beloved Master. Though He had Himself warned them that He would be betrayed into the hands of sinners, and that He would suffer death, they had been unable to bring themselves to believe that any such thing could or would really happen. Yet the day dawned when, true to what He had foretold, they saw Him lifted high upon the cross, with every indignity heaped upon Him. Then, as if that were not enough, they had heard the blasphemous words with which men dared to challenge the Almighty Himself remain unanswered, until, finally, they were stunned by the unbelievable cry from the One who had suffered all so patiently, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

What were they to make of it all? Was it not in fact a moment of bitter disillusion from which there could be no recovery?

Happily the night of weeping was to be short. Within a few hours God's plans for the complete vindication of His Son would begin to unfold. The bright morning of the resurrection was at hand. And though the disciples were as slow to grasp the truth that Christ would rise again as they had been in the first place to believe He would die, the moment of joyful recognition and assurance came. For they saw their Master alive again and were glad.

But the time was now approaching for Him to return to heaven, and the disciples were to be left behind in the world to witness for Him. Moreover as they recalled the tender words of comfort He had spoken to them in the upper room before He suffered, they could not forget that He had said ominously: "Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you" (John xv.20). And again a little later, "The time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service" (John xvi.2); and yet again, "In the world ye shall have tribulation" (ver.33).

Was not the prospect before them bleak? With dark forebodings in their hearts, and the bewildering spectacle of Calvary still vivid in their minds, was there no ground for misgiving, if not despair? Was it not possible that the disaster which had befallen their Master would overtake them, and that they would find themselves, sooner or later, bereft of help and forsaken? Such questionings were surely inevitable!

Very shortly, in fulfilment of the Lord's promise, the Holy Spirit would be sent down to lead them into the truth, and to make clear to them things which as yet they only dimly discerned. *Then* they would understand that their Master's sufferings had been unique, in that He suffered the judgment of God for their sins, precisely so that they might never suffer in the same way. *Then*, the prayer of the Lord Himself in the language of Psalm lxi.6—"Let not them that wait on Thee, O Lord God of hosts, be ashamed for My sake"—would be fully answered. The descent of the Holy Spirit would ensure *that*.

But was that to be the disciples' sole source of comfort, or would the Lord Himself give them a reassuring word before He finally parted from them? Our text supplies the answer. He gave His own the most positive and unqualified assurance "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Can anyone measure the sweetness of such a declaration?

Consider these words against the dark background of Calvary. That which had happened to their Master would not,

could not, happen to them! Come what might, the Lord would be with His own to sustain them in their darkest hour. Let Stephen, the first martyr (Acts vii.55), and the great apostle Paul (2 Timothy iv.17), bear their testimony to the trustworthiness of the Lord's promise!

Should readers and writer be permitted to enter upon another new year, may the comfort of the Lord's gracious assurance enable each and all to face with calm confidence whatever the future may hold!

The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose,
 He will not (He's said it) give up to its foes;
 That soul, though all hell should endeavour to shake,
 He'll never—no, *never*, no NEVER forsake.

E. A. Pettman.

HOW LONG, O LORD?

As one year comes to its close, and another year commences, we cannot but feel again something of the awe of the majestic onward march of time.

This is the occasion when we pause to look back in review of some of the many events and experiences of the old year, and gladly own how divine goodness and mercy have continued to follow us all the way. But still the Lord has not come again. Now we look forward to the new year. What will it contain for us? What further changes will it bring? Will the present peace continue, and the fearful means of destruction still lie unused? What headway will the gospel of Christ make among old and young, and will the next twelve months see the longed-for spiritual revival in this and other lands? Shall I still be in the body at the end of this year? Above all, will the Lord come again by the 31st December next?

For the Lord *is* coming again. In John's Gospel, chapter xiv., we are given the *fact* of His coming: "I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may

be also." At the time of speaking these words, the Lord was about to depart out of this world unto the Father, and He would not leave His own without giving them this clear simple promise. It is a fact that Christ will come again for all His own.

The *manner* of His second coming is shown to us in the Epistles to the Thessalonians: "The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout . . . the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (I Thess.iv. 16, 17). These details of the manner in which the Lord will fulfil His promise to come again, are adequate to give definite shape to our expectation. Faith lays satisfying hold upon the fact and the manner of His coming.

The *power* of the Lord's second coming is referred to in I Corinthians and Philippians. "It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power . . . the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed . . . Death is swallowed up in victory . . . the Lord Jesus Christ, Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able (or according to the working of His power) been to subdue all things unto Himself".

The *proximity* of the Lord's second coming is shown in the last chapter of the last book of the Bible, where three times the Lord says "I come quickly."

So still in hope we lift our wishful longing eyes, waiting to see the Morning Star arise. As has been said, we should be waiting pilgrims, not weary ones. Meanwhile we know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that grace which is sufficient for us all the way home, and which will be with us to the end. There are four verses in the New Testament of identical wording, viz:—Romans xvi.24: Philippians iv.23: 2 Thessalonians iii.18: and the very last verse of the Bible, Revelation xxii.21—"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."

W. H. L. Graham.

OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST

(Read: Hebrews v. 1-10)

IN these verses the Apostle brings before us what is a perfect contrast to the priesthood of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is not comparing the priesthood of Aaron with the priesthood of Christ; he is *contrasting* them. The end of his argument is found at the close of chapter vii., where he says "For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore." (verse 28).

At the beginning of chapter v., he says that an earthly priest goes in from among men to the presence of God to offer gifts and sacrifices. Whether he was making intercession or judging any matter, or making sacrifice or offering, what was true was this, that he could enter into all the failings and guilt of the people for whom he ministered because he was exactly such an one as they were *at that time*.

Now the opposite is true of our Great High Priest. The Lord Jesus sympathises with us in our weakness and our sorrows, not because of what He *is*, but because of what He *was*: as the apostle goes on to say, because of what the Lord Jesus passed through when He was on earth, not because of what He is passing through now in any sense whatever. But that is what was true of an earthly priest: "By reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins" (Heb. v.3). And no man took that honour upon himself: he had to be ordained of God.

The apostle then gives three things in which the Lord Jesus is suited to be an High Priest. The first is that He is the Son of God. "So also Christ glorified not Himself to be made an High Priest; but He that said unto Him, Thou art My Son, today have I begotten Thee." That was what was true of the Lord Jesus as a man, He is not speaking here of the eternal Sonship of the Lord Jesus: that we get in other parts of scripture. It is what God said when He was born into this world. It is not only true that the Lord Jesus was eternally the

Son in heaven, but as a man He was the Son of God, and God says, "Thou art My Son, today have I begotten Thee."

The second thing is that the Lord Jesus exercises His service in all the power of an endless life. That God who first says to Him "Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee", says again "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." It is not a priesthood that changes hands like the Aaronic priesthood. The Lord Jesus lives to die no more. He has died, He has been laid in the grave, but now He is the glorified and ascended Man in all the power of an endless life in heaven.

The Lord Jesus does not exercise His priesthood after the *pattern* of Melchisedec yet, because Melchisedec did not offer any sacrifices. Melchisedec came upon the scene when Abraham had triumphed over his foes; when he had destroyed the armies of kings, Melchisedec came forth with bread and wine and blessed him, a figure of what the Lord Jesus will do in the coming day of glory, when, after the destruction of all Israel's foes, He will come in blessing. But the Lord Jesus, although He is after the order of Melchisedec, now exercises His priesthood after the pattern of the Aaronic priesthood, that is, the Lord Jesus has passed out of sight. He has made atonement by the shedding of His own precious blood, and He is not here in this world. Just as the High Priest disappeared from view when he passed into the holiest of all, so the Lord Jesus has gone into Heaven, and He lives to make intercession for us.

Then there is the third thing, which is very beautiful, and ought to come to our hearts in all its attractive power. The third reason why the Lord Jesus is suited to be our high priest is that He has lived here in this world. He has not only been to the cross, but He has known what it is to suffer. He has known what it is to endure trial, so that He is perfectly qualified to exercise this priesthood on our behalf. "In the days of His flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared; though He

were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered" (verses 7, 8).

It is very important to see that scripture does not say that the Lord Jesus learned to obey. To say that would be profanity. He learned what obedience was, but He never learned to obey.

Let me try to make this plain. An *unfallen* creature—angel or archangel, if you will—has never to learn what obedience is because that is what is suited to his position. He obeys naturally, no other thought would enter the mind of an unfallen creature; he has not to learn what obedience is. But a *fallen* creature such as ourselves has to learn, not obedience, but to obey. Because it is our will to disobey, we have to learn under the discipline of God to obey.

Now the Lord Jesus had to learn what obedience was because He was not a creature but the Creator. He had not to learn to obey because that would suppose a will opposed to God. But He learned what obedience was when He came as a man into this world, because it was His place from all eternity to command and not to obey. He came into this world and He did not learn to obey or to suffer; He learned what obedience was, and what suffering was. And the end of that pathway was that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest. The Son of God who, if He had remained in heaven, would never have known what obedience and suffering were, came into this world and learned both fully in order that He might be perfectly qualified to enter into full sympathy with those who have to walk in obedience and suffering in this world. And "being perfected"—that of course has to do with His office as priest—having passed through it all, and thus being fully qualified, "He became the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him; called of God and High Priest after the order of Melchisedec."

(Adapted from unrevised notes of an address
by G. F. Cox, 7.10.25.)

APOLLOS

(a) His person and origin

THE first reference to Apollos in scripture is in Acts xviii. 24-28, where, although he bore a Greek name, it is specifically mentioned that he was by birth a Jew and came from Alexandria.

This town, situated in Egypt, was founded in B.C. 331 by Alexander the Great, who named it after himself. In the heyday of the Roman Empire it was the second city of the empire, with a cosmopolitan population which included many Jews. It was in Alexandria, during the period 285-246 B.C., that the so-called Septuagint translation of the Old Testament from Hebrew into Greek was made. This was the achievement of Jewish learned men exclusively, and shows that the nation had reached a high standard of development and possessed those who made a thorough study of the Scriptures.

Probably Apollos had been educated in this "school". The description of him in Acts xviii.24 as an eloquent man may be equally well rendered "a learned man". In any case, as the verse goes on to say, he was "mighty in the scriptures". In some way—we are not told how or where—he had become acquainted with the baptism of John. Certainly we may conclude that he had been baptized with the "baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." From John directly, or through the medium of John's disciples, he would undoubtedly have learned of the appearance of the Messiah which the Old Testament foretold. And when John the Baptist proclaimed His coming, Apollos believed his testimony.

It would appear however from verse 25 that he knew little or nothing of the public ministry, preaching, suffering and death of the Lord Jesus.

(b) His public service

About A.D. 54, soon after Paul had set out on his third missionary journey from Antioch, Apollos came to Ephesus. Acts xviii. informs us that he was an eloquent, or learned, man, fervent in spirit, a teacher who spoke boldly. As was

Paul's own custom, his first call was at the synagogue, where he gave instruction from the scriptures to the Jews who gathered there.

Amongst his audience, doubtless by the providential overruling of God, were Aquila and Priscilla, whom Paul had left in Ephesus when visiting the town on his second missionary journey. These simple folk, tent-makers by trade, immediately perceived that something was lacking in the preaching of Apollos, and did not hesitate to speak of this to the learned Alexandrian. Apollos did not decline their help with a proud gesture. He showed a humble disposition, and was glad to receive, as a new born babe, the sincere milk of the word (see I Peter ii.2).

Acts xviii makes it clear that this instruction of Apollos proved most fruitful in its results. He was added to the assembly in Ephesus, for the believers there gave him a letter of commendation when he travelled on into the province of Achaia, where, chiefly in Corinth, Apollos exercised his ministry, and, by the grace given to him, was a great help to the believers there. His learnings, his eloquence, his knowledge of the scriptures, his fervency of spirit, are not mentioned—only the grace he had received. This agrees with what is said elsewhere in the New Testament. We have different talents, according to the grace which has been given to us (Rom. xii.6). Only the proportion of faith has to play its part when exercising these talents.

Apollos exercised his ministry in Achaia in two different spheres: he was a great help to the believers, and he proved publicly to the Jews from the scriptures that Jesus was the Christ.

From the early chapters of I Corinthians we may conclude that Apollos had great influence in the assembly at Corinth. He is named in one and the same breath with Paul and Peter (I Cor. i.12), where the apostle reproaches the Corinthians for calling themselves by the names of men, thus forming parties. It appears that there were some in Corinth who preferred Apollos to either Paul or Peter! This shows that he

must have been a very able teacher. Maybe they were impressed by his eloquence and learning. Even so they gave him a higher place than the apostle Paul.

We might conclude that Apollos obtained his influential position by working at Corinth for a long time. In Acts xix.1 we read for the first time of the presence of Apollos in Corinth. This coincided with the beginning of Paul's third missionary journey at the end of the year 54, or the beginning of 55 A.D. While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul arrived in Ephesus, where he stayed two years. During that time he had wished that Apollos might accompany Timothy and Erastus on a visit to Corinth once again (cf. Acts xix.22 with I Cor. xvi.12). So it would appear that Apollos did not labour in Corinth for more than 1½ to 2 years.

Concerning the further service of Apollos, we have only the short note in Titus iii.13. It would appear that he visited Crete. The letter to Titus was written in A.D. 64, some seven years later than that to the Corinthians. No doubt Apollos was active for the Lord during the intervening period, and must therefore have ministered for at least ten years (A.D. 54-64) in the service of the Lord.

(c) His relations with Paul

The references to Apollos in the first epistle to the Corinthians throw most of the light that is available on this aspect of our subject. Apollos was no more indebted to Paul for his conversion to Christ than Barnabas had been. In contrast with him, however, and other fellow-labourers of Paul, Apollos did not preach or labour in any assembly *at the same time* as the great apostle to the heathen. Apollos appears to have acted independently all the time and everywhere. Even when Paul, who possessed apostolic authority, pressed Apollos to go once more to Corinth (I Cor. xvi.12), the latter absolutely declined. Why was this? It may well have been that he wished to avoid any action that might revive the factions against which Paul warned the Corinthians so seriously in his first epistle to them. He would do nothing to strengthen the resistance of some at Corinth against Paul.

On the other hand, Paul's urgent appeal to Apollos to return there shows that the apostle valued the work of Apollos and had complete confidence in him.

So far as scripture notices, Apollos never founded an assembly during the course of his ministry. He only visited places such as Ephesus, Corinth, and Crete where assemblies had already been established as a result of the preaching of Paul. Paul had laid the foundations; Apollos had built upon them (I Cor. iii.10). Paul had planted; Apollos watered (ver. 6.)

However, there was no question of jealousy or rivalry between the two men. Paul acknowledged Apollos as a servant of the Lord (I Cor. iii 5), as a fellow-labourer of God (verse 9), as a steward of the mysteries of God (Ch. iv.1), as a brother (Ch. xvi.12). He cited Apollos to the Corinthians as an example of humility (Ch. iv.6). The fact also that Paul, when writing to Titus many years later, bespoke special care for Apollos (Titus iii.13) points to a continuing esteem for the person and work of the latter.

It is clear that there was a difference in the talents which the Lord had given to both men (I Cor. iii.5), and on that ground every one would receive his own reward according to his own labour (ver. 8). Paul nowhere valued his own service more highly than that of Apollos, but accorded to it the same significance as being that of a fellow-labourer. Thus Paul and Apollos at different times devoted themselves to the same matter in the service of the same Lord, with differing talents, but with the same object.

(Translated and adapted from the Dutch
Messenger of Peace, by J. Mol, Senr., of Baarn).

STUDIES IN GALATIANS

XIII. Legalism, an insidious thing.

(Read: Chap. iv.8-11).

THEN there is the warning. "Howbeit, then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no

gods! But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God", etc. It is plain he means the Gentiles; he does not say, when *we* knew not God, because the Jews had a certain knowledge of God under the law; but "when *ye* knew not God" clearly is about the heathen.

"How turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?" Weigh that expression well. There cannot be a more solemn statement as regards the present state of Christendom. What does he mean by saying that these Galatian saints were returning *again* to the weak and beggarly elements, to which they desired *again* to be in bondage? They must have been perfectly shocked. Turning again to idolatry! How could this be? They might say, We are only taking up the principle of the law: do you call this the weak and beggarly elements? Why, says the apostle when you were unconverted, you worshipped false gods—idols; but if you, Christians, go and take up Jewish principles, even these feast-days or other principles of the law, you are in principal idolators, turning back again to that idolatry out of which God delivered you.

How is this? The reason is plain. It was not that the law in itself could be idolatrous, or that God did not forbear toward the prejudice of those that were Jews. But here were the Gentile believers resorting to these legal elements. Who told them? These things had lost all their meaning, and a Gentile had nothing to do with them; they had their value as a shadow of Christ, before Christ came; but to turn back from Christ risen from the dead, to these mere shadows, was in God's sight going back to idolatry. Whenever professing Christendom takes up the law, with its external ceremonials and shadows (quite right as all this was under the law), and adopts them as christian worship, it has unconsciously but really fallen into idolatry.

Supposing a person were to say, I find myself very cold in worshipping God, and I want something to arouse my soul; what more proper than to have a picture of my Saviour, that as I look upon Him and the crown of thorns, I may feel more

deeply His love, and have my heart's affections more drawn out to Him? *That* is idolatry now, if it would not have been so at any time. But there were certain of these things allowed under the legal system, because of the hardness of their heart; they had sacrifices of beasts and an earthly priesthood; but for a Gentile to turn to these things is going back to idolatry in the sight of God. The Holy Ghost presses this upon these Galatian believers, for the evil was only in the germ.

The essence of our blessing lies in the soul's enjoying Christ by the word of God—the Holy Ghost giving this enjoyment of Christ apart from everything that acts upon the natural eye or mind. For it is precisely this very abuse that the apostle here so strongly denounces, and which he calls the weak and beggarly elements. What God prizes in worship would now be generally considered meagre and poor; for it supposes the absence of outward decoration and excitement, in order that it may be the real power of the Holy Ghost acting among the saints.

“Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.” *Not* to do this now is the wonder. Alas! the Galatian evil is thought a proof of religion. He marks this observance, not merely as an error, but as a proof of idolatry. In heathenism these festivals were of great account; and God permitted them in Judaism because the Jews had a means of religion suited to their state and the worldly sanctuary. But now all is completely changed, and the observance of special feasts and seasons as a means of pleasing God is put down with a high hand by the Holy Spirit. “I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.”

Legalism is an insidious thing, because it looks fair. When this is the case, men fancy that they become practically more holy; but the contrary is the fact. What produces true holiness is, that it is not merely the name of a day, or of an hour, or of a season, or place, but God working in the soul, both to will and to do of His good pleasure; and this, because “sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ.” God brings the believer into His own presence, and puts him there as a child.

From “Lectures on the Galatians”, by W. Kelly.

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WORDS OF HELP

A Monthly Magazine for Believers

EDITORIAL

WE WELCOME new readers for 1961, and trust they will reap much spiritual benefit from "things new and old" which it is sought to bring to them from the Scriptures through the pages of *Words of Help*.

In order to cater for varying needs, we seek to provide ministry of devotional and practical character, as well as that which is expository. Considerations of space make it difficult at times to include all the variety we would like to see each month, and we therefore ask our readers' forbearance and patience if they do not find exactly what they feel to need in any particular issue.

Without making any definite rule in the matter, devotional articles are usually given first position in the Magazine; practical and expository follow: and pieces by writers now living normally precede those by honoured servants of the Lord no longer with us.

The Editor will always be pleased to hear from readers who have helpful suggestions to submit either with regard to subjects or problems of the day on which help from the Scriptures is desirable, or as to any improvement that might be made to increase the usefulness of the Magazine.

Once again we seek the interest of our readers in prayer that God's guidance may be given to all who write for the help of others, and His blessing upon all who read *Words of Help*.

"He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bring his sheaves with him". (Psalm cxxvi. 6)

JOHN XVII

This chapter is without doubt unique among the wonders of the word of God, and surely should constantly engage the devout attention of all the dear children of God, who have, through grace, been brought to know and own the Lord Jesus, the Son of God, as their Saviour, the One Who loved them and laid down His spotless life on the cross, having finished the work His Father gave Him to do. The words recorded were the utterance of the Son to His Father, mostly concerning those whom He was leaving behind in the world, and which they were permitted to hear, for He says "And now come I to Thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves" (verse 13). It should be with holy reverence as well as affection that we, who also are privileged to listen, should bow down our ears to hear His own words, preserved for us. May we have grace so to do.

"These words spake Jesus", as He turns away from all on earth, "and lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said, Father . . ." Who can measure the depth of the meaning of that one word, or of the love—the mutual love between the Father and the Son, and yet so blessedly expressed all through this gospel of John by Him Who came to make the Father known—as He says "I have declared unto them Thy Name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them" (verse 26).

Then He goes on to say ". . . the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee," giving in the verses following two reasons for this. One was that He had glorified God on the earth, and finished the work given Him to do (verse 4); the other because of His rightful place which He had with the Father before the world was (verse 5), but now as the One Who had in grace become the Son of Man.

He then goes on to speak of His disciples, but as those "which Thou hast given Me out of the world," having previously referred to them thus in verse 2—"As Thou hast given Him power . . . that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou has given Him." Surely this expression is worthy of special note, viz:—that in speaking of His own He

refers to them not less than seven times as those who were the gift of the Father to Him, see verses 2, 6 (twice), 9, 11, 12 and 24. As the hymn expresses it:—

Thou gav'st us in eternal love
To Him to bring us home to Thee.

How precious to know that we, who once were poor unworthy sinners, are assured that we are the gift of the Father to the Son. It is as to these, His disciples, that He says, "I have manifested Thy Name" (verse 6), as also He had said to Philip in chapter xiv. 9, "Have I been so long with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." Moreover he credits them with having kept the word of the Father, and also with having known that He came forth from the Father (verses 6-8).

He prays for them; not for the world. In a future day it will be said "Ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession" (Psalm ii. 8), but now it is for "them which Thou has given Me" (verse 9). One of His requests for them is, "Holy Father, keep through Thine own Name those whom Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, as We are" (verse 11).

Three times does He speak of His own being one. This point is worthy of our attention. How wonderfully this unity was fulfilled in the early church, when "they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts ii. 42). And further, "All that believed were together, and had all things common" (verse 44). Yet again, "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul" (Acts iv. 32).

The second time He speaks of this unity is in verses 20 and 21: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me." This surely was fulfilled when multitudes from all the nations around heard and believed the Gospel although they had before worshipped in a multitude of ways—as witness those in Thessalonica, who "turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from

heaven" (1 Thess. i. 9, 10). Many more instances are given us in Acts, and moreover it could be written, "There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling" (Eph. iv. 4).

The third unity in the 22nd and 23rd verses is surely the coming display in glory "that the *world may know*" (see 2 Thess. i. 10 and Rev. xxi).

How frequently He speaks of the world out of which the Father had given Him His own. How definitely He says of them that "they are not of the world even as I am not of the world" (verse 14), and prays that they may be kept from the evil, letting us know too that for "their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth" (verse 19).

Our Lord had said (Ch. xvi. 28) "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again I leave the world and go to the Father," and the great significance of His prayer was surely that His own should know that they were set in the same relationship, both to the Father and to the world, as that in which He was when on earth. In connection with this we hear Him say, "As thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world" (verse 18).

He speaks six times of His being sent into the world: for the seventh we must turn to Chap. xx. 21. Again, nine times He says "I have", twice as to His Father, and seven times with respect to His own.

All the foregoing is in relation to this world, but there is, may I say, a more intimate note struck in the 24th verse. "Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me: for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world." The world is not in view, but the desire that His own should be with Him where He is—surely in the Father's house, in blessed fellowship with the Father and the Son, in the full enjoyment of divine love.

These are some of the wonders of His wonderful prayer. May God the Holy Ghost bring them home in power and sweetness to our souls as we meditate therein, for God's glory and our blessing.

THOS. WILSON.

SATURDAY MEDITATION

“Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever.”

(Hebrews xiii. 8)

This is Saturday evening. One week is ending and another is about to begin. It is a good time for meditation. All too soon, people and things fade from the memory like footprints in the wet sand. So I will now recall while I can the events of the past seven days: some of the things I have been able to do, the places I have been in, the individuals I have met, the letters received and those written, the reading-matter which has occupied me. “Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established” (Proverbs iv. 26). As I look back, I will also look up, bringing names and needs to the throne of grace. I know the One Who occupies the throne, and He will hear.

I will also think of the new week ahead with some of its expected events: its possibilities of victory where this week was defeat, of opportunity to be used instead of missed, and especially of its to-morrow, the first day of the week, the Lord’s day, for is there not some truth in the old saying, A Sunday well spent brings a week of content?

Yes, I would like to prepare for to-morrow, and for this I need an open Bible and some quiet minutes . . . I wonder whether one of the great lacks of the present day is this exercise of quiet meditation. It is not always an easy thing, especially for those who never go to the Bible for help. What did someone once say to me, that he envied his mother her simple faith—she really believed that her Bible had come to her direct from God, right down into her lap, just like that. But I am sure that she was right; that is how we ought to read it, God’s word direct to myself with no-one in between.

Well, my Bible is now open at Hebrews xiii. 8, and in this verse I find three points:—

1. The Person of Jesus Christ;
2. Time in its three divisions,

Yesterday	The Past,
To-day	the Present,
For ever	the Future;

3. What Jesus Christ is in Himself, the Same, that is, the existing One Who does not change.

What did Yesterday mean for Him? His humanity commenced in the stable at Bethlehem, and for the truth about that Birth I need to think of Matthew i.23—"Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call His Name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us." Is it possible? God Himself is come at last to live on this earth, in the Person of His Son made flesh, Jesus Christ. Hallelujah!

His Yesterday includes His life here on earth, those thirty-three years of divine light and love when God was manifest in the flesh; the Joy of Heaven to earth come down. It includes too His Cross. I reflect that yesterday was Friday. Did not the Saviour die on a Friday? What a day was that, when the Incarnate Maker died for man His creature's sin! And the day following He spent in the grave. One day He rested from suffering free.

But the third day He rose again from the dead, and now, To-day, Jesus lives, the same holy, loving, blessed Person. A Professor asked his class to name the one who in their opinion was the greatest living man. After two or three suggestions, one young man said "Jesus Christ." "I said, *living* man", observed the Professor. "Is not Jesus alive?" was the reply. We answer, Yes, Christ Jesus lives to-day. Hallelujah!

And He lives for ever. Through time, and throughout the endless countless ages of eternity, Jesus lives for evermore, the same gracious, powerful, loving, divine Person. As Hebrews i. 12 declares, "Thou are the same, and Thy years shall not fail."

What about *my* Yesterday? Happy for me it is if I can look back to the time when in repentance and faith I turned to Jesus Christ, and received from Him forgiveness of sins and eternal life. It is good for Christians sometimes to remember their conversion, and sometimes to speak of it.

And my To-day? If not converted, "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." "To-day if ye will hear His voice." Turn to Christ now, for He says "Come unto Me." If a believer, I am to know and enjoy now, to-day, my place

of acceptance before God in Christ, and to live out the Christian life of faith and love, holiness and peace and joy, and hope too—waiting for God's Son from heaven. He may come to-day.

My For Ever is to "ever be with the Lord," Whose love can never change and never cease, for He is the same for ever. This will be glory for me, and for all the redeemed. Not one of His own will be missing in that blissful place.

Yesterday, to-day, for ever,
 Jesus is the Same;
 All may change, but Jesus never,
 Glory to His Name.

W. H. L. GRAHAM.

(The foregoing is based on a brief talk given (to fill a gap) in the daily evening service at a convalescent home, where the mixed company included both believers and others. Prayer may well be made for all such informal Christian services, wherever held.)

SILAS

Silas was the sole companion and fellow-labourer of Paul during his second missionary journey. In the book of Acts he is called Silas, meaning "silent" or "taciturn". There is no doubt that he is the same person as Silvanus mentioned in 2 Cor. i. 19; 1 Thess i. 1; 2 Thess i. 1 and 1 Peter v. 12, Silas being the Greek abbreviation of the longer Latin name. Nothing is told us in scripture as to his origin, family relations or conversion. However, we know that like Paul, he possessed Roman citizenship (Acts xvi. 37), though undoubtedly he came of Jewish stock.

The service of Silas, or Silvanus, as recorded in scripture, may be divided into three sections, viz:—

1. His activities in the assemblies at Jerusalem and Antioch;
2. His co-operation with the apostle Paul;
3. His activity in connection with Peter.

1. In Jerusalem and Antioch

Before Paul chose him to be his fellow-labourer on his second missionary journey, Silas was in the assembly at Jerusalem, where he occupied a prominent place. After having guided the council at Jerusalem to a unanimous decision on the problem of circumcision, Judas and Silas were chosen to go with Paul and Barnabas to convey the conclusion reached to the believers at Antioch.

These men are clearly distinguished in Acts xv.22 from the apostles and elders as "chief men among the brethren." We find the same word designating "leaders" three times in Hebrews xiii. 7, 17, 24, concerning whom scripture tells us that they had spoken the word of God, and that they watch for souls as those that must give account. Judas and Silas were prophets too (Acts xv. 32), and in Eph. iv. 11, prophets are mentioned immediately after the apostles as the Lord's gifts to the church.

Silas enjoyed the confidence of the apostles and elders, and indeed of the whole assembly in Jerusalem. There was also the certain overruling of the Lord Himself to bring him into close contact with the apostle Paul. Judas remained with Silas in Antioch for some time, but then returned to Jerusalem.

2. Co-operation with Paul

During their service together at Antioch, a bond of fellowship had arisen between Paul and Silas which was of great significance for their co-operation in evangelising. Paul valued the personal qualities and devotion of Silas to the Lord so highly that after the sad separation from Barnabas as a result of disagreement over the question of taking Mark with them, Paul chose Silas to be his travelling companion and fellow-worker.

This second missionary journey lasted some three years, and Silas shared with Paul the hazards of the journey, persecutions and imprisonment. With Paul, Timothy and Luke he crossed the sea from Troas to Europe for the preaching of the gospel. Not Paul only, but Silas also, paid attention to the Holy Ghost who led them in a definite direction. So that when Paul in a vision received the conviction that he was to go to Europe to announce the glad tidings there, Silas did not

shrink from the immense consequences of such a journey. Though Paul alone had seen the vision, Silas also received the conviction that God had called him also to this service in Europe. It was no question of slavishly imitating what another servant of the Lord was doing.

In Philippi Silas clearly took an active share in the preaching of the gospel, so much so that he was cast into prison with Paul (Acts xvi. 19-23). Like Paul however he was able to praise God with singing despite the bodily sufferings experienced. Silas too spoke the word of the Lord to the jailer, and to his household. In all that happened at Philippi, Silas stood by the side of Paul, while the other travelling companions, Timothy and Luke, are not mentioned here. At Thessalonica Paul would appear to have been the chief preacher of the word in the synagogue. Nevertheless we read that some of the Jews, a great multitude of the religious Greeks, and many of the chief women, joined themselves to Paul *and Silas* (Ch. xvii. 1-4). So Silas may also be considered as one of the founders of the assembly in Thessalonica.

Confirmation of this is to be found in both epistles to the Thessalonians which are sent as from Paul, Silvanus and Timothy. These letters were written shortly after Timothy's visit, and were despatched from Corinth during the second missionary journey.

In Berea too Silas was with Paul, but probably not in Athens. Later, in Corinth, he has rejoined Paul. In the historical record of Acts it is not said in so many words that Silas took part in the preaching of the gospel. 2 Corinthians i. 19, however, states categorically that this was the case. So that Silas was not merely a travelling companion, but a fellow worker with Paul. The labour of Silas in Corinth is the last mention of him in the Acts and Paul's epistles in regard to his co-operation with the apostle.

3. His labour with the apostle Peter

There is one further mention of the name of Silas, or Silvanus, in the New Testament, namely in 1 Peter v. 12. Here he is not mentioned as a "leader" or "prophet", but as a faithful brother. In this capacity Peter had come to know him, and was not only convinced of the fact himself but was aware

that those to whom he wrote would think of him the same way.

Peter addressed his letter to the sojourners of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia. They were Jews who had been dispersed during their own lifetime, and from the fact that Silvanus was not unknown to them we may deduce that he had had personal contact with them.

The original letter was written in the Greek language, of which Peter probably had not a thorough command or profound knowledge. Silvanus, or Silas, knew this language, and Peter was thankful to have his assistance: "By Silvanus . . . I have written briefly" (1 Peter v. 12).

According to verse 13, this epistle was written in "Babylon." It cannot be said with certainty which place is meant here. Some have thought that Rome is meant, the place where Peter suffered martyrdom in A.D. 64. It is generally accepted that Peter wrote his first epistle about A.D. 60, that is, some six years after Silas returned from the second of Paul's missionary journeys, to Jerusalem.

It is possible then that Silas devoted himself to ministry of the word to believers from among the Jews rather than going to the heathen. This would indicate close co-operation with Peter, the apostle to the circumcision. But however that may be, Silas was one who according to the measure of his faith (Rom. xii. 3), and the measure of the gift of the grace of Christ (Eph. iv. 7), carried out his service with faithfulness and perseverance. He is thus an example to ourselves.

(Adapted from a translation from the Dutch *Messenger of Peace* by J. Mol, Senr., of Baarn).

STUDIES IN GALATIANS

XIV. Personal Relations with the Galatians

(Read: Chap. iv. 12-20)

The apostle now turns to his own relations with the Galatian saints; and the very approach which the legal teachers had been inciting them to against himself, he takes as an additional ground for the truth. They, by their representations, had stirred up the Galatians to feel aggrieved with the apostle, because he had, as it were, ceased to be a Jew, avowing that he had completely done with the law. This is now met.

The apostle accordingly seizes this very reproach and turns it into an unexpected argument for the gospel. "Brethren, I beseech you, be as I am": that is, be free from the law, as being dead to it in Christ; take your place boldly and with firmness, with the certainty that the will of God is that you have no direct relationship with it. "Be as I am." I am free from its tenure and obligations. They say that I do not assert my legal rights as a Jew: I know and proclaim it. You were Gentiles after the flesh; you were never in a Jewish position at all: do not seek it now that you have, by and in grace, a better. "Be as I am; for I am as ye are." You are Gentiles, and have never been, and are not, under the law at all, and "I am as ye are." If you only understood your place of liberty from the law, how could you wish to pass under its yoke?

"Ye have not injured me at all." They were apparently afraid that in letting the apostle know that he was foregoing his own proper place, they were doing something to pain his feelings. Not at all, he says: "Ye have not injured me at all." I fully acknowledge that, whatever I was as a man in the flesh, I have entirely abandoned that ground. As a lineal descendant of Abraham, without a single evil thing, the law kept perfectly, I should not be so blessed as I am in Christ. You were only Gentiles and had nothing to say to the law: and now I am brought outside it as much as you—not, of course, by becoming a Gentile, but by being delivered from law in and through Christ. There is the blessedness of the Christian position.

"Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel to you at the first: and my temptation that was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus." So far from coming in anything that savoured of fleshly confidence and authority, he came as a suffering man. Being a Jew was all gone. He came to them as one suffering and despised, and in nothing asserting what he was as a child of Abraham. He was dead to it all; and as proof, he refers to the well-known circumstances of his first preaching to them. Did they not remember that when he came to them, it was not with might or show, but deeply tried? Instead of outward attraction attached to his person, there was that

which could not be but grievous trial to himself and to them. But what did they think of it then? They were so full of the gospel, so happy in finding the grace and the blessedness of the truth preached, that they regarded Paul as one would an angel. "Ye despised not, but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus."

"Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? for I bare you record that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me." Their affections had been completely alienated, which is always the effect of false teachers working on the mind. The enmity grows and every circumstance tends to swell it. The apostle presses this home urgently on their conscience. "Am I, therefore, become your enemy, because I tell you the truth? They zealously affect you, but not well. Yea, they would exclude you," or us; for it was really shutting out the apostle from the saints—making a barrier between him and them. "They would exclude us, that ye might affect them": that is, that it might all be a matter of flattering one another; for the law is invariably perverted to the puffing up of the flesh, when it is not used according to the purpose of God.

"But it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing, and not only when I am present with you." The experience of Paul with the Galatians was the exact opposite to what was found at Philippi (see Phil. ii. 12), where the apostle speaks of them as having "obeyed, not as in my presence only, but much more in my absence." With the Galatians it was not so. Taking advantage of the apostle's absence, they had soon fallen into a fleshly use of the law; and with teachers who humoured it, they were fast losing all real affection for him, and the blessedness they had once enjoyed. Although it would have been better that they should have looked up to God, and found strength to stand for Him when left alone, yet, considering the state in which they were, he could have wished to have been with them. Their faith had been shaken, and they were slipping from Christ, to make things more secure by ordinances; and as the apostle had gone through an immense deal about them in their first coming to the knowledge of Christ—had known, as he expresses it himself, deep painful

throes about it, so he went through all, in spirit, again now.

“My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you.” Legalism had so disfigured the truth in their souls, that they needed to be rooted and grounded in the first elements of grace over again. They had lost their hold of the cross, and the apostle stood in doubt of them. Outwardly they might be very zealous; but as far as testimony for Christ, and their souls’ enjoyment of Him were concerned, all was gone. The apostle desired that the work should be renewed from the very beginning in their souls. “I desire to be present with you and to change my voice, for I stand in doubt of you.” The meaning is, he wished to deal with them according to what he found their condition called for. There might be an effect produced, and he would speak softly to them; or they might be light, proud, and hard, and then he must deal sternly: he would change his voice.

(Slightly adapted, from “Lectures on the Galatians”,
by W. KELLY).

THE LAMP AND THE STAND

(Note on Mark iv. 21-23)

The Lord, in this saying here recorded, made reference to the common objects of a Galilaean household to impress upon His disciples their responsibility with regard to what they heard. A lamp was among the essential furniture of the poorest home, and where means forbade the possession of more than one there the necessity was most apparent that for its greatest usefulness it should be set upon a stand and not be obscured beneath a couch or extinguished under a bushel measure. Let the lamp be placed upon its appropriate stand, and it would shed its light upon all in the house (Matt. v. 15), as well as upon all who might enter (Luke viii. 16).

Here then we find the Lord preparing His followers for the missionary work to which He had called them, and to which He would soon send them forth, first to the cities of Israel and then to the ends of the earth (Mark vi. 7-13). Light was given them that it might shine to others. John the Baptist, the forerunner, was a burning and shining lamp (John v. 35); now the testimony of the kingdom was transferred to the apostles.

They were His witnesses, and what He told them in the darkness they were to preach in the light, and what they heard in the ear they must proclaim upon the housetops (Matt. x. 27). The essence of Christ's gospel was its publicity, and also, as was subsequently developed, its universality. Its ultimate scope was to all men and not to a few only.

And the Lord declared, referring generally to divine communications, that nothing was concealed except to be manifested eventually, and everything made secret for a time and for a purpose would assuredly be brought to light in due course. The dimness of the typical shadows would disappear in the light emanating from the perfect Priest and Sacrifice. That which was dark and involved in the predictions of the Old Testament would be fully elucidated by application and fulfilment in the New. The Lord Himself was not a lamp, but the LIGHT, shining in a darkness which was not dispelled but was deepened thereby (John i: 5). But to those who would receive it He had come to reveal the unknown. In His teaching was fulfilled the double prophecy of the Psalmist: "I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things hidden from the foundation of the world" (Psalm lxxviii: 2; Matt. xiii: 35). And the apostles, in their turn, did not obscure or conceal the light of testimony, but by the Spirit preached God's wisdom and taught the heavenly calling of the church previously hid from all ages and generations (Col. i: 26; Eph. iii: 9). Paul, as a good steward of the manifold grace of God, addressing the Ephesian elders, reminded them that in his ministry he had kept back nothing that was profitable and that he had not shrunk from declaring to them the whole counsel of God (Acts xx: 20, 27).

W. J. HOCKING.

(From *The Bible Treasury*, March, 1912).

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Words of Help

from the Scripture of Truth

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WORDS OF HELP

A Monthly Magazine for Believers

JUSTIFIED IN THE SPIRIT

(I Timothy iii. 16)

This phrase is used with reference to our Lord Jesus in whom the great mystery of godliness was seen among men for the first time in human history. "Justified" here means the outward expression before God and man of an inward profession. Abraham was "justified" when he offered up Isaac, because he acted in accordance with what he believed in his heart (Jas. ii. 21). Wisdom is "justified" of her children, because her children act wisely (Matt. xi. 19; Luke vii. 35). "By thy words thou shalt be justified," the Lord said, that is, when the words and the profession abide the test of scrutiny (Matt. xii. 37; Rom. iii. 4). The Lord Jesus was absolutely what He said He was (John viii. 25). He was therefore different from all others because of this. "Godliness" in the Lord Jesus reached a standard of perfection in God's estimation, and He was well-pleasing in His sight. His words and deeds "justified" Him as the Perfect One in the sight of God and man.

It is said that the Lord Jesus was "justified" in the Spirit because everything from His conception as man to His ascension to the Father's right hand was "in the Spirit". Holy men of old were moved intermittently and spasmodically by the Spirit of God, but the Lord Jesus was in harmony with and under the influence of the Holy Spirit incessantly and uniformly. In His life of godliness, therefore, He was justified in the Spirit, as also in His resurrection (Rom. i. 4; I Peter iii. 18).

It may be added that the grammatical construction of the Greek phrase in I Tim. iii. 16 indicates that the Holy Spirit of God is designated.

(From "The Bible Monthly", 1924) — by W.J.H.)

**THE DAY OF ATONEMENT (Leviticus xvi)
or, THE RENDING OF THE VEIL**

ONE GRAND THEME of the Epistle to the Hebrews is the contrast between the poverty and weakness of the best things that Israel knew under the law, and the richness and glory of the blessings which are ours now that Christ has come. Even allowing that the legal ordinances are typical of the good things to come, their meagreness is very striking. In two respects they are lacking: first, considered as types they are inadequate to portray spiritual realities just because they are material and fleshly; and secondly, until Christ had come and had accomplished redemption, no real clearance from guilt could be announced (though it might be known by individual faith).

This double limitation is perhaps most marked in the ritual of Israel's Day of Atonement, though it is to be observed in all the Old Testament shadows. Unless this limitation is borne in mind, we may go astray in interpreting the types.

Before going further, we ought perhaps to consider the question whether, now that the fullness of Christian blessing is revealed, there is any profit in considering the legal system which has now disappeared? To this question the very existence of the Epistle to the Hebrews is perhaps sufficient answer. If the Holy Spirit thought it good to draw our attention in that book to the meaning of those ordinances, do we not well to pay earnest heed to them?

Moreover it is the experience of those who have done so that the consideration of these types brings out some of the glories of the work of Christ that we should otherwise have missed. But it is always necessary to remember the limitations of the types, interpreting them by New Testament teaching under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and not by human imagination.

The most striking feature of the tabernacle worship was that there was ordinarily no access at all for priests or people

to the Holy of Holies, the inner part of the sanctuary where the presence of God was manifested above the mercy-seat. Only on the Day of Atonement was the veil pulled aside to enable one man only, the high priest, to enter the Most Holy. But how wrong we should be to take this very exceptional access into a "typical" sanctuary as giving the measure of our access to God! No, the limitation itself belonged only to the temporary legal system, as Hebrews ix. 9 points out. Rather, the limited access on that day was a promise, or at least a hint of what God's real purpose was.

The first actions of the high priest on that day were directed towards fitting himself for the great work he was to do. He had to bathe himself in water, put on the holy linen garments, and then offer a sin-offering as an atonement for himself and his house. Now none of these actions typifies anything that the Lord Jesus Christ did; but Aaron, sinful and defiled that he was, must cleanse himself and his house, offer a sin-offering and sprinkle its blood in the holy place, in order that they might be accepted as priests on behalf of others. Thus cleansed, Aaron became a fit type of the Lord Jesus. But the Lord Jesus Himself, not a priest of Aaron's order at all, yet declared by God to be priest after the order of Melchizedek (Hebrews v. 10), was in His own holy person able to take up and carry out the *work* after the Aaronic pattern, but in an infinitely more glorious way. He needed no cleansing to enable Him to do this. We can, of course, take the holy garments as typical of the holiness, in manhood, of our blessed Saviour.

Some take the priestly house here to typify the church. But seeing that the sin-offering was made for Aaron *and* his house, this seems to blur the sacred principle that for Christ no sacrifice was needed. Also, the New Testament never mentions the priesthood of believers along with that of Christ.

Next we come to the sin-offering for the people. This consisted of two goats, one for the Lord and the other for the scape-goat, and the priest cast lots to decide between them.

The Lord's lot was killed, and the high priest then carried some of its blood within the veil, and sprinkled it, once upon the mercy-seat, and seven times before the mercy-seat. And the scripture continues "And he shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness."

Whether this last "so shall he do" implies a separate sprinkling upon the tabernacle itself is not clear. (Hebrews ix. 21 states that the tabernacle was sprinkled, apparently by Moses, though there is no record of this in scripture. So the verse may refer to Leviticus xvi.) But the general meaning is clear enough: it is the Lord's lot that is in question, and it was needful, if a holy God should dwell, even in figure among His people, that there should be the witness to His holiness in the blood of atonement sprinkled on the mercy-seat—the very place where He dwelt, where, so to speak, His throne was. And the anti-typical meaning must correspond to this, though we shall not expect an exact correspondence.

Can heaven itself—the spiritual realm where God Himself dwells—need purification? This is to use the language of the type, but in truth the very existence of evil in God's creation is like an ugly question mark set over against the glory of God's throne. Is it consistent with His holiness and righteousness? And if He acts in righteous judgment against it, how can He act in love? As King David longed to go forth to his son Absalom, but could not without compromising his throne, so God's grace is not free to act in the presence of sin. Hence He must hide Himself as behind a veil, His true nature not revealed.

But to every question the cross of the Lord Jesus has given a full answer. For there God's utter hatred of sin was made evident by His forsaking His own beloved Son when He "was made to be sin for us." There His willingness to pay the utmost price in order to put away sin was demons-

trated. Thus His love for His sinful creatures is also displayed in the cross. God Himself is fully revealed.

It is instructive to see how the type helps us to understand what the cross has accomplished for the glory of God. And if anyone wishes to use the figurative language which the type supplies, no one need object to this, if only we remember that it is but figurative. Thus we may say that, when Jesus died, His blood was sprinkled on the heavenly mercy-seat. "Christ, through the eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot to God." But the fulfilment of the type means the end of the type, and, as a sign that His death had met every requirement of the divine holiness, the veil of the earthly temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom. It was as though God answered "It is finished" to the Saviour's "It is finished" from the cross.

No longer did God need to hide Himself—henceforth there was access right into His presence. The same precious blood that meets the requirements of God's throne enables Him to cleanse and forgive the sinner who approaches in the Name of Jesus. The typical system was at an end, and the divine sanctuary was open, the moment the Saviour died. For worshippers on earth to enter there, encumbered as we are with weakness, it was necessary that the high Priest Himself in resurrection power should enter on our behalf, but this was an additional blessing. The rent veil declared the work of atonement done, the way open, when the Saviour died.

Hence it is that the teaching in Hebrews ix. and x. concerning the entry of Christ as high priest into the holiest is by way of *contrast* with the Levitical type, rather than its exact counterpart. "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." With Aaron there was no continuing "appearing"—he could not stay a moment.

Again, "Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made

with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, *having obtained* eternal redemption for us." His once for all entry was not to make atonement, but *having obtained* eternal redemption: the work was already complete. He went in "by His own blood", not as though that gave Him entry, but because His work as high priest—appearing in the presence of God on our behalf—is founded on His completed sacrifice.

And, in final contrast, He sat down—there was no seat in the tabernacle. "Having by Himself purged our sins, He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Hebrews i. 3).

The veil is a type of His flesh, and while the Cross was still unaccomplished there was no entry for sinful man. But the veil is rent—itself a striking figure of His death. By that one offering of Himself He has perfected for ever them that are sanctified. And now the risen Christ, priest after a new order, has Himself gone into the presence of God for us. Having Him as our high priest, and having perfect cleansing by His blood, we are exhorted to draw near as worshippers (Hebrews x. 19-22).

We have considered at length that part of the Day of Atonement ritual which Hebrews comments upon, because of its importance. Let us now return to Leviticus xvi. The purification of the altar of burnt offering (verses 18, 19) is mentioned along with the tabernacle in verse 20, and need not detain us further.

The ritual of the scape-goat follows. Aaron laid both his hands upon the head of the live goat (the people's lot), and confessed over it all the sins and transgressions of the people. The goat was then led away and set free in the wilderness, "and the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited." Here is a vivid picture of the actual removal of the sinner's sins; but however vivid, we can but feel its inadequacy. For the goat that removed the guilt was not slain, and it must be combined in thought with the other that

was, in order to represent the two aspects of the Saviour's work on the Cross. But the type does help us to understand that when once the divine holiness had been vindicated, *all* the sins of the sinner could be forgiven.

Looking at this as a dispensational type, we may see that, though the Sin-Offering was slain long ago, Israel as a people has not yet seen the removal of her sins, because of her unbelief. The entry of the high priest into the opened heavens, and His session on the throne of grace are, as we have seen, not provided for in the type. But when He comes forth to subdue His enemies, Israel's repentance will be their true Day of Atonement, and their full blessing will follow. Hence the last offerings of that day are burnt offerings—those that above all speak of worship.

Meanwhile it is the happy portion of all those who believe in Jesus to know a perfect cleansing from sin by His blood, and a title to draw near to God in the holiest to worship in His Name. Today, holy places made with hands, earthly priests as well as vestments and incense, all are a denial of these simple truths. By rending the veil God has abolished them all.

E. H. CHAMBERLAIN

PROGRESSING IN THE TRUTH

(Read: Hebrews v. 11-14)

IN THESE VERSES the apostle says something we may well pay heed to: "Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing" (verse 11). God's will concerning us is that from the time we first know the Lord Jesus we should be making progress in the truth. The Apostle rebukes these Hebrews that had been Christians for years: he says, considering the time they had been Christians they ought to be teachers, whereas they needed that he should bring before them the things that were the first elements of truth, the ABC as it were of Christian truth.

How is it with us? Do we make progress, or is it true of any of us that we are no more advanced in it than we were

perhaps two or three years ago? God has given us His word in order that we might profit. Had God chosen He could have drawn up a sort of catechism which we could commit to memory, so that we could learn a certain amount of truth as people do in that way. But God has not done that, because there would have been nothing in it to engage our hearts. He has given us the scriptures, and the Lord Jesus as the centre of them; so that all is connected with Him.

The truth is brought before us in very different ways. We have the Gospels and the Epistles, the historical books of the Bible, and the Psalms. God has given it to us in this way in order that we might be diligent. It is not the mere question of committing so much to memory. God has given us His word in all its living freshness in order that our souls might feed upon it. And we know very well *that* needs diligence.

We are not to be dependent upon anybody else: that is clericalism, that there should be certain men to devote themselves to spiritual things and the rest of their flock devote themselves to secular things: then they come together, and the man who has devoted himself to learning feeds them. What scripture brings before us is that God has addressed His word to the whole flock; and He has given us His Spirit so that the apostle says "The anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you" (I John ii 27). This does not mean that teachers are not a help, but God has given us His word and His Spirit in order that we might not always be children, but advance in the truth and become of use in His service, having our "senses exercised to discern both good and evil."

Supposing you are the youngest in the assembly, you are not to be disheartened because you cannot understand all that is said. Nor are you, on the other hand, to be discouraged because older men have different views on certain things. God would have us, whether we are young or old, to have exercised consciences and exercised minds too. Even when he writes by inspiration, the apostle calls upon the saints

to be exercised as to it—"I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say" (I Corinthians x. 15).

God has given us His word because He loves us, and because it is His purpose that we should be nourished by it, growing by it. And it is a very important thing for us all to ask ourselves whether we really are growing by it, or whether we are careless and show less anxiety about our souls than we do about our bodies, so that year passes year and finds us with no deeper knowledge of the truth. We should reproach ourselves and judge ourselves if that is the case.

Adapted from unrevised notes of an address by G. F. COX

STUDIES IN GALATIANS

xv: The Christian in contrast with the Legalist

(Read: Chapter iv, 21-31)

"TELL ME, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?" He uses the word "law" in two different senses in this verse. Ye that desire to be under the principle of law, do ye not hear what the books of the law say? That is, the early writings of the Bible. "Law" is sometimes said about the word of God in general as then revealed, as in Psalm xix, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." But when spoken of as that which the Christian is not under, it is the principle of the conscience being put under certain obligations, in order to acquire a standing with God. This is the fallacy which St. Paul is laying bare.

Therefore, says he, "Ye that desire to be under law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free-woman. But he who was of the bond-woman was born after the flesh; but he of the free-woman was by promise." There you see the connection between flesh and law, promise and grace. The Spirit has to do with the promise, the law with the flesh. This he illustrates from Genesis.

The Holy Ghost has taken particular pains to lay hold of facts in the Old Testament which we should never have

thought applicable, in order to bring out blessed truths in the New Testament. Who would have discerned the difference between law and promise in Hagar and Ishmael striving with Sarah and Isaac? The Spirit of God not only saw it, but intended the record of the circumstances to be the beautiful foreshadowing of the two covenants; that of law, which has only a child of the flesh: and that of promise, which on the contrary, brings forth in due time the child of the Spirit.

The apostle does not leave us to our own imaginations. He shows that Hagar answers to Jerusalem that now is — the city of scribes and Pharisees, poor, proud, miserable Jerusalem, that had no liberty towards God, groaning under the Roman bondage and the still more bitter slavery of sin. The apostle applies this to what was then going on among the Galatians. Let them beware of becoming virtually the children of Hagar. Did they not take the place of being zealous for the law? Yet after all they did not understand its voice; “desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.” The law was thoroughly against them. It clearly showed that God attached the promise not to the mere offspring of the letter, but to the children of the Spirit.

“But Jerusalem, which is above, is free, which is the mother of us all.” The word “all” has been added to this verse. The true text ends with “us”, and obviously the sense is fuller and better without it. “All” was added, probably, by those who thought to strengthen the connection of all the children of God; whereas the inspired writer particularly refers to those that had been Jews. He says, We are no longer children of Jerusalem which is below, but we belong to Jerusalem which is above. As to the earthly Jerusalem, we owe her no allegiance now; we belong to Christ, and consequently to the heavenly Jerusalem.

The apostle then refers to a passage in the prophets — “Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not; for the desolate hath many more

children than she which hath an husband." The meaning may be a little obscure at first, but adds much, when understood, to the force of what the apostle insists on. It is connected not so much with Hagar and Sarah, as with the reference to Jerusalem. See Isaiah liv, where Jerusalem in a future day is looking back upon her past trials, and God makes a remarkable reckoning of grace. He is speaking of the time when she was long desolate, of her present season of trial, when she is reft of all her outward privileges; but of that very time it says, she has more children than even when the Lord was her husband. In Hosea Israel is spoken of as one most guilty, and the Lord about to put her away. Then she is the desolate one: the Lord has forsaken her because of her sin; but in due time, before there is any outward deliverance from under Gentile captivity or oppression, grace begins to work, and all those who are brought in under Christ now are counted in a certain respect her children. But all is connected with Jerusalem that is to be—Jerusalem that will have ceased to be Hagar and have taken the ground of grace. So that when she looks upon the Christians who will then be in their own heavenly place, the Lord will count them as children of the desolate wife. He will say, "Rejoice, thou barren, that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not; for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband." It is a comparison of herself during her time of desolation with herself when she had a husband. The latter was the time when she was owned in her earthly standing, and she had few children then; but now, in her desolation, there is a mighty outpouring of God's grace, and a wide ingathering of souls who are counted, by grace, as her children.

"Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But, as then, he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so now." There he shows the practical fruit; nevertheless, he adds, "What saith the scripture? Cast out the bond-woman and her son, for the son of the bond-woman shall not be heir with the son of the

free-woman." What a death-blow to all who maintain that the child of God has anything to do with the law, as that which determines his own relationship to God! The law is a powerful weapon for probing the ungodly; but in our own standing we have done with it.

"So then, brethren, we are not children of the bond-woman, but of the free." Such is the conclusion of the apostle's argument. And what could be more conclusive? Out of the law itself he contradicts all they were using the law for; and before the law was given at Sinai, we have, set forth in this remarkable type, the true position of the Christian in contrast with the legalist. The Jew answers to the child of the bond-woman, and was then in bondage too. The apostle shows that such is the inevitable portion of the Gentile also who desires to take that place, and who must suffer even more the consequences of his own folly in it. He is leaving freedom in order to be a slave. "But what saith the scripture? Cast out the bond-woman and her son; for the son of the bond-woman shall not be heir with the son of the free-woman." So that we have, in the clearest manner possible, God resisting all this attempt to foist in the law among the children of the free-woman. On the contrary, to the child of the free the promises are firmly bound by God Himself in Christ risen.

Slightly adapted from "Lectures on the Galatians"

by W. KELLY

GROWING IN SECRET

(Note on Mark iv, 26-29)

THIS PARABLE, like the earlier one of the sower, is founded upon the phenomenon of growth in the vegetable kingdom, the main features in this case being that during the period between the sowing and the reaping manual labour is excluded so far as the parable is concerned. It is thus with the kingdom of God, the Lord said. A man scatters seed upon the land. He then pursues his other occupations, waking and sleeping, night and day; but apart from any intervention

on his part, and without his possessing any real knowledge of the mysterious processes which were active within the seed, it sprouts and germinates and develops. Automatically the fruit is produced; first the blade appears, then the ear, and finally the fully ripened corn. Thereupon the time of harvest having come, the husbandman resumes work, using now the sickle to gather the grain.

This pastoral picture presents an analogy of the kingdom of God, especially in the form in which it was introduced by the Servant of Jehovah in view of His rejection. The millennial kingdom of the future will be founded upon the righteous judgments of the King; but the present moral kingdom is founded upon the teaching of the Lord the Prophet. And the great lesson taught here is that the word of the Lord carries with itself a power to effect the divine purpose altogether apart from external agencies. The seed is shown to have its foes in the thievish birds, the torrid sun, the luxuriant thorns; while the light of the lamp may be dimmed or destroyed by the bushel or the bed. But the Lord assured the hearts of His followers that, in spite of the activity of its enemies and the feebleness of its friends the word of the kingdom will inevitably make progress and prevail. So it came about, as we read, that in the days of the apostles "the word of God grew and multiplied" (Acts xii 24). And so Paul wrote to the Colossians of "the word of the truth of the gospel, which is come unto you; even as it is also in all the world, bearing fruit and increasing, as it doth in you also, since the day ye heard, and knew the grace of God in truth" (Col. i 5, 6, R.V.).

Thus while the duty of the servants of Christ was to let the truth shine in their actions, and to measure it out generously in their words, they were without power to produce any living result from their work. Let Paul plant and Apollos water, the increase is of God alone (I Cor. iii 6, 7). The spirit and the life are in His word. It is the word itself, not the ministry of it, that works within those that believe (I Thess. ii. 13).

This was a comforting assurance for the timorous disciples, seeing that everything in connexion with their Messiah was going contrary to their expectations. They herein learned that the word of the Master would ultimately succeed, and however unpromising the day of sowing might seem, the day of harvest would follow at its appointed time. Such a truth as is conveyed in this parable would, on the one hand, encourage them to trust in God to work out His plans by the invisible and invariable agencies of His word and Spirit, and, on the other hand, condemn any feeling of vanity and self-satisfaction, as though the preachers of the gospel by their own power or godliness caused its spread among men.

It has been a matter of debate among students of the Scriptures whether the "man" in this parable was intended to represent the Lord Himself or His servants. Those who contend for the latter view point out that it cannot be imagined of the Lord that "He knoweth not how" the seed grows, nor that He leaves it to take care of itself. On the other hand, others urge that it could not be predicated of the servants of Christ that they will put in the sickle and reap the corn in the day of harvest.

The truth is that neither the one nor the other of these interpretations is exclusively correct. The exact meaning lies, as it so often does in Holy Writ, between the two extremes. The Lord was conveying the important principle that in the ministry of the word its growth and ultimate fructification depended upon the intrinsic vitality of the word itself, irrespective of the personality of the minister. The central thought of the parable is the service, not the servant. This spontaneous activity of the seed's growth is equally true of the preaching of the Lord Himself and of His delegates.

(Reprinted from "The Bible Treasury", 1912) W. J. HOCKING

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from the Scripture of Truth

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WORDS OF HELP

A Monthly Magazine for Believers

“BLESSING AND THANKSGIVING”

The actual meaning of the word “bless” must always be ascertained from its context. Thus we read that Simeon blessed God, and also Joseph and Mary (Luke ii. 28, 34). Clearly the word “blessed” is used with a different meaning in these two texts. To bless God is to express to Him an acknowledgement of His perfect goodness and mercy, while to bless man is to seek that God would exercise His perfect goodness towards the person in a special manner.

The act of blessing is closely allied to the giving of thanks, as in the passage, “When thou shalt bless in the spirit, how shall he . . . say Amen at thy giving of thanks?” (I Cor. xiv. 16). Compare also the words: “The cup of blessing which we bless” (I Cor. x. 16). No special property is communicated to the cup by our blessing it. Similarly it does not appear that the Lord, when blessing the loaves, communicated to them the property of self-multiplication. The increase in their bulk was the result of the exercise of the Lord’s will when He broke them for distribution. The passage in Matthew shows that giving of thanks was comprehended in the act of blessing, but more than that, it resulted in a very substantial and needed favour to the hungry people which none but God could have bestowed, of whom we can truly say, “His every act pure blessing is.”

In trying to distinguish between our blessing and our giving of thanks, we suggest that blessing is a joyful acquiescence in the display of the unchangeable graciousness and favour of God, while giving of thanks is confined to a grateful appreciation of particular grace and mercy received.

(From “*The Bible Monthly*”, November, 1921).

THE WORSHIPPER

(Luke vii. 36)

HOW OFTEN, when meditating upon this episode, has one wished to know more of the spiritual exercises of this woman who "loved much." She comes into one of the sad hours of the patient life of the Lord Jesus as a ministration from His Father. Through the divine record, we may, if we will, enter upon a scene characteristic of the earthly experience of the Son of Man. There is spiritual profit in so doing. We may, reverently, see His reaction to each occasion of testing. We wonder at His lowly mind—and such wonder leads to worship.

There is no doubt of the intention of Simon the Pharisee: his invitation was not the outcome of respect or, indeed, of honest enquiry. When, under direction of the Holy Spirit, Isaiah penned his prophecy, the scene before us was one of many in the foreknowledge of God. "He is despised and rejected of men": the prophet must have grieved to write the words, but he could not have known how perfectly they portrayed the behaviour of the Pharisee. It would have comforted him could he have known that in one soul, at least, in the presence of despising and rejection, the reality of his following phrase was cherished—"Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows."

Why did she come where her character was known? Why does she face the cruel criticism of the self-righteous ecclesiastic and his friends? Could she not have sought a more private occasion, or even reached to touch His garment as another woman did, despite the throng and press? Did she know Him already—and in the way that only sinners knew Him? "Then drew near unto Him all the publicans and sinners for to hear Him." Had she come then? Or did she hear His wonderful message from some shadowed doorway or on the very verge of a crowd? Without doubt she believed in His saving power and reached out to it herself. She may have heard His invitation to the weary and heavy laden, but was it really so all-embracing as to welcome *her*? Perhaps she heard Him more than once. There was that day when He had turned to self-satisfied

legality, stripping it of the facade of hypocritical holiness to declare "Verily I say unto you, that the publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God before you" (Matt. xxi. 31)—and was she not an harlot? We are not told of these anxieties of her soul, but she was under divine conviction of sin, and the hands of mercy and grace were reaching out to bless her with assurance of forgiveness.

So it may have been that she overheard in the market place: the whispered news was gathered there. Simon the Pharisee had actually invited the Teacher from Nazareth to eat with him. What was the purpose of this? Was not this Teacher only the son of a carpenter, and had He not spoken against the exponents of their law, the upholders of their religious ceremonies? Simon would show Him He was of no account, and even repugnant to them. Whilst inviting Him (as one who would come expectant of honour) he would insult Him in that negative manner so well known in the East. There would be no water for *His* feet—whilst others bathed in ceremonial welcome. There would be no kiss—while others would be embraced. The scrutiny of malevolent criticism would be bent upon Him. Her whole soul revolted at the plan. But what could she do? It was one thing to watch His goings and comings in the city—to sense the hatred and bigotry that threatened Him—to centre her thoughts upon Him as Saviour in her need, but what resource had she, in her despised condition, from which to provide an antidote to His suffering? The women of scripture so often present a condition of weakness out of which it pleased God to perform His purposes in power. What strength from without impelled her to the house of the Pharisee? It was no brazen effrontery—no defiance of the conventions. Her hair is unbraided, and tears are starting to her eyes, but her steps are with purpose, and the phial of precious myrrh is clasped in her hand. She takes her place among the "weak things of the world," and divine grace uses her as a vessel from which shall be poured God's own ministration upon His well beloved Son.

She must have braved the glare of the door keeper and servants and passed by the honoured guests to where One reclined with unwashed feet, weary, no doubt, with many journeyings.

The servant of Simon had given Him no water, but the "woman of the city" bathed His feet with tears of grateful love. From her *own* resources she supplies the means for her ministration. The towel is her hair, once used to display her beauty, and amid the silence of enmity and criticism she opens her flask of anointing and pours upon her Saviour the myrrh which spoke of His death.

She made no sound that could be used for words, but her worship was the evident outcome of her overflowing sense of indebtedness to Him. Hers was now a ministration of humble and devoted love which sought no response nor asked reward. It exposed the behaviour of the Pharisee by a contrast as vivid as light from darkness, and Simon felt it and despised her as he despised the One he had already insulted. She was a sinner—and the pretended prophet did not know it! Thus would he justify himself, with no sense of being a sinner himself.

With relief one turns to Jesus as He lay at table, unwelcomed and unwanted save by an unnamed woman known only for her sins. He could, with His foreknowledge, have avoided the insult and animosity of Simon's house. With what humble grace He goes—with what patient forbearance He remains. He is aware of the lurking thoughts of the Pharisee, but speaks His answer to them with a dignity and courtesy it would be well for us all to follow: "Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee." It is almost like a request to be heard. Yet it meets with a laconic reply—"Teacher, say it"—as though permission were being granted—though unwillingly. So we may see the debtors as they face their Creditor—the Creditor who will spend all that He has even to the death that He may frankly forgive them both. His question is so simple that none need err in answering it. The Pharisee almost disdains to do so, yet he dare not let it be thought he is unable to judge of it. With bowed head the woman hears. The courageous love with which she came meets a response from the Object of it, as it always does—the message is for her. The comparison was obvious—"The one owed five hundred pence"—it was she. Hers, too—the free forgiveness! How she had longed for assurance of this personal forgiveness—and how carefully Jesus expounds the message of it.

So she left the house of Simon, where so many "thought within themselves," her own inward self at peace. The phial was empty of its precious contents, but she had shared her sorrow in her limited measure, and her heart was stored with precious memories. In "newness of life" she went in the strength of His own assurance—and worshipped.

Oh, for grace to share Thy sorrow
 Where Thou, Lord, wast crucified;
 While we wait the cloudless morrow
 When Thou reignest glorified;
 Thy confessors,
 Now Thy body, then Thy bride.

Edward T. Wood.

THE LORD'S SUPPER

ITS SYMBOLS AND THEIR MEANING

MANY AND VARIED are the teachings regarding the meaning of the Lord's Supper which we meet with in different parts of Christendom. It is essential, therefore, to confine our attention strictly to what the scriptures teach.

The title, itself a scriptural one, reminds us that the Supper belongs to those who call Jesus "Lord", who thus are already His. "One Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Eph. iv. 5) is the scriptural phrase, and it is as His confessors that we come to His table to partake of His Supper. Hence it is not a means of *attaining* eternal life. It is as those who through faith in His blood have already passed from death to life that we come, in response to His word "This do in remembrance of Me."

Its primary meaning, therefore, is a remembrance, and the occasion when it was instituted, "the night in which He was betrayed," and the apostle's own inspired words "Ye do show the Lord's death till He come," tell us that it is a remembrance of His death.

This is not to say in any wise that other subjects, such as His life of obedience to God, or His present exaltation, are to be excluded from our thoughts at His Supper. The tendency

which prevails in some quarters to lay down rules of this kind is to be heartily deplored. But the *meaning* of the Supper is, primarily, a remembrance of the Lord in death.

It is not, then, an occasion when we come to be ministered to—to receive food for our souls. We come, rather, to bring to our beloved Lord gratitude and love, worship and adoration as we remember all that He has suffered for us, and the wonders of the glorious work that he wrought on Calvary's cross.

It is impossible, of course, thus to remember Him without being ourselves fed. Indeed, many find that there is no blessing in the whole range of Christian experience to compare with that which we receive at the Lord's Supper. Moreover, we do well to remember that the Lord Jesus has cast this ordinance in the form of a *meal*.

The symbols which He has given us, the bread and the wine, were the commonest elements of a meal at that time. Perhaps it may help some persons to say that the fact of the bread being unleavened—the Passover being the occasion—is something which the New Testament nowhere hints as having any significance. When Paul writes to the Corinthians (who as Gentiles might be ignorant of the Jewish practice) about the Supper he has nothing to say on it. We may thus regard this in the same way as we do the upper room and the reclining posture at the institution of the Supper, that is to say, as incidental accompaniments that the Lord in no way intended to be part of His Supper.

The practice of using so-called “unfermented wine” at the Lord's table is an unwarranted alteration of what the Lord instituted, and the reason sometimes given, that fermented wine might intoxicate or arouse the taste in some person, is an insult to the Lord which everyone who honours Him should repudiate. It is safe to say that no such artificial product was ever known in Palestine. And in view of the drunkenness at Corinth which Paul rebukes in his letter, he would certainly have mentioned the use of unfermented wine at the Lord's Supper, if such had been the correct practice. Also the fermentation of wine, unlike that of leaven, is not used in the Bible as a

symbol of evil. On the contrary, in saying "Men do not put new wine into old bottles, else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out"—the swelling, due to uncompleted fermentation, of the new wine in breaking the old, stretched skin bottles, is used by the Lord as a symbol of the overflowing joy of the new dispensation contrasted with the narrowness of the old.

The Lord's words: "This is My body, which is given for you" and "This cup is the new testament (covenant) in My blood, which is shed for you" (Luke xxii. 19,20) are given with no important variation in Matthew and Mark; also in I Corinthians xi., save that in Corinthians the Authorized Version reads "broken" instead of "given". Now it is certain that the word "broken" is without authority, as may be seen by consulting the New Translation, Revised Version, etc. Indeed, we can see how inconsistent the word would be with what John xix. 33-36 tells us.

In fulfilment of the Passover type, expressed in the instruction "Ye shall not break a bone of it," the soldiers did not carry out their intention of breaking His legs. God took care, indeed, that no dishonour to His beloved Son should be allowed, once He had yielded up His life. Only the soldier was permitted to pierce His side, so that the testimony of the outflowing blood might be given to us.

Let us now examine the Lord's words, and recall the circumstances in which they were spoken.

As they all partook of the Passover, the Lord told His disciples that it was the last He would eat with them. He said also "With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer." Then He took a loaf, gave thanks to God and breaking it, passed it to them saying "Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you: this do in remembrance of Me."

They had partaken of the Passover lamb: now He replaces that emblem of sacrifice by another, which He declares to be a symbol of His body—a symbol, that is, of Himself as the true Sacrifice.

This then is what the loaf represents: Himself slain for us, given up to death for us. It is not a symbol of a living Saviour.

When He says "This do in remembrance of Me," He is asking us to remember how He, the Living One, became dead, and that for us. And in eating of that loaf each one of us in effect says "It was for me He died." In this feast we are not spectators; nor do we look back to His death as an historic fact; but we confess that it is through His death that we have received life.

A practical consideration here is for us to guard against a mere token eating, reducing it to a formality. If the Lord has bidden us *eat* of that loaf, then taking a minute crumb is not entering into the symbolism which He has instituted. If a person offers us his hand to grasp, we do not just touch his fingertips.

Then lest any young believer should misunderstand it, it is well to point out that "breaking" the bread was merely the customary method of partaking at any meal. It has no symbolism attached to it. If otherwise, it could only point to the act of His enemies in putting Him to death. As we have seen, the thought of breaking His body is excluded by the scripture. Nay, the loaf represents His body *given*, and we break it in order to eat of it.

Then, at the conclusion of the meal the Lord took a cup of wine and handed it to them with the words "This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you." Here again the thought of sacrifice is paramount. He, and no other, is the sacrificial victim by whose blood the new covenant of blessing, spoken of by Jeremiah, should be established. It is our privilege to know that all its blessings are ours now by faith in Him; when we drink of that cup, we acknowledge that it was for our sins that His blood was shed, and that through His death we have forgiveness.

Again it is well to say that the pouring out of the cup is not a symbolic act—it is not even mentioned in the scriptures. But the symbolism of His death is in the *separate* emblems on the table, representing His body and His blood.

So, in eating of the loaf, and drinking of the cup, all the wonder of the love which made Him willing to die, for God's glory and for our blessing, comes before our souls. We remem-

ber Him as the One who became the willing sacrifice, dying, the Just for the unjust, to bring us to God.

In John's Gospel we have no record of the Lord's Supper, but we do read there the Lord's clear and simple teaching that He is the food of our souls. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him" (John vi. 53-56).

Now these words do not refer to the Lord's Supper—they were spoken to unbelieving Jews in the synagogue, long before His Supper was instituted. But they teach the same truth that the Supper does. They are to be understood in a spiritual sense (verse 63), and tell us that our life both originates (verse 54) in His death for us, and is maintained (verse 56) by a living faith in Him. These things we acknowledge when, in partaking of His Supper, we "show forth the Lord's death till He come."

But it is not, and cannot be, the mere eating and drinking that ministers life to our souls. That is one of Christendom's delusions. Again, though the Supper is the remembrance of the Sacrifice offered at Calvary, it is not itself a sacrifice. But by faith in the Saviour and in conscious obedience to His word, our hearts are enabled to feed upon Him, the emblems of His body and His blood recalling all that He suffered, while through the Holy Spirit we gain a deeper understanding of all that His death has accomplished.

Finally, let us note that it is not just an individual remembrance, but a corporate one. We never read in scripture of anyone partaking of the Lord's Supper alone. Indeed, the one loaf, of which we all partake, sets forth the body of Christ in another sense—that spiritual union of all believers in Him. "For we being many are one loaf, one body, for we are all partakers of that one loaf" (I Cor. x. 16), and later in the same epistle "by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body" (I Cor. xii. 13). In passing we may note that the practice of

using individual "wafers" or a cut-up loaf utterly destroys this symbolism.

Is there any connection between these two ways of regarding the one loaf, namely the body of Christ who was slain for us, and the spiritual body which is His Church? Surely there is. We shall be able to grasp the connection between them if we recall the type of Eve being formed from Adam's body while he slept—sleep being a figure of death. The Church has been brought into being through His death: "We are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones" (Eph. v. 30).

E. H. Chamberlain.

STUDIES IN GALATIANS

XVI The Liberty the Believer now enjoys

(Read: Chap. v. 1-4)

IT IS WELL to remark the different ways in which the Holy Ghost brings out the liberty which the believer now enjoys. In John viii. 32-36, it is attributed to the Son, and the Son of God acting by the truth; and both points of view in contradistinction to the law. The whole chapter, indeed, is most striking in this respect. But there is another point of view, which it is especially the Apostle Paul's to bring out, that Christ has wrought a work by virtue of which even those who were under the law are completely brought outside its domain; and those not previously under it, i.e., the Gentiles, are proved to sin against their own mercies, if in any way they pass under its yoke. To this the Apostle Paul has come in our epistle: "Stand fast," he says, "in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."

Bear in mind this, too, that, among the Galatians, the character of the bondage was not so much what is called the moral law as the ceremonial. I am aware that many would think the latter much more serious than the former. But, on the contrary, the Christian's subjection to the moral law argues a far deeper departure from the truth than if it were the ceremonial; because the ceremonial law, every Christian must feel, derives its

whole meaning and value from being a type of Christ. Not so the ten words, which are not a type of Christ, but the direct demand upon the strength and righteousness of man, if he have any. And, therefore, one can understand a Christian's getting entangled with types and shadows.

A reasoning mind might say, Is it possible to believe that circumcision, on which God insisted so much with Israel, is to be given up now? If there were no value in it ever, why was it enjoined on Abraham's seed? And if it were so significant and obligatory then, why not now? Besides, does not Christ teach that it was not of Moses, but of the fathers? All this might furnish a plausible platform for human feeling and argument; but the apostle was led of the Holy Ghost to deal with the question of introducing the thinnest wedge of the law.

"Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing"—that is, if you should be circumcised after this: it was not a question of those who had already been. But if they, as Christians, sought it, "Christ shall profit you nothing." He does not mean that, supposing anyone had made the gross mistake of being circumcised, this could not be forgiven; but that, if they now passed through that ordinance as necessary to their complete justification, His efficacy was for them made void. Thus, not only is Christ a complete Saviour, but He is an exclusive one. The attempt to add to Christ is in fact to destroy salvation by Christ.

This principle is very important; because you will find it is constantly the resource of ignorance to say, Well, we all hold the same thing to a certain degree; the only difference is, that I believe something more than you do. Yes, but that "something more" is to extinguish faith, and annul the worth of Christ. Bring in anything, no matter what, necessary to be done by you—necessary as a means of "being justified in the sight of God," and I say unto you, warns the apostle, "Christ shall profit you nothing."

"For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law." You may distinguish between the ceremonial part, that had such a blessed meaning,

and the moral part, by which, you allow, man cannot be justified; but you know not what you do. You cannot separate circumcision from the law. God has embodied that rite so formally in the whole structure of the law, that though it had existed before, it became an integral part since, and henceforth amalgamates so intimately that you cannot separate the rite from the entire system. If you acknowledge any portion of the ritual as that under which you are, you are responsible for the universal legal system; you are debtor to all its demands. And I would call your attention solemnly to this—"a debtor to do the whole law."

Is not then every Christian thus a debtor? God forbid! It is false doctrine. If he were, he would be a lost man. I am aware there are those who do not understand this; who think that Christ, besides bringing pardon, is simply a means to strengthen them to keep the law. But this is sad and fundamental ignorance of Christianity.

Is a Christian then at liberty to break the law? Still more loudly do I cry, God forbid! It is one thing to be a debtor to do the whole law, and another that God can make light of any breach of the law. Is there then nothing possible between these two conditions—debt to the law and freedom to break it? Neither consists with a Christian. He who is free to do his own will, is a lawless, wicked man. He who is under the law to do it, describes the proper condition of the Jew and nobody else. The Christian stands on an entirely different ground. He is saved by grace and is called to walk in grace; and the character of righteousness that God looks for in him is of another sort altogether.

Nothing can be plainer than the Holy Ghost's decision in the matter. He shows that the very smallest insisting on the law, in any shape, brings you in a debtor to do the whole of it; and if so, where are you before God? You are lost and hopeless, if you have a conscience. The question of the law generally comes up now as connected with sanctification. In the case of the Galatians, it came out strongly in the matter of justification. But the Christian has no more to do with it in one form than another. In verses 1-4 it is connected with justification. In the

latter part of the chapter its link is with sanctification.

What a blessed thing it is to stand in this true grace of God! If I look at my salvation, it is all His grace; and if I think what is to give strength to my walk and service, it is just the same. Grace is the spring all through. God does not alter, now that He has revealed, the fulness of grace in Christ.

How sad, then, the departure warned of here! "Christ is become of no effect to you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." By these last words, he does not mean that they had slipped into immorality, or were openly gone from Christ. But they had joined the law along with Christ as a means of justification; and the moment you have done this, you have let slip the only principle on which God can possibly count you righteous. For God justifies *sinner*s. What a glory of God! "To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted to him for righteousness."

From "Lectures on the Galatians", by W. Kelly.

FRUITFUL HEARING

(Note on Mark iv. 20)

IN THIS INSTANCE the word is heard in a prepared heart—in an "honest and good heart," as the Lord said (Luke). And in examining the three Gospels it will be observed that three inward actions are stated to precede the fruit-bearing.

1. The word is understood (Matthew).
2. The word is received (Mark).
3. The word is held fast (Luke).

(1) It has been pointed out that lack of understanding was specially attributed to the nation of Israel, who had Moses and the prophets before the coming of the Lord. And it is from the First Gospel therefore that we learn that in order to bear fruit it was necessary to understand. This was so in the case of the apostles themselves. After His resurrection the Lord opened their minds that they might understand the scriptures, particularly in that case, those relating to His death and resurrection.

(Luke xxiv. 45). Those disciples who understand what the will of the Lord is are those who know what things are pleasing in His sight, and by doing such yield fruit to His praise.

(2) In Mark, the word is received into the heart, that is, it is taken to oneself, welcomed and cherished. The truth is received not in a formal sense as in verse 16, where a different Greek word is used, but in the love of it. The Bereans were more noble than those in Thessalonica in that they received the word of the gospel in all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily whether those things were so; "therefore" we are told, "many of them believed" (Acts xvii. 11,12).

(3) Further, it is necessary to keep, or to hold fast, the word. The expression implies the energy of active resistance against all opposing influences. Spiritual fruit-bearing has its particular enemies. In view of these, therefore, there is an individual responsibility to use a special endeavour to preserve a sense of joy in the word and a love for it in the heart. To do so demands spiritual energy.

W. J. Hocking.

"LOVE ENVIETH NOT"

(I Cor. xiii, 4; R.V.)

A small boy once worried his mother for a penknife and, at long last, his importunity wore down her opposition and she bought him one. He was happy just for an hour. He went next door to show his penknife to his friend and came back miserable, and when his mother chided him for ingratitude, he said, "Jim has a penknife also. But his penknife has three blades and mine only has two." How foolish it is to lose the pleasure of things we have by dwelling on the slight advantages of our neighbour. But it is not a fault confined to children. It is the daily error of half the world and in our folly we let the spirit of envy filch our happiness away.

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from the Scripture of Truth

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WORDS OF HELP

A Monthly Magazine for Believers

EDITORIAL

AS WE GO TO PRESS THIS MONTH, news has been published of the latest achievement of Russian scientists in placing a man in orbit round the earth and recovering him alive, apparently none the worse for his experience.

Exactly where are "the bounds of their habitation" which God has set for His creatures on this earth we may be unable to determine finally, but we are reminded of the occasion very early in the history of mankind when the children of men sought to build a city and tower whose top should reach unto heaven. And the Lord came down to see what they were doing, saying ". . . and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do" (Gen. xi. 5, 6). So the Lord scattered them abroad upon the face of all the earth.

The achievements of men, spectacular though they may be, are often fraught with peril to the peace of the world. As has been said, the gifts of science are double-edged; they "can sharpen the fangs of ferocity as much as they can alleviate human pain." The blessings of God's triumph at Calvary are unmixed, and will flow on and on to the eternal day.

The believer needs to be careful that in appreciating the achievements of his fellow-men, which after all minister to the pride and self-satisfaction of the human race generally, he does not lose his vision of God's infinitely greater and all-glorious accomplishment through the cross of Christ. By means of that which men count foolishness, God has brought infinite glory to His own name, and eternal blessing to His lost and undeserving creatures. Wherefore—

**"HE THAT GLORIETH,
LET HIM GLORY IN THE LORD."**

COLLAPSE OF FAITH

IN A NEIGHBOURING TOWN there is a young man who, until recently, was fully accepted as a Christian, both on his own profession and also by his manner of life: indeed his service for the Lord was showing considerable promise. But now, having been subjected to a severe test, his faith has faltered, and, for the present at least, has failed. The test was a severe one: into a family who were close friends of his, for whom he no doubt has a strong affection, into this family has been born a child hopelessly deformed. Under the impact of this heavy blow, the young man has given up his Christian activities and professes to have abandoned his faith in God.

Our sincere sympathy goes out to the stricken family. What a shattering of high hopes, what a grievous wound to tenderest feelings and affections, what bitter disappointment they have suffered! We grieve with them. We grieve also over the young man, scarcely able to bring ourselves to believe that he has finally abandoned all trust in Christ, and that he will not, in process of healing time, and with increased experience of trouble and difficulty and disappointment in this sad world, turn again to God in deeper humility and claim once more the saving grace that still flows because His Son once suffered and died for sinners, and now lives for ever. God grant he may yet be recovered, so that out of the seeming wreck of his faith may arise a strong conviction of the Christian verities which shall give glory to God, and enable him to become a better witness and worker than before.

The story is a sad one, and in contemplating a case of this kind it behoves one and all to do so in the spirit of meekness, "considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted" (Gal. vi. 1). For the calamity that has befallen our young friend might, but for the keeping power of God's grace through faith, overtake any one of us. Wherefore "let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall."

The fall of which our young friend has been guilty seems to us to bear the same character as that of Eve and Adam in the garden of Eden. With the utmost subtlety the serpent instilled into Eve's mind a doubt as to what God had said, insinuating that, in withholding the desirable fruit of one tree, God was

being neither as good nor as wise as she had thought. So she disobeyed, taking of the forbidden tree herself and giving also to her husband with her.

What ruin that wicked thought in her mind and her disobedience wrought! Why did she not trust her Creator? Why could not Eve believe the evidence of the kindness and care of God which abounded on every hand? Against innumerable tokens of God's goodness she must needs balance a single prohibition, and decide that God was not to be fully trusted. She leaned to her own understanding instead of putting her whole confidence in God (Proverbs iii. 5).

It is fatally easy to fall a victim to this snare, and to get into the habit of justifying oneself rather than God. No less distinguished a man than Job—a man so saintly in life that God Himself called Satan's attention to him—failed in this very thing. So that the wrath of God's spokesman, Elihu, was kindled against him "because he justified himself rather than God" (Job xxxii. 2). And Elihu had to remind him that:—

"God is greater than man.

Why dost thou strive against Him?

For He giveth not account of any of His matters."

(Ch. xxxiii. 12, 13).

There are scriptures in the Old Testament (Exodus iv. 11) and the New (John ix. 3) which should be pondered by those who are tempted to overlook the sovereign rights of God to do as He will in His own creation. Further, there is an immeasurable disparity between the Creator and His creatures, between God and ourselves: and this must ever remain, despite the fact that in His grace God has, through Christ, drawn so near to men that the humblest believer may address Him "Abba, Father." Whilst He pities those that fear Him, as a father pitieth his children, yet:—

"My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts."

(Isaiah lv. 8, 9)

Man's wisdom and duty are to subject his mind, and indeed his whole self, to God, and to rebuke all questionings of God's wisdom and goodness, whether they arise within himself or his fellows. As Paul expresses the matter:—

**“Yea, let God be true, but every man a liar;
as it is written, That Thou mightest be justified
in Thy sayings, and mightest overcome when Thou
are judged.”**

(Romans iii. 4)

It is helpful and beautiful to see how this same apostle submits himself to the surpassing majesty of God's wisdom and ways. It might have been thought, after the revelations entrusted to him—was he not caught up into paradise, where he heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter (2 Cor. xii. 4)?—that Paul would have been equal to every question the human mind could raise. Yet we find him bowing in worshipful submission before God in the doxology of Romans xi:—

**“O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom
and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are
His judgments, and His ways past finding out!
. . . For of Him, and through Him, and to Him,
are all things: to Whom be glory for ever. Amen.”**

Happy indeed is the man who acknowledges his limitations before God, and is ready to ascribe wisdom and goodness to his Maker, trusting fully where he cannot trace God's way. As Job himself declared in one of his speeches, “Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him” (Job xiii. 15).

Some might consider that the virtue of a lowly mind is one not to be sought or found elsewhere than amongst men—for whom it is of course wholly befitting. In other words they would not expect to find any trace of it in the Lord Jesus Christ because of the exalted character of His divine Person.

But was He not also a perfect Man? What do we find when we turn to the gospel records? To select one example, read Matthew xi. 25, 26. After weeks and months of word and work amongst cities of Galilee, so little was there to show for it all that the Lord had to upbraid them for their unbelief and failure

to respond. Through the prophetic word He could say, "I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought" (Isaiah xlix. 4), adding however, "Yet surely my judgment is with the LORD, and my work with my God."

So we find Him in Matthew xi., not uttering a complaining "Why", but accepting what His Father, the Lord of heaven and earth permitted; and this, not in a spirit of disgruntled resignation to the inevitable, but with positive thanksgiving and pleasure in the will of God:—

"At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in Thy sight."

(verses 25, 26)

Little wonder that believers sometimes sing:—

We wonder at Thy lowly mind,
And fain would like Thee be;
And all our rest and pleasure find
In learning, Lord, of Thee.

(*J. G. Deck*)

Moreover it is precisely in this connection that the Lord invited all who would to come to Him and take His yoke upon them:—

"Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light."

(verses 28-30)

The believer's conflict with the enemy of souls is a deadly warfare, for which he needs to put on the whole armour of God (Eph. vi. 13-18), including the shield of faith, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. May we all pray for those who stumble in the great fight, and seek to keep a firm hold upon God ourselves believing that—

“He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?”

(Romans viii. 32)

There is nothing like a steady gaze at Calvary to dispel the dark hopelessness of unbelief. At the cross God dealt righteously with that which lies at the root of all human suffering, namely SIN. And by virtue of the atonement Christ made, not only does the believer know here and now that his sins are forgiven, but he becomes entitled at once to look forward to the redemption of the body at the coming again of the Lord Jesus, “who shall transform our body of humiliation into conformity to His body of glory, according to the working of the power which He has even to subdue all things to Himself” (Phil. iii. 21; New Tr.).

E. A. PETTMAN



BLESSING AND CONFLICT IN HEAVENLY PLACES

IN THE EPISTLE to the Ephesians considerable reference is made to the exalted sphere in which believers of the present Christian era are privileged to be blessed. Five times the expression “heavenly places” is used—Ch. i. 3, 20; ii. 6; iii. 10; and vi. 12 (R.V.). In each of these verses the New Translation rendering is “heavenlies”.

The early chapters of the book of Joshua record Israel’s conquest of their earthly inheritance in the land of Canaan, setting forth in type the entry of believers today into the enjoyment of the blessings spoken of in Eph. i.; these however, by contrast, being heavenly in character—see verses 3, 11, and 14: compare also I Peter i. 3-4.

That God has “blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ” is the apostle’s introduction to a lengthy, comprehensive catalogue of blessings associated with the Christian position. Every phrase contains truth of deep importance. God acts in blessing to the believer as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: what He does is for the honour and glory of His beloved Son; so that the language is positive,

as the recurrence of the words "hath" and "all" declares. But it is important to see that the blessings bestowed have little relation to what is material and temporal; rather are they spiritual and eternal, so that the believer will enter into fuller enjoyment of them at the coming of the Lord.

Furthermore, God's blessings are stated to be "in Christ". Hence one does not acquire them by reason of any earthly advantage such as nationality or parentage, nor in consequence of natural ability or human merit; they come to the believer as a result of his being "in Christ", i.e. under His headship.

Adoption into the family of God and acceptance in the Beloved are further marks of divine favour. "Redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins" proceeds from the same grace, in which grace the recipients are treated as friends and intimates, being taken into God's confidence respecting what He has in prospect for the glory of His Son. Verse 10 speaks of that prospect. Dispensations have come and gone, their purpose being fulfilled: when "the fulness of times" arrives, He will take His inheritance, and His joint-heirs will obtain their inheritance with, and under, Him.

The phrase "which are in heaven" refers to the heavenly side of the coming kingdom, but the inheritance includes the earth also, as the words "which are on earth" that follow, indicate.

O blessed hour! when all the earth
 Its rightful Heir shall yet receive;
 When every tongue shall own His worth
 And all creation cease to grieve.

(Sir E. Denny)

The heavens—the vast system of celestial bodies above us which have moved in unison since they were assigned their places,

For ever singing, as they shine
 The Hand that made us is divine.

(Addison)

—which ever declare the glory of God, may illustrate the great conception of the Divine Mind in verse 10. God has purposed the gathering together into one system of all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and on earth, even in Him; under

Him, and His rule. Of this system Christ will be the Centre and the Sun; everything about it will be designed to bring honour and glory to His name.

Though we are indebted to the revelation given to Paul for our knowledge of this marvellous prospect, a dim foreshadowing may be seen in Daniel vii. In the Authorised Version a marginal note to verses 18, 22 and 25 reads "Chald. high ones, i.e. things, or, places." It may apply also to verse 27. This rendering is adopted in the New Translation (J.N.D.), each of the four verses mentioned reading, "the saints of the most high (places);" its author believed this form of words to be the origin of the phrase used in Ephesians.

It would seem that being blessed with spiritual blessings in the heavenly (places) includes what the believer has, and may know and enjoy now, as well as the place he will have in that day of glory when the Son of Man receives His kingdom (Dan. vii. 13, 14). He is not of the world, nor ever will be; his being left here for a little while must be regarded as an incident in his history, as the wilderness was in that of Israel—see Psalm cxxxvi; noting verse 16.

In the latter part of the chapter the apostle prays that the wonderful ways of God of which he wrote might be understood, "that ye may know . . . what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe." Then he turns their eyes to a demonstration of that power, "which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places."

This power is to us-ward: probably the chief intent of the passage, seeing that the second chapter begins with the words "and you hath He quickened," is to teach us that the same power has been exerted on our behalf, i.e. within all believers. For the apostle is pursuing his much loved task of showing that Jewish and Gentile believers have been treated alike. With what skill he uses the word "together"! We are quickened together, raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

All this is true in a spiritual way, but the New Translation chapter ii, verse 7, reads "That He might display in the coming ages the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness towards us

in Christ Jesus." So our eyes are turned Godward to see that the power which wrought in Christ's resurrection has wrought already in giving us a place "in Christ"; and in the future will work again in setting saints actually "with Christ", where He is in heavenly glory, this being the display of the riches of God's grace.

The fourth occurrence of the words is in Chapter iii. 10, where the apostle is unfolding his greatest revelation, the mystery of Christ and the Church. He says that "the principalities and powers in heavenly places" know through the Church the manifold wisdom of God. They look down to see how He has displayed His wisdom in such a marvellous way.

The heavenly hosts may well have been dismayed to see how their fellow-beings (now fallen) incited men to crucify the Lord of Glory; but in His resurrection and ascension they saw God nullifying their awful deed. Then, by the preaching of the gospel, which is God's power unto salvation to every one that believeth, they saw that power active in the conversion of many Jews, and, later, of Gentiles. (They rejoice today over those who repent and believe the gospel.) They saw those people, formerly antagonistic to one another, seated together at the table of the Lord. Should not we also rejoice to see our dishonoured Lord now highly exalted, and His saints at peace here below?

Though heaven with Christ is our destined place, yet, like Israel entering Canaan, we find ourselves in conflict, in our case with wicked spirits in high or heavenly places (Ch. vi. 12, margin A.V.). Elect angels are friendly to us, whilst fallen ones are against us. We shall have the protection of the former, and the opposition of the latter until we reach our heavenly place in person.

For this conflict we have the armour of God complete. Note particularly "the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." The Lord Himself, in the temptation in the wilderness, met the wicked one and overcame him by the word of God: the devil's fiery darts fell ineffective to the ground. Using both shield and sword, our Lord repelled the enemy with His thrice-repeated "It is written," and that which sufficed for Him will enable those who follow Him to triumph.

P. WHITE.

“THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE ABOVE”

(Col. iii. 1)

THE QUESTION has been asked, what are those things which are above?—a very natural question, seeing that we are to seek them, and to set our affection (“mind”, margin) on them. And it is added, “Where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God.”

The dictionary defines “things” as “whatever is or may be an object of thought.” But the things which are above are undefinable, except to say they include everything told us in the word of God, the vast volume of revealed truth concerning Christ, Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him” (I Peter iii. 22).

Going back to our Lord’s life on earth, we are told in Luke xiv. that when He was here great multitudes followed Him, doubtless looking for the kingdom. He turned and said unto them, “If any man come to Me, and hate not his father, mother etc., he cannot be My disciple” (verses 25-7). He would have them disillusioned as to any earthly hopes, and to know that there was a cross to be borne if they were to be His disciples.

In Matthew xvi. He comes to the point where He “charged His disciples to tell no man that He was Jesus Christ,” and then “from that time forth began Jesus to show His disciples, how He must go unto Jerusalem (not to be crowned, but) to suffer many things of the elders, and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day” (verses 20, 21). So that His death and resurrection must precede the kingdom.

In the verses that follow, He indicates that this also must be the path of disciples, telling them of reward when the Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; telling them also, “There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom” (verse 28).

Following this we find a scene in the next chapter—the transfiguration—which Peter speaks of as “the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Peter i. 16). But that was not the finish. Mark tells us (and how blessed the end of the pathway on earth of God’s devoted Servant, after He had passed through all the untold sufferings of Calvary!) “so then after the

Lord had spoken unto them, He was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God" (Mark xvi. 19). This was in fulfilment of Psalm cx. 1. And further, Luke adds his testimony, "And He led them out as far as to Bethany, and He lifted up His hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while He blessed them, He was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. And they worshipped Him . . ." (Luke xxiv. 50-52).

This brings to one's mind the words:—

Jesus, what memories thrill our hearts
Of Thy blest footprints here,
While now to heaven our eyes we turn
And gaze upon Thee there!

Then ten days later the Holy Spirit came down to witness of that wonderful fact: "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear" (Acts ii. 33). Later we have the testimony of the martyr Stephen, who "being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God" (Acts vii. 55).

So the believer of today knows on the testimony of scripture that Christ is at the right hand of God, and is able to sing in the Spirit:

The heavens are opened now,
Sound it through earth abroad;
And we, by faith, in heaven behold
Jesus the Christ our Lord.

Then in the marvellous ways of God, not long after the death of Stephen, Saul of Tarsus was arrested on his course of bitter persecution of all those who bore the Name of Jesus. He himself tells us, when standing before Agrippa, of his conversion, and that the Lord Jesus had said to him, "I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee:" and Paul adds "I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision" (Acts xxvi. 16 and 19). How fully this was carried out is witnessed to in Paul's life of

devoted service to Christ, and in the vast body of truth contained in his writings, penned under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost.

Do you still ask what are those things which are above? Behold a risen Man at God's right hand, the Man of His counsels, "Who has created all things, and for Whose pleasure they are and were created" (Rev. iv. 11)! The Son is the appointed Heir of all things, the One "Who having made purification for sins, set Himself down on the right hand of the greatness on high" (Hebrews i. 3, New Tr.).

It was not possible, speaking reverently, for God to disclose His wonderful eternal purposes of grace until He had a risen Man at His own right hand, the Accomplisher of eternal redemption. Till then He could not make known the mystery concerning "the church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all" (Eph. i. 23). But now all is out, and we have received "the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God" (I Cor. ii. 12); to enlarge on this would mean an unfolding of all the Christian epistles.

To return to the scripture in question: surely those things which are above are in utter contrast to the earthly religion, the fleshly ordinances, the philosophy spoken of in the previous chapter. The Colossians were in danger of "not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God" (Col. ii. 19).

May the foregoing help the reader in seeking "those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God."

THOS. WILSON



STUDIES IN GALATIANS

XVII The Hope of Righteousness

(Read: Chap. v. 5-12)

THE APOSTLE concludes the whole matter with "We, through the Spirit, wait for the hope of righteousness by faith." It is not that we, through the Spirit, are waiting to be justified. We *have*

the righteousness, but not yet the hope of it. We have Christ Himself, but the hope of righteousness is the hope that righteousness in Christ entitles me to. It is the hope of the glory of God . . . that I shall be with Christ in the very same glory that He has.

For this the believer is waiting. And meanwhile he has the Spirit of God, not merely to work in his soul, but that we through Him should wait for the hope of righteousness. We have not that hope seen and possessed yet; and therefore it is entirely a question of faith. But the Spirit of God who dwells in us gives us to know that, possessing the righteousness, being already justified, we shall have a hope suited to that righteousness. As we have the righteousness of God, we shall have the glory of God. So that nothing can be more blessed than the position in which the believer is set here by the apostle.

“For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love.” Now he shows, just passingly, that there is a very great reality in the believer’s moral condition. It is not only that he has justification and a hope in character with it by and by; but the selfsame faith which makes him know that he is justified, and gives him also to be looking onward to the glory he is destined to, meanwhile works by love, not by law. To this he is going to bring us, the question of practical sanctification; and he shows that the believer has no need of going under the law; because, if his faith works by love, it accomplishes that which the law sought, but never effected or received.

This, then, is the principle on which the believer stands—he is already justified; he is waiting for the glory; and meanwhile there is faith that worketh by love. Therefore it is no question of circumcision. We are Christians; and the whole basis of the law, therefore, and of these questions, is gone.

“Ye did run well. Who did hinder you, that ye should not obey the truth? This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you.” He reproaches them with having listened to these false teachers, who had pressed circumcision. “A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.” Is it not solemn to find that the very word “leaven” which is used in I Corinthians to describe frightful moral corruption, in Galatians characterises the introduction of

the legal system among the children of God? God treats it as a most offensive thing.

Having brought out the character of the error, he says, "I have confidence in you through the Lord that ye will be none otherwise minded." He could not say that about all of them: he says it in a general way; and adds, "But he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be." He wants to separate them and give a sense of horror about those who had misled them. "Faith which worketh by love" does not hesitate to use strong language about the corrupters of the Church of God—denounces them most earnestly, and as a duty to God and man. "I would they were even cut off which trouble you." He that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, *whosoever he be.*" There were several engaged in that bad work.

"And I, brethren, if I preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution?" These men had made the Apostle Paul to be a sort of evidence in their favour. They may have taken advantage of his circumcising Timothy, in order to make a show of inconsistency between his acts and his preaching. But St. Paul was not acting contrary to these principles when he circumcised Timothy. It was the elasticity of a man who could stop the mouths of objectors; and Paul, to silence Jewish slander, ended that question most unjewishly—by having Timothy circumcised. But he would not suffer it in the case of Titus, (who was a Greek), whom he took up to Jerusalem with himself. This might appear capricious, but grace knows the time to be firm as well as to bend. There seems here to be an allusion to this, in his argument with the defenders of the law. It requires the wisdom of the Spirit of God giving one to know where one may use our liberty, or where it is a duty to stand as firm as a rock; and Paul did both. If Timothy had been circumcised, it was grace stopping mere fleshly questions, and not law, for his father was a Greek. But as to preaching it, such a thing was far from his mind. Had he ever pressed circumcision, he would have had their favour and countenance in every place that he visited. On the contrary, he was persecuted because he would not allow the flesh nor the title of circumcision.

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Words of Help

from the Scripture of Truth

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WORDS OF HELP

A Monthly Magazine for Believers

EDITORIAL

ANY COUNSEL OFFERED to enable those who read the Bible to do so with greater profit is worth considering, and we are glad to be in a position to publish, this month and next, two articles on the Reading and Use of Scripture.

Inasmuch as the author's theme is the example set by the Lord Himself in this matter, little needs to be added except to impress upon all our readers the importance of that feature of His life to which attention is drawn. In this, as in every other grace, the believer should seek to follow in the footprints of his Master.

It is felt that these articles should be of particular value to younger folk, bearing in mind how much may be lost by slipping into the habit of racy, and merely superficial reading of the "daily portion." The satisfying "manna" of old came with the dew (Exodus xvi. 13, 14), and for dew to settle there must be stillness and adequate time. Those with experience will bear ready testimony to the fruitfulness of quiet and unhurried meditation in the book of God, for at such times the Holy Spirit is given the opportunity to take of the things of Christ and show them to us (John xvi. 13, 14).

We appeal to all who work amongst younger believers to bring these articles to their notice, and to press upon them the need for careful and thoughtful reading.

"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: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success."

God's word to Joshua—Chapter i. 8.

THE READING AND USE OF SCRIPTURE:

Our Lord's Example

TO EVERY BELIEVER the example of the Master must be of paramount importance, and the extensive use of the Old Testament scriptures by the Lord Jesus is full of instruction for us all. Let us consider first how

HE USED THE SCRIPTURES WHEN TEMPTED BY SATAN

“If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread” said the tempter. In reply the Lord was content to quote from the scriptures, with the simple preface “It is written.” “It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” (Deut. viii. 3).

Thus did He refuse to take the ground of special privilege, as One whose personal glory was to spare Him from trial or suffering. Rather, having accepted the position of man, in all things made like unto His brethren, He simply acted, as man ought always to have acted, in response to the will of God. Well He knew the love of His Father, who in due time would send His angels to minister to His need (Matt. iv. 11). No doubt also He had a special awareness of the will of God which we can never match, but the lesson for us is that He found in the scripture that expression of the truth which was exactly fitted to answer the Adversary.

The second temptation shows the readiness of Satan to adapt his wiles to the occasion. He implied that in throwing Himself from the pinnacle of the Temple Jesus would be demonstrating His reliance upon a scriptural promise! What a valuable lesson there is in the Lord's reply, again with a scripture: “It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God” (Deut. vi. 16).

For when the crowd at Nazareth sought to cast Him down from the brow of the hill, doubtless the angels were there to restrain their violence, even as in Gethsemane He knew He

could have called for them. But to cast *Himself* down, in order to test the validity of the promise, would have been to show unbelief, not trust.

In the path of obedience then, we may gather immense comfort from the promises of scripture; but we do need to look to the word of God to test ourselves and our ways: "Through Thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way" (Psalm cxix. 104). Thus did the Lord correct Satan's misuse of one scripture, by quoting another. We may well challenge ourselves as to whether we know the Bible well enough to be able to do this!

A very important principle is involved: we must never set one scripture *against* another, as each is the word of God. If our interpretation should lead to such a result, we may be sure we have got something wrong! While each scripture must be allowed to have its full force, it will, when correctly understood, be in conformity with all others.

Another thing: how do we use the promises of the Bible? Do we draw them at random from a "promise-box," or do we read them in the word in the context God has placed them in, and so use them with spiritual intelligence?

In the third temptation Satan again shifts his ground. It is no longer "If thou be the Son of God," but speaking to Jesus as to a man, he offers Him the world and its glory for one act of homage. Let us note the manner in which the Lord deals with this temptation. True, He answers as before with a single scripture, sufficient in itself to repel the temptation. But now Satan appears in his true colours—he is God's adversary, and as such the Lord decisively dismisses him: "Get thee hence Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve."

How encouraging it should be to us to see how, from this one book of Deuteronomy, the Lord found the answer to each of these varied temptations!

Now let us see how, in controversy with scribes and lawyers, Pharisees and Sadducees—

HE USED THE SCRIPTURES TO CONFUTE HIS ADVERSARIES

Well may we admire the wisdom with which our Lord drew from the most unexpected parts of the Old Testament the needed word, not only to confute His opponents, but to instruct the listening disciples or crowds!

See Him in the cornfield on the Sabbath day, when the Pharisees found fault with the "labour" of the disciples in plucking and rubbing the ears of corn to meet their hunger! Instead of arguing with these men who strained out gnats, while swallowing camels, He reminded them of David, God's anointed king, yet fleeing and in peril, who ate the sacred shewbread when he also was in need. The Lord Jesus reproved them for not understanding the application of this scripture, but we may well feel that we too would have passed it over but for His pointing it out. For of what value, in God's sight, was the ordinance that confined the use of the shewbread to the priests, when His anointed king, the man after His own heart, was hunted like a partridge on the mountains? Thus, in order to draw the utmost profit from our reading of the Bible, we need to see the connection of it all with Christ. To read of the experiences of David is interesting, and profitable; but to see in Him a type of Christ the rejected and persecuted King of Israel is far more profitable.

Again, when the Sadducees sought to dispute the truth of resurrection, He rebuked their failure to pay sufficient heed to the words addressed to Moses from the burning bush "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." To a casual reader "I am the God of Abraham" meant "I am the God whom Abraham worshipped and served."

Are we casual readers, content to gather the most superficial impressions from what we profess to be a divine revelation? Nay, let us endeavour to read as He must have read, for He has given us His Spirit to understand the things which are freely given to us of God. Let us ponder diligently the import of each word and each phrase.

“The God of Abraham” means at least then, a living God of a living man; a God who had made promises which He would surely fulfil; a God who loved and cared for a man who trusted His word. Impossible for Abraham to have perished, as the Sadducees thought, if such a God were his God! And note the words “I am,” implying unchangeableness. What He had been to Abraham on earth, that He still was. He is not a God of the dead, but of the living, for to Him all live (Matt. xxii, 31,32; Luke xx. 37, 38). And if Abraham still lived, God would infallibly raise him to incorruptibility in due time, to receive the fulfilment of every promise.

The very way in which the Lord spoke to His adversaries showed that He looked for a familiarity with the scriptures which He did not find in them. “Have ye never read?” He said repeatedly. And again “But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless.”

For it is not just familiarity with the words of scripture that is needful, but that our ways and thoughts should be so moulded by it that its wisdom comes readily to mind wherever it is needed. “Let the word of Christ *dwell in you richly*” (Col. iii. 16).

E. H. CHAMBERLAIN

(To be continued, D.V.)



THE EARTHEN VESSEL

SINCE GOD gave His word in the first place to dwellers in the East, He was pleased to use figures familiar to Orientals. Of these, surely, one of the most expressive is that of the earthen vessel. Formed out of clay, with its strange blending of toughness and fragility, what a striking type it is of the human body in its present condition—preserved, it may be (as with many in the early chapters of Genesis) for centuries of existence on earth; or, conversely, brought to a sudden end in infancy or childhood.

Some passages of scripture containing this figure seem particularly instructive.

In Leviticus xiv., the earthen vessel is actually used to set forth the stupendous fact of the Word becoming flesh. Whereas earlier chapters foreshadow typically the one offering of Christ, the law of the leper is unique in that it gives us also (in an acted parable, so to speak) the companion truths of the incarnation and the resurrection. There is no instance of the use of the ceremonial in Old Testament times—the only recorded cure of leprosy is that of a Gentile—but God has preserved for us the details of this beautiful and significant ritual. From verse 8 onwards, offerings are specified which the cleansed leper had himself to provide; they were the things *he* was responsible to do. But the preceding seven verses describe that which was provided *for* him, things with which the man had nothing whatever to do, thus presenting a lovely picture of the way God has manifested His sovereign grace in Christ.

The birds prescribed here are not identical with those specified in the opening chapters of Leviticus for cases of poverty. These were sparrows, or at least, if meant in a more generic sense, small clean birds. Can we not see a dual type in this? On the one hand, a being not of earth—come down from heaven; on the other, a bird so lightly esteemed *by man* that (if we compare Matthew with Luke) when four were purchased, the merchant it seems would usually throw in a fifth for nothing. How vividly the two thoughts are brought together in Isaiah 1., where the very One who controls the vast universe is seen submitting to the utmost contumely at the hand of His fallen creatures!

In the words of another: "The bird, then, represents the Lord as a heavenly Being, acquiring capacity to suffer and die in that manhood which He had taken, and which is symbolized by the earthen vessel; the living water here as ever type of that Eternal Spirit through whom He offered Himself without spot to God. It is striking that the figure does not, as we might at first imagine it would, represent the breaking of the vessel, while the bird itself escapes unhurt, but on the contrary the death of the bird itself; and Scripture is always and divinely perfect: such apparent slips are not in fact blemishes, not even the necessary failure of all possible figures, but things that call for the deepest and most reverential observation.

“For it is *one* blessed Person, in whom Godhead and manhood unite forever, who has been among us, learned obedience in the path which He has marked out for us through the world, suffered the due of our sins, and gone out from us by the gate of death, risen and returned to the Father. We lose ourselves easily in this depth of glory and abasement, where the abasement too is glory; but no Christian can give up the blessed truth because of his ignorance of explanation. Here it is not needful to explain, to accept the lesson: He who came upon earth to do the Father’s will has taken as the means of His doing it that ‘prepared body’ which was the instrument by which *He* accomplished it. Thus, rightly, according to the figure, the bird of heaven it is that dies in the earthen vessel. This stooping is the unparalleled marvel and power of the weakness in which He was crucified. We must not take the glory that was His to deny or lessen that weakness, but accept it as adding to it the wonder of such humiliation. How beautifully is this preserved in that 102nd Psalm, in which, if any where, we have just this type!” (Incidentally it is in this very psalm that we find Messiah comparing Himself, in His loneliness, to a sparrow upon the housetop) . . .

“If He go down into death, then, He must needs show Himself master of it. Resurrection must vindicate Him as the Lord of all: ‘Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.’ Accordingly in the type before us it is of resurrection that the second bird speaks. Let loose into the open field, he carries back to the heavens to which he belongs the blood which is the witness of accomplished redemption. The second bird represents the unextinguished, unextinguishable life of the first which has come through death, taking it captive, and making it subservient to the purposes of divine goodness, which, by the blood shed in atonement, cleanses us from the defilement of spiritual leprosy.”

As in Numbers xix., the cedar, scarlet and hyssop are here connected with death. If they represent nature in its widest scope and its most glorious forms, the truth of new creation is implied by the setting aside of that which preceded it.

In the book of Jeremiah the figure of the earthen vessel is used in various ways. What a remarkable chosen vessel the prophet of Anathoth himself was! Diffident, sensitive, and (like Moses, Thomas and Timothy) with a strong vein of pessimism in his temperament, he was yet enabled by divine power to testify for about forty years to a generation which in its cynicism, arrogance and self-sufficiency, seems ominously similar to present day Christendom.

On one occasion (chapter xviii.) he is sent to watch the potter at work on the clay: Jehovah uses this simile to affirm His sovereignty and exhort the people to repentance. Again, in the next chapter, he is to purchase an earthen vessel, take it to the valley of Hinnom, and smash it in the sight of civil and religious leaders of Jerusalem, as a solemn prefiguration of the guilty city's approaching doom.

In chapter xxii. we find the symbol in connection with king Jehoiakim (verse 28 should read, apparently, "vessel" rather than "idol").

But the happiest and most interesting use of the figure is in chapter xxxii. Jeremiah had been persecuted by his fellow-citizens of Anathoth. However, during a temporary withdrawal of the besieging Chaldean army, he attempted to return thither, but was arrested as a suspected deserter. And now, halfway through the final siege, while he is a prisoner, but allowed a certain amount of liberty, his cousin Hanameel comes into the court of the prison and offers to sell him his field.

What is Hanameel's motive? Is it that, with food prices rocketing, he is anxious to obtain ready cash, and seeks to get rid of land now out of reach and useless to him? And interpreting his cousin's faithfulness as quixotic "other-worldliness," he seizes on him as the one man silly enough to fall in with his suggestion? Be that as it may, the prophet is divinely advised to carry the purchase through, and what may look like a solemn farce to all present is duly completed.

When the transaction is over, Jeremiah prays to the Lord, but after brave opening words his faith seems to fail as he is overwhelmed by the apparent hopelessness of the situation.

Jehovah's wonderful answer takes the prophet at his word, reiterates the promise of restoration, and in a fresh message (chapter xxxiii.) announces the coming of Messiah.

What is so striking in the acted parable of chapter xxxii. is the way the earthen vessel is now connected with blessing rather than with judgment. The duplicated title-deeds (one sealed, the other unsealed) are placed in a jar for the rest of the captivity. Clay vessels were often used to contain treasure (cf. 2 Cor. iv. 7). We are not told where this one was placed, nor whether it was found by the remnant that returned with Zerubbabel. But as a token of hope, a pledge of future blessing, the title-deeds that were kept therein had both a private and a public character.

Is there not that which answers morally to this in the present condition of those that are Christ's? Even as one evidence was sealed, so the Holy Spirit's witness to the soul is, from one aspect, intensely personal and individual. Long before the present dispensation, the wise man realised that "the heart knoweth his own bitterness; a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy." How much more now that the revelations are transcendently beyond the capacity of the natural man! The reward to the overcomer in Pergamos (Rev. ii.) was a secret between his soul and Christ. And in a more general sense much of what is enjoyed is private and incommunicable—particularly so, perhaps, in these last days when the outward testimony is in ruins.

Nevertheless one title-deed was open. In like manner Christianity has a permanently public character. Paul tells the Corinthians (2 Cor. iii.) they are his epistle and Christ's, known and read of all men: a testimony to the unbelieving pagan and Jewish world. However difficult collective witness may be in these days, it is still called for, seeing there is "one body and one Spirit." As regards individual testimony, weak and painful as it may be, the child of God should feel encouraged by the thought that, whatever the immediate apparent result, the ultimate prospect for him is immeasurably more blessed and glorious than that which was revealed to Jeremiah, whether the "little reviving" of Ezra and Nehemiah, or even the millennial restitution of all things implicit in the New Covenant, is in

view. The Holy Spirit is indeed the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession—to the praise of God's glory.

A. C. MCCANN



STUDIES IN GALATIANS

XVIII. Walking in the Spirit

(Read: Chap. v. 13-26)

AT THIS NATURAL DIVISION the Spirit of God recurs to the thought of liberty with which He had opened the chapter. It is put forward in a twofold point of view. Liberty as a question of justification we had in the early part; liberty now we have as that which leads into, and ought always to be connected with, practical holiness. For we must remember that this is the subject-matter of the remainder of the chapter.

The apostle insists upon liberty. We might suppose that he had said enough about it, after having charged them to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free, and not to be entangled again with the yoke of bondage. But no. In the domain of holiness this liberty is needed, just as much as for justification; and therefore says he, "Brethren, ye have been called unto liberty." That is, it characterizes our calling.

Only, says he, it is not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, or you are not to use licence: do not turn this liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. In verse 6 the apostle showed that there is a faith that works by love; so now he shows that the object of that love should be the helping of one another. It is not for the purpose of putting you under the law, but that you may serve one another; "for all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

But the Galatians had been talking about the law as a means of walking well: what sort of holiness had they been producing? Biting and devouring one another! This is not love. But it was

the effect of their use of the law they boasted of. "But if you bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another." Such is the result. The law is a killing, destroying power; not because of *its* being bad, but because our nature is. And remember that the law bears upon our nature. The law was given not to the new man, but to the old.

Now, going farther, he gives them a positive word. "This I say then, walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh." There we have the divine guard; nay, more than that, it is not merely admonition against this or that evil, but what will give us power for what is good. "Walk in the Spirit." The Holy Ghost has been sent down to dwell in the believer. It is not the truth of our being builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit, as in Ephesians, where we have also the body of Christ brought out, the corporate relations of the children of God. The Epistle to the Galatians never gives us what is corporate, but always what is individual. And the walk being an individual thing, or what concerns each soul, if there were not another in the world, this is what you want. The word is, "Walk in the Spirit;" he does not say, Walk in the law. On the contrary, he had dealt sharply with the men who were so zealous for that rule. "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh." You want power against the lusts of the flesh: the Spirit is that power, and there is no other.

"For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other, *in order that ye may not do* the things that ye would." This, I believe, is what the Holy Ghost wrote and meant. The very point of the verse is this. He was showing them why they were called upon to walk in the Spirit; and what was the true preservative against the lusts of the flesh. For the two are totally opposed: they are contrary to one another in every way. It is not said, You have got the law that you may not fulfil the lusts of the flesh; but, having a nature that will always be prone to do its own will, you have not the law merely to restrain it, but the Holy Ghost is given; not like the law, a thing outside one; but the Holy Ghost is an inward power, identifying Himself with the affections of the soul, and giving strength to desires after what is

good, and against natural lusts, or any way in which the flesh may show itself.

The Spirit of truth is the power of holiness. The Spirit of God it is which enables a Christian man to walk aright, not the law. That is the point the apostle brings them to: and so he concludes the matter, "If ye be led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law." It is plain that if to be under the law were the means of Christian holiness, it would have been said, "If ye be led by the Spirit, ye *are* under the law," rather than, "ye are *not* under the law."

After this the apostle draws out the contrast of the works of the flesh and the fruits of the Spirit. "Now the works of the flesh are manifest"—then follows a list of these. Thus you have human corruption and human violence. You have idolatry and witchcraft brought in, and on the other hand, seditions and heresies, which refer to the party-spirit that might be at work even under a Christian profession. A child of God might slip into any of these evil things for a time; but there is a solemn sentence pronounced upon them—"Of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in times past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

Then we have, on the other side, "the fruit of the Spirit is love." He begins with love—that which is of God, and flows directly from God, and which is the knowledge of God's character more than any other thing. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith." Such are the first and weightiest effects produced by God's love. Then he gets down to what would more particularly deal with one another: "meekness, temperance," because these suppose the bridle put upon the evil nature—the self-control which the Holy Ghost works in the soul for the Lord's sake, as evidently being set in this world to be an epistle of Christ, so that we should not give a false character to Him whose name we bear. But all these are the fruits of *the Spirit*; and he adds, "against such there is no law." When did law ever produce these? So the law will never condemn those who walk in these things; as he says to the Roman saints, chapter xiii., speaking of governors and rulers, "Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same; for he is the minister of God to thee for good."

So here, "against such there is no law." If you are producing these fruits of the Spirit, there is no condemnation against them.

Is the old nature then forgotten? Or is the law needed for disciplining it? Unbelief so thinks; but the word says, on the contrary, "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." He shows that all that are Christ's have gone through the great question of what was not His: they have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. They have submitted, by faith, to the sentence of death on all their nature—they *have* "crucified the flesh." We know, of course, that it is only really and fully done in Christ—that it is in the cross of Christ that the crucifixion of the flesh, with all its lusts, has taken place. Hence, too, it is true of every believer. The flesh, with the affections and lusts, is a thing already done with in God's sight. If we are Christians at all, we *have* crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts. If it were only a person just born of God, he might say he has "crucified the flesh, with its affections and lusts."

But it may be asked, Have not I the flesh to crucify? I answer, it is done already: you have to believe it, and to walk in the strength that faith gives you. What a comfort to know that the flesh is a judged thing—that sentence of death has been executed on it! What will strengthen more than, that you are not alive in the flesh now, but living in the Spirit? And "if we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit." Let this be the standard by which you desire to be directed—that you have the Holy Ghost dwelling in you, and willing to strengthen you in Christ. Let your aim be to walk in that line of things.

Verse 26 exhorts them to beware of vain-glory, whatever form it might take, whether of provoking, or of envying one another.

Adapted from *Lectures on the Galatians*, by W. KELLY.



THE FOUR FISHERMEN

(Note on Mark i. 16-20)

THE DETAILS of this historical incident, fraught with such far-reaching consequences to the disciples personally and to multitudes of millions through them, are of the scantiest, though, having regard to its important nature, we might have expected an exuberance. By the call of Jesus these men were elevated out of that nameless obscurity in which Galilaean peasantry were wont to live and die. This call involved, not indeed that their names are written in the Lamb's book of life, though this be true (but not truer of them than of every redeemed one), but that their names are recorded in the inspired and imperishable archives of the church on earth, of which church they, with other apostles and prophets, formed the foundation, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone (Eph. ii. 19, 20).

Possessing, as we do, the light of subsequent history upon this event, we can consider the high destiny of these humble men. Founders of world-empires there have been; great as the world counts greatness. But where are Egypt, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, and their founders? The names of Simon and Andrew, of James and John, however, are hewn in the rock-foundations of that church against which the very gates of hades shall not prevail. Nay, when earth-kingdoms shall *all* have perished, and Messiah reigns gloriously, then shall these righteous ones shine forth in the kingdom of their Father. When the holy city Jerusalem descends from heaven to be the seat of government of the kingdom of heaven, manifested in all the glories of fulfilled prophecies, earth shall read the Galilaean names again. In the dazzling vision of the prophet of Patmos, where all is glory and perfection and brilliance, amid the blazonry of heaven itself, brought down for terrestrial view, we can see twelve names only (Rev. xxi. 14), and they include these four, once scored, as proof of ownership, on a couple of fishing cobbles on the Galilaean lake. This is a marvellous record, and where shall we match it?

(From *The Bible Treasury*, January 1910)

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Words of Help

from the Scripture of Truth

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WORDS OF HELP

A Monthly Magazine for Believers

AUTHORITY and POWER

(Note on Mark i. 27)

“WITH AUTHORITY He commandeth even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him.” What was it for Him to speak with authority? Does this mean that when He spoke His words were followed by an immediate and irresistible effect in the conviction of the minds and hearts of the auditors, or in compelling the obedience of the unclean demon present? Or does it mean that when He spoke it was evident to His hearers that He had an adequate commission as the Servant of Jehovah to declare the good tidings that He did? The latter, assuredly, is the meaning most in consonance with the scheme of this Gospel, and also with the general usage of the original word (*exousia*) rightly translated “authority.”

This word implies the possession of the right or title to act, and not only the capacity or competency to do so, the latter being expressed by the word often translated “power” (*dunamis*). Moses might be said to have zeal and competency when he first set about redressing his people’s wrongs in Egypt; but when his authority was challenged, “Who made thee a prince and a judge over us?” he fled ignominiously. Later, however, Jehovah said to him, “Come now and I will send thee unto Pharaoh that thou mayest bring my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt.” He then went as a divinely accredited emissary. It is so that Jesus is presented in Mark. He had an indisputable right to speak.

It is not implied that His word in any sense lacked power. On the contrary, in Luke we have, in connection with this very incident, both words used; “with authority (*exousia*) and power (*dunamis*) He commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out” (Luke iv. 36). As a Servant, He was heaven’s Plenipotentiary in the fullest sense of the word.

W. J. HOCKING

THE READING AND USE OF SCRIPTURE:

Our Lord's Example

(Continued from last month)

IN CONTINUING our study of the attitude of our Lord to the Old Testament scriptures, let us next remark how

He Drew Attention to their Fulfilment in Himself

Both in His public teaching and in controversy with His adversaries, and also in private with the disciples, did the Lord Jesus point out the fulfilment of the scriptures. Sometimes he made explicit statements, such as that in the synagogue at Nazareth, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears," declaring Himself to be the Anointed One (that is, the Christ) the bringer of good tidings (Isaiah lxi. 1, 2). To Nicodemus He referred to the serpent lifted up in the wilderness as a type of His own coming crucifixion; less explicitly, but still plainly, to the people at the lakeside He declared Himself to be the true manna, the eating of which should give eternal life (John vi. 50, 51).

His enemies could have been in no doubt, either, that He applied the words of Psalm cxviii. to Himself when He said, "Have ye never read, The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner?" For they had already recognised themselves as the wicked husbandmen in the parable of the vineyard, and hence would readily identify the builders as themselves also. And when He closed His public ministry, going out from the Temple with the words "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, ye shall not see Me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord," it was clear again that He was applying the words of the same Psalm to Himself, even if they did not grasp the reference to the Glory departing from the Temple, as in Ezekiel's vision.

When John the Baptist, having heard in prison the works of Christ, sent his disciples to ask "Art thou He that should come, or look we for another?" the Lord sent the men back to tell John yet more of the things they had heard and seen: "The

blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them." For these were the very happenings which the prophets had foretold should take place when the kingdom of Christ should come: "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing"; and "He will swallow up death in victory"; and "He healeth all thy diseases" (Isaiah xxxv. 5, 6; xxv. 8; Psalm ciii.). The preaching of the good news to the poor we have already seen in Isaiah lxi. 1. Though the kingdom had not yet come, though both John and his Master were rejected by Israel, yet this was a message calculated to assure John that the true Messiah had in fact come.

When the time came for Him to be offered up we find the Lord Jesus repeatedly impressing on His disciples that the scriptures were in process of being fulfilled. "This is My blood of the New Covenant which is shed for many for the remission of sins," He said as He handed the cup to them at His last supper. Their minds would at once have recalled Jeremiah's well-known words (Jer. xxxi. 31-34). Again with a reference to Psalm xli. He warned them of the presence of the traitor. Finally, in Gethsemane He reminded Peter that He must suffer, else how could the scriptures be fulfilled?

So also when risen from the dead He said to the disciples "These are the words that I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning Me."

He often Made their Language His Own

It is perhaps in connection with His sufferings on the cross that we may see most clearly how the scriptures, especially the Psalms, foreshadowed His own thoughts and feelings. As Peter tells us, the Spirit of Christ which was in the prophets, testified His sufferings beforehand (I Peter i. 11). So true is this, that, of the seven utterances of the crucified Saviour, in three He used the exact words of the Psalms, and a fourth (the words

“I thirst”) was made in the consciousness that only *one* scripture telling of His sufferings remained unfulfilled. The three utterances referred to are “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” which forms the introduction of Psalm xxii; the cry “It is finished,” which in the Septuagint is the last word of the same Psalm; and “Into Thine hands I commit My spirit.” These were the words He gave utterance to; but do we not feel, as we ponder so many passages in the Psalms, what a suitable vehicle they must have been for the thoughts of the Saviour? Yet it is also well to say here that, as they are on the whole the record of the experiences of godly men, and failing men (though the record be inspired), not all the words they contain are suited to the Holy One of God.

He Always Upheld the Authority of the Scriptures

All that has been said already in this article might be comprehended under this heading, but there are a number of special points which deserve consideration.

His teaching from the first attracted attention because, they said, He spoke as one having authority, and not as the scribes. But did His authoritative teaching ever undermine the authority of the scriptures—of the Law, or the Prophets? On the contrary He taught emphatically that He had come, not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil it. Not only in His perfect life, but even, in measure, in the lives of those who are His, the law of God receives a fulfilment which it never had in those who were under it. And when the Lord took up some of the ten commandments in detail, He brought out their full moral depth to a degree which none before had seen. Thus He showed, in regard to the sixth commandment, that to treat another with contempt is of the same nature as the destruction of his life (Matt. v. 21-22).

On the question of divorce His enemies tried to prove that His teaching was at variance with that of Moses. The Lord showed that they had overlooked the force of God’s original institution that a man and his wife were “one flesh,” and had paid attention only to the later instruction (Deut. xxiv. 1) which was merely permissive, and consequent upon their low moral state (Mark x. 2-9). We do well to give heed to this

demonstration of the authority of these early chapters of the Bible, so often slighted today.

Again, when His disciples were criticised by the Scribes and Pharisees for ignoring the "tradition of the elders," the Lord reminded them that this tradition, which was in no way part of the scriptures, was in fact *contrary* to scriptural teaching, and He quoted one instance of this. They held that a man, because of a substantial gift for the maintenance of the temple, was released from the obligation to do anything for his parents' support, thus nullifying the fifth commandment (Matt. xv. 1-9). When we remember how many practices of Christian churches are based on tradition and not scripture, what a warning this passage conveys to us!

When we survey the extent to which our Lord made use of the scriptures in His life and teaching, we are left with a most impressive sense of the abiding value and unquestioned authority of the sacred oracles. How widely our survey has ranged in this brief article! Every portion of the Old Testament—the Law, the Historical books, the Poetical books, the Minor Prophets, the Major Prophets—has attracted our attention. Our Lord gave no hint that some scriptures were more authoritative than others—for Him the voice of God was heard in them all. Nor did He countenance the modern notion that the actual words were of no account. "It is written" sufficed to answer the Tempter; and "the scripture cannot be broken" was His comment on the use of the term "gods" in one passage in a Psalm (John x. 34, 35; Psalm lxxxii. 6). Let us who must needs rely on translations of the Bible get the best help we can from the labours of godly men; and let those who undertake to translate the holy scriptures remember that they must give an account of the way they have fulfilled their tremendous responsibility!

Meanwhile let us thank God for His word, and humbly seek to follow the example of our Master in its use. Can we value the scriptures more highly than He did? Ought we not, as He did, to test all things by them? Shall we not seek to know more and more of the revelation of Himself in them? Let us diligently seek by the help of God's Spirit to know them, and so to absorb

their teaching that they may shape the very fabric of our thinking; while, by testing our own hearts and ways by them continually, we may be enabled to walk more worthily of Him whose Name we bear.

E. H. CHAMBERLAIN.



PSALM THREE

THIS PSALM was written by David on the occasion of his flight from Jerusalem after his son Absalom had rebelled against him and gone to Hebron to be proclaimed king.

Some years previously, Absalom had forfeited his life for the murder of his brother Amnon. David however spared him the full penalty he deserved, and at the end of three years' exile in Geshur, following the mediation of Joab, allowed him to return to Jerusalem, where he dwelt for two further years before being fully reconciled to his father. Instead of being grateful to the king for his clemency however, Absalom coveted the kingdom, and plotted to alienate the loyalty of the people to his father by personal charm and plausible speeches. This was a poor recompense for the mercy and kindness David had shown him; a base return of evil for good!

David wrote the psalm, then, at a moment of bitter disillusion—one of danger also, and of uncertainty as to the future. For Absalom had laid his plans well. Ahitophel, David's personal counsellor, had been won over, and was amongst the conspirators. The people increased continually with him, and the messengers that came to David brought the ominous tidings that "the hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom." There was therefore no other course but to flee, and David "went forth and all his household after him." For all he knew he was leaving his beloved Jerusalem for the last time. Who could say? "And David went up by the ascent of Mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot: and all the people that was with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up" (2 Samuel xv. 30). What a moving spectacle! How humiliating for God's anointed king!

This was therefore a moment of great distress. True, it was no new experience for David to be confronted with foes. He had been a warrior all his life, and was still a mighty man with a valiant bodyguard. But here was a carefully planned rebellion, and, humanly speaking, the issue was in grave doubt. Nevertheless, as in other emergencies of his stormy career, David's recourse was to God, and this psalm discloses some of the thoughts that engaged his mind. From it we may draw lessons for our strengthening and guidance, and also find foreshadowings of Him whom God raised of David's seed to be a Saviour, our Lord Jesus Christ. "Consider Him," the Scripture says.

The psalm may be divided into three paragraphs:—

VERSES 1-3: in which David describes the three stages of his distress, and the answer he finds in God Himself;

VERSES 4-6: in which he declares his confidence in God, and the comfort which that brings him;

VERSES 7-8: his triumph in God's salvation.

"Lord, how are they increased that trouble me!" that was the first thing. For a long time there had been those around him who caused David anxiety. He was conscious of an undercurrent of disloyalty amongst those who affected to serve his cause. Those of whom he stood in doubt grew in number, yet he could put his finger on nothing sufficiently definite to give him ground for open challenge. Their enmity was something he could sense rather than define: their opposition was furtive, their plotting secret. Many "troubled" him, and the number who did so increased. How trying and wearing this must have been!

Most of us in the course of life have some experience of what it is to suspect the loyalty of those who make pretence of being our friends, without being able to establish disloyalty as a fact. Perhaps in such circumstances we found relief in the thought that we might after all be mistaken; that events might prove our suspicions to be without foundation.

Our Lord passed through all this, except that He experienced the bitterness of *knowing* that one of His intimate companions would betray Him; that another would deny with oaths and curses that he knew Him; and that the whole band of His

disciples would forsake Him in the hour of His direst need. All that was *known* to Him *beforehand*. There was no solace for *Him* in the thought that events might turn out better than expected.

The second stage of David's trouble appears when he has to say "Many are they that rise up against me." No longer are his enemies in hiding; they have come out into the open; they are risen up against him in positive and manifest opposition. The time has now come when each of those around him will have to declare on whose side he is, and David will discover who is really for, and who against him.

Does this find no parallel in life today? when opponents who have nourished their secret animosity break out into open hostility, and a man finds himself wondering which amongst his so-called "friends" will remain true to him?

Without doubt this had its counterpart in the life of our Lord. The time arrived when His enemies came forth from their lurking-places to perform those evil deeds which culminated in His crucifixion. That storm of enmity, the first rumblings of which had been heard soon after His birth, when King Herod sought to destroy the Infant of Bethlehem, that tempest of causeless hatred which gathered force throughout the years of His public ministry, broke at last in all its fury over His lonely head. How truly, and in what deep distress of soul, He could say "Many are they that rise up against Me."

But there was a third stage—"Many there be which say of my soul, There is no help for him in God." What bitter experience is this, when those who knew only too well where David placed his trust began to taunt him with the suggestion that now, at length, he will find his confidence misplaced! Ill-wishers might recall the sad mistakes of David's life, asserting that a man who had sunk to the depths he had could scarcely expect God to come to his aid in time of trouble. Critics of his administration of the kingdom would doubtless contend that David had only himself to blame for a situation resulting from his own weak handling of Absalom.

When we find ourselves beset with troubles, considerations of

personal failure may come upon us with overwhelming power. Indeed, Satan himself will use them in his endeavour to weaken and destroy the believer's hold upon God. At such times the soul needs the reassurance of the unchanging God's unfailing grace.

With our Lord, there could of course be nothing of this kind, for His life had been perfect. Yet, who that reads the story of the crucifixion can fail to discern an echo of the second verse of the psalm when "the chief priests mocking Him, with the scribes and elders, said He saved others; Himself He cannot save . . . He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now, *if* He will have Him" (Matthew xxvii. 42, 43). Oh the anguish of that "if!"

No trial can be sorer than this—when the enemies of one who professes faith in God exclaim "There is no help for him in God." The believer knows this is not true, but it is hard nevertheless to wait patiently for the moment of vindication. How lonely the soul feels at such a time!

Did David feel that God had forsaken him? Listen to his threefold response to the challenge of his adversity: "But Thou, O Lord, art a shield for me"—that answered the threat to his personal safety: "My glory"—a complete antidote to the humiliation of being chased from his own home by his own son: "and the lifter up of my head"—calm and confident assurance that his affairs were in the hands of One who would restore his throne to him in His own good time. Happy indeed is the man who can thus rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him!

The lesson in this for ourselves lies on the surface, and needs no explanation. The scriptures contain examples enough of those who trusted in God and were delivered. Moreover, the believer today enjoys the knowledge of God as Father in a way that was impossible until the Son Himself had come to earth to reveal Him. Well may he boast in the One of whom Paul writes: "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" Assuredly, "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

Then the psalmist testifies to his own personal experience: "I cried unto the Lord with my voice, and He heard me out of

His holy hill." Is there any reason why he says "with my voice"? Are we to understand that David's trust in God was not merely the confidence of his heart, but the confession of his lips: something to which, despite the contemptuous gibe of his enemies, he bore witness in public and audible prayer, knowing that God would not fail him? If so, it is a reflection of that early assurance of his when face to face with Goliath: "This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee . . . that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel . . . for the battle is the Lord's" (I Samuel xvii. 46, 47).

"And He heard me out of His holy hill," David continues. Those who fight battles on earth recognise that a hill is a vantage-ground from which the movements of an enemy can be watched and countered. Is David's declaration that God heard him out of His holy hill a reminder that "the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect towards Him" (2 Chron. xvi. 9)?

If so, it is little wonder that David could go on to say "I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the Lord sustained me." What a triumph this! Sleep, when those that trouble him are increasing in number! How can he be so confident when the strident voices of his enemies declare "There is no help for him in God"? David's answer was in deeds, not words: "I laid me down and slept." Faith was the secret of his composure—"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee" (Isaiah xxvi. 3).

Do we not gaze with awe on the perfect exhibition of trust in God by the One who, at the height of a storm on the lake of Galilee, was "in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow"? The winds and waves might terrify the disciples. They did. But they failed to disturb the Saviour's rest; not because He did not care, as the disciples so thoughtlessly and shamelessly suggested, but because His trust in His Father was perfect, His communion uninterrupted.

In consequence of this practical experience of God's care, David can make a general declaration of his faith: "I will not be

afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set themselves against me round about" (verse 6). This is not the empty use of extravagant language in an attempt to keep up his own courage and boost the morale of flagging followers. It is faith's sober matching of the omniscience and omnipotence of God against the worst that man can do.

Coming finally to the third paragraph of the psalm, against the background of confidence in God already expressed, we find David asking that God will save him once again as He has done in the past. His present plight shall be one more opportunity to prove that salvation belongeth unto the Lord. It was a matter of historical fact that God had smitten those who had boasted themselves against him in times past: He had broken the teeth of the ungodly. What He had done before He could and would do again. God's interest is in His people's welfare: His blessing is upon them.

So, for the believer, all is well—for "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose" (Romans viii. 28). May God enable every reader to share the hopefulness and comfort of this psalm!

E. A. PETTMAN.



STUDIES IN GALATIANS

XIX. Bearing the Burdens of Others

(Read: Chap. vi. 1-5)

"BRETHREN, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." Supposing a person goes altogether wrong, and is positively surprised into what is plainly evil, what then? Still the Holy Ghost presses that the *spiritual* should "restore such an one in the spirit of meekness." A very weighty word indeed. For, first, in case of a fall, through want of watchfulness and dependence upon God, we learn who are most adapted to meet the need. It is the obligation of all in

a general way; but who are those that the Holy Ghost urges to deal well with such a case? "Ye which are spiritual."

Now it does not follow that he who is born of God is spiritual. To "live in the Spirit" is a very different thing from being "spiritual." A spiritual person not only lives, but walks in the Spirit. Of course, he has the infirmities of other men, and may at times show nature; but in an obvious way, taken as a whole, through the grace of God, he has learnt to judge, not to spare self, to detect, especially in himself, departure from the Lord, and to own it frankly and humbly before God. In consequence of this habitual self-judgment, there will be far greater tenderness in dealing with sin in others.

You will always find in cases that call for gracious handling, it is for the spiritual, not those that are the most used themselves to trip, not those that are apt to indulge the flesh and depart from the Lord. The very power that preserves them from going astray is what gives them to understand the grace of God and to use that grace for others. Accordingly these are told to "restore such an one in the spirit of meekness."

The apostle adds further, "Considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." This would justly be before the mind's eye of a spiritual man. He has the deepest sense of his own weakness; and hence would he most readily esteem others better than himself. How is that? Not of course that he who has made progress in the ways of God is to count a babe's knowledge greater than his own. Not that there are not, on the one hand, in the Church, those who are least esteemed, and on the other, men of tried and spiritual judgment. Not that we are to suppose all alike wise, strong, and honourable. This would not be faith, but fanaticism, and contrary to every right thought.

In what sense then are we to esteem "others better than ourselves"? When a soul that is in any measure spiritual, thinks of himself, what he feels is his immense falling short of Christ. He has habitually before him how greatly he fails, even of that which he desires in his ways before God. But when he looks at his brother-Christian, let him be the feeblest possible, and sees him as a beloved one of Christ, in full acceptance in, and the object of, the Father's tender affections, this draws out both

love and self-loathing! Thus, if grace be at work, what is Christ-like in another saint rises at once before the heart, and what is unlike Christ in himself. So that it is not a question of striving to cultivate high feelings about one's neighbours, and to think them what they are not; but really believing what is true about them, and feeling rightly about ourselves too. If one thinks of what a saint is in Christ and to Christ, and what he will be through Christ, then one's heart takes in the wonder of His love, and how much the Lord makes of him: but when the eye is turned to oneself, all the unworthy ways and feelings and shortcomings come up in humiliating remembrance. So, in considering "thyself, lest thou also be tempted," with this difference, that it is not so much looking at what we have been, as at what we have to fear and watch against.

In the next verse the apostle presses upon them the bearing of one another's burdens. There are difficulties, trials, sorrows; there are things in the shape of infirmity; there are circumstances of the most variedly painful nature that press upon the children of God. Now, if we wish to show our value for the saints, opportunity need not be lacking. "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." Stoop down, and take up that which your brother groans under. The Ten Commandments may not demand it; but so you will fulfil the law of *Christ*. This is the law for us Christians.

"The law of Christ"—this is what Christ was doing when He was here below. He did not please Himself. He never chose the path of ease; but, on the contrary, every case of wretchedness and sin and sorrow was what occupied the Lord Jesus, provided it were the will of God. When He took His place as man on earth, there was the continual exercise of communion between the Lord Jesus and His Father, the spirit of dependence upon the living God that never acted without His Father's direction. And so it should be with our souls. If we are thus laying ourselves out to bear one another's burdens, we need to wait upon God about it to know what the will of the Lord is. It is not the law, nor ordinances, but "bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."

"For if a man think himself to be something, . . ." This is

the invariable effect of law acting upon the spirit. It supposes a man to have power. The law never crushes the pride of man; and man will bear with anything that supposes he can do something. The law works upon the mere nature of man, and puffs him up. Acting upon the flesh, it makes man think himself to be something, when in truth he is nothing; and if a man does this, evidently, as the apostle adds, "he deceiveth himself." Nothing can be more cutting than the words here.

But if the Galatians bowed to the word and were willing to be nothing, but that *God* should work, he adds, "let every man prove his own work." Supposing one really to examine everything, thus thoroughly to prove his work, then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.

The apostle winds up this part of his subject by another word, and one that might appear to be paradoxical, if compared with the second verse. "For every man shall bear his own burden." In fact, we have here the two great practical principles of Christianity: the one is active energetic love, which bears the burdens of others; and the other is personal responsibility. "Every man shall bear his own burden."

It is not in the least a question of bearing each our burden in judgment. If this were so, not a soul could be—not one deserves to be—saved. When He says, "Every man shall bear his own burden," it is simply in view of the difficulties and trials in practical life. Mind, he says, that you bear one another's burdens;—but, after all, every man must bear his own burden. Every one of us must have to do with God for himself. We cannot get any one else to answer for us.

Slightly adapted from "*Lectures on the Galatians*," by
W. KELLY.

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Words of Help

from the Scripture of Truth

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WORDS OF HELP

A Monthly Magazine for Believers

EDITORIAL

AUGUST is the great month of the year for holidays—particularly for children and young folk. It brings with it great opportunities for beach services, boys' and girls' camps, house parties and the like, when those who are active about their Master's business seek not only to sow the good seed of God's word, but, by His help, to reap a spiritual harvest, modest maybe, for the honour of the Lord Christ.

As you open this magazine, please spare a moment to lift up your heart in prayer to God for each and every effort that is made to win souls, young or old, for Christ at this season.

Open air preaching, and tent services too, seem to belong to the month of August. Alas! the noise of traffic makes the former service much more difficult than it was years ago, and there is resentment in many quarters at the use of loud-speakers. Nevertheless there are those who persevere with this work, and we may strengthen their hands by our prayers, sometimes by our presence.

Then there are those who visit homes, hospitals, and even prisons, seeking to speak words in season, of comfort, guidance, instruction in the way of life, or warning. All such deserve remembrance at the throne of grace.

Lastly, let us find a place in our intercessions for those who write tracts, and also those bold and fearless servants of the Lord who distribute them. These often suffer undeserved rebuff. So we should pray for all needed grace and courage to be given them.

Finally, let us all take comfort from the word of the Lord by Isaiah the prophet (Ch. lv. 11):—

“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.”

AN HABITATION OF GOD THROUGH THE SPIRIT

(Ephesians ii. 22)

IN EXODUS XV. the first song is recorded. It is led by Moses, and six hundred thousand people sing it with him. It has a wonderful theme, far-reaching in purpose, and divinely inspired. It celebrated a victory, and foretold a glorious aftermath—it was God's victory and it will be His aftermath of glory.

He had redeemed the people who were singing. The sea had closed over their enemies—the most mighty power known in that day. Well may they acclaim their God “Glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders.” But God had redeemed them *for Himself*—they were *His* purchased possession, and as the song proceeds it tells of His inheritance and His sanctuary and, also, His kingdom: “The Lord shall *reign* for ever and ever” (verse 18).

Beyond the present immediate victory it is clear that these liberated thousands did not enter into the far-reaching designs of God. This may be seen from the song of Miriam and the women, sincere in its praise to Him who had “triumphed gloriously”, but limited to the initial victory. Moses knew, however; for had he not seen the pattern of things to come when, in his own wilderness, far from his brethren, he had turned aside and stood, shoeless and amazed, before One who, as a Flame of Fire, dwelt in the thorn bush—even the thorn bush of Israel? Indeed, the memory of this unfolding never left Moses. In the last hours of his life his blessing for the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh related to “The goodwill of Him that dwelt in the bush” (Deut. xxxiii.). Caleb and Joshua, too, must have stored in their hearts the glories of that divine revelation: “Thou *shalt* bring them in and *plant* them in the mountain of Thine inheritance.” It was in the strength of this that they confronted the unbelieving multitude who were ready to stone them. Strong in faith, they knew that none could thwart the purposes of God. “If God delight in us He *will* bring us into the land and give it us.” They had sung the song “with the understanding also” (I Cor. xiv. 15). “He shall plant them in the mountain of His inheritance.” What establishment and security there is in that promise!

So were these newly purchased people under the lordship and leadership of Jehovah Himself—though they had no practical awareness of it. They are now to be His habitation, but the extent of this grace was unknown save to those few—a remnant with the vision of faith. God was to be their only Resource: the wilderness could yield none. Three days they searched for water. Their young men explored, but the wilderness was real—they were not in Egypt where every provision is made for the flesh. “They found no water” (Ex. xv. 22). No cry of need was raised to Him of whom they had sung “He is my God, and I will prepare Him an habitation.” They had sung with energy, but there is no substitute for the energy of faith. To know Him as our *only* Resource in this wilderness is to walk, even a desert way, in divine refreshment of “newness of life.”

“And they came to Marah.” There was the symbol of death and resurrection “in the cloud and in the sea” (I Cor. x. 2). It was repeated in the three days of no water, but now, it appeared, their means of life and refreshment was available from the wilderness, for the sunlight gleamed upon the waters of Marah. The place was unknown to them by name until they had tried to drink of its stagnant waters. The bitterness of that brackish swamp belied the promise of long-awaited reviving. The murmuring of six hundred thousand disillusioned people must have seemed to Moses like the rising of a fearful storm. The value of his past leadership and example was of no account in their eyes compared with their present discomfort.

There is no record of upbraiding by Moses—no sign of anger. His patience and meekness bring immediate memories of One “Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not” (I Peter ii. 23). Moses “cried unto the Lord; and the Lord shewed him a tree” (verse 25). It was not a fortunate discovery, nor the outcome of *human* ability. If we are to appreciate the sweetness of the death of Christ amid the bitterness of this world’s sources of refreshment it must be in the meekness of Moses (Num. xii. 3), and in the faith that takes all the Marahs of the wilderness to the gracious throne of God. When the first day of the week brings again the opportunity of remembrance of the Lord Jesus in His death, how vital it is

that we turn from every resource to that one revealing Spirit. "He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you" (John xvi. 14). Twice in John's record of the favoured forerunner we read "I knew Him not." John disclaimed all *human* aid in completing his mission. It is the *divine* voice that says "Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, the same is He." So the Lord showed Moses a tree—to be cast into the waters! It grew nearby, available, waiting to be the perfect antidote to all the bitterness of Marah, though it meant the severance of life without which the bitterness could not be absorbed.

In the ways of God there is always testing. This should not be confused with the outcome of our failure. The death of a loved one, or any circumstances over which we have no control, is not a retribution, or the result of our disobedience. There are events which are allowed of God, and though we do not understand His plan now we may be sure that such experiences are opportunities to know Him in a more intimate way than would have been possible without them. The wilderness is real, indeed, but we may know God there in all the refreshment of *His* provision for us, since it is *here* He makes us His habitation.

The inspired record of Marah in the lives of others is full of instruction as well as comfort. In each one the test is evident, and the outcome shows failure as well as victory. At Shunem there is "a great woman" (2 Kings iv. 8), rich, evidently, in her own right, but poor in that she had no son. She reaches out after the things of God, and life comes out of dead potentiality—"newness of life." But the resurrection character of this life is to be shown to her, and the day comes when, at the time of reaping, the child dies in her arms. With what deliberation of faith "She went up, and laid him on the bed of the man of God, and shut the door upon him, and went out" (verse 21). This fourfold act seems so comprehensive of her whole reaction to this bitter Marah in her life. It takes her straightway to God. There is no lingering with the dead—the door is shut. To criticism she replies "It shall be well." Faith soars far beyond the ritual of new moons and sabbaths. She seeks no resource other than that from which her gift had come, and, when that little life, in all its preciousness, was in her arms again, she

knew the power and grace of Him who has overcome death. "God did tempt (test) Abraham" (Genesis xxii.). Abraham had close experience of the ways of God. The scope of the divine promise made to him reached into the future of the boundless purposes of God. Yet the day came when it would be demonstrated whether the whole source of his living was in the One who gave him a son, whom he named Isaac (laughter)—the rejoicing of faith. For twenty-eight years he had rejoiced in Isaac's life: now he was to watch him die. In his exposition Paul reveals to the believing Hebrews the inner confidence of Abraham's faith. The third day dawns—the day of resurrection—in which God, not man, will provide for Himself a lamb for a burnt offering. So, in this Marah test, God "proved" him, and, like the "great woman" of Shunem, he received his son back from the dead, and was increased in the riches of the knowledge of God.

There is much to be gleaned beneath the brevity of expression in the record of Ruth. Naomi must have come to a bitter time of testing when famine came to Beth-lehem-judah. God was showing His people that Beth-lehem-judah (House of bread) was a source of sustenance in name only, while their ways denied the blessing of His presence. With her sons and her husband she had left the place of exercise and testing and set her face toward the land of Moab. Yet, even there, the test persisted until, of all the small company, she alone remained. As death took each of her loved ones, she drew nearer to the One who was bringing her into conformity with Himself. It was this *practical* testimony that drew the allegiance of Ruth. "Whither thou goest, I will go; . . . thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." "Call me Marah," said the woman whose name means "pleasant", "for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty." How much better to be brought to emptiness and the home circle! For, at Bethlehem, it is but the beginning of barley harvest—that first of the corn harvests which speaks of passover time and of resurrection.

When the bitter time of testing came to those who had followed the Lord Jesus, the sorrow of a great loneliness enveloped them. "As sheep without a shepherd" they were indeed.

Their dependence upon Him had been absolute: they now felt they were without resource. "Ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful," He had told them. "But", He added, "your sorrow shall be turned into joy" (John xvi. 20). So it was with Cleopas and his companion as they took the Emmaus road, oblivious to surroundings—submerged in the sorrow of the calamity of Calvary. "We trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, today is the third day since these things were done." This was the bitter disillusion of Marah in their experience, and He who, in type, was the tree cast into the waters, had drawn near that He might remove from them the grief associated with it. How the grace of God abounds—beyond our limited capacity for understanding! It is not restricted to those who comprehend, it reaches out even to the "slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken." How precious to those two was His ministration of "the things concerning Himself." The Tree was cut down, but the bitterness of that death was made sweet—"Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?" It was "the third day since these things were done"—the resurrection day!

The tests of the wilderness take many forms. Some are common to us all, others are personal in character. The suffering or loss of those who have become part of our lives—other events bringing pain and disappointment when we had looked for comfort and security—these are the waters of bitterness into which Christ, in the value of His death and the "power of His resurrection", may come. "Moses cried unto the LORD; and the LORD shewed him a tree, which, when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet." We meet the Lord among His people—we sing, and are uplifted with the theme, but it is when we are faced with the failure of earth's refreshing and taste the bitterness of it that He draws near and goes with us. His object—as ever—is to show us "things concerning Himself," for he, and He alone, is the perfect antidote to the bitterness of Marah.

EDWARD T. WOOD.

EVENTIDE

(Read: Mark i. 32-34)

The Jewish Sabbath was past, and the first of the week began. The Mosaic day of rest was not such for the Servant of Jehovah. A captive of Satan was in the synagogue, and the Son of God was manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil. Weakness and pain, the effects of the presence of sin in the world, were present in the house of Simon Peter, and the Anointed One had come "to set at liberty them that are bruised." Hence it was a day of service for Jesus, who cast out the demon and healed the mother-in-law of Simon. And the necessity for such service proved unmistakably the utter inadequacy of the law to relieve and bless the sinful and suffering Jew.

But after Sabbath a new era dawned, a forecast of the kingdom come in power. Not now isolated cases were blessed, but all the sick and suffering of Capernaum flocked to the great Physician, who healed them all—every one. Those who had in weariness and painfulness passed many a sleepless night were freed of their infirmities to enjoy a rest Jewish ordinances could never give. It was truly the beginning of a new week for them. And it was also a happy augury of that millennial day for Israel when the glorious Sun of righteousness, even then present with healing in His wings, should arise and chase away all darkness, disease and death.

At eventide there was a great congregation of the afflicted of Capernaum at the house of Simon Peter. Those who had scruples in coming to be healed on the Sabbath now came freely. Those who feared the tyranny of an apostate priesthood came under cover of the lengthening shadows. And prostrate ones, fearful of the fierce rays of a noontide sun, were brought to Jesus in "the cool of the day." And He who in the garden of Eden sought the guilty pair at eventide as they shrunk abashed from His presence (Gen. iii. 8), had come from heaven to seek and to save their suffering and groaning sons.

The Lord of glory held a great reception that night, but the throng was not such as is found in the courts of the world's great ones. He was indeed greater than Solomon, but no Queen of Sheba was there with her gifts. Truly the day is coming when

all nations shall fall down before Him, but those who did Him reverence then were but a company of invalids. Nor did they seek His face in vain. They found that He whose sceptre shall in due time exercise its unchallenged sway over the governments of this world was supremely potent even then in the kingdom of affliction and pain. With the resources of His omnipotence blending with the exquisite sensibilities of His perfect manhood, He passed, while the twilight shadows deepened, through that motley assemblage, laying hands of beneficent healing on every poor sufferer (Luke iv. 40), and expelling demons with a word (Matt. viii. 16). How well did Jesus prove Himself that night the Servant of Jehovah! What occasion did He give for Capernaum to exchange the spirit of heaviness for the garment of praise, and to take up the language of the prophetic Psalm and sing to God, "Bless Jehovah, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name. Bless Jehovah, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits; who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases" (Psalm ciii. 1-3).

We shall do well to reflect upon this vivid picture of the Lord's loving service, given in all three of the Synoptical Gospels. For we are still in the shadows. We form part of the creation which, in its entirety, groans and travails in pain even yet (Rom. viii. 22), waiting for a deliverance still to come. In our weaknesses we need an all-sufficient One to sustain and to deliver; "until the day break and the shadows flee away."

Though Israel did not know the Messiah, the demons were inwardly conscious of the personality of this Servant of Jehovah, and would have declared it aloud. This the Lord forbade, as in the synagogue. He did accept the fourfold witness of the Baptist, the Father, His own works, and the Scriptures (John v. 32-47), but He, the Holy One of God, disclaimed all testimony from beneath. In that wisdom which He possessed so perfectly as a Man, He, anticipating the unfounded charge against Him of complicity with Beelzebub in the expulsion of demons, and to give no occasion of stumbling to any of the Father's "little ones," publicly renounced all association with the works of darkness, so that all might know that these things were wrought by Him in His Father's name alone.

(from *The Bible Treasury*, May 1910.)

W. J. HOCKING.

CAIN AND ABEL

“BUT GOD hath chosen the foolish things of the world, that he may put to shame the wise” (I Corinthians i. 27, New Tr.). How often God promotes that which is weaker to take precedence over that which is first according to the natural order. This was the case not only with Cain and Abel, but also with Ishmael and Isaac, Esau and Jacob, Manasseh and Ephraim, and with David and the seven sons of Jesse.

LIKENESS AND DIFFERENCE

The scripture record of the first people to be born on earth discloses features in which they were alike, as well as marking their differences. Reared in the same family, Cain became a tiller of the ground, Abel a keeper of sheep. There was little difference between them in their daily work.

We read very little about Abel. All we are told in Genesis iv. is that he became a keeper of sheep, that he brought an offering of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. “And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: but unto Cain and to his offering He had not respect.” Hebrews xi. 4 explains clearly the reason for this difference, and why Abel’s offering was superior to Cain’s. Behind the offering stands the person of the offeror. The offering is the language of the soul.

It was by faith that Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice than his brother. Cain lacked faith. From whence did Abel’s faith arise? Romans x. 17 teaches that faith is “by a report, but the report by God’s word” (New Tr.). We deduce therefore that Adam and Eve had told their children what happened in the garden of Eden.

It was not by chance that Abel came to offer of his flock, not merely because he happened to be a keeper of sheep. Abel realised he could not approach God anyhow. Having heard his parents relate that God had been obliged to kill animals in order to cover their nakedness after they had sinned, his faith grasped the meaning and import of what God had done.

Here we see the great difference between Cain and Abel. Two ways of thinking are evident; two dispositions of heart, which have manifested themselves in mankind ever since. Abel’s

mind was one of dependence upon, and surrender to, God. Cain's was a carnal mind. Nor are these dispositions to be found only in the world around us; we find them within ourselves.

It must be borne in mind that virtue did not lie in the offering itself, but in the fact that in the animal Abel judged himself, and put himself under sentence of death to receive life from God.

CAIN Cain was a person whom men would describe as being religious. He was not an atheist, but one who wished to serve God *in his own way*. So far as his offering was concerned, everything was in the outward form and appearance; he brought it as a matter of duty; there was no action to express the surrender of his soul to God.

When Cain perceived that God had no respect for himself or to his offering he became angry. Those who practise a merely carnal piety feel aggrieved when confronted by divine teaching, whereas all is simple and clear to those who take their right place before God. The man who thinks he may approach God in the manner that Cain did will not see the difference between Cain and Abel as the Lord saw it; and instead of submitting himself to God will raise objections of every kind.

THE GRACE OF GOD

The first thing that strikes us is the manner in which God meets Cain. Knowing all things, God knew what Cain would do, and He begins with the question "Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?" Then follows verse 7, which has given translators some difficulty. The most comprehensive translation reads: "If thou doest well, will not thy countenance look up with confidence? and if thou doest not well, sin (or 'a sin-offering', the Hebrew word having both senses—J.N.D.) lieth at the door."

Whilst, as is evident from the conversation, God judges the offering and disposition of Cain, He does not condemn Cain himself. For him there is grace. God shows him the way of life and the way of death. Understanding this, the decision rests with Cain himself as to which he will follow.

Cain does not reply to God, but chooses the way of death. He goes out into the field with his brother and kills him. Again

God comes to him with the question "Where is Abel thy brother?" For the first time Cain speaks to God. He lies and says, "I know not: am I my brother's keeper?"

"Where is Abel thy brother?" It was a touching question. Nothing in the wide world could silence Cain's conscience. He might pretend it was not his responsibility to protect his brother, but he knew well enough that Abel was more to him than a mere neighbour. Abel was his own brother.

What the Lord says to Cain after this reminds us of God's words in Genesis iii. 19: ". . . till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken." It is true that man will return to the ground, but the ground is not expecting him from the hand of a brother. The judgment of Cain lies in the cry of Abel.

THE REACTION TO GOD'S LONG-SUFFERING

After what the Lord had said in verses 10-12, Cain becomes apprehensive that he himself will now be killed. But the Lord appoints a sign lest anyone finding him should kill him. Cain is alarmed, but alas does not recognise that his own attitude is one of hostility to God. On this account he does not come to that inward humiliation of soul that would have secured God's forgiving grace and renewal of his life. He was merely sorry over what he had lost, not for the action itself. Such repentance as that never leads to salvation. Divine deliverance can only follow inward change of heart.

After the Lord had met with Cain twice, the outcome was that Cain went out from the presence of the Lord. We do not read that the Lord went out from the presence of Cain. This was the second important stage in man's removal of himself from God. Adam, it is true, lost the glory of Paradise, but for him the face of God remained. Cain lost everything: the earth, the face of God, his neighbours and—himself!

(Adapted from a translation from the Dutch *Messenger of Peace*, by J. MOL, Senr., of Baarn.)



STUDIES IN GALATIANS

XX. Sowing to the Spirit

(Read: Chapter vi. 6-10)

Then comes another thing, and it would appear that these saints had forgotten it: "Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth, in all good things." I think there is a little danger of ourselves forgetting this kind of relationship to all those whom the Lord has raised up for the good of the Church. There are certain landmarks never to be obliterated. One is this very thing—the privilege and obligation of the taught to remember Christian teachers in love. It is not said, To him that teacheth them; but "To him that teacheth." What blessed largeness of feeling this! Supposing you are free from such need in the particular place where you live, are you to be so short-sighted as to overlook the claims of the Lord elsewhere? This would be selfish indeed.

Let none suppose that this was given only for early days; or that any circumstances can alter the responsibility of the saints in this respect. It is well for us to remind one another of it, that we are members of the body of Christ. Take the case of persons labouring abroad: has not that a voice for us? What a claim upon our love and sympathy! The Lord looks for far greater self-denial and service of love now than when it was a question of law. Let us not content ourselves with ceasing to do evil; but also learn to do good.

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption." Evidently there it is a question of self-indulgence in one way or another. If there is a heart for the Lord, a way will soon be found wherein to serve Him fully; but that way often demands much self-denial. No circumstances set this aside.

"But he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." This is very strong, yet most true. A person might say to me, I understood you to teach, that those that believe had life everlasting already; but here it is said, He that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. Both statements are of the utmost value; but the point of view is totally different. If God is exhorting His people to a holy walk, He shows

that life everlasting is the crown of that walk, and the end of it.

Whatever may be the salvation that grace brings in, it never sets aside the value of holy devotedness to God. And, therefore, those who have true faith, manifest also real holiness; and only those. The two things coalesce. The believer in Christ receives everlasting life. What is the consequence? He sows to the Spirit, and reaps life everlasting. The life everlasting here is evidently what we are to have in glory. The everlasting life spoken of by John is what the saint possesses on earth. Both are true. In glory he will find everlasting life without alloy. I receive it now as a believer from Christ, and after pursuing the path of the holy will of God I find it in heaven. The life-resurrection of believers consists of those who have done good here below. (John v. 29).

“Let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.” There is often a great danger of relaxing in the course. A man starts well and graciously; but after a while he finds that he has been taken advantage of by so many people, that he becomes reserved and suspicious. This is to be weary in well-doing, or its effect. He is determined to be duped no more. The truth is, there is a great deal of flesh in that kind of talk and feeling. Where souls are occupied with the grace of God, they are not so easily worn out. Because another has been selfish, is that a reason why a saint should become selfish too? The becoming state for a Christian is to have an open, generous heart, and to be active in looking out for suitable ways of doing good.

This reaping, plainly, is in glory. We are not to expect it here. We may meet with that which is sweet and grateful, but we are not to be surprised if we do not, and if there is much from men that is painful, let us remember, it is to the Lord we are lending. Is there anything disappointing there? He that looks to the Lord is never disappointed.

“As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men.” This is the business of the Christian—doing good, and “especially unto them who are of the household of faith.” There is a special connexion with saints; but we are not to stop there.

Adapted from *Lectures on the Galatians*, by W. KELLY.

THE USE OF THE WORD "DIVINITY"

IT MAY NOT BE inappropriate in this place to refer to the word divinity, as distinguished from Godhead or Deity, with which, however, it is sometimes confounded. Both the latter, Godhead and Deity, are faithful translations of the Greek word, *theotes*, which occurs only in Col. ii. 9. This word means "Godhead in the absolute sense" (J.N.D.), and is distinct in meaning from *theiotes*, occurring in Rom. i. 20, which signifies the character of God, rather than God Himself.

The word in Romans is applied by the apostle to what may be observed of God in the works of nature—His creatorial majesty, might and wisdom. These attributes are included in His *theiotes*, divinity, but are not His Essential Being. On the other hand, all the fullness of the *theotes* dwells in Christ bodily.

To mark this important distinction between the two words, "Godhead" in Rom. i. 20 is replaced by "divinity" in the R.V., in the New Translation, in W.K.'s Notes on Romans, and in other translations. "Godhead" is reserved for the rendering of *theotes* in Col. ii. 9, where Deity in the fullest, most absolute sense is required both by the word and its context.

It is always well to note the inspired values of scriptural words, particularly of those relating to the Person of our adorable Lord. And in view of the prevailing denials and detractions of the Ever-blessed Son, it is *especially important to mark this distinction between the terms, Deity and Godhead, on the one hand, and divinity on the other*, and to remember that the latter should never be regarded as a synonym or as the equivalent of the former two.

From "The Son of His Love," by W. J. Hocking.)

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Words of Help

from the Scripture of Truth

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WORDS OF HELP

A Monthly Magazine for Believers

EDITORIAL

THIS MONTH once again we have drawn very largely upon the writings of those long since called home to be with the Lord. We are fortunate to be able to do so. And, indeed, why not?

Even in this day there appear to be those holding the view that they need do no more than read the Bible itself, albeit counting upon the Holy Spirit for enlightenment. But did the risen Lord ordain evangelists, pastors and teachers without purpose? May the church disregard those whom the Lord has given over the years "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Eph. iv. 11-12)? Surely not. To despise "gift" is to dishonour the Giver!

On his way back to Ethiopia, the eunuch of Acts viii. sat in his chariot, puzzling over an Old Testament scripture he could make nothing of. Doubtless the Holy Spirit, who knew full well the man's perplexity, *could* have afforded him the light he needed without human intervention. But He did *not* do so. Instead, He used Philip, who was nearby as a result of obedience to the direction of the angel of the Lord, commanding him to "Go near, and join thyself to this chariot." How foolish the eunuch would have been to reject the divine assistance because it came to him through a human channel!

Again in the next chapter, Saul, in answer to his prayer "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" was bidden to "Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." Thus the one who was in due time to fill no less a position than that of Apostle to the Gentiles, and to receive special revelations direct from the Lord, had first to accept the ministry of a fellow-believer.

In commending this issue of WORDS OF HELP to our readers, we would remind them of the inspired injunction of Hebrews xiii. 7—

"Remember your leaders who have spoken to you the word of God; and considering the issue of their conversation, imitate their faith."

(New Translation)

LORD'S DAY REFLECTIONS

XXV. "Alive for Evermore"

(Revelation i. 18)

SUCH was the comfort administered by the Lord Himself to John, when, in his solitary cell in Patmos, the effect of the vision he had just seen was such as to bring him to the point of death. He laid His right hand upon His servant, saying: "Fear not; I am the first and the last, and the living One: and I became dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of death and of Hades." The present effect of such a communication becomes evident, if we call to mind the Lord's word in John xiv. 19, referring to His own departure: "Yet a little while, and the world seeth Me no more; but ye see Me: *because I live, ye shall live also.*" The following verse adds a further effect: "At that day ye shall *know* that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you." How wonderful and far-reaching are God's ways of grace!

The assurance above mentioned refers evidently to the presence and operation of the Holy Spirit, and to His abiding presence with the disciples on earth, of which the Lord had just spoken for the first time, in verse 16 and 17, in anticipation of His own departure: "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive."

It is important to notice that His personal presence here on earth did not produce faith in the multitudes who saw Him, notwithstanding all His miracles, though, when satisfied with bread, they were quite ready to "take Him by force to make Him a king" (chap vi. 15). But now that the Lord has gone back to heaven, the Holy Spirit who, as it were, replaces Him on earth, can and does take of His things to reveal them to believers, not merely as a matter of knowledge, but as bringing us into the present personal enjoyment of a new relationship, of which we see the full and perfect expression in the SON, "the only begotten, in the bosom of the Father" (John i. 18). It is only in the person of the SON that we can learn what this

relationship is. May the Lord help us to feed on it in a worshipping spirit, and enjoy it more, not for ourselves only, but as the full present portion of all His saints.

Moreover, the words "for evermore" carry us on, in thought and meditation, to the eternal state, wherein we shall behold the whole company of saved ones as the reflection of His blessed person. For, though knowing Him as the Saviour, we do not yet *see* in believers the *effect* of His work *in our bodies* as well as in our souls. We are already "the children* of God;" but not yet "transformed," as will be the case at His coming for us. And surely nothing short of that wonderful change can satisfy the heart of our Saviour, who even consented to "bear our sins in His own body on the tree, in order that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness;" for it is by the stripes that fell upon Him that "we are healed" (Isa. liii. 4-6; I Peter ii. 24-25). We were all indeed "like sheep going astray;" and it is only through His gracious intervention that an asylum of peace and rest has been opened up to us, so that we might have a "Shepherd and Bishop of our souls," whose loving care on our behalf can never cease or fail.

But while waiting and watching for the completion in glory of all His purposes of grace towards us, we have already the assurance that He who, once for all, bore our sins in the untold suffering of body and soul upon the cross, is already our blessed and glorious representative in the Father's house above. For He has given expression to His own care and thought in this respect, saying to His disciples: "In My Father's house are many mansions (that is "abodes"): if it were not so I would have told you. I go to *prepare* a place for you; and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know" (John xiv. 2-4).

* It is well to be reminded that the general exactness of our Authorised Version fails as to the distinctive use of the word "sons" in John's writings. As a rule, he avoids it in speaking of believers, reserving "Son" for the Lord Himself. Exceptions may be observed in xii. 36, "*sons* of light," and in xvii. 12 and xix. 26, which explain themselves, the former referring to Judas.

These words were too much for Thomas, who was only thinking of human knowledge. But his difficulty led to a further unfolding of the truth for our present blessing and advantage. His difficulty is indeed the forecast of our own at the present day, occupied, as we naturally are, with things of time and sense. If only our hearts were occupied with the Saviour, all these uncertainties would disappear, and our hearts would at once embrace the truth as set forth in His person, who said: "I am the WAY, and the TRUTH, and the LIFE" (John xiv. 6).

The Lord explains it all in the verses which follow. He is the way to the Father. No one can come to the FATHER unless by Him. He is the only One who sets forth in His own person the truth as to all that the Father is on behalf of every believer. He is also the life, which is, through faith, the believer's portion already, while awaiting here on earth the blessed moment when every saint will, at the Lord's coming, be instantly transformed into His likeness. Then, in the twinkling of an eye, he will realise the eternal blessing of being so transformed, as never to have any more thoughts or feelings, in kind or in degree, different from that which the Holy Spirit produces, through fixing the affection upon the Saviour's person.

As we meditate upon these things, how blessed and precious do those words "for evermore" become. The future for the believer does not depend upon a moment of entrancement; but, in every detail, it can only be measured by the Saviour's own joy, who says to the faithful servant: "Enter into the joy of thy Lord" (Matt. xxv. 21, 23). The believer's duty is to be "faithful" in everything that the Lord has committed to him during the period of His absence (Luke xvi. 10-13).

It is not then a question of doing "great things," as Saul once said to David (I Samuel xxvi. 25), but of being faithful "in that which is least;" for that is the best indication of character, as the Lord states in Luke xvi. 10. And the result is shown by Him in the distinguished place conferred on any of whom it is true; see the following chapter xix. 17. Such an one is so recognised when the "nobleman" returns, "having received the kingdom."

All these things, precious and encouraging as they are, pale, however, before the blessed *fact* of eternal life, enjoyed now as the believer's known possession, and presently as seeing Him, who is "alive for evermore."
W. J. LOWE.

(Reprinted from *Words of Help*, August, 1919)

CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

(Read: John ii. 1-11)

The following are notes, unrevised by the author, of an address given by the late Mr. W. J. Hocking at Winchester, on 19th June, 1933.

It is very apparent from scripture what a high place marriage holds in God's estimation. We find it in the first Book of the Bible, where God provides a wife for Adam; and we find it in the last Book of the Bible, where a bride is prepared for the Lamb.

We find here that our Lord Jesus was present at this marriage in Cana of Galilee, and that this event took place at the commencement of His testimony. He was there present at the feast with His mother, and His disciples; but the first thing that strikes us is that the Lord Jesus had no prominent place. Every preparation had been made, but the Lord Jesus had not been consulted; indeed, He was there practically unknown.

He was not there in the character He ought to have been as the Son of God, especially on such an occasion as a marriage, which is the beginning of a new career. The result was that the matter of purification was overlooked (water is a sign, not of joy, but of the word of God used in cleansing), and joy was absent.

Associated with that, they had six waterpots: but they were empty on this occasion; instead of being filled with water for the use of those present, they were empty. The Lord commanded that the pots should be filled with water, and Mary said to the

servants, "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it." She had confidence in the word of the Lord Jesus, and so she told the servants to pay attention to His word. They had lacked attention to what was necessary for purification.

The waterpots of water were needed for the cleansing of the feet as in John xiii. Water is so needful, not only when walking along the dusty highways of life where the feet become travel-stained by the way; it is needed also at home periodically for cleansing purposes. The water typifies God's holy word, which cleanses away all that defiles.

The Lord did not provide the water on this occasion; for it was the duty of the servants to draw this. The six waterpots however have very significant lessons to teach us.

THE FIRST WATERPOT

Ephesians v. 22—“Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.”

This waterpot is for the wife. She is called to be submissive to her husband, as unto the Lord; and this in contrast to the ways of the world as we see them today, where in many cases the wife rules the husband. She is to see the Lord behind her husband, directing him; and she must have the word of God in her heart in order to see that the counsel and direction of the Lord come first. This is to last all through the period of her wedded life.

THE SECOND WATERPOT

Ephesians v. 25-27—“Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.”

This waterpot is for the husband. The great point is for the husband to love his wife, not only up to the time of their marriage; but the husband is to go on loving his wife. Christ gave

Himself for the church in order to display the incomparable love He has for it; and the husband shows his love by nourishing and cherishing his wife, even as the Lord Jesus is active continually in blessing His church.

THE THIRD WATERPOT

I Peter iii. 3, 4—“Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.”

This is another waterpot for the wife. The wife is to adorn herself for her husband. It is quite easy to adorn the exterior; but in this case, it is to be the hidden man of the heart. This is not accomplished in a moment.

When Rebekah saw her prospective husband, she took a veil and covered herself. During her journey across the desert she was no doubt engaged in preparing the robe which she hoped would please Isaac. We, as the heavenly bride, are preparing a robe in which to meet the Bridegroom; for when the marriage of the Lamb is come, His wife will adorn herself in fine linen, which is the righteousness of saints. In that day we shall be arrayed in what approximates to the beauty of Christ. The wife adorns herself with that quiet spirit which nothing can rob her of: and it is for her husband to look out for it.

THE FOURTH WATERPOT

I Peter iii. 7—“Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.”

This is another waterpot for the husband. The great point is that the husband is counselled to give honour to the wife, as unto the weaker vessel. But the stress is not on the weakness of the vessel, but on the honour which the husband is to render. Regard your wife as a precious gift to you, and as a fellow-heir

of the grace of life who has been confided to you for your care. See to it that your prayers are not hindered, but that they rise as one supplication to God.

THE FIFTH WATERPOT

Ephesians v. 31—“For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.”

This means that today a new institution has been formed in this world, and that the new home should be a holy spot for God on this earth. God looks down and beholds our brother and sister as one: and as united together they are to be a power for blessing to one another; and they are now a centre from which blessing should flow out to others.

THE SIXTH WATERPOT

I Corinthians xvi. 19—“Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house.”

We have been speaking of the responsibilities and duties of husband and wife: but they are not to be isolated: they are associated with the assembly. Their new home is to be associated with the church of the living God. There is to be the going out to those who belong to our Lord Jesus Christ. And these counsels are for the guidance of all who are associated in these relationships: and those forming the family of God are to be guided by His word. The home is kept sweet and clean by the observance of the word which God has given us.

When the waterpots were filled, and the water turned into wine, there was enough for all present. And as the wine typifies joy, so the joy of the Lord is the strength of His people. And the Lord's will is that we should have that joy. The first thing necessary is to honour God's word, and then there will be the blessing of the Lord which maketh rich: and He addeth no sorrow with it.

(Supplied by R. Medlock, Wood Green, N.).

CHRIST—DAVID—and Ourselves

IN I SAMUEL xvi. 18 one of the servants of Saul describes David in the following words: "Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse the Beth-lehemite, that is cunning in playing, and a mighty valiant man, and a man of war, and prudent in matters, and a comely person, and the Lord is with him." Thus briefly is sketched his birth, his abilities, his character and his appearance; the culminating point being "the Lord is with him."

David did not hide his light under a bushel, but was a witness for God, not so much in words as in deeds. When Saul asked for a man to help him because an evil spirit was troubling him, one of his servants could say "I have seen." People discerned something out of the ordinary in David. In this he is not only an example for us, but a type of the Lord Jesus, the Light of the world.

Scripture gives us this sevenfold description of David, and in each feature we may discern that which speaks of the person of our Lord and Saviour who far exceeds David in greatness and majesty.

SON OF JESSE

This denotes David's humble descent. Though but a simple farmer, Jesse was a descendant of Judah, to whom the promise had been given that the sceptre should not depart from him. God now fulfils His promise. Later on, when David had to flee from Saul, he took his parents for safety to Moab (I Samuel xxii. 3). He did not exalt himself above them, nor was he ashamed of his lowly origin. When his brothers were engaged in battle against the Philistines, and his father wished to know how they fared, he had only to call, for David to obey. And he went without a murmur to the place where he was to meet his enemy Goliath.

By his birth the Lord Jesus belonged to the same tribe as Jesse: "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse" (Isaiah xi. 1). Later on, the same prophet records of the same Person: "He shall grow up before him as a tender plant,

and as a root out of a dry ground" (Ch. liii. 2). His origin as the Son of Man was humbler than that of David, for He was known as "the carpenter's son." Yet He was the fulfilment of the promise God gave in the garden of Eden.

On the other hand, Jesus was the Son of God: vast glory and majesty are His appointment. David was but a king: Christ is the King of Kings. Yet how humble He was when on earth. He obeyed the Father in heaven: "Lo I come to do Thy will O God," and again, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me." We read also that He was subject to Joseph and Mary. He by whom the heavens were made was obedient to human parents. Even amidst His sufferings on the cross He thought of His mother, and took care of her.

We men like to pride ourselves on pretended qualities. But the word of God describes us as descendants of a sinful Adam. And as regards parents, the admonition of the Lord through Paul is: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right" (Eph. vi. 1).

FROM BETH-LEHEM

The second testimony is to David's native town—Beth-lehem. To one who considered only outward appearances Beth-lehem was an insignificant hamlet. We find no mention of it in the hey-day of Israel's glory: neither battles nor miracles of God are connected with it. But for those with spiritual perception Beth-lehem possesses a glory all its own. Both in its name (Beth-lehem means "house of bread") and in its historical connection with the story of Ruth, the grace and kindness of God are expressed. In the same Beth-lehem Ephratah which art "little among the thousands of Judah" the Lord Jesus elected to be born.

Nevertheless His humiliation went deeper than that of David. His portion in Beth-lehem was a stable and a manger, for "there was no room for them in the inn!" Later, as a dwelling-place, He chose Nazareth, an even more insignificant place in Galilee. "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?"

was the exclamation of an Israelite in whom there was no guile (John i. 47). Jesus of Nazareth was the current name of our Saviour both before the cross and after.

Neither our origin nor our dwelling-place gives us ground for boasting. Under the curse of God we live in a world stained by sin. Fortunately for us Christ came in deep humility to bring us salvation and peace.

CUNNING IN PLAYING

Tribute is now paid to David's abilities—the first, "He is cunning in playing." Behold David keeping watch over his flocks while his nimble fingers played the harp! Hear him singing his psalms, praising and glorifying his God!

The life of the Lord Jesus was not characterised by music and song. Only once do we read that He sang—"And having sung an hymn" (Matt. xxvi. 30; Mark xiv. 26), and the particular psalm is not specified. On this earth we know He was the suffering One, the Man of Sorrows. We see Him weeping at the sepulchre as He beheld the consequences of sin: death and the pain of bereavement. He felt this even more strongly than Mary, whose tears moved Him and troubled Him in spirit. On another occasion, as He beheld the city of Jerusalem, He wept over it.

Yet David, the player-singer, foreshadowed the Lord Jesus after His sufferings were finished and the work of salvation accomplished. When Moses and the people of Israel were being pursued by the Egyptians they had no song. But when they saw their enemy defeated, when they arrived safely on the farther shore of the Red Sea, then Moses could sing with them (Exodus xv. 1). So with our Saviour; in the midst of the assembly He now leads the song of praise to God (Heb. ii. 12). Those who believe can sing: whilst on earth they are encouraged to do so (I Cor. xiv. 15; Eph. v. 19; Col. iii. 16; James v. 13), and in heaven they will continue their song unendingly (Rev. v. 9).

A MIGHTY MAN OF VALOUR

Might and valour are qualities which need to go together. A person may be brave, but it would be rash for such an one to rush into battle if he is unable to handle a weapon. On the other hand a man may be trained in the use of weapons yet lack courage when it comes to actual fighting, and so be useless. David was not only brave but a warrior. He had proved his courage when first a lion and then a bear tried to rob him of his sheep: knowing how to use his weapons he slew both.

Goliath was the victim of David's courage. David was brave because he knew the Lord was with him. He met his enemy, not with the arms and armour of a common soldier, but as a shepherd, with the weapons of a shepherd. He had a sling and five smooth stones suitable for his purpose: with these he defeated the giant in the valley of Elah.

In the valley! We see in this an unmistakable picture of our Lord, who came down to this earth, yea, into the valley of the shadow of death itself, to annul the power of Satan with his own sword—death (Heb. ii. 14). His first battle with Satan had been fought and won in the wilderness; the final victory was through the death of Golgotha.

Believers today are called to fight, not an earthly battle against flesh and blood, but against spiritual wickedness in the heavenlies. For that warfare we cannot use human or carnal weapons; we need the panoply of God as described in Ephesians vi. 13-17. To stand, and, having done all, to stand, we need spiritual courage. Our confidence must not be in our own strength, but in the sustaining arm of God (Compare I Samuel xiv. 6 and xvii. 37).

However, courage alone is not sufficient. We must learn to use all the armour God provides, and be skilled in the use of the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. John iii. 16 may be sufficient for our conversion, but if our knowledge of the Bible does not go further than this text, we shall not be adequately equipped with truth for our spiritual warfare.

David had not *one* stone but *five*. And these were smooth, i.e. suited to the purpose for which they were needed.

(Adapted from a translation from
The Dutch Messenger, by J. Mol, Snr.)

STUDIES IN GALATIANS

XXI. The Writing of the Epistle

(Read Chapter vi. 11)

THE VERSE which is about to come before us might seem somewhat surprising in an epistle so full of statements of doctrine, and appeals to the conscience and heart. In the midst of all this, the apostle says, "Ye see how large a letter I have written to you with my own hand." Or if you take the phrase, as it may very well be taken, "Ye see with what large letters," etc., it is still more striking.

Writing was somewhat unusual, even for the Apostle Paul. To write an important document was not common, save through a secretary; it was a trade or occupation to itself. Therefore it was the habit of those occupied actively, and arduous otherwise, to employ some one to write for them. In this instance, however, the apostle wrote himself, and, from not being used to writing, he drew attention to the large characters in the epistle. It was comparatively a short letter, but it was all written by him; and, from not being used to write his own compositions, the letters seem to have been in this large handwriting, executed probably with considerable difficulty to himself.

But there was something connected with the manner and bearing of the whole epistle in this simple fact. It is not a mere isolated circumstance, but the apostle lays stress on it, because of the state and dangers of the Galatians whom he was addressing. The Holy Ghost led him out in the strongest and most ardent desire for their deliverance. He therefore put aside any thought of employing a medium between them and himself; no matter what the difficulty, he will write to them

himself. On other occasions, he might employ Tertius; but the case in hand was so urgent, the question at stake so all-engrossing and momentous, that every other task must give way. It was an hour so full of grave peril, that he takes no account of time, trouble, or anything else. It was a testimony of his intense interest in these Galatian saints, and so much the more striking, because of the marked absence of his customary greetings of personal, brotherly kindness.

There we have a beautiful confirmation of the remarkable way in which the Holy Ghost mentions facts that bear the impress of God's own mind, His care and love for His people, His deep concern in them. The apostle himself draws attention to the circumstances of this epistle. He had written by others, and to others, far more freely; for, as I said before, there is not a single salutation in the epistle. Not that he was straitened in desire before God; but he could not let out his Christian affections toward them. There was that in their conduct which, though it might be mingled with good, was so disastrous and contrary to Christ's glory, that he stood in doubt about them; he hoped about them, and that was all. He had confidence in the Lord touching them; but if he looked at themselves—at what they were doing and saying—he could have none.

The two facts, then—the absence of personal salutation, and his writing the letter himself—both bear a remarkable testimony to the manner of God's love working through man's heart. All the mere interchange of the fraternal amenities is at an end. People would have said, How unkind of Paul! But brotherly kindness is not love, though people often confound them.

I gather from this, that where there is that which touches the work of Christ, as in Galatians, or the person of Christ, as in St. John, all personal considerations must give way. As the Lord, in His final mission to Israel (the Seventy, Luke x.), forbade the disciples to salute any man by the way, so here the Spirit carries out something analogous, because Christ's glory was at stake, and the foundation of all blessing was menaced.

From "*Lectures on the Galatians*," by W. KELLY.

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Words of Help

from the Scripture of Truth

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WORDS OF HELP

A Monthly Magazine for Believers

EDITORIAL

This issue of WORDS OF HELP sees the end of one series of expository articles, taken from Mr. William Kelly's *Lectures on the Galatians*, and the beginning of another under the title "The Church of the Thessalonians." The latter will (D.V.) appear bi-monthly.

Those who make a practice of retaining one copy of the Magazine each month will find it useful, when a series is complete, to re-read the whole as a complete and connected treatise. Should any reader discover that a particular installment is missing from his collection, he should apply to the Publisher, who will be able to supply the back numbers required, so long as supplies last.

The first article of the new series is introductory, dealing with the apostle Paul's visit to Thessalonica, during which the assembly there was formed. Subsequent papers will contain exposition of the text of the Apostle's first letter to the converts.

By purchasing two additional copies of WORDS OF HELP, it is possible to make, inexpensively, one's own commentary on Thessalonians by cutting the leaves out of the Magazine and pasting them into a suitable notebook. In this way the notes may be preserved for future reference. Maybe a time will come when the outline will be found useful in preparing lessons for a Bible Class or other Bible Study Meeting. We recommend this plan to our younger readers.

May we take this opportunity to say that the Editor will always welcome, and be glad to consider, any suggestion as to portions of scripture, or scriptural subjects, which might usefully be dealt with in WORDS OF HELP with a view to assisting the Lord's servants in their handling of current needs and problems.

LORD'S DAY REFLECTIONS

XXVI. The Half not told

(Read: I Kings x. 1-9; Revelation i. 10-18)

There is a parallel between these two scriptures. Each describes the effect upon an individual of a sight of majesty. There is nevertheless one important difference between the two incidents: the splendour of Solomon was earthly and temporal, while the glory of the Lord Jesus (even though portrayed in symbols) is heavenly and eternal.

The report of Solomon's fame concerning the name of the Lord had reached the Queen of Sheba, and stirred her to undertake the arduous journey to Jerusalem in order to verify by personal contact and observation what she had heard. She came therefore with her hard questions to prove his wisdom for herself, communing with him of all that was in her heart. Nor did she merely listen to Solomon's words, she beheld also the order of his household and the happy bearing of his servants.

The Queen gazed upon Solomon's greatness and glory until she had no more spirit in her: all she could do was to express her unstinted admiration of what she had seen and heard, declaring that the half had not been told her: Solomon's wisdom and prosperity exceeded all the fame which she had heard. Finally, acknowledging that Solomon's glory had been bestowed upon him by Another, she blessed "the Lord thy God, which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel."

Thus the diligent seeker became a believing worshipper of the only true God.

Centuries later, the apostle John, in his lonely exile, was "in the Spirit on the Lord's day," when the Lord Jesus gave him a vision of Himself as one "like unto the Son of Man" walking in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks.

It would seem that John's removal from his normal sphere of active labour for the Lord had been overruled in order that he might be the recipient of certain prophetic manifesta-

tions of things to come which he was to commit to writing for the edification and comfort of believers after him. But before showing him the future, the Lord appeared Himself, clothed in garments of dignity and glory. "And," says John, "when I saw Him, I fell at his feet as dead." John was overwhelmed by the sight, and prostrated himself before the One whose majesty was displayed before his mental vision.

Were we to see our Lord in His glory today with the eyes of our flesh, would we not do the same? Apart from the sense of personal unworthiness with which we should be filled, would not His presence overcome us with awe, and compel us to conduct ourselves with the utmost reverence?

Why is it that, when gathered to His Name, our souls are often so little moved, and the response of heart and lip is feeble and unworthy? Is it not because the eyes of our *faith* are dim? The Lord declares He is in our midst (Matthew xviii. 20), and we do not fully believe the fact. Nay, and this is the gravamen of our failure, we do not believe *Him*.

Men have sought to remedy the defect of which they are conscious by the erection of imposing buildings, and the ministrations of priests in ceremonial dress, with the accompaniments of incense and rapturous music. In other words, they seek *material* "aids to worship," after the pattern of the Jewish economy of old. What they are doing in fact is to turn back to the shadows while seeking the reality. Must not this search prove disappointing and inadequate?

The Lord Jesus announced the end of such things when He told the enquirer of John iv., "The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth" (ver. 23).

The most we know of the apostle John's physical circumstances at the time of his vision is that he was in "the isle that is called Patmos." More precise definition is not given, and must therefore be of no account. The all-important consideration seems to be that he was "in the Spirit on the Lord's day." In such condition he is found a worshipper. "I fell at

His feet as dead," says John, transported as it were with the beauty and glory and majesty of the One who filled his vision.

May the Lord help those who gather to His Name to do so truly "in the spirit," so that as they come together week by week they may give to the One who is present in their midst His due of praise and adoration.

E. A. PETTMAN

THE CHURCH OF THE THESSALONIANS

I. Introduction

(Read: Acts xvii. 1-15)

The city of Thessalonica, more recently known as Salonika, and now called Thessaloniki, is situated in Macedonia, in what is now northern Greece. It is at the northern extremity of the Gulf of Thermai, is some three hundred miles west of Constantinople (now called Istanbul), and is on the famous Roman road Via Egnatia, which runs about five hundred miles right across the north of Greece. It has always been a busy commercial city, and was the capital of the Roman province of Macedonia, having been made a free city by the Romans in B.C. 42.

To this city in about the year A.D. 51 came the apostle Paul on his second missionary journey. Paul had been converted some fifteen years before, and about ten years after his conversion had made his first missionary journey, with Barnabas, to the island of Cyprus, and then on the mainland, in the southern part of what is now Turkey, to Antioch (in Pisidia), Iconium, Lystra and Derbe. His second and much longer journey commenced some five years later, when with Silas and Timothy he first reached Europe, and after the stay in Philippi where the Lord's hand was so wonderfully with Him servants, they arrived by way of Amphipolis and Apollonia at Thessalonica "where was a synagogue of the Jews."

Here there were no doubt many Jews, and also a large number of "devout," or religious, Greeks. We are told that the Jews of Berea "were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of

mind." From this we may infer that the Thessalonian Jews were somewhat ignorant, strongly prejudiced, narrow-minded, and unwilling to receive light and truth from God. In fact they proved to be bitter and active enemies of the gospel of Christ.

Paul adhered to his rule, "to the Jew first," and on three sabbath days went into the synagogue, spoke to them from the Old Testament scriptures, and adapting himself to their condition, "reasoned with them" in the way of explanation and persuasion. His message was about the Christ, the Anointed of God, the coming One Who must one day rule over the whole earth, "from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth," before Whom "all kings shall fall down," and Whom "all nations shall serve;" the One of Whom it is written, "His Name shall endure for ever; His Name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in Him: all nations shall call Him blessed" (Psalm lxxii.). And Paul's task was to make the Jews see from the Old Testament the surprising truth "that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead."

He no doubt endeavoured to get these Jews to consider Isaiah liii., where God's Servant, Who "shall be exalted and extolled and be very high," is said to be "despised and rejected of men, a Man of sorrows," wounded and bruised, and "cut off out of the land of the living." We can picture Paul turning them also to Psalm xxii., to those solemn words, "Thou hast brought Me into the dust of death." Yes, if the word of God is to be fulfilled, Christ must needs have suffered, and died.

But He must also rise from the dead. See Psalm xvi. for instance: "Thou wilt not leave My soul in hell; neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt shew Me the path of life." God would not leave His Anointed in the grave, but would raise Him from among the dead.

Then Paul would doubtless bring before his hearers the types and figures of the Old Testament, such as the Passover Lamb of Exodus xii., the two birds of Leviticus xiv. (of which

one was killed, and the other was let loose into the open field), the story of Joseph coming up out of the prison to be second only to Pharaoh in all the land of Egypt, and Jonah going down into the deep and coming up again upon the dry land.

All these indicate the history of the Christ of God; suffering first, to be followed by resurrection and glory.

Then Paul's message had a further part, not now referring to the distant past, nor to the far-off future, but to the immediate history of the time. Jesus of Nazareth had been crucified at Jerusalem some eighteen years before, as was well known—"for this thing was not done in a corner"—"this Jesus," declared Paul, "Whom I preach unto you, is Christ."

We may be sure that the apostle appealed again to the Old Testament, showing that Isaiah vii. and Micah v. were fulfilled in the Birth at Bethlehem; that Isaiah lxi. referred to the preaching and healing of the Lord's life, that His entry into Jerusalem upon an ass was in accordance with Zechariah ix. Then too Jesus was betrayed by His friend, as indicated in Psalm xli; He refused to answer Pilate as foretold in Isaiah liii; was crucified and lifted up as we read in Psalm xxii., and seen typically in the Brazen Serpent of Numbers xxi.

The soldiers "parted His garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, 'They parted My garments among them, and upon My vesture did they cast lots'" (Matthew xxvii. 35 and Psalm xxii. 18).

As to the burial of Jesus, the word in Isaiah liii., "with the rich in His death" was fulfilled when "a rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple," having obtained the authority of Pilate, took down the sacred body and laid it, wrapped in a clean linen cloth, in his own new tomb which he had hewn out in the rock.

There were many witnesses to confirm that Jesus rose from among the dead on the third day following the crucifixion.

In this way, Paul preached Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit of God, adding, we are sure, the reason why Christ

must needs suffer; that He had died for sinners, in order that we who were dead in sins might live, and not perish, but have eternal life as the gift of God. The message is simple, but by the power of God it is the means of salvation to every one that believes.

Besides the preaching of the three sabbath days, doubtless Paul was active also during the week in Thessalonica both in public and private, endeavouring to bring the unsaved to turn to the Lord, and trust in Him. As he declared to the Ephesian elders on another occasion, "I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have showed you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house, testifying both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts xx. 20-21).

Remembering the condition of the Jews which were at Thessalonica, we are not surprised that only some of them believed the gospel and openly followed Paul and Silas. But "a great multitude" of Greeks, besides "not a few" of the chief women, were converted. Thus commenced the Christian church of the Thessalonians, in Thessalonica.

The unbelieving Jews in their blind folly stirred up trouble in the city, and Paul and Silas left by night, being sent by the Christians to Berea. When the persecution spread to that place, Paul was moved on again to Athens, and afterwards he came to Corinth. It was from there, and perhaps only a few months after leaving Thessalonica that he wrote the First Epistle to the Thessalonians. We will consider this, if the Lord will, in a future article.

W. H. L. GRAHAM

CHRIST . . . DAVID . . . AND OURSELVES*(Continued from last month)*

The next thing we read concerning David is that he was
PRUDENT IN MATTERS

OR

SKILLED IN SPEECH*(New Translation)*

This description appears to denote that David knew how to express himself intelligently and to take sensible decisions.

It is highly desirable that believers of the present dispensation should cultivate these sound qualities. When we judge ourselves honestly we have to admit all too often that much of what we have uttered is of little value. In our conversation one with another, are we always prudent in the true sense of the word? In meetings for the ministry of the word of God, is it not often the case that many words are spoken with really very little said?

When we consider the Lord Jesus, how small we feel in this matter! He could "speak a word in season to him that is weary" (Isaiah I. 4). He could solace the hearts of the anxious with words of divine comfort. Nicodemus (John iii.) could speak of wonders and signs, and assert that the Lord was a Teacher come from God. Yet the Lord did not engage him in discussion, but declared the necessity for a man to be born anew. The Samaritan woman (John iv.) was stirred in her heart by His simple request for a drink of water. The Herodians and Pharisees, normally intolerable to one another, asked Him in feigned agreement "Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar or not?" (Matt. xxii. 15-22). But Jesus perceived their wickedness and answered, "Why tempt ye Me, ye hypocrites?" And when they showed Him a coin bearing Cæsar's inscription He said, "Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things which are God's." When they heard these words they marvelled, and left Him, and went their way. Dumbfounded, they had fallen into the trap of their own setting.

It is good for us to realise our limitations and need for divine guidance: then to remember the counsel of James (Ch. i. 5)—“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; *and it shall be given him.*” God will surely help all who seek to follow the Lord.

David is then described as

A COMELY PERSON.

Here, of course, the literal sense is meant. But behind his physical attractiveness and ability to fight there lay spiritual beauty and a fitness to do battle for the Lord.

Earlier in Old Testament history we read of Moses with material privileges. When his mother saw that he was “a goodly child,” she hid him three months (Exodus ii. 2). Yet there was more than mere earthly beauty: the faith of his parents recognised the child as somebody eminent, or beautiful, for God (Acts vii. 20).

In regard to outward appearance, Isaiah testified concerning Messiah: “He shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness: and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.” So we have not to consider a literal application of the type to our Lord. Nevertheless, who can fail to perceive His infinite moral glory? In His humiliation as in his glorification we see perfect beauty. The bride, in the Song of Songs, could find no words adequate to describe the beauty of her beloved: she refers to him as “the chiefest among ten thousand . . . excellent as the cedars . . . altogether lovely” (Ch. v. 9-16).

Let us occupy our souls much with His person. The object of the word of God is to glorify the Lord Jesus in order that we may honour the Son as we honour the Father (John v. 23). Then we may hope to reflect something of His beauty in this world. “Beholding . . . the glory of the Lord” we may be “changed into the same image” (2 Cor. iii. 18), so that in prosperity, or adversity, we shall manifest something of Christ.

Lastly we read:

THE LORD IS WITH HIM.

This description is in the nature of an explanation. David walked in the ways of the Lord; consequently the Lord was with him. In the matter of practical responsibility the words of wisdom are ever true, "I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me" (Proverbs viii. 17).

Four times over in the darkest days of Joseph's life (Genesis xxxix.) we read that the Lord was with him. Nor was the fact a hidden secret, known only to Joseph himself. Others "saw that the Lord was with him" (verse 3: see also verse 23). In the case of David the same thing was apparent. Saul's servant had observed it. The hand of the Lord protected David, and blessed him. Everyone who had contact with him could see that he was serving God, and that God was not ashamed to be called his God (see Hebrews xi. 16).

In this matter once again, the Lord Jesus surpasses the type. When He passed through the world, despised by men, the heavens above Him were opened for the divine testimony to be given: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I have found My delight" (Matthew iii. 17: New Tr.). Such testimony could never be given as to one who was no more than a man. Moreover, during His pathway before Calvary none could touch Him because His hour had not yet come.

Enoch, we are told in Hebrews xi., walked with God, and was translated without seeing death, having this testimony before being taken to heaven, that he pleased God. The Second Man, the Lord from heaven, lived in the midst of sin and enmity on a corrupted earth, passed through the world in unbroken contact with heaven; then ascended back to the place from which He had come by virtue of the perfection and glory of His own person.

The business of the believer is to be a sweet savour of Christ as long as he is left in this world.

*(Adapted from a translation by J. Mol Senr.
from "The Dutch Messenger")*

STUDIES IN GALATIANS

XXII. Final Words

(Read: Chapter vi. 12-18)

The apostle turns finally to the subject that agitated his spirit, and sums up in these last verses both the danger and the blessing. "As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ." He does not mind what people say. They might call it imputing motives, but no matter. It is in vain to deny that legalism fraternises with the world, and loves its own ease, loves present reward, boast as it may of piety: it is, after all, only a desire to make a fair show in the flesh.

This is very important; because, I ask, What is it now that men look for, and that men would be gratified with? If you had all the world attending churches and chapels—persons walking soberly and in a decent, orderly way otherwise—what universal rejoicing over the improved state and prospects of Christendom! And what would all this be in the sight of God? I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that, if there were no more, it would only be "a fair show in the flesh." What we, as Christians, are entitled to look for, and what we ought never to be satisfied without is, that souls pass from death unto life—that souls should be delivered from the power of Satan and be translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son.

A large part of the world seek to be as religious as they can: i.e., to reconcile religion with the world. And as the effect of this strategy of the enemy, and of their own unwatchfulness, very many of God's children descend to it, because great names are there, appearances are there, and even the word of God may be quoted to show that it is right to walk there. This is commonly done by taking what God says to Israel, who were God's people after the flesh, governed by the law, and applying it to those who are God's people now, called to walk under grace and Christ alone, who have the Holy Ghost that they may walk in the Spirit, and not yield

to anything of the flesh. The mingling of the two things beguiles Christians into what is, after all, only the religion of the flesh.

Hear the solemn sentence: "As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised, only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ." They want you to submit to these religious forms. The reason is that they dread suffering for Christ.

The apostle further shows that, after all, these zealots for circumcision did not keep the law. They only observed it in part, with no little inconsistency, however hot their feelings against the advocates of Christian liberty. This is always the case. Those who insist on the perpetuity of the sabbath, how do they keep it? It is not only that they never heed the true day; but supposing the Lord's day were really the same as the sabbath, do they observe it according to the law? Not at all. They will tell you that Christianity, besides changing the day, has modified the mode of its observance, that the gospel mitigates the severity of God's law, etc. If this be not to make void the law through unbelief, it is hard to say what is.

Now the apostle, having spoken of the evil, turns to the blessed side: "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." They were glorying in what would exalt human nature; because in that way they could get the world and its multitudes to unite with them.

The cross of Christ is that which first of all crucifies the Christian to the world, puts him entirely outside it as one saved out of it; but also the world is crucified to him. There you see the world with all its unremoved guilt, ignorant of the Father, spite of the coming of the Son. So there cannot be the least common ground between a Christian and the world, any more than there could be for this country if it were at open war with any of its neighbours.

The apostle now brings in another point. To speak merely of being crucified to the world would not have been enough. There is more than that in Christ. "For in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new

creation." People may boast about their forms or their no-forms; but whatever it may be, it is all wrong, unless you have got positive, substantial blessing from God; unless you have the cross of Christ and the new creation.

The Christian possesses the new creature in perfection in Christ. "He that hath the Son hath life." It is called here the "new creation," because it is not merely looked at as life found, but contrasted with the old, which had to do with the world. This implies not only the person, but the work of Christ. The grand work of redemption is accomplished; God's law had its free course, and righteousness is established; the voice of condemnation is never to be heard again by virtue of the cross of the Just One, who suffered for our sake. But then He is risen from the dead, and has entered upon a new and blessed existence as a risen man before God. And this is the nature which He communicates to us. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." The consequence is that, having died but being risen, He communicates that very life which was in Him. "I am come that ye might have life, and that ye might have it more abundantly." The more abundant life is this "new creature," or life in resurrection.

"And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them and mercy, and upon the Israel of God." In the first expression, "as many as walk according to this rule," he specially looks, I think, at the Gentile believers, such as the Galatians were. "This rule" is the rule of the new creation—Christ Himself. He adds, "peace be on them and mercy, and upon the Israel of God." The only part of Israel acknowledged consists of the real believing Jews. "Israel of God" seems to be used here, not as a general phrase for every saint, but for the believing ones in Israel—those Jews who had repudiated their own works and found shelter only in Christ Jesus. Two parties are spoken of, and not one only. "As many as walk according to this rule," are rather the Gentile believers; and the "Israel of God" are the Jewish saints, not the mere literal Israel, but "the Israel of God;" the Israelites indeed, whom grace made willing to receive the Saviour.

He then adds, "From henceforth let no man trouble me; for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus." Their fleshly wisdom had brought in confusion and every evil work, law instead of love, questions about his ministry, etc. "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus." He had been scourged and put in prison. What mark of indignity had not been put upon him? *These*, and not circumcision, are "the marks of the Lord Jesus." Just as a slave in olden time used to bear the name of his master burnt into his flesh, so, he means, he bore in his body the marks of the Lord Jesus. Let others bear or seek what they may, these are the marks that Paul valued. They were the sufferings that he had endured for the sake of Christ and the gospel. Nothing more sweet and touching, but, at the same time, what a sweeping condemnation of those self-exalting men who took their ease in the presence of one whose life was suffering for Christ!

"Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen." It is indeed most gracious and dignified. He asks not that they might feel the thunders of that law under which they desired to put themselves; but that "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ should be with their spirit," showing how thoroughly he felt the vantage-ground which grace gave him—how he could meet all these attacks upon himself—how he could point to the scars of his honourable warfare, if they talked of their circumcision, though he would boast of nothing but Christ's cross. Our wisdom is Christ, as our folly is ourselves.

The Lord grant then that we may learn better to know our true wisdom and to walk in it; and while holding fast the truth, that we may desire earnestly the blessing of those who oppose it, and seek the deliverance of every soul around us. The Epistle to the Galatians is the death-blow to the religious world, root and branch, as it is to the revival or continuance of the same system, which the Apostle Paul was then so strongly denouncing, and which he shows to be the enemy, not of the saints only, but of the cross of Christ.

From "Lectures on the Galatians" by W. Kelly.

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Words of Help

from the Scripture of Truth

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WORDS OF HELP

A Monthly Magazine for Believers

CORRESPONDENCE

5, New Road,
Rye,
Sussex.

To the Editor of *WORDS OF HELP*.

Dear Sir,

The author of the helpful article on David in the October issue, in discussing David as a type of Christ, says that the description "a comely person" cannot be applied to our Lord's outward appearance because of the words of Isaiah liii.2: "He hath no form nor comeliness, and when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him."

Have we not to be equally careful that a literal application of the words of the prophet conveys the true meaning the Spirit intended? Indeed, some interpreters have been so far misled as to speak in an offensive way of the Lord's appearance.

J.N.D.'s French translation gives us "eclat" where our version reads "comeliness," and this certainly makes an easier sense. Does not the prophet's statement mean that the marked physical superiority of a Saul: "a choice young man, and a goodly: from his shoulders and upward he was higher than any of the people" (I Samuel ix.2), or the lordly demeanour of a Naaman, the overbearing dominance of a Jehu, were absent, and that in the eyes of those of Israel who were looking for a militant leadership, there was nothing to attract in One Who was "meek and lowly in heart."?

Yours sincerely,

E. H. CHAMBERLAIN.

THE SHIELD AND THE REWARD OF FAITH

“Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward” (Gen. xv.1).

It is necessary for the growth and advancement of the man of faith individually that his soul should be in conscious personal relationship with the Lord. A person may be called to the performance of some public service for the Lord, and it may be carried out wisely and well, and moreover honoured by the seal of the Lord's public approval. Then it is all the more needful that his heart should still lay hold for itself on the word that God has spoken, realizing the unspeakable blessedness and assurance that follows from having a word direct from Him to oneself.

Abram had acted publicly for God in the overthrow of the victorious armies that had captured among others his nephew Lot. He was enabled to recover the captives and the spoil. On his triumphal return he was met in the valley of Shaveh by Melchizedek, the king of Salem, who blessed him in the name of Jehovah, the most high God. But Abram, in the true magnanimity of faith, declined to receive anything from the hand of the king of Sodom, who on that occasion offered him the whole of the goods recovered from the foe.

The occasion was undoubtedly an epoch in the life of Abram. The rout of the confederate hosts by him and his three hundred and eighteen trained servants was a proof of the strength and energy of the man's faith, while his dignified reply to the king of Sodom sprang from lofty trust in the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth.

But in immediate succession to this notable event it would seem that Abram's soul needed to be strengthened, for we read: “After these things the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward” (Gen. xv. 1).

But then had he not, so to speak, just proved the truth of this very promise? Had he not pressed on to attack the victorious army with his little band, strong in the confidence that the Lord of battles was his buckler and his defence? And had he not received the reward of this faith in the destruction of the enemy and in the blessing of Melchizedek, king of Salem? Assuredly so. Abram appears to have acted as under the influence of this assuring promise which the Lord subsequently recited to him in a vision. The God Who had called him out from Ur of the Chaldees had been before him as his shield and his reward.

The need, however, for the solemn reiteration of this word was disclosed by Abram's exclamation. There was unrest in his soul. He was uneasy as to the future. Jehovah had said, "All the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth; so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered" (Gen. xiii. 15, 16).

But years had rolled by, and Abram was still a childless man. And the depository of promise became full of anxiety. "Lord God, what wilt thou give me," said he, "seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus?" "Behold," he went on, continuing his complaint, "to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir" (Gen. xv. 2, 3).

Through faith he had smitten the enemy, and pursued them unto Hobah. Through faith also he had repudiated the flattering gifts of the king of Sodom. But as he brooded over his circumstances in the quiet of eventide his faith appears to have lost grip of the living God as to what immediately concerned himself and his own household.

May we not say that the Lord saw the cloud of unbelief and doubt stealing across the patriarch's soul? And, in answer to the thought of his heart, He said, "Fear not, Abram; I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." Then his unbelieving thought was formulated into the words quoted above. But how tenderly Jehovah deals with him! He assures him that he shall have an heir. He bids him observe the starry

radiance of the skies above him as an emblem of his abundant posterity. Then Abram "believed in the Lord; and He counted it to him for righteousness."

One may meditate with much profit on the terms of this word of assurance that came to Abram—how the shield speaks of protection in present circumstances, and how the reward guarantees both immediate and future recompense for the self-denial and suffering of faith, while the subsequent history of Hebrews xi. shews how suitable the word was for the man of faith in his strangership and pilgrimage.

But it must suffice at present to ask whether it is not frequently the case with us that in the very point on which we have gained a public victory there follows a secret failure to maintain that measure of faith in the presence of the Lord. A public testimony often requires that our faith should be strong and active and valorous; but before God faith is more often called to patient waiting and endurance. But strenuous effort in spiritual matters is usually more to our taste than quiet and humble submission. Yet it is in the latter attitude that we best learn to appreciate the excellent promise: "I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward." W. J. HOCKING

(Reprinted from "The Bible Monthly," August, 1928)

JEHOVAH THE SAVIOUR

"THOU SHALT call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins" (Matt. i, 21).

Given first to His mother Mary by the angel Gabriel, and repeated to Joseph in the words quoted, the name Jesus was thus beyond all doubt divinely appointed. Though not an uncommon name among the Jews, when chosen by God Himself for His Christ its *meaning* must be worthy of our close attention.

It is, of course, the Greek form of the Hebrew name Joshua, which is itself a contraction of Jehoshua, meaning "Saved by Jehovah," or "Jehovah is Saviour." Thus it might be interpreted

when borne by a child whose parents wished to express their faith in the saving power of Jehovah their God. But in this case it was the child named who should save, and not that He should be saved. Furthermore He should save His people, who were Jehovah's people, from their sins. Do we not remember how Moses once sought to do just that, and was refused (Exodus xxxii. 30-33)? Thus, as Mary and Joseph might have pondered in their hearts, here was to be a child far greater than Moses. And thus *we* may see, if Mary and Joseph could not, that such a name given to one who was Himself to be the Saviour could only mean that He Himself *was* Jehovah—"Jehovah the Saviour."

Some there are who call themselves "Jehovah's witnesses" who do not acknowledge the Bible's own witness to the glory of the One born in a stable. But, beginning with His divinely appointed name, this witness is full and clear.

First we may note how His coming forth to Israel was prepared by John the Baptist. This is introduced by Mark with the quotation "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight" (Isaiah xl. 3). Reference to Isaiah shows us at once, by the word "LORD" printed in capitals, that it is the way of Jehovah that was to be prepared.

Next we may remark the character of those beneficent works which accompanied His ministry and bore witness to Him. We find that the very ways in which Jehovah in the Old Testament promised to bless His people are those in which Jesus displayed His power and grace toward them.

Thus His feeding of the five thousand, and again of the four thousand—is it not a fulfilment of Psalm cxxxii., where Jehovah says of Zion "I will abundantly bless her with provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread"?

Consider the crowds who flocked to Him for healing: must we not say that this is Jehovah "who healeth *all* thy diseases" (Psalm ciii.)? Certainly Israel had been unable to *claim* the promise of Ex. xv. 26: "If thou wilt diligently hearken to the

voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in His sight, and wilt give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of those diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians." Yet in *grace* He had come to those proved lost and guilty by the holy law of God, and showed Himself among them to be, in the final words of the promise, "Jehovah that healeth thee."

Though hindered always by unbelief, He was on one occasion at Capernaum constrained to prove His right to declare the sins of the paralysed man forgiven, by showing that He had the power to enable him also to take up his bed and walk (Mark ii. 1-12). Thus were brought together the two blessings celebrated in that same Psalm (ciii.) "Bless Jehovah, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; Who healeth all thy diseases."

Certainly, what He did in the days of His flesh was but a foretaste of what He will do for Israel in the days of the kingdom, when she turns to Him in repentance. Then they will all know the blessings of forgiveness. So, in the raising of Jairus' daughter we have both a sample of the power that "redeemeth thy life from destruction" (Psalm ciii. verse 4), and a figure of the raising to renewed life of Israel herself. What Jesus did then showed truly, for those who had eyes to see, *Who* it was that was there!

Again, view the storm-tossed fishing boat on the Sea of Galilee, and hear the anguished cry of the disciples "Carest Thou not that we perish?" As with a word He calms the wind and the waves, can we fail to recognise the mighty power of Jehovah, as Psalm cvii. declares: "Then they cry unto Jehovah in their trouble, and He bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still."

None of the figures which Jehovah employed to show His care for His people is more lovely than that of the Shepherd, and here again we recognise the blessed Saviour. "Jehovah shall feed His flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently

lead those that are with young" (Isaiah xl. 11). He looked with compassion on the multitude that had come round the lake to reach Him, seeing that they were "as sheep without a shepherd. Then He began to teach them many things." So He sought to gather them, and to feed them, first with spiritual food, and then with material.

Nor must we overlook how the Old Testament presents Jehovah as Israel's Saviour and Redeemer, titles so characteristic in the New Testament of the Lord Jesus. It is true that both titles in the prophets often refer to a deliverance in power from Israel's enemies (this also will the Lord Jesus fulfil, in due time), but redemption from sin is also ascribed to Jehovah, as in Isaiah xliii. 14, taken with verse 25: "I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins;" and Psalm cxxx. 7, 8: "Let Israel hope in Jehovah: for with Jehovah there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption. And He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities." The two things are perhaps combined in Joel's prophecy of the last days, when deliverance from earthly foes shall be granted only to those who in repentance and faith call upon the Name of Jehovah (Joel ii. 32). This is the scripture which Paul quotes in referring to the saving power of the Name of Jesus: "For whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved" (Rom. x. 13).

Now it is not only that the Lord Jesus fulfilled in His earthly life what was written of Jehovah. It is equally true of the New Testament prophecies of His coming again, in words which are too familiar to need detailed reference. Such Old Testament prophecies as "When Jehovah shall build up Zion, He shall appear in His glory" (Psalm cii. 16); "Jehovah my God shall come, and all the saints with Thee" (Zech. xiv. 5); "And Jehovah shall be king over all the earth" (Zech. xiv. 9)—these words, and many others, we know from the New Testament will be literally fulfilled at the glorious appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

There are many other attributes of Jehovah which belong to the Lord Jesus. Thus, He is the Creator, as John i. 3 tells

us: "All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made." Colossians i. 16 adds that all things were made *for* Him.

To Samuel Jehovah said, "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but Jehovah looketh on the heart." How often did the Lord Jesus prove His ability to read the hearts of men! Indeed, the actual words of Jeremiah xvii. 10, referring to Jehovah's searching men's hearts, that He might judge every man according to his ways and doings, the Lord Jesus uses of Himself in Rev. ii. 23: "All the churches shall know that *I am He* that searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works."

Again in Isaiah xlv. 6 "Thus saith Jehovah, the King of Israel, and his redeemer Jehovah of Hosts: I am the first, and I am the last; and beside Me there is no god." With this compare Rev. i. 17, and xxii. 12, 13: "And behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last." That the Lord Jesus is also God is, of course, abundantly testified in the scriptures, as in John i. 1, "the Word was God;" Rom. ix. 5, "Christ, who is over all, God blessed for ever;" and also Hebrews i. 8.

Indeed, if the Lord Jesus is the "First," He must be God: but the full New Testament revelation of Father, Son and Holy Spirit had to await the coming of the Son as man. Nevertheless when we think upon Isaiah xlii. 8: "I am Jehovah: that is My Name: and My glory will I not give to another," and remember how God the Father has been pleased to receive back His beloved Son into "the glory which I had with Thee before the world was"—to sit upon His throne and to receive the worship of heaven (Rev. v. 11-14, R.V.), we can understand that the Lord Jesus is not "another," but is essentially one with the Father and the Spirit, equally bearing the Name of the eternal, self-existent One—"Jehovah."

Just as to Israel of old Jehovah sent the message by Moses "I AM hath sent me to you" (Ex. iii. 14), so the Lord Jesus

said to the Jews, "Before Abraham was, I am." They could not miss His meaning, and refusing to admit His stupendous claim, took up stones to cast at Him. Anyone to-day who refuses to believe that He is Jehovah takes their side against Him.

E. H. CHAMBERLAIN

MALACHI iii. 16

"Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another"

LET US, as God's dear children, look for a little into this scripture and examine it in its surroundings, seeking profit for our souls in doing so. It is found in the closing book of the Old Testament, which is the last word of God to His people until, after the lapse of some 400 years, Christ came to establish the new era of grace.

The conditions revealed through the prophet are very sad, in fact deplorable, and the lack of response to the Lord's appeals betrays almost total indifference to His love to them and the honour due to His holy Name, as well as contempt for His offerings. We are assured that all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works (2 Timothy iii. 16, 17). So we at the end of days should find it profitable for ourselves.

From God's side there is a mingling of rebuke, encouragement and promise, and the verse quoted above is a break-away from God's lament as to the sinful ways of His people. In the midst of abounding corruption the Lord sees a remnant, and the emphasis seems to be on the word "then"—"*Then they feared the Lord spake often one to another.*" How frequently do we find the fear of the Lord spoken of in the word of God, and that fear expressed by obedience to God's word!

God had said to Abraham in early days, "Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou has not withheld thy son, thine only son from me" (Genesis xxii. 12). The Psalmist could write,

“O fear the Lord, ye His saints” (Psalm xxxiv.9), and supplement it in the 11th verse by saying, “Come, ye children, hearken unto Me: I will teach you the fear of the Lord.” Nehemiah could say regarding his upright conversation in contrast with that of former governors, “But so did not I, because of the fear of God” (Ch. v.15); and in speaking of his brother Hanani he could say, “For he was a faithful man, and feared God above many” (Ch. vii.2).

In the book of Proverbs much is said as to the fear of the Lord. It is spoken of as the beginning of knowledge in chapter i.7; as the beginning of wisdom in chapter ix.10; and in chapter xxxi. 30 we are told “Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.”

In the early days of the church we read that they were “walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost” (Acts ix.31). And the children of God are exhorted in Hebrews xii.28,29, “Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: for our God is a consuming fire.”

The subject of the fear of God is a large one. Is it not remarkable that in speaking to Satan the Lord said, “Hast thou considered My servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil” (Job i.8)? And in the prophet Malachi the Lord speaks among other things of Levi, “My covenant was with him of life and peace; and I gave them to him for the fear wherewith He feared me, and was afraid before My Name” (Ch. ii.5).

Now in view of the foregoing, might we not well challenge our own hearts as to whether or no this fear of God is prevailing in us in the midst of the corruptions that abound in this our day: and, if so, is it finding expression in the way it did in Malachi’s days? “*Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another*”—is this what we are doing? If we are to profit by the word of our God, we must submit to the light of it.

Should we not hear the word of God twice repeated in Haggai i., "Thus saith the Lord . . . Consider your ways."

Apparently it was the Lord Himself, and the preciousness of His Name, that drew these godly saints together. They found their outlet in seeking one another's company, and in speaking of Him. Moreover we may observe that four hundred years did not obliterate this testimony, in the grace of God, for we read of aged Anna in Luke ii.38, "She spake of Him." Can we not in spirit hear them say as in the words of Psalm lxvi.16, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for my soul?"

Then what encouragement we have as our verse goes on to say, "And the Lord hearkened (or observed it) and heard it." Objects of interest are they to the blessed God in heaven, and He a listener! Not only that, but for them He had a book of remembrance written for those that feared the Lord and that thought upon His Name, reminding one of the prayer of David, "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my Redeemer" (Psalm xix.14).

Who among the saints of God has not revelled in the way the story of the resurrection is told in Luke xxiv? The two disciples, though spoken of as foolish and slow of heart to believe, were occupied with their Lord, for when asked what had been the subject of their conversation, their reply was "concerning Jesus of Nazareth." And it was to these the blessed risen Lord "expounded in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself." Later, to the assembled company, He spoke of the same things as "concerning Me" (compare verses 19, 27 and 44). The result in the case of the two disciples was, "they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the scriptures?" (verse 32: see also Deut. vi.7). Let this be our happy experience, remembering the scripture under review, "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another."

There is however still more in our scripture by way of encouragement, for the Lord adds, "And they shall be *Mine* . . . in that day when I make up My jewels." The bride in the Song of Solomon comes to this blessed end in her experience, for in chapter ii. verse 16, she says "My beloved is mine, and I am His," whereas in Chapter vi.3 she reverses the order, and her first thought is "I am my beloved's." Further on still, in chapter vii.10, she says "I am my beloved's, and His desire is toward me." It is worthy of note in the address to the church in Philadelphia how prominent the personal pronoun is, especially when addressing the overcomer in verse 12 (Rev. iii.), to those of whom the Lord could say "Thou hast kept My word, and hast not denied My Name."

May the Lord in His grace give writer and reader to listen to these admonitions and encouragements of scripture, and, finding the comfort thereof, earnestly seek the Lord's commendation in that day as we have it in His own words "Well done, thou good and faithful servant . . . enter thou into the joy of thy Lord" (Matt. xxv.21).
Thos. Wilson.

LETTER ON I PETER i.2.

Adapted for *Words of Help*

My dear brother in Christ,

You expressed to me your difficulty in understanding this verse; so, as promised, here are a few notes to help.

We are saved, firstly, because God has "elected" (or "chosen" —the terms are identical) us for salvation, and this choice of each individual by Him was made in Christ before the world was formed (Eph. i.4). This election is essential for the working out of God's plan, because if God had provided the *means* of salvation, i.e. Christ and His sacrificial work, *and had done nothing further*, the gospel would have been preached and *no one would ever have believed it*, or benefitted by it.

Man is so incurably wicked, so wholly departed from God by nature and by practice, that the gospel invitation would have

fallen on the deaf ears of man "dead in trespasses and sins." But God, Who is rich in mercy, could not be content to be glorified Himself by Christ's work without men, too, being blessed. Hence it was necessary for Him, not only to provide the Saviour and the Sacrifice, but to choose from amongst men in all ages those who should be saved. I Peter i.2 shows clearly that "election" is according to "foreknowledge," i.e. God chooses individuals whose identity He "foreknew" (or "knew before") ages before they were born. Romans ix. shows that this "foreknowledge" of God's related to *persons* (Romans viii.29 says "*whom* He did foreknow") and not *things*, whether they be good or bad things.

Romans ix.11 states clearly it was *before* the birth of Jacob and Esau that God chose Jacob, i.e. *before* either had done good or ill. This indicates to me that God's choice is not determined by His foreknowledge of the *kind* of people we should be and whether or not we should receive or reject the gospel message. Indeed He knew that, left to ourselves, *all* of us would reject it. The Holy Spirit could hardly have cited a more powerful example than that given in verses 10-13 in order that we might know that God's election stands on the basis not of works but of His own sovereign and gracious call.

On the other hand it should be carefully noted that the Holy Spirit's condemnation of Esau as "a profane person" in Hebrews xii.16 is expressly declared to be on account of *his own* behaviour in the matter of the birthright. In other words, while Jacob's blessing was unconnected with any good works, Esau's rejection was the direct result of his own folly and godlessness.

The second thing mentioned is "through sanctification of the Spirit." Sanctification means, as you will know, simply "setting apart." In the verse under consideration it is not the sanctification of the believer that is in view, namely the continuing process after conversion whereby Christians become "set apart" from unholiness and worldliness to serve and worship God. Here it is the initial work of the Holy Spirit by which they are "separated" from the unbelieving world around, brought to

the earnest consideration of divine truths, and made ready for the steps that follow. John iii. deals with this, and Ezekiel xxxvii. provides a perfect illustration of what the work of the Holy Spirit accomplishes in men who are spiritually dead.

“Unto obedience” is the third step. The gospel is preached for obedience to the faith among all nations (Romans i.5), and those will perish who “obey not the gospel” (2 Thess. i.8). The Spirit’s gracious and compelling work prepares men to obey and receive the Lord Jesus in faith.

These three things lead on to the “sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.” This is the application, to everyone who obeys the gospel, of all the value of Christ’s blood (or, death)—livingly, really, personally, savingly.

If the use of the expression “sprinkling” has any difficulty for you, reference to Hebrews ix. 19-22 will help. The thought is application. All the value of Christ’s great sacrifice is applied to us personally and made our own.

I hope these brief notes may help you to a better understanding and enjoyment of this important and beautiful scripture.

Yours sincerely,

L. A. JONES.

**“Why was I made to hear Thy voice,
To enter while there’s room,
While thousands make the wretched choice,
And rather starve than come?”**

**’Twas the same love that spread the feast,
That sweetly forced me in;
Else I had still refused to taste,
And perished in my sin.**

ISAAC WATTS.

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Words of Help

from the Scripture of Truth

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WORDS OF HELP

A Monthly Magazine for Believers

EDITORIAL

As we go to press (9th November), H.M. the Queen, with her consort, leaves for her tour of parts of Africa. Earnest prayers for a prosperous journey and her personal safety will be offered by many in this and other lands.

By the time this issue of WORDS OF HELP is in full circulation, she should, by God's goodness, be safely home again. Nevertheless the occasion may serve to remind the Lord's people of their obligation to pray for those who wear the crown of royalty and those who bear the responsibilities of government.

"I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour."
(I Timothy ii, 1-3)

These words are not to be regarded, or disregarded, by any of the Lord's people in the light of personal political leanings. Given in the form of an apostolic injunction, they are a direction of the Spirit of God to all who would be obedient to the Lord. How much this poor world has been indebted to the intercessions of believing men down the ages! How much the peace of the world, and the opportunity for the gospel to be preached to all men in the future, may depend upon the prayers of Christian folk everywhere!

Let us all remember the word of the Lord Himself:

"Men ought always to pray, and not to faint"
(Luke xviii. 1)

THE CHURCH OF THE THESSALONIANS

II. I Thess: Chapter i, verses 1-4

It is generally agreed that this is the first, as regards date of writing, of the inspired epistles which God caused to be written to form part of the New Testament scriptures. The scriptures are plainly given to us, in divine wisdom and goodness, to take the place of the apostles (when they were removed from this world by death) for the authoritative instruction and guidance of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ in all the centuries which have followed up to the present day.

Thus the apostle Peter is led to write in his second epistle, "Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things . . . knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle . . . moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance . . . this second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you . . . that ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour."

Thanks be to God for preserving these precious inspired writings right down to our own times.

The Christians to whom this epistle is addressed had been for only a matter of months converted from a state of heathen ignorance. We have considered in a previous article (see October issue) the story in Acts xvii. of Paul's visit to Thessalonica, his preaching there, and the results. Their conversion had been remarkable; it was sudden, thorough, clear-cut, plain for all to see, and though they were subject to opposition and persecution from the very start, they continued to exhibit the freshness and vigour of Christian life. To their new-born souls, the Lord Jesus Christ was everything: they waited from day to day for His promised coming again—His return in person—and meanwhile the divine life in them, received by the new birth, showed itself in its true activities and blessed reality.

If then these believers were progressing and persevering so well, did they need an epistle to tell them what they had already largely known and experienced? Yes, God Who knows our frailty and forgetfulness saw good to provide them with a clear

statement of the manner of their conversion, its true purpose and results, and also the additional revelations and exhortations which were needed for their blessing. Besides them, God had in view the profit of succeeding generations of Christians, and so ordained this epistle to be part of the Holy Scriptures.

In the first verse, the apostle Paul is led to associate Silvanus (Silas) and Timotheus (Timothy) with him in his salutation to the church, or assembly, of the Thessalonians. The latter had learned to know and value these faithful servants of the Lord, and would be cheered by the mention of their names.

The assembly is addressed as being "in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ," an expression not used of any other church, though true of all. These believers were, because of their faith, exposed to the hostility of their fellow-countrymen, without help or protection from any worldly authority. They had no organised standing or political status, and probably not even a place of their own to meet in, for public buildings for Christian gatherings were not generally erected until some 150 years later (about A.D. 210).

However, it had been written long before (Proverbs xviii. 10) that "The Name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it and is safe." Here the Spirit reminds the seemingly defenceless believers of the protection of the full Christian position, as though to say, "You are *in* Him Who is above all, *in* Him Who has all power in heaven and on earth; you are settled, planted, established in and surrounded by God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." How comforting for them, and for us today including our fellow-believers in such places as China!

Further, there is the reminder of the divine attitude towards Christians, that of grace and peace. Grace is God's unmerited love, His favour to the undeserving. Peace is a state of harmony and tranquillity. Such is God in His thoughts towards us, His desires for us, so very different from man's natural thought of God as a hard exactor of His rights over us, hostile because of our failures. May we enjoy in simplicity the divine grace and peace which are ever toward us in the God we know as Father and the Lord Jesus Christ Who is our Saviour! This is the Spirit's desire in verse 1.

The apostle then makes clear at once his own attitude towards these believers in Thessalonica. It was one of thankfulness to God for them because of their conversion, evidenced by outward proofs of the divine life in them, and showing plainly that they were among the elect of God, chosen by Him for blessing; a thankfulness expressed in his prayers. Note that Paul was always thanking God for these believers, and thanked Him for them all. If we were to be constantly giving thanks for all the Christians known to us, our attitude to and walk with them would no doubt be influenced for the better.

The spiritual life in believers has three principles for its proper basis, namely faith, love and hope. These are inward and not visible to others. The life shows itself to others by work, labour and patience. The three principles or motives are mentioned in I Corinthians xiii.13, "And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three." The three outward activities are referred to in Revelation ii.2, "I know thy works and thy labour and thy patience," and there the inner springs seem to be lacking, or at least weakening, for in verse 4 are the words "Thou hast left thy first love."

The Thessalonian believers, however, were at this time in a fresh and happy condition, following their recent conversion. They were active in the work of *faith*, such as prayer and praise, the reading and assimilating of the word of God, the habitual trust in God instead of self-confidence, the following of good to please the Lord. They showed their *love* to Christ in willing service for Him, this labour being to them not a burdensome obligation, but a privilege to toil for the One to Whom they owed everything. They maintained their *hope* of the Lord's coming, notwithstanding that the passage of time left them still in this world of conflict and sorrow, at home in the body but absent from the Lord. Content to have no portion in this world, they waited for Him because He had promised to return, and nothing short of being with Him could satisfy them.

There is one thing more in verse 3. These Christians retained a lively sense of the eye of God resting upon them; the conscience was alive and alert towards Him; their walk was before Him in the light. So the tone of their spiritual life was maintained. "Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and

labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father.”

May this be true of ourselves through the grace of God! While in the world we are continually subject to testings, trials and temptations of all sorts, with much within and around to damp and depress our Christian life, and to bring in distance between our souls and the Lord. May we be constantly revived and sustained by all the means which a faithful God affords for our blessing.

A further word of strengthening is given in verse 4—“knowing brethren beloved, your election of God;” rendered in the New Translation, “knowing, brethren beloved of God, your election.”

Up to the time of their conversion, the Thessalonians had lived the normal life of their time in common with their fellow-countrymen. Since believing in Christ they had suffered ostracism and persecution; ease of living had given place to tribulation and violent opposition. Had they made a profound mistake in embracing the Christian faith? Were their sufferings the result of being misled by some unknown visiting preachers, in a way for which they could blame no one but themselves?

The apostle comforts them with the thought that Another, even God Himself, had had a hand in it. He had chosen them, and they were beloved of God. Paul knew this, and would have the believers to be assured of it. If their pathway proved uphill and toilsome, it was God Himself who had called them to tread it. How privileged they were really! How safe! How sure of ultimate triumph and bliss!

Besides, they were now brethren. They had one another's companionship. Was there not an indissoluble bond in Christ which bound them both to God and to one another? A comforting thought indeed. As has been said, a pole will not remain upright alone; but if several are bound together at the top, they will stand firm. Such is the local Christian assembly.

Soon all will be perfect above. In another place in the Revelation, chapter xxi., verse 2, when the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, that is, more than a thousand years after the marriage of the Lamb, we read, “And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out

of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." Thus the church will retain for ever, in perfection, her freshness of affection towards Christ and her complete attachment to His most blessed Person. These things are revealed to us now, so as to have a present effect upon us while all is of faith, not yet sight.

(To be continued)

W. H. L. GRAHAM.



THE FATHER'S NAME

IN chapters xiv. to xvii. of the Gospel of John the name of the Father is used about fifty times, mostly by the Son Himself. The Lord Jesus had the cross in view, and turned instinctively to Him whose will it was that He should die.

Among believers it is said, "Nothing is so strong as the link of relationship; nothing so tender as the link of communion." For us this is a wholesome consideration. But such words may not be used of the Lord Jesus: in eternity past as well as during His brief sojourn on earth, the link with His Father was always unbroken, whether we contemplate the relationship itself or the communion flowing from it.

Let us notice a few references to the Father's Name, showing this communion between THE FATHER and THE SON. These seem designed to promote the joy and peace of believers.

In verses 20-22 of chapter xvi., the Lord had spoken to His disciples of their coming sorrow because He was leaving them, but declared that they would soon rejoice with a joy no one should take from them. He would see them again. His resurrection would be a great joy to them: and in the era this would introduce they would be able to ask the Father in His Name whatever could properly be associated with that Name. The Name of the Son was such a delight to the Father, that the Father would answer prayer made therein.

So long as the Lord remained on earth, it was not necessary for the disciples to ask in that way because He was with them. But after He had departed to the Father, they could ask in His Name, as acting for Him, as being in His service. Though

“whatsoever” in verse 23 must be restricted to those things which are for the glory of the Son, the range of what may be asked for is so large as to fill the heart of the suppliant with joy (verse 24).

Then in verses 26 and 27 a further revelation is given. Though it is for the sake of the Son that their prayers are answered, yet the Father Himself has His own positive love for believers, because they have loved the Son and have believed that He came out *from God*. On this account He hears them readily. Verse 28 contains an advance even on this, for the Son now says, “I came forth *from the Father*, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go *to the Father*.” What everlasting comfort and joy all this was intended to bring to the hearts of His own!

After the defection of Judas (Chap. xiii. 30) the disciples had been privileged to listen to the profoundest utterances that ever fell upon the ears of men. So that they were able to say: “Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb. Now are we sure that Thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask Thee: by this we believe that Thou camest forth from God” (verses 29, 30).

What infinite grace on the part of the Son to speak thus to men! To assure them they were loved of the Father because, in the face of the surrounding unbelief, they had believed—believing that was made easy by the works they had seen Him do, and His own statement that He had come forth from God. Would not their reverent wonder increase when they heard Him address His Father, “they . . . have known surely that I came out from Thee, and they have believed that Thou didst send Me” (Chapter xvii., verse 8)? And again in verse 25, “These have known that Thou hast sent Me.”

We must not think that such blessedness belonged only to those who were with Him then. For He said also, “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word” (verse 20). This embraces not merely those who heard the apostles, but all succeeding generations of believers.

After His death and resurrection the Lord uttered something held in reserve until then. Addressing the first person who saw

Him risen from the dead, He gave the wonderful news to Mary Magdalene, "I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God and your God." Surely the grace of these words is inexpressible! "THE FATHER", "MY FATHER", are words we may understand without difficulty: but "YOUR FATHER"? This is divine grace in its highest manifestation.

Before closing His course of instruction, the Lord prepared His disciples for what His omniscience foresaw awaited them (Chap. xvi.31-33). "In the world ye have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (R.V.). Tribulation appears to be the inevitable consequence of discipleship, even if degree varies very greatly.

In John xiv. 2, the Lord Jesus had said, "In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you." He would not have spoken in that way had there been any doubt as to their reaching the Father's house, or having a place there. He reassured them on both these points. So, in the matter of tribulation, He did not tell them it was inevitable, and leave it at that: He reminded them that He Himself had overcome the world. They were therefore to be of good courage. They would be strengthened also by knowing of His intercession for them (John xvii.).

P. WHITE.



MOUNTAIN OF MYRRH and HILL OF FRANKINCENSE

IN the Song of Songs we find a dialogue between bridegroom and bride, in which their mutual affection is expressed. The bridegroom is the Messiah; the bride, the people of Israel. Though the Song of Songs does not set forth the relation of Christ to His assembly, the heavenly bride, much spiritual nourishment may be drawn from this song. If the love of the Lord Jesus for Israel is so great, what must it be for His assembly for which He gave Himself! His love is not only unfathomable, but constant, in contrast with our love which is

fitful and dependent all too often upon our frame of mind. Our love for Christ is but a faint echo of His love for us.

Chapter iii. 6 and chapter viii. 5 refer to one and the same person who has engaged the attention of the bridegroom, and drawn out the love of his heart. Both verses begin with the question: "Who is this that cometh out of (up from) the wilderness?" Nevertheless there is a difference in the circumstances. In chapter iii. the question is asked over myrrh and incense, symbols of the sufferings and death of Christ, which have given us access to God. In chapter viii. the bride is leaning on her beloved. The Lord Jesus, risen out of death, is figured as the High Priest. The wilderness is the place where much may be learnt of the grace of God. There He dwelt, in the midst of the tabernacle.

Like Pillars of Smoke

THE bride is compared to pillars of smoke; she has been blackened with myrrh and incense. In this connection we may recall the brazen altar of burnt offering, where in figure we see the complete surrender to God of the only One in whom God could find His joy. The meat offering, which sets forth the complete devotion of the Lord Jesus to God during His life on the earth, was mingled with frankincense, and the memorial of it burnt on the altar of burnt offering. The columns of smoke rose on high, and were a sweet savour to God. In the representation of the bride as "pillars of smoke" there is a reference to the fact that the children of God are seen by Him in the beauty and glory of His Son Jesus Christ.

Myrrh is a symbol of the sufferings of Christ. He was the Man of Sorrows. From beginning to end His residence on earth was characterised by suffering. The Magi from the East offered Him myrrh as a gift: on the cross they offered Him myrrh. When He revealed Himself in goodness and grace to the people, He was recompensed with hatred. When He cast out devils, people accused Him of being possessed Himself and doing His works by the power of the prince of the devils. They drove nails into His hands and feet; they mocked and derided Him. All this happened to Him from the hands of men. Yet the worst for Him was what He had to endure in the three hours of darkness upon the cross. Forsaken of God, burdened

with our debt, judged on account of our sins; yea, made to be sin for us, He fully tasted the bitterness of suffering.

The Sufferings of Christ and Our Worship

THE incense associated with the meat offering which was burnt upon the altar, emitted a pleasant odour. Speaking generally, incense, especially that which was offered on the altar of incense, symbolises the worship of believers. Our hearts need to be filled with adoration of the Lord Jesus. Until He comes, the Lord would occupy us with His sufferings (the myrrh) in order to bring us to worship (frankincense). In this connection we read in chapter iv. verse 6, "Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense."

Myrrh (the sufferings of the Lord) is connected with *a mountain*; frankincense (our worship) with *a hill*. The bride too is seen blackened with all kinds of perfume. That perfume is perfectly pure in the eyes of God which is the result of the Holy Ghost directing our hearts to the person of the Lord Jesus, and to His sufferings, so that we worship.

The High Priest Who Gives Strength

IN chapter viii. (verse 5), the same bride, seen in chapter iii. to be like pillars of smoke, is leaning upon her beloved, who prefigures here our great High Priest risen for us from the dead. In the wilderness we become tired, but we may become strong by leaning on our Lord. To attain to this condition we need the sustaining power of our risen High Priest. Without Him we are feeble: looking to Him we are strong: we go from strength to strength.

Paul was tried by a thorn in the flesh. At first he was not content to have this trial and besought the Lord to take it away. He sought the compassion of his High Priest, and the divine answer to his thrice-repeated prayer was: "My grace suffices thee; for My power is perfected in weakness" (New Tr.). The circumstances under which Paul sighed were not changed: the thorn in the flesh was not taken away. But Paul was changed.

Gratitude and contentment took the place of sighing under the trial.

However great our difficulties may be we may lean upon the arm of our High Priest. When, in prayer, we reflect upon what the Lord declared Himself to be for us in His prayer to the Father (John xvii.), we shall receive comfort and encouragement.

The Lord Jesus deserves our gratitude for what He now does on high for us as our compassionate High Priest, and our Advocate with the Father. We rejoice that He is our High Priest, who gives us daily strength. May we worship Him as long as we live. But when we do this, let us not forget that, however perfectly we may do it, our worship is but a *hill* in comparison with that *mountain* of myrrh, typical of His sufferings (Ch. iv. 6).

Night will soon be gone, and the time come when shadows will flee away. Then we shall see Him face to face. His promise, repeated more than once, is: "I come quickly." Amen, even so, come, Lord Jesus.

(Notes from ministry of brother Mattha Behnam, from Egypt, at a conference held at Alphen on the Rhine. Adapted from a translation from the Dutch MESSENGER OF SALVATION by J. Mol, Senior.)



GOING FORTH TO MEET THE BRIDEGROOM

(Remarks on Matthew xxv. 1-10)

I suppose it would be perfectly safe to say that there is no truth in the whole of God's word with which we are more familiar than the coming again of the Lord Jesus Christ. We may perhaps even think ourselves a little superior to other Christians because of our understanding of it. But while we are so well acquainted with this truth, there is none that more quickly loses its power in our hearts if we lose the sense of the near approach of the Lord Jesus.

We are living in the interval that the Lord Jesus intimated there would be, after the cry had gone forth, "Behold the bridegroom! Go forth to meet him." The history of Christians in early days should have been a warning to us. "While the bridegroom tarried they all slumbered and slept," and yet for this very thing they had turned to God, that they might wait for His Son from heaven (I Thess. i. 10). They had all taken up this position—the ten virgins went forth to meet the bridegroom (Matt. xxv. 1).

Whether they were true or false they all slumbered and slept: the coming of the Lord was forgotten. But a hundred years ago the Spirit of God began to work, to bring this hope again before the hearts of His saints. "At midnight there was a cry made, 'Behold, the bridegroom! go ye forth to meet Him.'" And what was the result? There was an awakening not only on the part of those who were real, but on the part of those who were only professors. The revival of ritualism which we now see around us in Protestantism dates from that time.

The Lord Jesus has not yet come. As we might have learned from this parable, there was to be an interval between the going forth of the cry and His actual coming, an interval during which those who had no oil, finding their lack, would be seeking in various ways to get it. This is the real lesson of much of the religious activity we see around us to-day.

The question for us is what has been the result in our hearts? It is quite possible for us to content ourselves with the mere knowledge of the truth, and to sing about it, as in that beautiful hymn, "Jesus our Lord."

"Soon Thou wilt come again,
Jesus the Lord;
With Thee how happy then,
Jesus our Lord!"

How we ought to challenge our hearts as to the effect this hope has upon us! If we are honest with ourselves, do our lives show that this hope is a reality with us? Or have we, as the virgins in this parable at the beginning, in some measure fallen asleep? It is impossible for the truth of the Lord's coming to lay hold upon us without having a practical effect. Let us then ask ourselves how we should act to-day or to-morrow, were

we fully persuaded that we were on the very eve of the return of the Lord Jesus, Who is coming for us in His infinite grace.

The Lord had us in view when He first came into this world. And we should be without hope now and dare not look for His coming, had He not already been into this world. He came, and He bore the judgment of God that must otherwise have come upon us. We cannot fully enter into all that this meant to Him, but we know that His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground, at the very thought of the cross. But what must it have been to His holy soul to pass through those hours of darkness, of which we sing:

“When Satan sore assailed Thee,
When God heard not Thy cry,
Then were our sins Thy burden,
Our guilt, our grief, Thy bands.”

But what is the blessed result of His atoning work for us? It is that we are able to look forward with peace and joy to His return. There is nothing in ourselves that would give us ground for such peace, but we know Him; we know that He has borne the wrath for us. He is coming again in glory, as we read in Thessalonians, “Ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven, Whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, our Deliverer from the coming wrath” (I Thess. i. 9, 10).

And when that wrath comes upon this world, the Lord Jesus is the bringer of it. He is the One Who is coming to visit this earth with the wrath of God, and we know Him as the One Who upon the cross entered into every question as to our sins, all that would have brought the wrath of God upon us, all that would have filled us with fear if we had had to say to God about it. The Lord Jesus Himself has had to do with God about our sins already, and has borne the judgment in His own holy body upon the tree.

Therefore it is that we are able to look forward with peace to that day when He will come for us. It is not as judge that He is coming, but He is coming as our Saviour from heaven, coming to fashion these bodies of ours into the likeness of His own body of glory.

How ready we are to content ourselves with the knowledge of the truth, without judging ourselves by it, without asking ourselves day by day, what would be the result in all our conversation if we really believed what we profess to believe! We know the Lord Jesus Himself has set His heart upon that day. The very last words He spoke from heaven were, "Behold, I come quickly." And the response of the church was, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Beloved, may that word reach us, and may we be ready to judge ourselves honestly in the presence of God, as to all our ways and behaviour down here! God has called us out to wait for his Son from heaven, and we have heard the awakening cry. God has allowed an interval of waiting to come, on purpose to test our hearts. May the Lord Jesus find us answering to His desire, our hearts saying, in ever ready response to His promise, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." G. F. COX.

(This article, which is taken from THE BIBLE MONTHLY for November, 1933, contains notes of an address given shortly before the author was called home to be with the Lord.)

ANCIENT OF DAYS

THIS is a divine title found three times in Dan. 7, namely, twice in Daniel's dream or visions (verses 9, 13), and once in the interpretation (ver. 22). The title applies to God, and is expressive of the eternity of His being; it also applies equally to the Son of man, Who is God and man in One Person, blessed be His holy name.

All judgment is committed to the Son of man (John v. 22, 27); and Messiah's future kingdom is the subject in Dan. 7. In the visions, the *Ancient of days* is first seen on the throne of fiery flames (ver. 9); then the Son of man comes to the *Ancient of days* to receive His dominion (ver. 13), in which passage They are distinguished though They are One; finally (ver. 22), the *Ancient of days* and the saints together possess the kingdom. The visions in Dan. 7 should be compared with that in Rev. i. 12-20, where John sees the Son of man in like judicial character.

W. J. HOCKING

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