

THE MAINTENANCE OF THE TRUTH



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90 Channel Street, Galashiels

Price 1s. 6d.

INTRODUCTION.

As a preface to the first issue of this new quarterly magazine, the following extracts from a letter written over 40 years ago would seem appropriate.

“ In the issue of a new serial it is important to make plain that its object is the maintenance of what is true in doctrine, not the promulgation of what is new. No intelligent Christian can gainsay that in this (19th) century there has been a remarkable revival of the truth of the Church, and the effect has been felt beyond the immediate circle formed by the truth, revived in God’s goodness. How are the great truths involved in the Church, *e.g.*, the calling of God, eternal life, new creation and union to be maintained? Fixed statements and conventional terms have proved inefficacious, as has also the attaching of everything to the believer as a possession, the good of which is experienced in the power of the Spirit. Souls so trained must necessarily stop short of apprehension of new creation. A Christian’s apprehension of God’s calling cannot be beyond the measure of God’s work in him. He may claim standing, privilege, having prophecy, understanding mysteries, and without love be nothing. A Christian’s measure for God and for the assembly is love The only real way to secure truths is in our being their expression; holding the truth in love We cannot have the consciousness of any truth, save as we are in the state which corresponds to it The first light of God in the soul was by faith. We are justified, saved, sons of God, risen together with Christ, and Christ dwells in our hearts by faith. At the same time the work of the Spirit of God forms the believer for approach to God in the consciousness of his soul, *i.e.*, in the new man In this way our souls are in the brightest light as the fruit of God’s work in us and in the apprehension of the greatest things which are for God. We have not only the faith but the consciousness of all that is of God’s grace for man. Truly we can then say that we have been brought out of darkness into God’s marvellous light!”

THE PATH OF FAITH IN A DAY OF RUIN.

(Notes of an address by J. A. Trench, 1890).

In the beginning of Ephesians we have the wonderful place which is ours as in Christ before God the Father in unclouded perfection, and the counsels of God according to His glory. Then, besides our individual place, God carries us on to these corporate relationships which we have with Christ as Head of the body, and with God as a dwelling place for Him. The connection of the opening of Ch. iv. is with the end of Ch. ii., v. 15. There we read (1) "to make in himself of twain, *one new man*." What a wonderful thing it is to think that we have been taken out of what we were, dead in trespasses and sins, and that we are quickened together with Christ, and made one new man. Then there are:—(2) the *one* body (v. 16). We are all united together and to Christ. (3) "Through Him we both have access by *one Spirit* unto the Father" (v. 18). (4) we are builded together for an habitation of God" (v. 22). This is the wonderful position into which we have been brought. Ch. iii., gives us, in a parenthesis, Paul's part in this blessed work, presenting him as the chosen vessel of the revelation to us of the mystery, and closing with that beautiful prayer, which is not so much a question of knowledge as in the prayer of Ch. i., but communion with Himself, that Christ, the object of the Father's heart, might be our object too. Now from the basis of this unfolding of our position, the apostle beseeches us to "Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called." Already in the earliest and brightest expression of the truth in the assembly at Ephesus, we find there was the need of this spirit of lowliness and meekness as the only one in which to walk worthily, using diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit. Then immediately, lest our thoughts of it should be limited in any way, we find three circles of unity: (1) one body, one Spirit, and one hope, where all is real; (2) one Lord, one faith, one baptism, *i.e.*, profession, where all may not be real; (3) "One God and Father of all," *i.e.*, the whole family, taking in the universe.

The principles of God cannot change with the dispensation, they are given to us to form our path, and know no change, though we change alas! Everything is pressing that it is the last time, and to walk according to the vocation wherewith we are called, instructions are given to faith, for

the change of things brought in by our failure. This we find in II. Timothy, ch. ii., "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His." The principles of God know no change, but He knoweth them that are His. "And let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity" the unity of the Spirit can only be recognised in accordance with Christ's principles. Then the illustration of the great house is applied. The first essential step of the path is separation from what is evil. Then the loins must be girded. Take care lest the enemy get in and mock you in the path of separation, but follow righteousness, faith, love, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. There are the three steps; (1) separation from evil; (2) the loins girded; (3) seeking out those who are similarly separated. Every step of the path is ordered by God Himself. There remains another unchanging principle, "Where two or three are gathered together unto My name, there am I in the midst of them," *i.e.*, the smallest company that could be found not meeting in man's will (in independency), but gathered to the divinely given centre, in the wonderful character of association with Him. How blessed to be reminded of these principles; let them challenge our hearts as to whether we are really seeking to carry out the unity of the Holy Ghost (Matt. xviii., 20)!

Turning to Malachi we find an illustration of the fruits of His grace produced by the power of these things in the hearts of His people. We cannot imagine a darker day; profound indifference to everything of God marked the mass. The Lord had restored a remnant from the captivity, but all soon became clouded over by failure, and the restored remnant was profoundly indifferent, *e.g.*, the priests that despised His Name, "Wherein have we despised thy Name?" The Lord said, "Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar," and they said, "Wherein have we polluted thee?" (i. 6, 7). Of the table of the Lord they said, "What a weariness is it" (i. 12, 13). Ch. iii., 7, brings to the point when the Lord said, "Return unto me, and I will return unto you," and they said, "Wherein shall we return?" What indifference! So much for the dark side. Now turn to v. 16 and 17. "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for

them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name.” How sweet in that day of general indifference that there shone out of it a bright light for God. There were hearts knit together, who loved to meet, to speak of Him. He listened, and kept a book of remembrance for those who even *thought* on His name. We have the immense cheer for our hearts, that in the darkest days He will have a remnant whom He marks as His own—His seal is set upon them!

Four hundred years later, we still find a few cleaving to Him—Zacharias, Mary, Simeon, and Anna (Luke i., 11). In spite of her great age, Anna departed not from the temple, the centre of God’s interest upon earth. As long as He owned it, she owned it (Luke ii., 36, 37). As one last instance refer to Luke xxi., 1-4. The poor widow cast in all the living she had for the maintenance of God’s house (still recognised, so near the close). The Lord owns her devotedness, although in the next breath the Lord warns His disciples that not one stone should be left upon another. Up to the last there were some cleaving to His principles.

In Rev. ii. and iii., we have the history of the church in responsibility. At the close of it we can look back and see all the main features of the church’s history stamped on the prophetic page. Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea are found together at the end. In the Epistle to Philadelphia, the Lord gives us what answers to His own heart in the midst of the ruin. He presents Himself in His own blessed character as the holy and the true, because that is what He would have in His people. He is looking for what is genuine! Then “He that has the key of David” sets before us an open door. Who will occupy the door He has opened? This depends upon condition. “Thou hast a little strength:” He is not looking for any great display of power, which would attract the notice of the world. “Thou . . . hast kept my word;” He is looking for complete subjection to His Word, as the condition that answers to His heart. It is a day of subtle working of the enemy. We are called to uncompromising fidelity. Oh, that we may seek to answer to this revelation of what suits Him. Then He goes on, “Because thou hast kept the word of my patience.” His whole heart is set upon having us where He is. He is patiently waiting for that moment; thus it is the word of *His patience*. Then He puts His seal

on what His grace has produced, “ I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation.” It is deeply solemn that it does not secure that the one who has been in that path, will be preserved in it to the end, but it does assure us that *some* will be in it to the end. Some may be unfaithful, and have to be set aside! “ I come quickly ”; here He addresses those who are awake in their affections; so it is, “ I come quickly,” to sustain fidelity in the testing, “ Hold that fast which thou hast.” In v. 12, how often that little word “ *my* ” comes in; it is the association with Him of the heart, which faithfulness leads us into, right on to the heavenly glory. The last phase of things in Laodicea does not displace what has gone before. The very character of its judgment flows from the fact that it comes after the awakening of the hearts of His people. There is the indifference as in Malachi, and the Lord spues it out of His mouth, *i.e.*, judgment long forewarned. But how encouraging to know that what His grace has produced in the past, He can produce in the present too. The Lord grant that we may be found in that path, keeping His word.

INDIFFERENCE TO CHRIST.

“ *Thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.*”—Rev. iii., 15.

Worldliness and earthly-mindedness have blinded the minds and hardened the hearts of Christians, now-a-days, to an extent very few have any idea of. There are, I am persuaded, very few cases touching upon the safety, and well-being of the Church of God, which can be left to be judged by the mass of believers. On whom can one cast one’s burden of responsibility as to the spirituality of the saints’ walk and conduct? In innumerable cases which have occurred, I have found that the affections to the Person of Christ have not been lively enough to make Christians indignant at open insults put upon Him—and they have had neither the heart nor the mind to stand apart from that which was the expression of indifference to Him. . . .

Many can contend earnestly for love to the brethren, and warmly resent failure in this respect, yet remain unmoved when the truth of God, on which it is based, is sought to be undermined. . . . Dishonour to the Lord is less thought about than disrespect to one another.

(Present Testimony ix., 207; ii., 30, 31).

REACTION TO THE WAYS OF GOD.

Notes of address by John Robinson at Workington (22/3/40).

It is well for us to know what God is doing and the end He has in view on the earth. Where God is working, Satan is working too. His is the great counterfeit of God's masterpiece. Taking account as moral beings involves responsibility to act according to the light God has given! In Genesis, after the Flood, God began with a new earth and Noah was set up in His favour. Immediately he offered a burnt offering and God smelled a sweet savour. Notwithstanding, shortly afterwards Noah failed grievously when tested by wine. A little later, Nimrod manifested purpose of heart in seeking self-exaltation. He built a city which developed into Babel. It was the progenitor of the great Babylon yet to be destroyed; so that the end of all man's glory is destruction! Immediately after Nimrod's appearance, God called out Abraham from his country and father's house; that introduced the principle that God must have first place. Abraham, the man of faith, knew how to refuse what in itself might be perfectly right. But in the same chapter he failed in going down to Egypt. However, there was also recovery, and he returned to Bethel, the House of God. He was subjected to another test in the land to which God had called him, in that there was strife between his herdmen and those of Lot. In spite of his natural right he left the choice to Lot. Then God came in again with the promise to Abraham of all the land in his view. However, he remained a stranger and pilgrim in the land. Following that, he was called to deliver Lot. After his victory he had to refuse the gift of the King of Sodom, as he could not be enriched by the world. He was dependent on God and received everything from Him. (Similarly the kingdoms of the world were at the disposal of the Lord when here, but He knew how to refuse. In the same way beholding the beauty and the glory of the Lord will render us immune from the seductions of the enemy).

As we follow the history in the Old Testament, there was a very interesting time in Joshua. The people had come through the wilderness, crossed the Jordan and the reproach of Egypt had been taken away. As a company dependent on God they marched round Jericho and its walls fell down. Yet immediately after that the Babylonish element entered. Choosing the things of the world brought the people into

bondage! After centuries of failure under tests, relieved by individual obedient reaction, the people were taken captive to Babylon; yet even there God was on behalf of His servants. They refused to partake of the king's meat. Subsequently, three of them were cast into a fiery furnace. But there they had the company of One like unto the Son of God. God will honour those who honour Him! He will open a door of escape. The fire set them free from their bonds. They were preserved in the midst of the trial in communion with the Son of God.

Coming to the Gospels we find "His Church" against which the gates of hell shall not prevail, established by the Lord Jesus Christ. On the other hand in the chapter where Peter boldly confessed the Lord, he was found refusing the Cross and merited the rebuke of the Lord. The precious things of Christianity can only be had through the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, which separates us from our sins and brings to an end that man who is obnoxious to God! In Romans, Ch. vii, we see deliverance from bondage and death so that we may be in living association with the Son of God. The things of the world are going on to destruction but there is what belongs to the Lord with which he is occupied:—*viz.*, His Body and His Bride. That will be taken up to meet Him in the air and subsequently to be manifested with Him. Babylon will come out in full bloom, but will have short prosperity coming to final destruction, but what belongs to Christ will come out as His Bride, "adorned for her husband," in spite of all the previous failure in responsibility. She shall display the beauty and perfection of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself! As His own peculiar treasure He can take delight for the joy and satisfaction of His heart of love. May the Lord help us to be occupied with Him and His thoughts, that we may become more like Him now, then when He shall appear we shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is!

"I will fasten Him as a nail in a sure place . . . and they shall hang upon Him . . . all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons."—Isa. xxii., 23, 24.

To great and small things love alike can reach,
And cares for each as all, and all as each.

“REJOICE IN THE LORD.”

Notes of an address on Phil. iv. by J. N. Darby.

In the third chapter spiritual energy carries the saint onward in the race: the fourth chapter treats more of the power which lifts him above his circumstances; not making him insensible to them, but enabling him to rejoice in the Lord alway. Nothing is more instructive than the life of Paul shut up in prison at Rome, when he had laboured more abundantly than all. The result was, all in Asia had forsaken him, seeking their own; yet Paul could rejoice in the Lord alway. We shall find plenty of trouble and conflict, for Satan is not bound yet! The more we go on the more we shall know the opposition, and sorrow in the church. Saints individually going wrong should press upon our hearts; but we ought to have the secret of faith, walking with Christ and the power to serve others. Christ, the Man of sorrows, was the example of this. He could say, “I have meat to eat that ye know not of.” Even Martha, whom He loved, tried to move Mary away from listening to His words. The disciples sought to turn Him aside when He spoke of His death. All showed misapprehension of what He had come for—to give His life a ransom for many. Yet He can ask that the disciples may have His joy fulfilled in themselves. If we really have this joy in Christ we can endure things for the elect’s sake, because we are with Him. He endured all things for the joy set before Him. It is not the mere buoyancy of a heart ignorant of the power of evil, and the opposition of Satan. There is a good deal of superficial joy; but it is real power when the depth of evil and opposition is apprehended, and the power of the Lord known as above all. Are we conscious that what is working is the power of God and it is paramount to the evil. The evil is flowing on like a mighty stream to the ocean—judgment; unless the Lord intervenes in goodness, or mercy, or in judgment, or a scourge. But the character of the world is that satan is its god and its prince. The power of Christ has come in above all, and this must be the power applied to us. If my soul is living in the immediate power of this it will feel the presence of the evil, but will not be depressed nor “terrified by your adversaries.”

The practical daily supply of strength depends upon the heart being occupied with Him who has overcome, and Who has all power in earth and heaven. There we know the

sure resting place in Himself which nothing can touch; as it says, "labouring to enter into His rest." The heart, with Him who is in rest, has a power which nothing can reach; and the first mark of this power is patience. This power keeps the heart free for others. The Apostle was occupied with the whole church, and yet can think even of a slave with his master, as if there was but a single individual to think of. His affection was fresh for each "yoke fellow." Though all had forsaken him (all sought their own) it did not hinder the outgoing of his heart. Are our hearts living enough with Christ to think of a brother thus? Paul says, my heart is so with Christ in the consciousness of what it is to be in the Book of Life, that when I think of a brother it is as one whose name is in the Book of Life. Again, of the Galatians, he says, "I stand in doubt of you"; but, in the next chapter, he can say, "I have confidence in you through the Lord." Bringing in the power which was above all the evil he made wells going through the valley of Baca. Chained between two soldiers, the Apostle was cast more than ever upon the Lord. The Lord was very gracious to him, but he learned to rejoice, not in the prosperity of his work, but in the Lord always. As the Psalmist can say, "I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth." How did this come about? We read, "This poor man cried and the Lord heard him" (Ps. xxxiv., 1, 6). Again we read, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." It is not, "I have green pastures I shall not want." It is "in the presence of mine enemies my cup runneth over." Paul, standing before Agrippa, said not "I would to God you were Christians," but "such as I am." He was so full of the love of Christ, that he could wish they were as he was. The heart was completely happy in Christ, and the trials, even the trials in the church, only carried him to Christ. Are we so conscious of this blessedness that we can say to others, I would that you were as I am? Every Christian, old and young, is called to this. The only difference is that the young rejoice in the first blush of feeling; but there is nothing positive to rejoice in but Christ. When the evil springs up our blessing has to do with Christ in resurrection, Who has destroyed him who had the power of death; with Him whose mighty holy arm hath gotten Him the victory. As He says, "Be of good cheer I have overcome the world." He starts us with this

testimony, having gone Himself into a place where evil cannot reach. We have Him as the immovable source of blessing, and rejoice in Him there. He has not taken us out of the world governed by Satan's power, but He keeps us from the evil. We are not of the world as He was not of it. Speaking of running the race, we are to look away unto Jesus Who has run the whole course, met the power of Satan in the beginning and the end, tempted in all points, but overcame. The victory won, we are to enjoy Him now high above the things we are passing through. Do not let present circumstances occupy you. Do not look away from Him to them, but rejoice in Christ always.

You must be with Him because He alone is out of the evil and is the centre of good. What is seen here will be your moderation. Am I looking for my rights in this world? Christ had none! My treasure is elsewhere; I am going out of this world; I can wait for my rights until Christ has His. Let us pass through this world with our hearts weaned from things here. Christ passed through it leaving all to go its own way in the presence of unrighteousness. The flesh is apt to rise, but let us cultivate the subduedness which yields. The Samaritans would not have Him. He turned aside to another village! What a lesson that is! Because He had steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem, the half-hearted would not receive Him. So will it be with you; if you steadfastly set your face to go right, the religiously half-hearted will not want you; but the Lord is at hand. He has taught us to wait for Him, to be always as men that wait for their Lord.

We have cares and sorrows. We should have more if we were living more as servants among the sorrows of this world. But there is a tendency to be anxious even in caring for others. I must tell God, and this carries me so above the cares that I can rejoice in God. What does God give to the heart that gives all the care to Him? He gives His peace. Is God's heart taken up with circumstances, or troubled by them? Is His throne shaken by the wickedness and folly of the world, or even the failure of the saints? Put your cares on God, Who knows the end from the beginning, and He will put His peace in your heart. The peace He is in will keep your heart and mind. There is no indifference, carelessness, or coldness, but earnest entreaty with thanksgiving. A man with thanksgiving goes to Him

with prayer and supplication, and the soul having cast all on God, feels His hand under the trouble, and can say, "it is His affair. not mine."

He is a happy person who goes through this world in blessed fellowship with Christ, in the power of the Spirit of God for inward joy and for outward circumstances with his affections free to go out to the brethren. The heart will be free to find good in people. Jesus could find grace in a poor soul, and His heart was free to enjoy it: "I have meat to eat ye know not of." Again He says, "Mary has chosen that good part"; and He can speak of "An Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile." There is always this perception when the heart is kept free to enjoy the fruits of the Spirit, occupied with what is good. You cannot touch pitch without being defiled. There is much pitch in these days; *i.e.*, thinking with and talking like the world! The heart gets coloured by it; it is not Christ. The heart set free lives in the things that Christ's heart delights in. It makes such a difference living in the atmosphere where Christ's heart dwells, instead of being dragged after a thousand things!

Not only His peace, but the God of peace shall be with you. What blessedness is in that Name. He is never called the God of joy! Joy is up-and-down: there may be a cause of joy, and trouble may hinder the heart enjoying it. Peace is what nothing can disturb. Peace is the effect of a perfect work. He has made peace through the blood of His Cross. Why? Because He has gone through everything that was contrary to God, bearing the wrath of God—the very opposite to peace. The instant He is risen He comes into the midst of His own and says, "Peace"; and now God takes that wonderfully blessed place of the God of peace. Have your hearts got that peace? If God rises up with every attribute that He has, can He say anything to disturb it—disturb Himself? You hath He reconciled; things around are not reconciled. But I can say before God, "I am in the light as God is in the light because the blood of the Lord Jesus cleanses me from all sin." I may have conflict with self, with the world and Satan, but He sets me in that state which nothing can disturb. Your peace shall flow like a river. Faith is needed to be able to rejoice always. The feet will be going where God would have them to go, not avoiding evil merely, but walking as He would lead in every detail of life, in habits, dress, con-

versation. Everyday habits test the soul's condition. It is a different thing to say Christ strengtheneth me, and to say, "I can do all things through Christ." Paul had learned it. What a blessed thing to find that Christ was sufficient for him. He had learned to be abased and to abound. Abundance tends to draw the heart away from the Lord. He had kept him from that. If Paul had want, he had Christ's abundance. This is not joy in circumstances, but moral power above circumstances. He had learned it looking at Christ, and finding it out all the way along. It was true when he began his career, but Paul did not know it then as he did at the end when he could speak of it to others as that which he had learned. "My God shall supply all your need" is known in all sorts of circumstances; and if you ask, what is the measure? It is "according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." All sought their own; but it only enabled Paul to say more completely "My God shall supply all your need." What reality in the life of faith! Walking in secret with God, we get what no world can touch, no power of Satan can rob us of. The trials that come in by the way only prove us superior through the power of His grace.

THE HOPE OF GLORY.

It is important for us to have our minds fixed on the hope of glory which is set before us. . . . In the children of Israel unbelief took many forms; one character of it was that "they despised the pleasant land" (Num. xiv., 31; Ps. cvi., 24). Now very often there is in our hearts practically, though not wilfully, the despising of the pleasant land. I am not speaking of any doubtfulness of the land being ours. If there were something that a friend had given me as a great treasure, and I was sure of its being mine, and yet I looked at it but seldom and cared to think of it but seldom, this would be a proof (not of uncertainty respecting its being mine, but that I despised the thing, that I had no real value for it. This is very often the way we treat the heavenly glory that belongs to us.

(J. N. D., Vol. xix., 411).

Jesus only can truly satisfy and rejoice the heart. All the difficulties of earth are nothing when He is present; but heaven itself would be for us solitary and joyless, if He were wanting there.

(Present Testimony xv., 19).

CHRIST THE HEAD OF EVERY MAN.

Notes of an address by W. H. Westcott, 1929.

Before speaking directly of Headship, I may say that our ideas of the gospel are very contracted. In our contact with people we think if we can only get them "over the line," that is all our present business. But the gospel is comprehensive. The facts that lie at its basis are simple yet grand; how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; that He was buried, and was raised again the third day according to the Scriptures; then was seen by several on earth, and finally by one who saw Him in heavenly glory. The epistle to the Romans is the orderly exposition of the meaning of the facts. First, the explanation of the state in which the gospel finds men; then of how that state was met, and of the new state that has been brought about by the grace of God. In Rom. 16, 25, you are reminded, as those who have received the gospel, that God has power to establish you; so that every part of the gospel should be wrought livingly into your souls, that you might know the deliverance spoken of, and which has been wrought for you; and have a practical, powerful, entrance into all the blessing of which it speaks. The gospel, when it lays hold of you, and is wrought into your souls, prepares you for the understanding of "the mystery." That is what was in the mind of God in providing the gospel. It is really therefore a basis laid in your soul for the intelligence of all the mystery.

In Romans, Ch. xiv, v. 17, we read, we have been brought under the sway of God, in contrast to the dominion of sin. You are under God's will, the sway of God in grace; the kingdom of God is set up in your soul. When one is saved and put under the will of God; what is begun in the soul is but the forecast of what is going to be established in a world-wide way by and bye. When the kingdom of God is outwardly manifested, and Christ has come as God's King over the whole earth, there will be three great marks which everybody can recognise:—(1) It will be a righteous rule, all wrongs will be righted, and the reign of that wonderful King will be righteous. (2) There will be peace. The nations will not learn war any more, nor will there be international strife, nor class war, but the will of God will be dominant; and in the case of our Lord Jesus Christ, it will be absolute autocracy linked with absolute justice,

what has never been known on earth yet; the effect of righteousness will be peace; (3) There will be joy. The ransomed will return with songs to Zion, everlasting joy will be upon their heads, and the sounds of sorrow will be hushed. These are the three great marks of the coming kingdom of God, which will then be universal. But the Holy Ghost dwelling in you sets up the rule of God in your heart, and these three marks are exemplified in the Christian now. The Christian under the rule of Christ is righteous, (*i.e.*, speaking of him characteristically, and as subject to the will of God), he is peaceful, and happy. "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink"; it does not consist in your being a vegetarian, but the Holy Ghost brings you under the sway of God in grace, making you righteous and peaceful (*i.e.*, you are not a disturber of the peace), and happy. The gospel lays the foundation in your soul for the kingdom of God. Yet while the kingdom of God is referred to, the doctrine in its immensity is not developed.

From Romans, Ch. xii., v. 4, those who have believed the gospel are one body in Christ, organically joined together. It is not a matter of agreement (*i.e.*, not we will join one body; nor different gatherings federated to form one body; nor that the gatherings of Christians are individual members of the body of Christ, and that the whole body comprises all the gatherings; but every Christian is a member of the body of Christ). The fact is stated; the basis is laid in your soul for the understanding of the doctrine when it is unfolded; but it is not unfolded here!

"*The mystery*" is referred to in another way in Ch. xi., v. 25. God instructs us even in this primary epistle as to the order of His ways. All Israel will be saved; they will all be brought into national blessing; but at present God is visiting the nations to take out a people for His Name. He has postponed the kingdom in its outward form, and the blessing of Israel, but He has not forgotten it. Everyone saved at the present time is brought into a new circle of blessing.

From Ch. viii., v. 28-30, we see that in the gospel there is a basis laid in the soul for the fulfilment of the purpose of God (*i.e.*, the first time in this gospel epistle that "purpose" is mentioned. You may be quite a young Christian, but when God laid hold of you, He had a purpose in it, *viz.*, that you should be conformed to the image of His Son, that He

may be the firstborn among many brethren. It involves Sonship for us; and in order that we may have its enjoyment now, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son whereby we cry "Abba Father." The foundation is laid in your soul for the understanding of the purpose of God. Having begun the work, He sees it right through. What God has purposed will infallibly be fulfilled.

From Romans, Ch. vii., 1-4, we see that it would not be legal for you to leave the law if under the law, you are bound to that husband; but having died in that wherein we were held, having come under the benefit of grace, we have become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that we should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead. That is being delivered by the death of Christ from the law, we have a right to love Christ, to be wholly for Christ. "That we should be married to another, even to Him that is raised from the dead." You have, beloved, a right in heavenly courts, to be truly for Christ, loving Him, even as a wife who is a true woman loves her husband. So the foundation is laid in your soul for union with Christ. This is individual in the 7th of Romans, but the foundation is laid, not merely a love of gratitude, but a love of attachment to Christ! That foundation prepares you for the unfolding of the mystery when the church as a whole is united.

Romans, Ch. v., v. 15 brings us to the subject of the Headship of Christ, the foundation for which is laid in the believer's soul, but the doctrine of which is not unfolded in this epistle. We can see in these chapters from the 3rd onward, how that God in sovereign grace and through the death of Christ is the source of all blessing; but that it has been so wrought, and so seen in Christ, and the administration of it is so put into the hands of the Lord Jesus Christ, that all the blessing that we have by believing the gospel is administered through Jesus Christ our Lord. One blessing after another is presented as it has been wrought out in Christ Jesus. In the 3rd chapter, we have a summing up of our guilty estate. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." We might well despair as far as we are concerned. But, speaking to believers, the apostle at once says, we are "justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." The name "Christ Jesus" is applied to our Lord Jesus Christ where He is now. There has been wrought out a redemption the full

power of which is seen in Christ Jesus. It does not direct us to look to Jesus on the cross (because He is not there); nor as buried (He is not in the grave); nor is redemption in Him only as risen from the dead (He is up there in glory). The full expression of the redemption is seen in Christ Jesus; it is all set out in Him. He was charged with the sins on the cross, "Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God." But through whom, and on what ground? "Through our Lord Jesus Christ." He is the great Administrator of these favours of God. But not only so, we have a standing in Christ, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit of promise in the 5th chapter. God thus draws our attention to this glorified Person to whom we are indebted. From chapter v., v. 12 he goes on to speak of Headship. "As by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for all have sinned." "Through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God and the gift by grace which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many." The sin in which we formerly were found, the sins which we had committed, and the death and the condemnation that were the result of these things, are all traced up to the sin of one man Adam, our head. The head of that race was the one who fell through sin; and so death has passed on all for all have sinned. In Ch. iii. "All have sinned," sums up our *guilt*. But in Ch. v., the same three words sum up our *state*. The old state was that we were of a sinful nature under a sinful head, and condemned therein. But now we are translated from all that was connected with Adam; we are free of condemnation, have a new life, and in Christ. God now takes account of each Christian as under the headship of Christ, just as formerly under the headship of Adam. All connection with Adam has been judicially annulled by Christ's death for the believer, but that followed by His resurrection has involved for him the beginning of a new order of man altogether; as we have seen our redemption is in Christ Jesus on Whom we find the love of God eternally resting; and that the love of God rests upon us in Christ Jesus our Lord. "For if by one man's offence death reigned by one: much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one." There are three things in that verse—grace, righteousness, and life. God takes account of us as

having been transferred from Adam to Christ. We are linked to Christ, the Head, in risen life, partaking with the Head in all His wonderful position of grace, righteousness and life. At the end of the chapter "Where sin abounded grace did much more abound, that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord," *i.e.*, grace, righteousness and life!

In 1st Corinthians, Ch. 11 the subject is carried a step further. There is a difference between Romans and Corinthians. The former grounds us in the truth of the gospel, as the Apostle says, "To establish you according to my gospel." Every individual believer should get established in the gospel. "Unto the church of God which is at Corinth" (1 Cor. 1, 2). He is not now addressing individuals, to respond to that gospel, but he is addressing them as an assembly; to all in their localities. Lest any should say, "that applies to the Corinthians, God has not given it to us," the apostle adds, "with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both their's and our's." The state of the assembly at Corinth was the immediate cause of writing the epistle, but it was the opportunity of unfolding to the assembly of God in every locality; the constitution of the assembly, its privileges and functions, and ways of carrying it on. To say, "that is Paul's teaching or opinion" is nothing but ignorance; and that is exactly what Paul says.

The 11th chapter, v. 3 opens the subject in three directions:—(1) The head of every man is Christ. That everybody is under the Headship of Christ is true, but the apostle is addressing the Christian assembly, the immediate application is clearly thereto. (2) "The head of the woman is the man." (3) "The head of Christ is God." The Lord Jesus Christ, the Eternal Son ever seen in His own unique relation in the Godhead, has become Man, and He looks up in dependence and subjection to God. Even though exalted it is for the carrying out of the purpose of God. By and bye when He takes the Kingdom it is to bring everything into subjection to the will of God. In the end when the Kingdom has run its course, as far as that form of it is concerned, and the Lord Jesus has brought Israel through every peril, He will deliver up the Kingdom to God and His Father, that *God* may be all in all. He takes His place as

subject. He has taken that place as Man that in Manhood He might carry out all the purpose of God! Then "the head of the woman is the man," is elaborated in the chapter. In the Christian assembly God has a certain order suitable to Himself, and this is part of the order. When assembled as a christian assembly men remove their hats, and women remain covered because the head of the woman is the man! Man was made in the image of God, in His likeness, and his office in creation is that he stands in the image and glory of God, he is the head of the lower order of the creation; hence it would not do to cover up the glory of God! The woman was given to the man to be his help-meet. The woman is the glory of the man! So that, when coming into the presence of God, the glory of man is covered.

Then, the head of every man is Christ. In Romans, that all the blessing for man is headed up in Christ underlies all; the fulness of God is in Christ. But when the assembly comes together, we are to look to Christ for direction, for wisdom, for support. The assembly is carried on, while the Head is invisible, but nevertheless real. If everyone understood that he has immediate access to Christ, and Christ has immediate access to him, he would not be asserting his own will, or pushing forward, but everyone would look to Christ for direction. In the assembly there is not the appointing of a minister, to direct or control the service. That is not ministry of the truth in individual service, but of the assembly gathered in one place in recognition of Christ, as the one living, personal, active, controlling Head!

CHRIST IN THE HEART.

"That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith."—

"Christ is in heaven now. He was the centre of the thoughts of the little company who followed Him in Galilee. Why should not you and I have Him practically as the centre of our minds and hearts? All with them was simply done in the light and at the word of the Master. Had they boats to launch, nets to let down, all was at His word. This is a challenge to our hearts as to every-day circumstances. His presence in our hearts changes everything. It is very hard to be discontented when He is in the heart. How the thoughts of one's mind change with the company one is in! (J. N. D., Coll. Wri., Vol. xxvii., 209).

ONE SHEPHERD AND ONE FLOCK.

In John x. we have the privilege to see every Person in the Godhead engaged to carry out the divine counsels concerning Christ and His sheep:—(a) the Father sending the Son (36), giving the sheep to Christ, and caring for them as they are held in His hand (29); (b) the Son calling the sheep by name leading them out of man's world, going before them, giving His life for them, and forming them into one flock; (c) the Holy Spirit (under the figure of the porter) opening the door for Christ so that His voice is heard and the sheep drawn to Christ. Moreover, no power of the devil, no opposition of man, nor failure of the disciples could prevent the counsels of God being carried out. Nor is it otherwise to-day! It is good indeed for our souls to realise that in spite of the turmoil in the world, the corruptions of Christendom, the opposition of religious leaders, and the failure of the true people of God, Christ's sheep are being reached, blessed, led through the wilderness and brought home to glory.

The chapter opens with an allegory (v. 1) in which the Lord uses the familiar customs of an Eastern country in relation to a shepherd and his sheep, to set forth His own gracious work in the midst of Israel. The nation is likened to a sheepfold. False prophets and pretended Messiahs had risen from time to time seeking to obtain influence over the sheep for their own profit and exaltation. Such were only thieves and robbers. They did not enter in by God's appointed way—the door (v. 2). But at last One came into the Jewish fold by the way that God had foretold. In Him the varied prophecies as to the coming of the Messiah were fulfilled. He was born of the virgin, according to Isaiah; and at Bethlehem according to Micah. Thus Christ entered by the door and was manifested to be the true Shepherd of Israel, the "One Shepherd" foretold by Ezekiel (Ezek. xxxiv., 23).

"To Him the porter openeth" (v. 3). The porter is a figure of the power of God, whether acting providentially in ordering circumstances, or by the Spirit working in the hearts of men. Thus the way was opened for Christ to reach "His own sheep." However, while the Lord presents Himself as the Shepherd of the sheep, it is not as in Ezekiel xxxiv. to deliver Israel from their enemies and establish them in their land. For that the time has not yet come. Israel

has rejected Christ, and the nation is left in its blindness. Thus, the Lord is presented as the Shepherd calling His own sheep and leading them out of the Jewish fold into all the blessings of the new Christian flock. Of the mass of the Jewish nation, by whom He is rejected, He has to say, "Ye are not of my sheep." (26). Here, then, the Lord is seen in the midst of the corrupt Jewish nation exclusively occupied with His sheep, while they recognise no voice but His. Then we learn the three great activities of the Lord on behalf of His sheep. (1) The Shepherd calls His own sheep by name; and they hear His voice. Hearing His voice implies that they not only heard the words of the Lord, but, that His words conveyed a personal message that reached their hearts. Preaching at Antioch, Paul can say to the Jews that their rulers "Knew Him not, nor yet the *voices* of the prophets, which are read every Sabbath day." (Acts xiii., 27). Thus though they heard the prophetic Scriptures, these Scriptures conveyed no message to the hearers. They did not hear the *voice* of the prophets. The sheep "hear His voice," He has personal dealings with them. "He calleth His own sheep by name." As we trace the Lord's path, recorded in this Gospel, we hear Him calling His sheep one by one. Simple fishermen, like Andrew, Simon, and Philip, are called. Nathanael, an Israelite in whom is no guile; Nicodemus, a Pharisee and a ruler; a fallen woman by a well side; a nobleman of Cana; a helpless man at Bethesda, and a blind beggar by the wayside are called. They came from very different grades of society, but one thing marked them all, they "heard His voice." (2) Having called them, the Shepherd does not leave them in the Jewish fold, that had rejected Christ. "*He leadeth them out*" of the Jewish nation that was passing on to judgment.

(3) Having put the sheep out, the Shepherd does not leave them when they are outside, for we read "He goeth before" to lead them in the path of life and blessing (v. 4). On their side, the sheep "hear His voice," "follow Him," and "flee" from the stranger that would seek to draw them from the Shepherd. They flee, not because they know but because they *know not* the voice of strangers (v. 5). "It is not the sheep's knowledge of the stranger but of the voice of the Good Shepherd that keeps it from the snares which he tries to set for it. They know what they hear is not *that*

voice. It is thus the simple are kept; the wise wish to know everything, and are deceived." (J.N.D.). We are to be "wise unto that which is good and simple concerning evil" (Rom. xvi., 19). Thus we have a striking picture of a flock of sheep wholly dependent upon the Shepherd. Sheep are foolish and feckless things, prone to wander, easily frightened and soon scattered. Left to themselves they would be in a hopeless plight. Under the guidance of the Shepherd, in spite of their weakness and folly, they will be safe. If they are hungry and faint, He is there to lead them into green pastures. Are they thirsty, He will lead them by still waters; have they to tread a rough bit of road, He is there to guide them in the way; does the wolf seek to attack the sheep, the Shepherd is there to protect. The Shepherd is there wholly devoted to the sheep, and the sheep are entirely dependent upon the Shepherd—"They know His voice," and flee from others. Such is the lovely picture of the Christian flock formed of believers, outside the Jewish camp, gathered to Christ.

Blinded by Jewish prejudices, the Lord's hearers "understood not what things they were which He spake unto them" (v. 6). Alas! it is still true that Christendom (including many true believers) fails to understand the Lord's allegory. Ignoring His teaching, Christendom has again formed folds after the Jewish order. Thus we find vast religious systems in which the sheep of Christ are linked up with unbelievers under the control of human heads, bound together by human ordinances. Thus, if Christendom has again formed itself into a religious camp, after the pattern of Judaism, the word still applies, "Let us go forth therefore *unto Him* without the camp" (Heb. xiii., 13). Let us, however, remember that if we go forth from the camp, it is not simply to escape its evils, but to give Christ His place. We go forth "unto Him." Having left the camp we are not simply a company of believers left to our own devices, but under the guidance of Christ. Taking a place outside the religious organisations, it is still possible to walk in the light of these great truths and give Christ His place as the Shepherd of the sheep, and refusing every stranger voice, to look only to Christ as our great Leader—the One with all wisdom, love and power, to guide us through the wilderness and home to glory.

In the verses that follow, the Lord applies His allegory (7, 8); unfolds the blessings into which He leads His sheep (9); warns us of the dangers to which we are exposed (10-13); presents Himself as the great resource of the sheep in the presence of every foe (14, 15); tells us of the other sheep drawn from the Gentiles, to form with the Jewish sheep one flock. (1) In applying the allegory, the Lord tells us that He is the door of the sheep. God had set up the Jewish fold, and though man had corrupted it the godly remnant had no direction to leave the fold until Christ came. But Christ having come, and being rejected, the nation is left to pass on to judgment, and He is presented as the One sent of God to be a door of escape for the godly from the guilty nation. So after Christ was risen, Peter can present Christ as the One through whom believers could save themselves from this untoward generation (Acts ii., 40).

(2) The Shepherd is not only the door by which the sheep can escape from the corrupt Jewish fold, but He is the door into the positive Christian blessings. If "any one" (Jew or Gentile) enter by personal faith in Christ, into the new circle of blessing of which Christ is the centre, he will find salvation:—*i.e.*, salvation for his soul from sins and judgment, and then salvation from all the power of the enemy during the wilderness journey. Moreover, the sheep under the leading of the Shepherd will be brought into liberty, by which they can enter within the veil as worshippers, and go out to all the world with the glad tidings. Further, under the leadership of Christ the sheep are fed,—they find pasture.

(3) The Lord warns us against the opposition we shall meet as we pass through this world. He speaks of the "thief," the "hireling," and the "wolf." Already the Lord has told us that the thief does not enter by the door; he breaks into the house secretly, unawares, and to rob. Later we are warned by Jude against "certain men who crept in unawares" amongst the people of God (Jude 4); and Peter warns against false prophets who privily shall bring in destructive heresies (2 Pet. ii., 1). The hireling does not necessarily teach false doctrine, but he serves for wages. Peter warns us against shepherding the flock of God for "filthy lucre" (1 Pet. v. 2) and that there will arise those who "through covetousness" will "make merchandise" of the saints (2 Pet. ii., 3). Christendom has largely fallen

into the snare of the hireling. The hireling may profess to tend the sheep but his motive is self. Thus when danger arises, he thinks of his own safety and flees. The wolf comes to the flock in sheep's clothing. He makes a fair profession by which the saints are deceived. So the Apostle Paul can warn us that after his departure wolves would enter in among the saints "not sparing the flock" (Matt. vii., 15; Acts xx., 29). The wolf cannot seize the sheep out of the hand of the Shepherd but he can seize and scatter the sheep. Alas! what havoc these have wrought in the Christian profession! It is only as we give Christ His place as the Shepherd of the sheep that we shall escape their depredations. In contrast to the thief, that robs, Christ came to give life, and to give it abundantly in all its fulness. In contrast to the hireling who thinks only of himself and flees in the presence of danger, "the Good Shepherd" giveth His life for the sheep." He is not only "the Shepherd of the sheep" separating them from the Jewish fold, but He is also "the good Shepherd" devoted to the sheep. We may fail in following Him but He will never fail in devotedness to the sheep. This devoted love is seen in the Lord giving His life to save the sheep from the thief and the wolf.

(4) We find in Christ our one resource in the presence of all we have to meet. We have the blessed assurance that the One loves us unto death, is the One who knows us through and through. As the Lord can say, "I am the good Shepherd and *know* my sheep." He had been the Object of the Father's love as He passed through this world. In the same way the sheep are the objects of the Lord's love and care as they pass through this wilderness. How good to realise that He knows the sheep: He knows our trials, our difficulties, our sorrows, our circumstances, our weaknesses—all is known to Him! Moreover the sheep in their little measure know the Shepherd and confide in Him, as He, in the perfection of His way, trusted in the Father.

(5) In laying down His life for the sheep the Lord opens the door for His sheep from among the Gentiles. His sheep are not only found in the Jewish fold: He has a vast number among the Gentiles. They, too, must be brought out of heathen darkness into the Christian flock; they, too, will hear His voice and will form, with the sheep from the Jewish fold, one flock under One Shepherd.

Thus we have the Lord presented as “ the Shepherd of the sheep ” separating His sheep from an earthly religion; as the “ Good Shepherd ” devoted in love to the sheep; and as the “ One Shepherd ” uniting the sheep into one flock. Like Himself, He would have His flock to be *separate* from the corrupt religious profession, *devoted* to Himself and *united* to one another. This, then, is the beautiful picture of Christianity presented by the Lord. Alas! in Christendom we see little that answers to the teaching of the Lord. But the truth remains. It is still possible to refuse all that is contrary to it and seek to walk in the light of the Lord’s teaching. This will only be possible as we have the Lord before us as “ the Shepherd of the sheep,” “ the Good Shepherd,” and the “ One Shepherd.”

HAMILTON SMITH.

THE JOY OF HEAVEN.

“ *There came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*”—
2 Pet. i., 17.

Ah yes! this is heaven’s deepest joy; fellowship with the Father Himself, in the delight with which He views His beloved Son; and fellowship with Jesus, in His delight to be thus the object of the Father’s love.

This joy, e’en now on earth, is ours,
But only, Lord above;
Thy saints without a pang, shall know
The fulness of thy love.

(Present Testimony V., 69).

If a man has not Christ at the bottom, he is no Christian at all; but even where Christ is in a man, you may find him walking blamelessly, yet, if you speak to him of Christ, there is not an echo in his heart, though his life goes on smoothly. Christ at the bottom, and a fair Christian walk at the top, and, between these two, a hundred and fifty things that Christ has nothing to do with at all. His life is practically passed without Christ. This will not do. It is the terrible levity of the heart that goes on without Christ, until it becomes the highway of whatever the world pours into it.

(J. N. D. Coll. Writings xxvii., 289).

NEW CREATION.

In Scripture "creation" is mentioned in different ways, each presenting some special feature for the instruction of the saints of God, *e.g.*, Proverbs vii. brings the Lord Jesus before us as the Man of God's counsels, witnessing the scene in which He would be found with His companions for the pleasure and glory of God. John i., Colossians i. and Heb. i., declare the glory of the Person of the Son; whereas Ephesians iii. tells us that the present purpose of the creation was to make known to heavenly intelligences in the church, the manifold wisdom of God. The most detailed account of creation is that given in Genesis i. and ii.; and there man is presented as its head and centre.

The ruin of the old creation.

That God has spoken of "new creation" in His word, implies that the creation connected with Adam has become old, and is passing away. Scripture confirms this, showing too that the creation has become ruined by reason of man's sin. When Adam fell, all under his headship shared the consequences of his fall (Romans viii., 19-22). In this Scripture God has shown that before the old creation shall pass away, it shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into which Adam brought it.

The passing of the old world: the beginning of a new.

From Adam there has sprung a race of men, connected with him in the old creation, all sinners by nature and practice. Cain, Adam's firstborn, demonstrated the hatred that lay in the nature of man, by killing his brother; and soon the world that was stained with Abel's blood became so corrupt that God had to cleanse it with a flood of water. A new world emerged from the Flood, with Noah as its head; but soon poor Noah showed he could not control himself, much less the new world. Although it was a new world it was not new creation: every successive generation and development of God's dealings with men proved that man was incorrigible, and that the old creation was ruined beyond recovery. Headship in Noah was debased; Priesthood was defiled in the sons of Aaron: the sons of Samuel perverted judgment. Royalty was dishonoured by the sons of David, the Kings of Israel, and by the great Gentile monarchs. All this evil was consummated in the world's rejection of the Son of God. In His cross the world was exposed by God, and its judgment was sealed.

God working—amidst the ruins of the old creation.

When the Jews persecuted the Lord Jesus for healing the impotent man on the Sabbath day. He replied, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work" (John v.) From the moment of man's fall in Eden, it would seem as if the rest of God was broken, and He began to work afresh in view of a "new creation." In consonance with His Father's activity, the Son had come into Manhood and to the earth to work for the establishing of a scene where the Father could rest in His love, no more to be disturbed by the entrance of sin or any evil that would grieve Him at His heart. To secure this the Son would be found here in toil and labour, laying the foundations in His work and death of that new world where the glory of the new creation could be displayed in those who once were sinners far from God.

God working—preparing vessels for glory.

In the riches of His glory, God is preparing for glory, vessels of mercy (Rom. ix., 23). These are the saints who at present have earthly tabernacle houses, while awaiting their "house not made with hands eternal in the heavens" (2 Cor. v.) God has wrought His saints for this glorious destiny, by forming them spiritually in new creation; so that while they are connected with the groaning creation in their bodies they are already in new creation as to their spiritual condition. Amid the ruins of the old creation, God is working to produce the vessels in which the glory of the new creation shall be displayed. A beautiful illustration of this is found in 2 Chr. iv., where, after describing the vessels of the Temple, it says, "In the plain of the Jordan did the king cast them, in the clay-ground between Succoth and Zeredathah."

God working—preparing vessels for testimony.

But God has not only been preparing the saints for glory; His new creative work is to produce vessels in which His grace may even here be manifested. This is the teaching of Eph. ii., "We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Good works can never be produced by man in the flesh, but those who have been created in Christ have divinely given ability to work in a manner that glorifies God and gives Him pleasure. As created "in Christ" we partake of Christ's character and are thus enabled to manifest His features of grace and beauty.

From this we learn something of God's present triumph. Satan in getting rid of Christ doubtless thought that he secured a complete victory; but God wrought in such a way that many vessels, every one of Christ's order and character, as created in Him, are now upon the earth continuing the heavenly life that was perfectly manifested in Him here.

Relationships of the flesh, and the new relationships.

The subject of new creation in 2 Cor. v. is introduced with, "Wherefore, henceforth know we no one after the flesh: yea though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more. Therefore, if any man be in Christ (there is) new creation." After the flesh, the Lord Jesus was of Israel, and the Son of David; but none of the relationships that were His on this line, belong to Him in the new conditions into which He entered in resurrection. These were all relinquished at the cross, when He said to His mother, "Woman, behold thy son," and to John, "Behold thy mother." This was further emphasised when in resurrection the Lord said to Mary Magdalene, "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God and your God." In those words, which told that Mary could no longer know Christ after the flesh, there was the divine revelation of the new relationships into which the Lord had brought His own in resurrection. The disciples were called "friends" previously by the Lord, but not until He had entered the new conditions of life in resurrection could they be called His "brethren."

"Old things are passed away—all things are become new."

The things that have been corrupted and defiled by man in the old creation have no place in the new creation. Everything in this spiritual sphere is new and of God. The life and relationships are new; so are the affections, joys, blessings, riches and glories. In this new order our thoughts and feelings are new; and the desires of the heart and disposition of the renewed mind are toward things that the natural man has never known. Much that exists in the old creation was introduced by man; but in the new creation all things are of God. Not a single principle of man's world is there; none of his philosophy or vaunted learning; none of the embellishments that adorn his city, nor any of the attractions that appeal to the flesh.

Reconciliation and New Creation.

All the things of this new creation have their origin in the God Who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ. Evidently God has brought us into right relations with Himself to have us engaged with the things that belong to Him. Through the death of His Son He has brought us near, who once were far off; and in shedding abroad His love in our hearts by the gift of the Holy Spirit He has displaced the enmity towards Him that once was there. Now, as before God in the sense of His love, and as being His workmanship, we are free to explore the wonders of the new creation centring in Christ His beloved Son. These two matters are not only associated in 2 Cor. v., but they are found together in Eph. ii., 16. In the latter Scripture, Jew and Gentile are reconciled together to God in one body. As forming the body of Christ in new creation, the church is the vessel in which the features of Christ are manifested now upon the earth, and in which the glory of God shall be displayed in the coming ages.

A man in Christ.

Paul by the Spirit said in 2 Cor. v., "If any man be in Christ (there is) new creation." Chapter xii. of this epistle gives the experience of a man in Christ. Viewed abstractly as a man in Christ, Paul reveals that he was caught up to the third heavens, the home of the man in Christ. There, in Paradise, the place of delight, he heard things he could not speak of on earth. Our present condition of flesh and blood hinders our knowing the full blessedness of what is ours in Christ, for we only "see through a glass darkly"; but there are many things we can know, the things freely given to us of God, the things "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man—God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit."

The new man—his creation.

When the Lord Jesus was on earth, the Father opened the heavens and said, "This is my beloved Son, in Whom I have found my delight." Here was a Man entirely different to every other man; and it was God's purpose to have a race of men, all like Christ. In the "new man" this race has been created. The Jew and Gentile were two men at enmity, because of the law; but in the cross the cause of the enmity was removed, and Christ created in Himself of both one "new man," and so made peace. Neither of these two men

could give God pleasure; so that an entirely new kind of man had to be created in Christ's features. This new man has been created after God in righteousness and true holiness (Eph. iv., 24); and in him there is nothing of "Greek, Jew, circumcision, uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman, but Christ is everything, and in all" (Col. iii., 11). Not only are the distinctions between these different kinds of men not found in the new man, but not one of them bears his features, for all his features come from Christ; and Christ is the life of all partaking in this new created man.

The new man—his testimony.

After disclosing in Ephesians iv. that the new man is created after God, the saints are exhorted, "Wherefore putting away lying, speak truth every man with his neighbour." From this and the verses which follow we learn that the features of the new man are to be manifested in all our dealings with our neighbours. Then there are exhortations with a view to the manifestation of the traits of the new man in the family and business circles. Finally, in the conflict, with the panoply of God, which is the dress of the new man, we are to stand for God in the evil day. In all these spheres the features of the new man are to evince the testimony of God.

The display of new creation.

God's purpose in quickening us and setting us in Christ in the heavenly places is in order "that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness towards us in Christ Jesus." This is the display of grace in glory; and for this God is erecting a Temple, a shrine, in which His holy nature shall shine forth, in those united to His Son. The church is this vessel of glory; seen in Eph. ii., 21 as "A holy temple in the Lord," and in Rev. xxi. as "The bride, the Lamb's wife—the holy city—having the glory of God." Amid the tumults of the systems of this present age, loudly proclaiming their own greatness and glory, God is silently raising His structure, which is the fruit of Christ's work, and the crown of His workmanship. Long after every human system has perished for ever, this glorious church, conceived in divine wisdom and wrought by God's power shall subsist in the eternal display of His love and glory in new creation.

The rule of new creation.

After discoursing on law and grace, in his defence of the Gospel, towards the close of the epistle to the Galatians, Paul says, "For in Christ Jesus, neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision; but new creation. And as many as walk by this rule, peace upon them and mercy, and upon the Israel of God." Judaism and its ceremonial rite of circumcision were for man in the flesh, and in them Israel boasted; but in the light of new creation they have been exposed as valueless. The old order, which supposed there was ability in man to obtain divine blessing, has been closed in the cross; and the new order, in which "all things are of God" has been opened up for us in God's grace in new creation. Those who walk by the rule of law cannot have peace while striving for blessing which they cannot obtain; but those walking by the rule of the new creation, who do not depend on their own efforts, receive divine mercy, and the peace which comes from relying solely on God. . . May we therefore live by the faith of the Son of God, seeking the things that are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God, and thus be blessed by walking by the rule of new creation. WM. C. REID.

LIKENESS TO CHRIST.

You never can become suitable to Christ but by being in His company. It is the Bridegroom that makes the Bride; and you must acquire from Himself what best suits Himself. . . . It is company that teaches manners. If you are not in His company you may read the Scriptures as much as you like, be able to describe from them dispensations and so on, but it will all end in affectation, not in Christ's ways. Accustom yourself to being in the presence of Christ; and the effect of that presence is to demand the entire removal of everything that is not of Him. . . . The reason we see so little of it in people is that they have been so little beholding the glory of Christ. This was just what made the difference between Martha and Mary. Martha was occupied with the human good thing; Mary was learning, by being in company with Himself, what suited Him. Children are very often like their parents, because they keep their company so much. . . . It is only as I am with Himself that He gives me power from Himself to be what is suited to Him. J. B. STONEY.

FIRST EPISTLE TO THE THESSALONIANS.

Expository Notes by H. Smith.

In the different Epistles, God has made rich provision of spiritual food suitable for every stage of christian growth. The Thessalonian Epistles were written to the young in the faith. Thus we do not find unfolding of the counsels of God, or of the Mystery of the Church, as in the Ephesians and Colossians. In the First Epistle we have the great practical features of Christianity—faith, love, and hope—which should mark the youngest as well as the oldest. Moreover, the Apostle comforts them in their trials, and removes a difficulty that had arisen as to the Christian's hope—the coming of the Lord *for* His saints.

The Apostle dwells in Ch. i. on the practical fruits of the gospel received in the power of the Spirit; in Ch. ii. on God's special care for the lambs of His flock, in leading them through every trial; in Ch. iii. on how God uses the trials by the way for strengthening of faith, love, and holiness; in Ch. iv. on the walk pleasing to God, in view of the coming of the Lord for His saints; in Ch. v. on exhortations as to the conduct consistent with walking in the light of the day of the Lord, as well as general exhortations and warnings as to dangers that beset the christian path.

I.

The Fruits of the Gospel (Ch. 1).

In the parable of the Sower (Mark v., 20), the Lord instructed His disciples that where the good seed fell upon good ground fruit would result. In this opening chapter some of the beautiful fruit of the Gospel manifests itself in the changed lives of young converts. To understand the Epistle it is necessary to recall the gospel preached to these Thessalonians, as recorded in Acts xvii., 1-9. From this we gather that, during the Apostle's visit to Thessalonica, he preached to both Jews and Gentiles. Four things marked his preaching. (1) He presented to them Jesus, the Saviour; not merely doctrines, but a living Person (the Saviour). (2) He alleged that this Person (Jesus) had died and risen again. (3) He not only preached the facts of death and resurrection, but the necessity of these great facts. Christ "must *needs* have suffered, and risen again from the dead." (4) He fell back on Scripture as his sole and sufficient authority. As a result of this preaching

“some” of the Jews, and “a great multitude” of the Gentiles, believed. Moreover they proved the reality of their faith by publicly identifying themselves with the Lord’s servants, for we read, they “consorted with Paul and Silas.” They did not keep their faith to themselves. They made no attempt to escape reproach by remaining secret disciples! They believed in Jesus, and boldly confessed their faith. The result was they had at once to face persecution. The Jews who believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows and set the whole city in an uproar. Envy led to the first murder, when Cain killed his brother: and envy led to the greatest murder when the Jews crucified their Messiah. Pilate “knew that for envy they had delivered Him.” If men moved by envy will commit murder, we need not be surprised that respectable Jews stooped to use lewd base fellows to carry out their ends. Thus we learn the character of the seed sown, the fruits produced, and the opposition called forth. The Apostle writes his Epistle to encourage these young converts in persecution, and delights to dwell upon the beautiful fruit of the gospel so manifested.

The Apostle associates with himself those who had laboured with him. In his salutation he views these believers relative to God the Father, and to Jesus Christ as Lord, rather than as members of the Body of which Christ is the Head. He encourages them by assuring them that he constantly gives thanks to God for them, and remembers them in his prayers. Moreover he recognises the fruits of the Spirit in them. In calling attention to these happy christian qualities, the Apostle is not flattering them, but gladly recognising in them the evidence of a real work of God. He notes their work, labour, and endurance; but not as marks of true conversion. Men of the world are often famed for great philanthropic works, immense toil, and much perseverance in carrying out their works. In the case of the Thessalonians the Apostle can link with these other qualities essentially christian: *viz.*, “work of *faith*, labour of *love*, and patience of *hope*”: the three great elements of christian life that bring the soul into relation with Divine Persons, thus giving the marks of a truly converted soul. As evidence of reality, the writer of the Hebrews Epistle, refers to these three qualities. He had been speaking solemnly of those who made a profession of

Christianity, but afterwards apostatised. But, of these Christians he can say, "Beloved we are persuaded better things of you, and *things that accompany salvation,*" *viž.*, "labour of love"; "the full assurance of hope"; and, "faith and patience" (Heb. vi., 9-12).

Moreover, the reality of their "faith," "love," and "hope," is proved by these beautiful qualities being "*in our Lord Jesus Christ.*" Faith, love, and hope, each require an object. In Christianity that supreme object is a living Person—the Lord Jesus Christ. Every true activity in the christian life is the outcome of faith which draws all its strength, wisdom, and needed grace, from One who is unseen, and therefore only available for faith. True christian toil springs from love for our Lord Jesus Christ and is not carried out as a legal duty. The endurance is not dull resignation to stern necessity, but sustained by hope that waits for our Lord Jesus Christ. Further, the life of faith, love, and hope, is lived "in the sight of God our Father." It is a life of holy fear lived before God, and not simply before man to obtain a religious place, or before the saints to gain a reputation for devotedness. These young believers became "ensamples to all that believe," and their faith to God was spread abroad; but their witness before man was the outcome of a life lived before God. They consciously lived and walked "before our God and Father." "We may indeed zealously contend for a *name*; but the question before God is as to power and full fruits of grace in the measure of that which has been received; and if the soul does not come up to that, it is a dreadful thing for it to be resting on a religious reputation, while the works are not perfect before God" (J.N.D.).

Further, these evidences of a work of God in their souls assured the Apostle that they were beloved of God and the subjects of His electing grace. Not only has grace met all our responsibilities, but, by the sovereign mercy of God believers were elected, before the foundation of the world, to obtain salvation with eternal glory (2 Tim. ii., 10). If we are elected to eternal glory, we are set apart by the work of the Spirit from this present world. No position of dignity and honour which this world can offer, will have any attraction on realising that. These beautiful fruits had been produced in lives by the gospel that came to them not "in word only, but also in power" by the preaching

in the Holy Ghost. Thus there was much assurance. Alas! there may be much correct gospel preaching, but too often "in word only." The power and work of the Holy Spirit are wanting. What will give power to the preaching and leave the Holy Spirit free to work is *the consistent life of the preacher*. So the Apostle can say, "Ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake." His life confirmed his preaching and thus became part of the testimony that he bore with his lips.

The result of testimony in power manifests itself in two ways. (1) It led those who received the testimony, not only into the blessing of salvation, but to imitate the Apostle, and therefore the Lord (N. Tn.). Being blessed they became representatives of the One by whom they were saved. (2) This testimony in power aroused the hatred of those by whom it was rejected. This malice expressed itself in persecuting the believers. Nevertheless these believers were sustained in joy by the Holy Spirit. The devil may stir up persecution, but the power of the Spirit is greater than all the power of the enemy. Stephen, full of the Holy Ghost, is sustained in triumph in the midst of his martyr sufferings. The martyr whose sufferings only call forth praise to the Lord renders an arresting testimony to the power of God before the world! Thus the joy of these young persecuted converts became an ensample to believers and a testimony to the world around, for, in every place, their faith towards God had become a matter of wonder. Their testimony had a threefold character. (a) the word of the Lord was sounded out from them. (b) their changed manner of life proved the reality of their conversion, and was a witness to the truth of their preaching, for they gave up all their old idolatrous practices, and turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God. Scripture, not only recognises the actual images of the heathen as idols, but also anything that comes in as *an object* between the soul and God:—*e.g.*, "Little children keep yourselves from idols" (1 John v., 21). How often the believer's life and service may be hindered by allowing some earthly pursuit, which in itself may be harmless, to become an object between the soul and God. (3) They turned from the world, and its delusions, to wait for the Son of God from heaven. All their expectations were in Him. Being converted they did not vainly attempt to put the world right, and make it better

and brighter. To deal with the evil, and bring in the blessing, they quietly waited for God's Son from heaven. They did so in peace and calmness, knowing that Jesus had delivered them from wrath through His death, and that God had declared His satisfaction with the work of Christ, and the believer's justification from sins and judgment, by raising Christ from the dead.

THE ETERNAL SON.

“When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman.” Gal. iv., 4.

“Is it not strange,” a child once asked his father, “that St. Paul should tell us that our Saviour was born of a woman? Everybody that I know is born of a woman, and it is hard to see why such a thing should be mentioned as if it were remarkable.” “Born of a woman!” Surely there is nothing remarkable in this circumstance, if we take human life as we find it. For us men to be “born of a woman” is not merely the rule, it is a rule to which there is no known exception. So that we are constrained to ask why a circumstance which might have been taken for granted should be invested by the Apostle with such prominence in the case of our Lord Jesus Christ. Surely, the real question is whether, in His case, such a circumstance could have been taken for granted. If Paul mentions it thus emphatically, it is because he, at least, does not make such an assumption. If, indeed, the Christ Whom Paul loved and served was only a son of God by grace while by nature He was only and purely a man, then to have said that He was “born of a woman” would have been an unmeaning truism. But if, in naming Him, Paul is thinking of a Being whose nature is such as to make any appearance of His in this earthly sphere in a high degree extraordinary, then to say that He was “born of a woman” is to advance an assertion of startling significance. When Paul says, “God sent forth His Son,” he uses the same word as when he says, “God sent forth the Spirit of His Son” (Gal. iv., 6). It is a word which does not simply describe the action of God's providence, whereby He places a being on the scene of created life; it implies a sending forth of One Who shared the very nature of the Sender. The Son of God, Whom God sent forth, and Who was born of a woman, was God's

Son, not by grace but by nature; not as being begotten after a lapse of ages, but as, before all worlds. God of God; the Son of God, in a sense unshared by any other, because not other or less than God the Son. At His birth, as Paul says, He was "manifested in the flesh"; but whether in this passage He is called God or not, the Apostle's words at the least imply that our Lord existed before His manifestation in time. The Father "sent forth His Son, made of a woman." But the Son existed before He was sent forth: the expression is evidently chosen to imply this.

H. P. L.

A MEDITATION ON EPHESIANS iv., 9, 10.

Here is a parenthesis in which we have *multum in parvo*. It follows, and is a comment upon the quotation from the triumphant sixty-eighth Psalm. There can be no doubt as to whom the eighteenth verse of that Psalm refers, and in his illuminating commentary the inspired Apostle adds lustre to it. He points out that if the Lord Jesus ascended, He must first have descended. Just here we get a flash of the Glory of His Person. Only a divine Person could leave the condition and circumstances in which He was and come into a condition and into circumstances in which he had not been before. We are reminded of Hebrews i., 1-3. The Son; He who made the worlds; the effulgence of God's Glory and the expression of His substance Who upholds all things by the Word of His power, having made by Himself the purification of sins, has set Himself down on the right hand of the Greatness on high (New Trans.). No less a person could descend into the lower parts of the earth and this was a necessity if He has to make purification of sins. When we consider the greatness of the Person and the immensity of the descent we get some little idea of the greatness of the work that He accomplished, and the vastness of the results that flow from it. Now we return to our Scripture. "He that descended to the same also that ascended up far above all Heavens." As man He was "raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father" (Romans vi., 4). It is also true, however, that He "rose again" (1 Corinthians xv., 4), indicating that He Who became man was a divine Person. He could say, "I lay down My life that I may take it again. . . . I lay it down of myself. I have authority (the right), to lay it down and I

have authority (the right), to take it again." Only a divine Person could say that, yet as Man He adds: "I have received commandment from My Father" (John x., 17, 18; New Trans.). Now we proceed: He has "ascended up far above all Heavens." In face of all opposing forces, for Satan is "the prince of the power of the air" (Ephesians ii., 2). He has risen from the domain of death to the highest point in the Glory of God. None but He could have come from such a height, and none but He could have stooped to such a depth, nor could any other than He have ascended to the Throne of God. He came into Manhood; as Man He descended into the lower parts of the earth; as Man He has ascended to the Throne of God; as Man He will fill all things; He will never cease to be God, He ever will be Man. In Ephesians i., 17, 23 we learn what God has done with Him. *He* has raised Him from the dead; *He* has exalted Him to the highest place; *He* has put all things under His feet; and *He* has given Him the Assembly to be His complement in the coming day of Glory. In Hebrews ii., 8, 9, we see Him where He now is the Object for our heart's deep delight, "crowned with glory and honour," and we rejoice that God has given Him His rightful place. It is the only place of which He is worthy, and He is the only Person who is worthy to fill that place. Let us take one more glance at our Scripture as we close. He who has descended and who has also ascended is the One who is going to fill all things. He who is the centre of the Father's affections; the centre of the divine purpose; the centre of the Assembly; will be the centre of the vast system of Glory, and He will be the One to whom all creation shall ascribe worthy praise when everything that hath breath shall praise the Lord. Hallelujah!

W. BRAMWELL DICK.

There is no answer to infidelity like the life of Christ displayed by the Christian. Nothing puts the madness of the infidel, and the folly of the superstitious, more to shame and silence than the humble, quiet, devoted walk of a thorough-going, heavenly-minded, divinely-taught Christian. It may be in the unlearned and poor and despised; but, like the scent of the lowly violet, it gives its perfume abroad, and both God and man take notice of it.

(Present Testimony xiv., 412).

THE BROKEN AND THE UNBROKEN NETS.

The comparison of the net in Luke v., 6, with that in John xxi., 11 throws much light on the way in which God is working now and will yet work for the satisfaction of His own heart and the blessing of men. There is much to be gained from the study of the way in which God presents His thoughts in the Scriptures, and these two nets give an illustration of this. It is clearly stated in the first incident that the net broke; and in the second that the net did not break; so that while the net would refer to the same thing in both cases, obviously, each must be connected with different circumstances. We enquire into this difference by considering the text of Scripture.

As there could be no breakdown or failure with God, the broken net must be connected with the responsibility of man, and would refer to the period of time from the Lord's ministry on earth until the establishment of the Millennium. The metaphor of the net in Luke v. would therefore appear to answer to the present system set up by God gathering in men for blessing. While the context of John xxi. would indicate that a millennial scene is in view. In support of this, confirmation can only be sought from the Scriptures, and Acts xxvii. and II. Tim. ii. would yield abundant proof for what is suggested. Man in responsibility (that is in his ability to respond) has always failed even under the most favoured circumstances and God shows carefully from His word that while the present period is no exception it is possible to be individually in spirit separate from it.

Acts xxvii. would give the apostolic signpost and II. Tim. ii. would put the individual in the proper path. Reference is made to the shipwreck from which it is evident that there was no salvation except through being with Paul. So amidst the mournful breakdown which exists, is it not great encouragement to remember that is the case? Paul has put himself in touch with us through the medium of his epistles, and for the individual II. Tim. ii. would clearly indicate the path for any believer sincerely desiring to be a vessel unto honour. Where this individual faithfulness is found there is the maintenance of what is according to God so that while the net broke in Luke v. the fish were landed. But let it be noted that the fishermen were out of the ships washing their nets, suggesting the purity of the word presented by the individual. In Mark i., 19, they were mend-

ing their nets which would relate more to soundness, but in verse 7 the collective thought would be reached when they beckoned to their partners, obviously referring to fellowship. There is fellowship in the Gospel (Phil. i., 5), although largely overlooked to-day! But if the system broke down, thank God, there was that which He could use for the landing of the fish!

In turning to the second net, there is a distinct halo of the Millennium around it! The confession of Thomas in Ch. xx. would bring us to the confines of the day of the Lord, but the haul of fishes to the time when all will depend entirely on the Lord. Singularly perhaps as the Apostle John is not dispensational in his writings generally. The success of the fishing depended on the Lord who commands and directs all. But John xx., 9, shows that the Lord already had fish on the shore, quite distinct from the haul. Probably Matt. x. would refer to the former, for that commission has still to be fulfilled, and the wider commission of Matt. xxviii. might be fulfilled in this great haul. Matt. xxv. and Rev. vii. seem to refer to the beginning of the Millennium; but the net being *full* might throw into relief the result from the sea of the nations.

It is remarkable that at the end of the three Synoptic Gospels the Lord gives a commission which embraces the period from His sojourn on earth until He comes to reign. At the end of Mark the commission was clearly accomplished (Ch. xvi., 20). The commission in Luke is what was taken up in the Acts and what is being carried out to-day: whereas that in Matt. xxviii. awaits fulfilment. How perfect Scripture is! There is no overlap! The Lord dining with the disciples would complete the picture. May the Lord give us to enter into His gracious dealings with men, both for the present moment and for what is yet to come.

J. WILSON.

Nine-tenths of the temptations that beset and hinder would not exist if Christ had His place. Things would not tempt and beset us, as gold, and silver, and pretty things, if "the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus" had its place in the heart; that kind of conflict would be gone.

(J. N. D. Coll. Writings, xxvii., 289).

THE HOUSE OF GOD.

No. 1. Evidence in the Pentateuch.

The house of a man is where he dwells, similarly the House of God is where God dwells. The term "house of a man" is used in various relations, prominent amongst these is the material structure, since man has a body. But God is a spirit, and as the martyr Stephen in his masterly arraignment of the Jewish leaders said, "the Most High dwells not in temples made with hands" (Acts 7, 48). While the Apostle Paul in his address to the Athenian philosophers made a similar statement. That thought was even apprehended at the zenith of the era of material display by Solomon in the dedication of the Temple (2 Chron, ii., 6). Yet there are many illuminating passages in the Old Testament, throwing light on features of the New Testament doctrine of the House of God.

Since Genesis has been well termed "the seed-plot of the Bible," we are not surprised to find that the first intimation in Scripture of the subject appears in Gen. xxviii., 10-22, describing Jacob's dream. Therein he was transported outside his circumstances to witness the purpose of God as to the earth. Four prominent features of the doctrine to be unfolded later received emphasis, *viz.* (1) "Surely the Lord is in this place" (v. 16), *i.e.*, the presence of the Lord was apprehended. (2) "How dreadful is this place" (v. 17). He apprehended that entailed reverence in accord with its holy character. (3) "He beheld the angels of God ascending and descending on a ladder, thus it was the gate of heaven" (v. 12-17). Hence the realisation of heavenly administration in the presence of God who is a consuming fire must impress fear on one who comes in contact with the House of God. That is easily understood. Our first parents after they had sinned hid themselves from God. The company of Christians (and most of all their company in a Gospel meeting) is disagreeable to anyone who has not come to know God as a Saviour. (4) "Jacob set up a pillar and poured oil on the top of it" (v. 18). The pillar indicated testimony or witness (Gen. xxxi., 52). In this case the witness was to the unfailing faithfulness and mercy of God (the Lord God of Abraham, etc.). The oil was typical of the Holy Spirit who makes the House of God a living reality now. Jacob named the place Bethel or House of God, although no real house was then existing. Since

that day many have sought to imitate Jacob's example by erecting houses and memorials of different kinds and have described them as relative to God, but without prophetic insight. So that the features of the real house have been obscured. Then Jacob sought to drive a bargain with God. If God would prosper his way then he would own God and would give back 10 per cent. of whatever God gave him. That showed splendid business instinct! A moiety of 50 per cent. would have been the lowest terms he could have offered to man with any hope of acceptance. Frequently people of God nowadays do not reach Jacob's modest standard, they take all from God without thanks or recognition of His interests. Twenty years of circumventing circumstances by his own cleverness brought Jacob to an extremity (Gen. xxxv., 1), and God said to him "Arise go up to Bethel and dwell there." Jacob realised that there was much in his house which was not consistent with the holiness of the House of God so he commanded his household to put away the strange gods and to be clean and change their garments. He hid the idols under the oak by Shechem (usually considered as typical of the significance of the cross of Christ). Behind all the circumstances was the hand of God in discipline. Expediency, hitherto the guiding principle of Jacob, would no longer serve. He would thenceforth have to act according to the righteousness of God. Living away from God inevitably leads to our contracting many associations which are not compatible with the holy character of the House of God. When Jacob got everything cleared-up he erected another pillar at Bethel and anointed it in the same way as he had done 20 years before. He had returned to the testimony with which he was connected at first. But he understood it in a much better way. The hard discipline throughout the 20 years had caused him to apprehend the perfect administration and the holiness of God.

In Genesis the idea of the House of God was only in embryo form since God wished to dwell in the midst of a people, and these did not appear until the record of Exodus was reached. The first eighteen chapters of the book are occupied mainly with the statement of what God did for the people notwithstanding their waywardness. The remainder of the book is more taken up with what man was to do for the Glory of God. In chapter iii., God appeared to

Moses in a burning thorn bush which was not consumed. The love and grace of God (a consuming fire, nevertheless) were to be manifested amongst the people of Israel just as miraculously as the fire in the midst of the bush which did not consume it. Forty years before Moses had given up the people in disappointment. Since then God's dealings with him had disestablished his opinion and he had reached the point that he could serve God. Although Israel might be well described as a worthless thorn bush, when God as a consuming fire dwelt in the bush, then all was transformed. (As another has said, "for the first forty years of his life Moses was learning to be something, in the second forty years he was learning to be nothing, and in the last forty years he learned that God was everything"). The ground was holy. As God of Abraham, His will is paramount and unchallengeable. He consumes in discipline what is unsuited to His will, even as in abundant grace and mercy He moulds what is pleasing to Himself so that he can dwell amongst the people. Subsequently the display of Himself as Jehovah (*i.e.*, Lord, I am, the self-existing One), would come into view. Therefore in spite of Pharaoh's stubbornness God would have His people free to serve Him outside Egypt.

A two-fold action was necessary to attain that end:—(1) External power would be manifested to deliver them. (2) Their hearts had to be cleansed and unbelief displaced by internal power. In the series of God's acts of power in Egypt, there was a distinction or separation made between the land of Goshen where God's people dwelt and the rest of Egypt. The various agencies of judgment on Egypt did not affect Goshen. The ninth plague of judgment was thick darkness which could be felt. For three days no one could stir, but the children of Israel had light in their rude dwellings while the ornate temples of Egypt were shrouded in a more complete blackout than a London night fog! (That is indicative of the spiritual darkness which envelops man's philosophy, while divine light fills the hearts of the people of God, because God is there). The tenth plague was the culmination of God's dealings in smiting the first born in every household in Egypt, from the greatest to the least. But the families of Israel were sheltered inside the houses with bloodstained lintels and sideposts (*i.e.*, the Passover, typical of the death of Christ in one of its aspects).

The accompanying bitter herbs indicated self-judgment, wrought by the grace of God in the soul engrossed with the love that averted the judgment stroke of the angel. The unleavened bread showed the separate character to be sustained by the people of God. God could not tolerate in His people the leaven or evil he had to judge in Egypt (typical of the world). The Passover celebration indicated three prominent ideas (a) protection, (b) food, (c) exodus from Egypt. Redemption or deliverance by blood was not complete redemption. It was necessary that the people should be taken out of Egypt. When all hope seemed to vanish as they were hemmed in by the Red Sea in front and the Egyptian host behind, God intervened and they passed through the sea as on dry land. What was their salvation became the destruction of their enemies! Chapter xv. gives the redemption song (the first song in scriptural record). That was contingent not on safety from judgment through the blood of the Lamb but on complete separation from Egypt and the destruction of the enemy's power. The redeemed people then knew that God was for them: v. 2 sprung from thankful hearts who wished to prepare a habitation for God; v. 17 speaks of the sanctuary and v. 13 of the abode of God's holiness. Chapter xix. introduced the thought of man's response towards God. In obeying the voice of God and keeping His Covenant they would be to Him a peculiar treasure above all people a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. (All the people were to form a royal priesthood. The special family ultimately honoured as priests came into function through the failure of the people).

Chapter xxv. records the instruction of God, "let them make me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them." All the material was to be given as a freewill offering by the people. That could not have taken place until redemption had been effected. The House of God or Tabernacle had walls of imperishable shittim wood, made up of 48 boards, 10 cubits high and $1\frac{1}{2}$ cubits broad, each with two tenons at the bottom fitting into two silver sockets (which were typical of divine grace by redemption in its two constituents, the death and resurrection of Christ). So that the components of the House of God were based on redemption. They did not touch the sands of the desert at any point! Moreover, the boards were bound together by bars and the

corners were specially strengthened. Over all was a layer of gold, typical of the righteousness of God. The tabernacle or tent was completed by a covering, composed of ten curtains of fine twined linen and blue, purple and scarlet, with embroidered cherubim thereon (typical of the display of the varied glories of Christ). Over that was a goats' hair covering of eleven curtains (typical of the Holy Nazarite separation of Christ while here). Further coverings of rams' skins, dyed red (consecration unto death) and badgers' skins (holiness excluding evil) completed the roof of the tent. The oblong shaped tabernacle was divided into three compartments. (1) The outer court which was open above and surrounded by hangings 100 cubits long and 50 cubits broad supported by pillars and sockets of brass, while the connecting hooks and fillets were of silver. The brass was indicative of the righteousness of God testing man in responsibility. So brass was prominent of the outside as gold was of the inside of the tabernacle. At the same time the connection with silver declared the value of the redemption of Christ then future. Man's need discovered by the test was at once met by redemption! The hangings as well as the curtains of entrance to the second chamber bore no cherubim which brought in the thought that although cherubim and a flaming sword kept man out from the tree of life in Eden, no such barrier would exist in the era of display of heavenly things of which the tabernacle was a type. (Christ would be the door and living way).

The brazen altar was for the burnt offering (indicating God's satisfaction in the death of Christ) and the brazen laver (between the altar and the entrance to the Holy place) was for the priests washing their hands (1 Tim. ii., 8), and feet with water (John xiii.) (2) The second chamber, the Holy Place, comprising two-thirds of the covered space (30 cubits long, 10 broad, 10 high), contained the table of shewbread, the pure gold candlestick and the golden altar of incense. The table of shittim wood overlaid with gold had an encircling border and both had crowns. The table bore the twelve loaves or pierced cakes (Lev. xxiv., 5), showing Israel before God maintained by Christ. (3) The third chamber, the Most Holy, consisting of the remaining one-third of the tent, was separated from the second chamber by a veil of the same figured fabric as the curtains forming the roof. The veil was supported by four pillars of shittim

wood overlaid with gold and had four sockets of silver and furnished with gold hooks. The contents of the chamber were: the Ark of testimony ($2\frac{1}{2}$ by $1\frac{1}{2}$ by $1\frac{1}{2}$ cubits) also of shittim wood overlaid with gold (type of the true Manhood and Divine Glory of Christ), and the gold lid of the Ark formed the Mercy Seat. On its two ends all in one piece were two gold cherubims with their faces looking down on the Mercy-Seat (witness of the perfect redemption in the blood of Jesus). In the Ark were to be subsequently put the golden pot with manna (God's treasure in memory of Christ here but now Man in the Glory). Aaron's rod that budded (Christ's priesthood in power of an endless life), and the tables of the Covenant (all God's promises with His people secured in Christ). Everything was constructed according to the pattern shown to Moses in the Holy Mount, so that no detail was left to the fertile imagination of man. The Tabernacle of testimony was in relation to what was in the mind of God to be manifested publicly in the world to come.

At the end of Exodus we read that the tabernacle or tent of the congregation (literally "the tent of meeting") was covered with the cloud and filled with the Glory of the Lord which was the guide for the people in all their subsequent journeys. Exodus closes thus, and Leviticus commences with the Lord speaking to Moses from that centre. Leviticus is occupied with the description of the offerings and the offerers and the general service connected with the Tabernacle, the House of God. In Numbers, emphasis is put on the Levites bearing and taking charge of the tabernacle of testimony in its movement through the wilderness, also on the prominence of the tabernacle as the central feature of the camp. In Deuteronomy reference to the tabernacle is only made at the close of the book, when the Lord communicated to Moses the intelligence of his approaching death. Moses and Joshua were to appear before the tabernacle of the congregation and the Lord appeared in the pillar of cloud over the door of the tabernacle and spoke to Moses therefrom. T. OLIVER.

"A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver."—Prov. xxv. 11.

HE IS COMING.

“ O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength: lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!. Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him.”—Isa. xl., 9, 10.

He is coming; and the tidings
Sweep through the willing air,
With hope that ends for ever
Time's ages of despair.

He is coming; and the mountains
Of Judea ring again;
Jerusalem awakens
And shouts her glad Amen.

For He thy true Messiah,
Thine own anointed King,
He comes, in love and glory,
Thy endless joy to bring.

Yes, He thy King is coming
To end thy woes and wrongs,
To give thee joy for mourning,
To turn thy sighs to songs.

To dry the tears of ages,
To give thee, as of old,
The diadem of beauty,
The crown of purest gold.

To lift thee from thy sadness,
To set thee on the throne,
Messiah's chosen nation,
His best-beloved one.

H. BONAR.

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*This Magazine is Devoted mainly to the Exposition
of Scripture.*

*"Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation
(encouragement), to doctrine." (I. Tim. 4, 13).*

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Vol. I.

APRIL, 1941.

No. 2

GALASHIELS	T. Oliver, 90 Channel Street.
LONDON	Bible Truth Depot, 11 Little Britain, E.C.
TORONTO	Evangel Bookshop, 418 Church Street.
SYDNEY	Tract Depot, 302 Pitt Street.
NEW YORK	Bible Truth Depot, 19 West 21st Street.

Published Quarterly by T. OLIVER, 1s. 6d. per annum.

CIRCUMSTANCES.

Always, every moment, under every circumstance, it is God with whom we "have to do." People who are ever looking at second causes are led into practical infidelity; and so is it in measure with the saint of God: if he be resting in circumstances, he loses the sense of "having to do" with God. When once we come really to know God, we know Him as love. Then, knowing that everything comes to us from Him, though we be in a desert—no matter where, or what the circumstances—we interpret all by His love. I may be called on to pass through pain, and sorrow, and trial, as part of His discipline; but everything that comes from God, comes from a source and spring in which I have confidence. I look, through the circumstances, to Him; and nothing can separate me from His love. Is it not quite true that we often stop, practically, at the circumstances in which we find ourselves placed, and consider only our feelings and judgment about them? That with which we should be occupied is, not the circumstances, but what God intends by them. There may be some secret evil (one of the ten thousand things that, if indulged, would hinder the enjoyment of God) working in my heart, and yet I remain unconscious of it. Well God sends some circumstance that discovers to me the evil, in order that it may be put away. Is not this a blessing? The circumstance does not create the evil which it excites; it only acts upon what it finds to be in my heart, and makes it manifest. The evil being discovered, circumstances are all forgotten—God's end alone is seen. If there are circumstances that try and perplex our hearts, let us just say, it is God with whom I "have to do"; and what is He about with me? The moment the heart is brought into the recognition of God's presence, all is done—it submits. The soul finds itself in communion with Him about the circumstances.

(J. N. D. Coll. Wri. Vol. xvi., 173).

Dig deep in this precious golden mine,
Toil and its richest ore is thine,
Search and the Saviour will lend His aid
To draw its wealth from its mystic shade.
Strive and His Spirit will give thee light
To work in this heavenly mine aright.
Pray without ceasing: in Him confide,
Into all truth His light will guide.

(Found in the bible of Dr Barlee's mother.)

SONSHIP.

Notes of Address by J. A. Trench at Galashiels (2/7/1916).

Read Matt. iii., 1-17, iv., 1-11; Eph. i., 1-14, vi., 10-13.

It was a wonderful moment in the ways of God when John the Baptist, as the fore-runner of the Lord Jesus Christ, went out with his solemn testimony calling upon the people to repent. It was he of whom it was prophesied as the voice of one crying in the wilderness, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His path straight." There were those attracted by his testimony, and they went out to him and were baptised in Jordan, confessing their sins. However it must not be thought that everybody went out. In point of fact the result was very different. The religious leaders had rejected the counsel of God. He addressed the Pharisees and Sadducees as a generation of vipers, as those who had not brought forth fruits meet for repentance. It was indeed a very small remnant of the most disreputable classes in Israel to whom his testimony found access. It was the moral refuse which were moved by John the Baptist's ministry. This is a blessed mark of God's sure work in the soul, and there was no work done until they were brought down before God, confessing their sins.

Doubtless it was no small surprise to John when Jesus presented Himself for baptism. He did so to carry out God's will. He identified Himself with what was approved to be of God in Israel. What a moment it was when Jesus came up out of the water. The heavens were opened. God in His wonderful grace sees the moment for the full revelation of Himself. The testimony of God had been tending right on from Genesis that He might reveal Himself, but the full revelation had never been made until that moment. "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." What a revelation—incomparable, infinite, of the Father and the Son and the Son in relation to the Father. How infinite was the grace of God found with the Lord Jesus Christ as intimated in the 16th Psalm, which is His own peculiar Psalm. It could only be applicable to the Lord Jesus, from the very outset. His interest was in the saints, the excellent of the earth, in whom was all His delight. This was not in the state in which He found them. As set forth in the end of the third chapter, the Lord Jesus became the pattern of all that He would bring them into, and us also now by the Gospel. Among the things which

come out in these Scriptures are the Father's voice declaring His beloved Son as the object of His perfect pleasure, and the Spirit of God descending and abiding upon Him. I need hardly say that the Lord Jesus was absolutely alone in the position in which we find Him. He only was declared as the Father's beloved Son, the object of favour on whom the Spirit could descend. Never could this have happened upon any other apart from blood. He had taken up the place as a man before God, but not to remain as such. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone, but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit" (John xii., 24). He humbled Himself so as to introduce us into His own place before His Father. The fulfilment of His Father's will was His direction right from the opening of His path to His death on the cross.

In Eph. the heavens are opened to us, and so the Apostle in the opening verses can say "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ." Could the heavens have been opened in any better way? The opening is of the richest character and in the highest place. We are identified absolutely with Him. It is no wonder then that the Apostle, before going in to the ordinary communications of the Epistle, had to relieve his heart in the way he did, which is the true character of worship. Worship is shown in the heart being full so as not to contain itself, and he goes on to say "According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love." I ask you to observe the standpoint God brings us to in His wonderful revelation. It is the standpoint of His own eternal counsels. To be before Him without blame in love is just as Christ was presented in Matthew's Gospel. What helps us in seeking to enter into these things is to apprehend the way in which Christ is presented to us in the Gospels. He was the complete expression of God in His own person, and this had to take place before any of us could have been actually introduced. We have everything set forth in Himself. He went down into death to carry out the eternal counsels of God. That is the standpoint of His choosing us in Him before the foundation of the world.

Into what relationships has the will of God put us? That you and I should be taken up out of the guilt and defilement and made angels would never have satisfied the heart of God.

He had to predestinate us unto sonship by Jesus Christ to Himself according to the good pleasure of His will. That was the position of Jesus as shown in Matthew iii. There we see sonship manifested for the first time. In the everlasting counsel it was set forth that we should be introduced to sonship. There is no activity in counsel. There was none in choosing what was according to desire. He chose us in Christ. He wanted to have us before Him perfectly suited to Himself. Then the activity comes in. All this is very wonderful. God's counsel was for Himself, not merely to satisfy us with such relationship. We could never have dreamed of it. Not one of the angels could ever have called God "Father." God wanted to surround Himself with those who could cry "Abbā, Father," surrounded by the children of His love. But we are in the position of sons. The distinction between sons and children is very hard to bring out in English. I am a child by relationship, I am a son by position, which is a contrast with the angels' place. We are children by being begotten. It is worthy of note that in verse 6 the Spirit of God changes the keynote in the chapter "To the praise and the glory of His grace wherein He has made us accepted in the Beloved." Previously we are spoken of as in Christ. God wants us to know that we are in the same place as His Son. We might have thought that such a special place was reserved for Him only, but He has reserved nothing. In John xvii. Jesus says, "O Father, glorify thou Me with thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was." The last verse of that same chapter tells us the provision He has made for knowing the Father's name. The revelation of the Father's heart is a present thing. He loves to bring the consciousness of His love into our hearts which gives us the strength and capacity to enjoy the wonderful place we have in the Father's love. What a great thing it is to be walking in the consciousness that we are as dear to the Father as the Lord Jesus Christ.

In the next verse we have redemption through His blood according to the riches of His grace. That is the way He has met us in our need. The poverty of our need required the riches of His grace. There is such a revelation in that name of the blessing contained in that wonderful revelation. He was known by a new name, not Jehovah which was the name he was known to poor failing Israel. He was now to be known as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Surely it must be in the spirit of worship we enter into that sphere of blessing. We are blessed with all spiritual blessings. We could not be more blessed! The Spirit of God descended and abode upon Jesus. It had never descended upon any other man in this world, without blood. Redemption having been effected through His blood, the forgiveness of sins and the tidings of salvation reached us. We have received the seal of His own delight upon us. The Father sealed the Son by the same blessed Spirit we have received, and so it is with us the moment that we receive the glad tidings, we are sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession.

The next scene opens in Matt. iv., where the Lord is led into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. He was brought into direct conflict with the power of Satan. It is wonderful to think of it, yet it is what we may expect. We have no sooner been put into the place given us by accomplished redemption than we meet the power of Satan. It is in Ephesians which gives us such a revelation of God in His fulness, that we are instructed as to meeting the powers of wickedness. We are to put on the whole armour of God that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil, whose whole object is to cast us down from our excellency. We are thus provided with the complete armour to withstand. The Lord was led of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted. He fasted forty days. Satan, as the subtle tempter, seizes the opportunity. It is a contrast with what happened to Adam and Eve. He hoped that in human weakness he would achieve the same success as with the first man. Man's place is to obey. Christ had previously been in the place of God, but He answered every attack with, "It is written." It is well to observe that. But there is more than the idea of direction, there is the question of living. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." The Word of God is to form our life. Do you study the Word of God to seek to enter into the truth, and to be ready to meet Satan, having treasured up the Word within you? It should be noted also that the devil can quote Scripture, but in doing so he left out the cardinal point in the passage to which he referred, *viz.*, "In all thy ways." It is no part of God's will for anyone to commit suicide, and when baffled again by the Word of God "It is written," Satan

changes the ground to worship. His whole aim is to displace God. He has not the power actually to give all the kingdoms of the world and the glory, but he is able to present them in such a way as to dazzle the eyes and to gain the heart. But Jesus was again proof against the tempter through using the word, "It is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and Him only shalt thou serve."

THE RAPTURE AND ITS SEQUEL.

It is interesting to notice that among the last words spoken by the Lord Jesus as He entered upon the dark night of His betrayal was the promise of His coming, and that His very last message, ere the volume of inspiration was closed, was the renewal of this promise. It is also noteworthy that while the promise seemed to have been forgotten, or treated with neglect by His people, it was in what appears to be the beginning of the last period in the history of the Church as a responsible witness for Christ upon earth, that the precious truth was revived. We invite our readers to consider with us:—

- i. The Promise.
- ii. Its Significance.
- iii. Its Practical Application.

(i) *The Promise.* It was in the upper room, on that darkest of all nights, surrounded by eleven sorrowing disciples, that the Lord Jesus told them that He would come again. Let us note three things in His announcement. (a) *Who* will come. When Israel will be regathered He will send His Angels to do that (Matt. xxiv., 31). But when His Saints are to be gathered home, He will come Himself! "I will come again." (b) "I *will* come." That word could be used only by a divine Person. He who uttered the seven "I wills" recorded in Exodus vi. is the One who, having become Man, spoke the "I will" to His disciples that night. (c) "And receive you unto Myself that *where I am* there ye may be also" (John xiv., 3). He will take us home to be with Himself. It is the Person, not the place that constitutes home. It will be:—

"The Father's house, the Father's heart
All that the Son is given
Made ours the objects of His love
And He our joy in Heaven."

That will make His dwelling place home to us. His presence, the Father's love radiating the whole scene, that will be our portion throughout eternal ages. But He waited till the whole divine plan had been unfolded, the blessings that are ours in Christ; the truth of the Assembly; the restoration of His ancient people; the heading up of all things in Himself; the ultimate and complete triumph of God; before He sought to stir the bridal affections of His Saints by presenting Himself as "the Bright and Morning Star." Thus showing that when the night was at its darkest; when things spiritually seemed to be at the lowest point, those whose hearts beat true to Him might be encouraged by the knowledge that the darkness of the night was nearly at an end, and that soon He would come to claim His bride. The effect, as set forth in Revelation xxii., 17, was instantaneous. Awakened from slumber, moved in response to divine love, the bride joins with the Spirit, and the Spirit and the bride say, "Come." Hearts, hitherto unmoved, are touched as they hear the call:—"Let him that heareth say, come. And, O, so like our precious Lord! there sounds out a last invitation to those who do not know Him. "Let him that is athirst, come! And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Then, as if there were those who had heard of His coming, but, as time passed they asked, "How long, O Lord, how long?" He gives His final message. "Surely I come quickly," which calls forth the glad response.—"Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." How it delights His heart to tell us. How it should rejoice our heart to respond. Are there things that hinder this? The intrusion of the world, the desire to get on, the pull of business, ambition for family prosperity, and, correspondingly, the slackening of interest in the Lord's things; in the furtherance of His interests; the prosperity of His Assembly; and, in a word, the settling down for a good time here? May it be the Lord is using present happenings in this war-stricken world to stir us up, to remind us that He *is* coming and that we may expect Him at any moment. May we hear His voice; respond to His message, and then we shall sincerely echo the closing prayer. "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with all the saints. Amen."

W. BRAMWELL DICK.

CHRIST HEAD OVER ALL THINGS.

Notes of address No. 2 by W. H. Westcott, 1929.

(Ephesians i., 10-11, 19-23; v. 22-32).

There are three things that may now occupy us, and can be easily remembered. (1) the purpose of God; (2) the Person Who is the centre of that purpose; (3) the partner associated with that Person. The Ephesians, Ch. I., opens out a very wonderful presentation of Christianity, because it conducts us beyond this present scene. In our time history we are brought to realise our sins, and the need of a Saviour; we realise that God has provided One in the riches of His grace; we obtain redemption and the forgiveness of our sins, and we are sealed by the Spirit. But, in the first of Ephesians, we are carried outside of things here, of this world of time, back into eternity. We find that the blessing which we enjoy as individual believers was thought out, and planned in Christ before the foundation of the world. It is astonishing that we should have had a place in the thoughts of God from all eternity; according as He has chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world.

In verse 3 the Apostle, speaking on behalf of Christians, says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Jesus has been here, rejected, slain, and in His death has wrought the glory of God, and for the accomplishment of His purpose; and He is now made both Lord and Christ at God's right hand. You have His full name and title here, our Lord Jesus Christ. Now God, Whom we realise to be our God and our Father, sets before us what He thinks of Christ, makes us cognizant of His enjoyment of, and delight in our Lord Jesus Christ. He takes this name and title as connected with all that He has to say to us. The Apostle in the sense of it says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," and then brings in a view of all His favour. "Blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." It is stupendous! Every believer is in view; you have been blessed in this way, according to the thought that our God and Father has of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is no longer addressing Himself to man as the God of Abraham, or Isaac, or Jacob; but, with His eyes upon this glorious Person, He seems to say, "Now I will tell you what I am prepared to do, and what I have purposed."

He goes on to speak of the nature of believers, in which they will be found when all the purposes of God are completed, when the last trace of flesh in us has been left behind. When God has carried out what He will carry out, we shall then be holy, and without blame before Him in love. "That we should be holy": when the purpose of God is completed, we shall be entirely agreeable to God in that respect; holy because He is holy. There will be no trace of defilement in us then. If we learn what we are to be in that coming day, then we learn correspondingly to regulate our conduct now. "Holy and without blame," not a single blot or flaw under His holy eye, as it says, "before Him." What a scene it will be when every saint all over the universe will be holy and without blame before Him in love. We shall be formed in the divine nature, and placed before His eye, where His love shall rest upon us with delight eternally. That refers to our *nature*!

Then in verse 5 we read, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto Himself." There you find the mind of God that we should be in all the dignity and intelligence and power of sonship. It refers, not so much to the moral nature in which we are to be formed, as to the *relationship* in which we stand before His face—by Jesus Christ. It is in each case for the gratification of His own heart. We are predestinated to sonship by Jesus Christ to Himself, in that near and holy relationship, to be enjoyed for ever. Again, in verse 6, "To the praise of the glory of His grace wherein He has made us accepted in the Beloved." "In the beloved," what does that mean? If you can understand in any degree how much God loves this wonderful Person, the Lord Jesus Christ, of Whom He speaks here so prominently as "the Beloved" you can see what a stupendous revelation it is to us that we are taken into favour in the Beloved. Every Christian is verily beloved of God, the love of God rests upon him, and he can be rightly designated as one of the beloved of God. But while that is true, and true of all saints equally and alike, there is One Who is pre-eminently the Beloved. You who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ are said to be accepted in the Beloved. That is the power of it; it is not simply to have that acceptance in the Lord, but *in the Beloved*. God would stress it, that you might understand how greatly you are

loved, and that you are taken into favour in the measure of love that He has for the Lord Jesus Christ.

Then, in the 7th verse, "In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace." Notice these two first words, "In Whom." God has not simply given you a document saying, "Here is the forgiveness of your sins," but, He says, "I have worked out that question in a Person. There He was with your sins upon Him, and upon Him fell all the just judgment in view of My claims in righteousness and holiness; He bore it all, and the sins that He bore were yours. They are all gone, and the very Person who bore them is risen from the dead, enthroned in glory. It is in Him you have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins." That is the measure of the redemption that He has wrought out *for us*: the question is never to be reopened. And so He acts *according to the riches of His grace*. I know some people have the idea, "Yes my sins are all forgiven up to the time of my conversion; but what about the sins that I may commit after my conversion?" But from this standpoint in Ephesians, God would have you to understand that when He did take up that matter, He did not divide your life into two or three sections—your past, present, and future sins; but undertook the settlement of that question according to the wealth of His grace, taking it all up at one and the same time, and settling it all in that One Person, so that every believer can say, "In Whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the wealth of His grace." God took into account all our history from start to finish; at that moment knowing all the sins beforehand, and dealing with them according to His own glory.

With these things in view—our future assured, and the sins question settled—we may think what more could there be? There is a great deal more. Believers, whom God has so wonderfully blessed, are taken into confidence by the blessed God. They are drawn into His presence to receive the most intimate communication as to what He is doing. What is God's object? He appears to say, "I want to take you into my confidence, I have constituted you my redeemed people, and I have given you a nature, relationship, and acceptance in which you can be in undisturbed possession in quiet and rest; every anxiety removed. Now, with your

heart at rest, I want you to understand that My blessing and your blessing is really part of a larger plan," *viz.*, He has made known to us the Mystery of His will according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself. It is hid from other people, but made known to the believer. Let us remember that the will of God is supreme; He counsels, and it must be accomplished. When we read of the will of God in this sense—the will of His counsel—we know that it is going to be accomplished. What is behind it all? "His good pleasure which He has purposed in Himself." What then is that? Is it not that God is working out a wonderful scheme, headed up in Christ, in which He will be able to find eternal pleasure. When it is all brought into being and accomplished, God will be able to rest in His love, in supreme satisfaction, because He has brought about a system for His own pleasure. He purposed it in Himself, He has made it to depend upon His own omnipotence and omniscience: upon His own wisdom and power. He has brought it about, and will bring it about for reasons of His own. Truly we can say:—

"Father, Spring and Source of blessing."

What is this purpose? He is going to bring everything under one control. He has purposed in Himself, that in the dispensation of the fulness of times He might head up all things in Christ. There are a great many discussions that take place amongst the nations, and amongst men, as to what is really the best form of government in a properly constituted state. Some would advise aristocracy, some autocracy, others democracy; but what is God's good pleasure? The fact is that all these schemes of men fail, because the state of men in their fallen condition sets them one against another. Supposing you had a community where there was no authority, but all did their own wills, it would be every man against his fellow. It is all very well to talk about dividing things up equally, but anybody would know that very soon one man would want more than he had, and he would feel that he could only get it from his neighbour, and so there would be one set against the other. But God is sovereign; and the most wonderful order of things will be brought about, when there will be absolute autocracy or theocracy, combined with absolute justice and absolute consideration for every creature. The blessed God alone is capable of it, and He will vindicate His *will*, and He will

entrust—He has entrusted—the fulfilment of it to this wonderful Person—it is purposed to head up all things in Christ. It is God's plan to bring everything under Christ; everything will centre in Christ; He will be the great Head, the great source of authority; He will rule and order and govern according to the will of God.

(To be continued).

FRUIT-BEARING AND TESTIMONY.

(John xv., 1-8).

In John xiii. there is presented to us the Lord's gracious service for His people, that, during the time of His absence, they may have communion, or "part," with Him where He is in the Father's house. In John xiv. the Lord comforts our hearts by telling us of the coming of the Holy Spirit, whereby it will be possible for Christ to be with us, as He can say, of the one that keeps His commandments, "I will love Him and will manifest Myself to him." Again, speaking of the Father and Himself, "We will come unto him and make our abode with Him" (xiv. 21, 23). Our having part with Christ, where He is, and Christ having part with us where we are, prepares us for the fruit-bearing brought before us in John xv. The discourse opens with the presentation of the Lord as the true Vine, the Father as the Husbandman, and the disciples as the branches. To save any misconception as to the passage, it is important to remember that the discourse does not contemplate Christ as the Head, and believers as forming His body, as set forth in the Epistles of Paul. It presents Christ and those who profess to be His disciples on earth. Viewing believers as members of the body of Christ we think of their heavenly privileges as united to the Head in heaven. Into this body nothing unreal can come, and from this body no member can be taken away. If, however, we look at believers as disciples of the Lord we think of their responsibility to bear His character, and thus represent Him in the world from which He is absent. Amongst these disciples there may be found false professors, who are but dead branches fit only for the burning.

To follow the teaching of the passage we may ask ourselves three questions: (1) What is the fruit of which the Lord speaks? (2) What are the means taken that the true disciples may be fruitful? (3) What is the great end in view in fruit-bearing? What then does the Lord mean when He

speaks of fruit? May we not say that fruit is all that in our lives which is agreeable to God? It follows that only that which is of Christ in us can be for the Father's delight. We may therefore say, that *fruit is the character of Christ reproduced in the lives of His disciples*. We read in Galatians v. 22, that "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, fidelity, meekness, self-control" (N. Tn.). These are the very qualities that marked Christ in His path down here, and that called forth the Father's expression of pleasure, for the voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son in whom I have found my delight." Fruit, then, is not simply preaching and teaching, or activity in different forms of service, or in this passage even souls won for Christ through the preaching, but rather the beautiful qualities of Christ seen in the souls that are won. Alas! it is possible to be very active in Christian service and yet exhibit very little of the character of Christ in the life, and, therefore, bring forth but little fruit for the delight of the Father. Moreover, let us remember that what goes up to God as fruit, goes out to man as testimony. These two thoughts are expressed by the Lord's words, "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples." The life that glorifies the Father and delights His heart becomes a testimony to the world that we are Christ's disciples. That we are truly His disciples will be far more manifest by a little meekness and gentleness, than by any amount of activity. Mary's quiet dependence upon the Lord, that led her to sit at His feet and hear His word, brought forth fruit that was far more pleasing to the heart of Christ than all Martha's sincere energy. We are not all called or gifted to take an active part in preaching or teaching, or many other forms of service; but it is open to all—the youngest as the oldest believer—to express in our life the beautiful traits of Christ, and thus bring forth fruit for the Father and testimony before men. Christ, personally, is no longer on earth; but God desires that Christ, morally, should still be seen in His people. In the measure in which this is true there will be fruit and testimony.

How, then, is fruit produced in the lives of Christ's disciples? (V. 1). First, let us mark the Lord's words, "I am the true Vine." The fruit of the vine is found in the branches, and the branches can only be fruitful as they are livingly connected with the Vine. Christ is the source of the believer's life. Nature can, at times, exhibit many

amiable qualities, but cannot produce the lovely character of the One Who made Himself of no reputation in order to serve others in love. Apart from Christ—the source of life—there can be no fruit for the Father. In order that we may bear fruit, “bring forth more fruit,” and “much fruit,” the Lord’s words indicate that there is what the Father does; what He, Himself, does, and what we ourselves can do. (V. 2) First there are the Father’s dealings in discipline and chastening. From the figure used, it would seem that it is possible to be a branch in vital link with the vine and yet be unfruitful. Such the husbandman “taketh away.” This would be an extreme form of chastening of which, perhaps, the New Testament gives us a solemn example in the case of some in the Assembly at Corinth whose lives were so dishonouring to the Lord that they were taken away by death, as we read, “many are weak and sickly among you and *many sleep*” (1 Cor. xi., 30-32). There are, moreover, the dealings of the Father with those who bear fruit that they may “bring forth more fruit.” Of such the Lord says, “every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it.” Thus we read, in Hebrews xii., that if the Father chastens us it is “for our profit that we might be partakers of His holiness.” The trials that we pass through, the sorrows by the way, the sicknesses that are allowed to come upon us, the bereavements that break our hearts, and the insults that we may have to meet are all allowed by a Father who loves us, in order that we may detect and judge all that is wrong in our thoughts and words and ways, so that Christ may be formed in us, and that we may bring forth fruit by exhibiting something of the lovely character of Christ.

(V.3) Secondly, there is that which the Lord, Himself, does in order that we may bear fruit. Already He had washed His disciples’ feet; as He can say, “Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.” This would indicate that the feet-washing of John xiii., that enables us to have communion with Christ, prepares us to set forth in our lives the excellencies of Christ. (Vv. 4, 5) Thirdly, there is not only the Father’s dealings with us, and the Lord’s gracious service for us, but our own part in leading to a fruitful life. Do we desire that our lives may become beautiful by expressing in some little measure the loveliness of Christ, then we do well to heed the Lord’s words, “Abide in Me.” What is the significance of these words, repeated in these verses so many times? Do they

not imply a loving and personal dependence upon Christ that would keep us close to Himself, living in the sunshine of His love? Very blessed it is to help, and minister to one another; but abiding in Christ is not dependence upon ministry, or looking to a servant of the Lord, however right at times. It is personal dependence upon the Lord, and looking to Himself. Thus the bride, in the Song of Songs, can say "I sat down under *His shadow* with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste." Seeing the lovely traits set forth in perfection in Christ, we shall delight in this excellent fruit; and, occupied with Him we shall become marked by that which we find sweet to our taste. Beholding the glory of the Lord we "are changed into the same image from glory to glory (2 Cor. iii., 18). Then let us mark well the Lord's words, "Without Me ye can do nothing." A truth we all acknowledge but often forget. We need one another as this discourse, and many another precious Scripture plainly indicates, but above all we need Christ, for, in the matter of bearing fruit, without Him we can do nothing. (V. 6) The Lord's words present the solemn case of a dead branch—a mere lifeless professor, one who may profess great activity but have no vital link with Christ, and therefore bear no fruit for the Father. Nothing of the character of Christ is seen in such. He is not simply "taken away" as in the case supposed in v. 2, but he is "cast forth" as a dead and withered branch and burned. Was not Judas a solemn example of one who made a fair profession before men, but in whom there was no vital link with Christ? (Vv. 7, 8) Finally, the Lord encourages by setting before us the blessedness of bearing fruit:—(1) as regards ourselves, by abiding in Christ and thus bearing the character of Christ, we shall have the mind of Christ as expressed in His words, and thus be able to pray according to His mind and receive answers to our prayers. (2) Bearing fruit we shall bring glory to the Father by setting forth the character of Christ Who was the perfect expression of the Father. (3) By wearing the character of Christ we shall become witnesses before the world that we are truly His disciples, and thus become the witnesses in this world of that blessed Man who is in the glory. The Lord does not say, "If ye preach ye shall be my disciples," but if "ye bear much fruit." The witness to Christ is found in the lives of disciples. It is a living witness!

HAMILTON SMITH.

THE MYSTERY.

Wonderful divine secrets have been disclosed in the revelation of "The Mystery." It is a treasury of truth, unveiling in "The Mystery of God" the secret of God's heart and counsels; in "The Mystery of Christ," the Headship and pre-eminence of the Son of the Father's love; in "The Mystery of the Church," the riches of God's glory in blessing the church in union with Christ; and in "The Mystery of the Gospel," that the great secret of the ages was now enshrined and proclaimed in the heart of God's Glad Tidings.

The Mystery in divine revelation.

God was silent regarding the Mystery in ancient times, having purposely hidden it from the past ages and generations. It was not concealed among the mysteries of creation, to be discovered by the enquiry of the philosopher or the exploration of the scientist; nor was it revealed or hidden in the Old Testament Scriptures to be found by the prophets who diligently searched their own writings. The treasure of the mystery of the kingdom was hid in the field; but "*The Mystery*" was hidden in the heart and counsels of God until the time for its revelation. Moses told Israel that God had secret things when he said, "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those which are revealed belong unto us" (Deut. xxix., 29).

The time for the revelation of the Mystery arrived, when the Lord Jesus, after manifesting the Father's Name and accomplishing redemption, sat down at God's right hand. A special revelation was made to Paul of this great truth, because he had been divinely chosen as minister of the Mystery. But God also made it known to Christ's "holy apostles and prophets in the power of the Spirit."

Fulfilling his ministry, Paul declared, "all the counsel of God" to the saints; and he communicated it in writing that the truth of the Mystery might remain for the saints down the church ages in "prophetic scriptures, according to commandment of the eternal God, made known for obedience of faith to all the nations" (Rom. xvi., 26). The Mystery is the keystone in the glorious edifice of divine revelation: the foundation of which concerns the Person and work of Christ; and whose superstructure contains the counsels and purpose of God. Without this subject the

canon of Scripture would be incomplete, for, said Paul, "It was given to me for you, to fulfil (or complete) the word of God; even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations."

Christ's place according to the Mystery.

That Christ has a special place in relation to the Mystery is learned from Romans xvi., 25; "To him that is of power to stablish you according to my Gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the Mystery." Prophecy, in the Old Testament, pointed out Christ's place in relation to Israel; and even the blessing of the nations through Christ depended on Israel's blessing. In consonance with the prophetic word, the Lord Jesus while on earth, identified Himself with the godly remnant of Israel, though presenting Himself to the nation as Messiah and Son of God. But the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the Mystery, announces the heavenly glories of God's anointed, and the exalted position of the Son of God at God's right hand.

Colossians i. develops the subject of the "preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the Mystery." Speaking of the Lord Jesus as, "Christ—the hope of glory," Paul adds, "Whom we preach." The Christ, Whom Paul preached, is the Son of the Father's love, and the Head of the body, the assembly. He is not found to-day among an earthly people, as an earthly Messiah, displaying the glories of an earthly kingdom; but He is among the Gentiles, their Head and their life; and the glory they are to share with Him is in prospect.

Similarly, in Ephesians iii., 8; Paul in pursuance of his ministry, was to "preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." Psalmists with raptured heart, and in glowing terms, described the searchable riches of God's king, the Son of David; and with exquisite language Solomon in his Song of Songs portrayed the deep affection of Christ for His earthly people: but how surpassing, the privilege given to the apostle Paul as minister of the Mystery, to unfold the wide range of Christ's unsearchable riches, as Head over all things to the church; and to speak of "the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge."

The Church's place according to the Mystery.

Formerly, God had blessed Israel as a nation, bringing them near to Him; and erecting in the Law, a wall which

hedged them in, and kept them separate from the Gentiles. In the cross, God broke down the middle wall of partition, and revealed in the Mystery the blessings existing in Christ for both Jew and Gentile. The elements of divine blessing, as found in Eph. iii., 6, are (1) Jew and Gentile are Joint-heirs, (2) Jew and Gentile form a joint-body, (3) Jew and Gentile are joint-partakers of God's promise in Christ by the Gospel.

The inheritance in which believing Jews and Gentiles now jointly share, is not the inheritance belonging to man as derived from Adam; nor is it the inheritance belonging to Abraham by the promise of God; or that held out to Israel on the ground of law. Man has forfeited his right to the earth by reason of sin; and Israel by breaking the Law has proved the inheritance cannot be secured by human effort: and although the promise to Abraham remains, the fulfilment refers to a future day. The inheritance given to the saints is "in Christ," in Whom God will gather up in one all things, the things on earth, and the things in heaven, in the dispensation of the fulness of times. In that day, God will occupy the vast inheritance in His saints, even as He occupied Canaan in Israel, and shall yet occupy the earth in the princes of Israel. God desires that His saints should have the spiritual condition now, to know the "riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints."

When the Lord Jesus is manifested as Head over all things in the coming day, the church will be united to Him as His body and fulness. Jewish and Gentile believers share jointly this wonderful place and privilege as Christ's body. Already they have been reconciled to God in one body; and without discrimination partake together of the blessings and benefits accruing from this place of nearness and intimacy. They receive the same care from Christ, and draw the same nourishment from the Head of the body; all the resource and wisdom of the Head being available to both alike. No hint of such blessing is given in the Old Testament; nor that Jew and Gentile should jointly participate in divine blessings without distinction.

God's promise in Christ by the Gospel is something outside any promise given to saints of old. Promises were made by God to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; to Israel and to David; but this promise "in Christ" which is brought to light in the Gospel is something of a new order connected

with God's purpose. Consideration of 2 Tim, i., 1 and Titus i., 2 would lead us to conclude that this is the promise of eternal life. Paul speaks of it as "Eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." It belongs to God's counsels, which existed before the world; and reveals a life which is heavenly, and which shall be ours in glory with Christ. John, who ministered the truth of eternal life, and shows it as a present possession of the children of God also speaks of it as a divine promise, saying, "And this is the promise that He hath promised us, even life eternal."

"This is a great mystery—Christ and the church."

Although the mystery is not found in the Old Testament, God in making Eve from the rib belonging to Adam, had Christ and the church in view. Eve was derived from Adam, and was therefore suitable to be united to him. As Christ's body, the church is part of Him; being first taken from Him in His deep sleep of death, and then by the Spirit united to Him to share His place of Headship and glory. Israel, as the King's daughter, all glorious within the Ivory palaces, was derived from the King: the Queen in gold of Ophir, at his right hand, shows Israel united to Christ in the display of His earthly glory. But the church is united to Christ for the display of His heavenly glory, and is in the nearest possible place of intimacy and affection.

The ministry and administration of the Mystery.

God gave the *revelation* of the Mystery to the apostles and prophets of the New Testament; but the *ministry* was committed to Paul, so that the saints might receive its *manifestation*. Through this ministry, God would have His saints "know—the riches of the glory of this Mystery," and have them "knit together in love, and unto all the riches—of the Mystery of God, in which are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. chs. i. and ii.). Possessing such a ministry, Paul realised his indebtedness to the grace of God; and also that the successful exercise of the divine gift depended upon the formation within him of God's grace by divine power. This spiritual preparation does not puff up the vessel; but gives the greatest servant of Christ to account himself as less than the least of all saints. As specially chosen, and as wrought upon by God, Paul was to declare to the Gentiles Christ's unsearchable riches, "And to make all see what is the fellowship (administration) of the Mystery."

This administration delineates God's present purpose in creating the universe. When the creation came into being "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy," as they saw the display of God's wisdom and power: and in the ages to come God will display "the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness towards us in Christ Jesus." But in this day; the day of man's sin and ruin; God is making known to the great intelligences of heaven His all varied wisdom. All that the human eye can see in the church is failure and confusion; but among the debris of the old creation, God is producing in new creation, the vessel that shall display His glory and love in the eternal ages. To form such a vessel, from such material and in such conditions, demands not only infinite power, but wisdom of greater variety than that which brought the old creation out of nothing. God, then, created the present universe, that He might have a platform upon which to display to His heavenly hosts the wonders of His wisdom.

What the reception of the Mystery produces.

Romans xvi., 25 states that two things are necessary for the establishing of Christians: Paul's Gospel; and the truth of the Mystery. Without the knowledge of the Mystery we cannot therefore be established according to God. But Colossians i. shows that if we are to be mature Christians we must have the preaching of Jesus Christ, the hope of glory, as revealed in the Mystery: "Whom we preach—to—present every man *perfect* in Christ Jesus." Paul's prayer, after treating of the Mystery in Eph. iii., makes known the result desired by God in giving this revelation: "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith"; "That ye might be filled with all the fulness of God."

What the reception of the Mystery involves.

For Paul, the ministry of the Mystery brought reproach and sorrow; and those who receive into their hearts the truth he ministered cannot expect to escape these things. Paul's special sufferings as minister are recorded in Col. i., 24, "Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His body's sake, which is the church." He specifically mentioned in his letters to the saints at Ephesus and Colosse that he was bound with a chain because of the Mystery; yet all Asia, which must have included these assemblies, turned away from him, evidently being ashamed of his chain.

Had the truth of the Mystery gripped their souls, as holding the Head they could not have been indifferent to the sufferings of a member of His body; and had Christ been dwelling in their hearts by faith, they would not have turned away from the servant imprisoned for His testimony. Demas, who loved this present world, forsook Paul; and in his day of crisis the apostle has to say, "no man stood with me." But there was consolation in all this. When no man stood by him, Paul could add "notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me"; and when all Asia turned away from him, he said, "Onesiphorus—oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain: but—sought me out very diligently." Reception of the truth of the Mystery involves a life of separation from the world, and this will bring the world's reproach. If we are faithful to the Lord in holding fast the truth as Paul was, we must expect to be "turned away from" by those ashamed of the testimony, and forsaken by those who love the world. We cannot expect to have many companions, but we can count upon the companionship and support of the Lord; and we can rely on the refreshment supplied in true fellowship by those who have Christ dwelling in their hearts.

WM. C. REID.

CHRIST HIMSELF.

If the soul has been merely occupied with the work of Christ in bringing salvation to itself, there will be peace because it knows salvation; but if the Person of Christ has become the object of affection and the soul is occupied with Himself, such has a constant spring within of joy, as well as settled peace; for with Christ as the personal object to the soul, it possesses a joy which the fact of knowing we are saved (blessed as it may be) will not continuously give. If Christ fill the heart, it will not be merely that I am happy because I am saved, but the thought of Him to whom I am going will fill my soul with joy. It is true that I am going to Heaven, but the thought that makes Heaven to my soul is, that *Christ Himself is there*; there is One to whom we go. The Person I have loved on earth, I am going to be with in Heaven, thus it is always expressed in Scripture. If my heart is occupied with Himself who possesses the coming glory, unless I find Him in the glory, it would be nothing to me.

J. N. D.

ANTECEDENTS TO SERVICE.

It has been properly remarked that the history of the book of Kings is that of man in responsibility; whilst the history of the book of Chronicles is of God's purpose. Sad though man's history had been, yet II. Kings strikingly closes (xxv., 28), with an intimation that man will, through the mercy of God, be lifted to a seat of honour. Man's history would have ended in irrevocable judgment had God not intervened in sovereign mercy for His own glory and man's blessing.

In Chronicles we can trace God's purpose, and though man there, as ever, still fails, God continues His good pleasure by securing a remnant, see Ezra and Nehemiah, and in Malachi declaring His delight in such, and promising to them the rising of the Sun of righteousness. By Him eventually God's purpose is consummated. However, saints too, can find an honourable place in the record of God's purposes. In I. Chronicles iv., 10, we read of Jabez requesting God to bless him richly and enlarge his border. He was in accord with Eph. iii., 16-19; and such prayers find a ready answer. Another bright jewel found shining amongst the apparently uninteresting genealogies of the early chapters is that in ch. iv., 21-23, which would seem to be so pleasureable to God, that He digresses to draw attention to it, and thus doubtless to instruct and encourage those who would in their day and measure serve Him acceptably.

Before mention is made of the activities to which we are directed in v. 23, the godly character of those under review is first given. This is most essential! We serve becomingly as we live becomingly! Shelah, the first named, means "peace," and assuredly all who serve commence there, whether this is taken to refer to the person and work of our Lord, as "He is our peace," and "He made and preached peace"; or, as may be more correct here, the manner of our service, as "endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Er, meaning "watcher," suggests Eph. vi., 18, followed by Lechah—"addition." "The families of the house of them that wrought fine linen" reminds us of the need of righteousness in our walk, Rev. xix., 8, confirming the fact that here we have practical, rather than imputed, righteousness. Jokim (Jah sets up), and Joash (Jah supports) need no interpretation in the line

of purpose. Moab in Jer. xlviii., vv. 11 and 29, speaks of ease, pride, haughtiness. Saraph (burning—judgment) reminds us of the self-judgment needed that we may obey the word which says, “walk as wise, redeeming the time” (*i.e.*, not at ease, idlers) “because the days are evil”; and also “walk worthy of the vocation or calling in all lowliness, meekness, longsuffering, etc., striving to keep the unity of the Spirit” (not unity merely) “in the bond of peace.” These are some of the features traced for us here by God.

Before we touch the service of these men, we read, “these are ancient things.” The word “ancient” means “removed.” Matters relative to God’s purpose are not connected with this world, being far removed from the sphere of natural man’s interests. “Our citizenship is in heaven.” Further, a vessel meet for the Master’s use must be a purged (*i.e.*, separated or removed) vessel. The features expressed in the names before considered are old and unchanging.

Now we come to the character of the service. “These are the potters,” to fashion or form. This was true of him who in Gal. iv., 19, writes “my little children of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you.” Truly the New Testament potter at work here, as Jehovah Himself in Jer. xviii., 6. Then as to their abiding place, “they dwelt amongst the plantations and enclosures” (N.Tn. by J. N. D.). The plants are of the Father (c.f. Matt. xv., 13), and the enclosures or folds, being plural, would speak of assemblies where are placed the called ones according to eternal purpose. Shelah and his posterity abode there, yet not alone. One is already there, “they dwelt with the king for his work.” The Lord is in His assembly, He delights to be there, and such are with Him. With Him speaks of holy intimacy and companionship. Dwelling with, precedes working for. As we know Him, we are able to serve Him properly. Abiding in Him, according to John xv. assures fruitfulness. Therefore we read “with the King for His work.” “I will build my assembly.” His interest and activity has it in view. He both died and lives for it. The gifts bestowed by Himself are given with the object of perfecting the saints, and edifying the body of Christ. Also every part, according to its effectual working makes increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. May this Scripture encourage us to seek our Lord’s presence, and there be fitted for His work in the plantations and enclosures.

L. B. HOGG.

GOD'S CARE FOR HIS LAMBS.

(Expository Notes by Hamilton Smith).

First Thessalonians, Chapter II.

In touching language, "He shall feed His flock like a shepherd : He shall gather the lambs with His arm and carry them in His bosom" (Isa. xl., 11), the prophet Isaiah likens God's people to a flock that God delights to feed. Moreover, the lambs of the flock, that might be especially liable to be scattered by the enemy, He gathers with his arms of power, and cherishes in his heart of love. Thessalonians, Ch. ii., presents this special care for the lambs. We see the gracious and gentle way that God takes with these young converts, in order that they may walk worthy of the One who has called them unto His Kingdom and glory (12). The wolf may seek to scatter the lambs, but the great Shepherd of the sheep will gather them with His protecting arm. The enemy may seek to encompass their fall, but the Shepherd will carry them, and bring them home to glory at last. The first twelve verses set forth this loving care, expressed through the Apostle. The latter part of the chapter brings before us the blessed results of this care as seen in the christian characteristics displayed in these young believers.

(a) The grace of the Apostle to sinners (1-5).

To remind the Thessalonian believers of the grace of God on their behalf, the Apostle first speaks of his entrance among them as sinners (1-5); then of his gentleness with them as young converts, even as a nurse cheriseth her children (6-9); and lastly, of his faithfulness to them, even as a father deals with his children (10-12). (Vv. 1, 2) Whether religious Jews, or idolatrous Gentiles, they were sinners needing a Saviour, and as such the Apostle came to them with all boldness. This was the more striking, seeing that the Apostle and his companions, came from Philippi, where, as the result of proclaiming the gospel, they had suffered persecution and insults. Their sufferings had raised no resentment, or made the servants more reticent in publicly proclaiming the truth, as natural prudence might have done. On the contrary, the Apostle can say, "After that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated . . . we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God." It was not, however, the boldness of

nature which often degenerates into the aggressiveness of the flesh; it was boldness in our God. Thus the servant followed in the steps of his Master, who, when His enemies took up stones to stone Him, quietly passed on dispensing grace. No violence of man could draw forth any resentment from Him or wither His grace. Moreover, the Apostle's preaching was with "much earnest striving" (N.Tn.). It was not with fleshly contention, that only provokes the flesh, but with earnest longing that strives to win the soul. (Vv. 3-5) Furthermore, if the Apostle came to them with *outward boldness*, it was accompanied with *inward purity*. If the manner was bold, the motive was pure. There was nothing either in the preacher or the preaching that deceived men. It was not with "deceit" that Paul preached. Nor was his preaching with "uncleanness" that panders to the lusts of men; nor in "guile" that hides the truth. His motive being pure there was nothing in the preaching that sought to please man as man, or that sought the approval of man by "flattering words." Nor did the Apostle use his preaching to gain anything from man, thus making the preaching a pretext for covetousness. On the contrary, the Gospel that Paul preached, instead of deceiving, opened men's eyes to their true condition, rebuked them for their sins, told them the truth, even if that truth was neither pleasing nor flattering to the flesh. Moreover, while the gospel brings infinite blessing to man, it is not a means for extracting gain from man, or for making a living. Further, the Apostle can speak with such integrity of conscience, that he can call God, who trieth the hearts, to witness to the truth of what he said.

(b) *The loving care of the Apostle for young converts (6-12).*

If vv. 3-5, tell us of the purity of motive with which the Apostle preached to sinners, the verses that follow speak of the affection of heart that moved him in caring for young converts. (Vv. 6-9) It was not selfishness, that sought personal gain, that moved the Apostle, but rather the mind of Christ that, forgetting self, served others in love. He was not energised by self that seeks the applause of others, or one's own glory. He sought no glory from men, and would take nothing from saints, even if he had the right so to do. He was moved by love that sought only the good of others—love that was not requiring from them but imparting to

them; that was gentle among them even as a nurse cherisheth her children; that was ready to give even his life for them; that laboured night and day in order to serve them, without being a charge to them! (Vv. 10, 11) Moreover, if the Apostle was gentle as a nurse, he also faithfully charged them as "a father doth his own children." To charge others, however, calls for a faithful and holy walk, and such indeed was the Apostle's walk that he can call them to witness, and God also, that he lived among these believers, piously, holily and unblameably. (V. 12) Living such a life he could, with spiritual power, exhort, comfort, and charge others that they, too, should walk worthy of God, who has called us unto His kingdom and glory. The world esteems it an honour to be associated with those who are high in the kingdoms of this world and its glory; but how far greater the privilege to be associated with those who are called to God's kingdom and glory. Far greater honour to be found with those who are going to sit on thrones judging in the kingdom of Christ, even if down here they were but ignorant and unlearned fishermen, than to be associated with the greatest potentate of this passing world. Poor the Lord's people may be, but, "Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love Him?" (James ii., 5). God would have us to look beyond this world and all its empty honours, and remember the high dignity that He has conferred upon us in calling us "unto His Kingdom and glory," and, as we pass through this scene to walk and behave in consistency with our position as heirs of the coming glory.

(To be continued).

FURTHER NOTES ON THESSALONIANS.

Apropos of the helpful exposition of I. Thess., Ch. 1 in No. 1 of the Quarterly there has come to hand the following notes by a correspondent, well versed in New Testament Greek, which will stimulate fresh exercise!

The original text suggests that there were several local companies, manifold in character (secular and religious), also a synagogue (Acts xix, 32, 39). The Church in Thessalonica was constituted in (*en*) God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. (The little prep. *en* has wonderful power of expression). Their origin and destiny as well as

sphere of relationship are in contrast to what related to Jewish and Pagan gatherings. Their reaction was expressed in *toil* (more than mere labour) of love, *work* of faith and *patience* (enduring constancy, J. N. D.) of hope. That involves perseverance as well as patience! These attributes were not “in” but “of” (*tou*) our Lord Jesus Christ! (The genitive case indicates origin, character and power). What a contrast was presented in the grace, peace and love compared with the worldly equivalents in that large city! All God’s work, election and conversion, was in the power of the Holy Spirit, the living active holy agent, and in much greater assurance (*plerophoria*). Elsewhere we have correlatives in the “much full assurance” of understanding (Col. ii., 2) of hope (Heb. vi., 11) of faith (Heb. x., 22). The Holy Spirit is the effective power and subjectively the certain full assurance of the believers. A kindred word is *plerophoreo* (2 Tim. iv., 5). “Most surely believed” (Luke i., 1); “fully persuaded” (Rom. iv., 21; xiv., 5); also “full measure of the ministry” (II. Tim. iv., 5, 17). *Pleroma* = full measure or “all the fulness,” etc. So from the fulness of God is poured Pentecostal abundance (whether in 7 or 12 baskets: the full corn in the ear!) into the hearts of men and women, as in the Acts, *e.g.*, Stephen, Paul, Peter, etc., so to the Thessalonians! They became not merely “followers” but “imitators” (*mimetes*; cognate *mimos*—an actor: “copyists,” although always translated “followers” in N.T.). They had copied the ways of the Lord, as actors study their characters. “The old craftsmen apprentices lived with their masters and so became like them.” They also became imitators of the churches of God in Judaea (ii., 14). They received the word which was the ground of their imitation in spite of afflictions but accompanied with spiritual joy. In consequence, they became ensamples (patterns) of what they sampled (i., 7). From them was “rung out” the word of the Lord: very different from the sound of a dying swan song! Here is joy and triumph, since sounding distinctly! As the range of the sound increased, the field of testimony enlarged (i., 8). The three-folds of verses 3, 9 and 10 synchronise with these of verse 5. *Eisodos*, entrance (i., 9) is the same word as in Acts xiii., 24, translated “His coming” in A.V. and “the face of his entry” by J. N. D. (See also I. Thess. ii., 1; Heb. x., 19; II. Pet. i., 11). Love

carried by the gospel leaps every barrier of the thick barbed wire fortifications of Paganism. The power and assurance are penetrating and effectual. They had remarkable conversions:—turned (verb in aorist) to God (His doing) from idols. There was a complete change of masters. Behind the idol there was the demon (man's false foe). They were no longer under a death-dealing enemy but in the service of the true (or real) and living God! They were constituted to wait (not a timeless participle as "delivered")—sustained in expectation of the Coming One, now alive for evermore Whom death and the grave could not hold. The idols and the world (the sphere of wrath) cannot deliver since themselves fettered! Thus He can and will deliver His own.

OMICRON.

THE RENT AND THE UNRENT VEILS.

A comparison of Matt. xxvii., 51 with Heb. x., 20 might serve the purpose of creating exercise as to the two deeply important truths of revelation and approach, the former dealing with God's side and the latter with ours. It will be obvious on the ground of Scripture, that revelation is the primary and approach the secondary consideration, for this is the way in which they are presented in the Tabernacle system of Exodus. In Ch. xxv. having proposed that the people should make a sanctuary so that He could dwell among them, God instructed Moses in detail as to the Tabernacle, describing first of all the furniture dealing with revelation, *viz.*:—the Ark, the Mercy-seat, the Table, the Candle-stick (all of which speak of Christ), the Tabernacle itself and lastly the Altar of burnt-offering which was a witness to both of the truths which are being considered, in fact, the point where one embraced the other. Then came the consecration of the priests, clearly showing that approach could only be made through that medium, followed by the vessels speaking of approach, *viz.*:—the Altar of incense and the brazen laver.

If God, then, in His wisdom distinguishes in this way in the typical teaching of Old Testament Scripture, surely as those upon whom the revenues of the ages have come (1 Cor. x., 11) we do well to follow the distinction into the New Testament! It would seem that the two truths are seen shining clearly from the references to the veil of the Temple in Matt. xxvii. and the veil of the Tabernacle in

Heb. x. The former, let it be noted, was rent in twain (showing the completeness of the revelation) from the top to the bottom (showing the origin of the revelation and its extent). There has thus been the complete revelation of God as to nature and character, for the Cross has come in and this was the only means by which the complete outshining of God could be effected (I John iv., 10; Rom. iii., 21-26). It is a stupendous thought that everything in connection with God has been told out, nothing else remains to be revealed and the one who has believed the Gospel of his salvation has the power and capacity for the apprehension of what flows therefrom. "Ye have an unction from the Holy One and ye know all things." Where this is understood the believer has the Witness on the line of approach for in turning to Hebrews we find it is the Tabernacle and not the Temple which is largely taken up (ix., 24). Heb. x., 19 shows the title the believer has to enter into the Holiest which is an individual matter and verse 20 would perhaps indicate the conditions which surround entrance. It is by a new and living way which He hath consecrated for us, *through* the veil, that is to say His flesh. On our side it would be the acceptance of death conditions to self (I Cor. i., 29). Where entrance is practised, flowing as it does from state on the part of the individual, it will lead to what is collective as the chapter goes on to develop. May the Lord help us to make an abundant entrance into these precious truths!

J. WILSON.

What screened the Israelites was not their seeing the blood but God seeing it. Many souls are saying, I do not know whether I have accepted it aright. But what gives peace is knowing that God has accepted it. They think they must look into their hearts to see if they have accepted it aright: but a simple soul would not think of such a thing, but would only be too happy to rest in God's value of Christ's blood. J. N. D. (Vol. xix., 477).

On visiting this land 70 years ago, Dr Dollinger was struck with the presence of a Bible in every household as a distinguishing feature of English life. That is far from being true to-day!

Scripture is never hackneyed in expression nor threadbare in texture! We do well to pay attention to the subtle niceties of Scriptural expression lest we miss the still more subtle niceties of Scriptural thought!

T. O.

TWO OFFICIAL GLORIES.

(Notes of Reading on Hebrews viii. at Harrington, 1/1/41).

In this chapter we have the Lord presented in two of His official glories; first as the Minister of the Sanctuary, then as the Mediator of the better Covenant. As the Minister of the Sanctuary we learn that Christ has gone in to God. Then as the Mediator of the better Covenant, He prepares us to go to God. The service of God in the Heavenly Sanctuary, is surely the great theme of this wonderful epistle.

In the former part of the epistle the priesthood of Christ is viewed more on the side of from God to man than from man to God. He is set to carry His people through the wilderness and right through to Glory as seen in the tenth verse of the second chapter. For this, He has every provision, for every need for every one of His people: (1) for sin without as in Ch. ii., 18; (2) for pressure within as in Ch. iv., 15; (3) for the difficulties of the pathway as in Ch. vii., 25. For the first we have ministered to us "Succour"; for the second "Sympathy"; for the third, "Salvation." He will carry His people right home to Glory, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.

Now we read in Ch. vii., 25 of those who "*come to God.*" In the former part it is rather those who get through the wilderness, but Heb. viii. is more occupied with coming to God. It is with this in view that our thoughts are led on to contemplate Christ as the High Priest who is at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens. He has gone in, in the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man, that is, into heaven itself (Ch. ix., 24). He is there as the High or Chief Priest and this involves a company associated with Him there, for while we are never directly spoken of as priests in this epistle, yet the thought of a company to which He is High priest, runs through chapters viii., ix. and x.

Verses 3 and 4 speak of Him as having "somewhat also to offer." But we must notice here it is not now from God to man but from man to God. As of old the offerings of God were brought by His people to the House of God and the priestly function was to offer them, so now Christ has the place of pre-eminence over the House of God (Heb. iii.-vi.). He is there to offer the spiritual gifts that are

brought to God to-day. Surely this carries our thoughts back to such verses as Ch. ii., 12. "In the midst of the assembly will I sing thy praises." He is in heaven, it is there He sings as taking up His Priesthood in resurrection. He is at God's right hand, the true Melchisedec Priest, the fulfilment of Psalm cx.

In the New Covenant we have the conditions stated for our standing and fitness for going in to God. The New Covenant is mentioned in three particular places in the New Testament. (1) 1 Cor. xi. Here it is the witness of the love of Christ. (2) 2 Cor. iii. Here it is seen as the ministration of righteousness from the glory, to form us like Christ, so as to be able to present Christ in the gospel to men. (3) Heb. viii., ix. and x. Here it is to prepare us for approach into the presence of God, with a view to presenting Christ to God. Hence the two outstanding effects of the New Covenant mentioned in Hebrews viii. are—the knowledge of God and the forgiveness of sins. If we did not know God we *could* not approach Him. If our sins were still on us, we *dare* not approach Him. As the fruit of the New Covenant we both know God and know that our sins are forgiven. Hence with holy boldness we come consciously into the presence of God to worship Him intelligently. Christ has gone in and we can go in in association with Him, that we might take up, under His direction, the service of God in the Sanctuary. This is more fully opened out in chapters ix. and x. to which we might turn later if the Lord will. G. DAVISON.

. . . . The spiritual life keeps one young in spirit, for not only in this life have we hope: we have an intimate link with the Lord of life and glory. These exercises are rejuvenating for the old who have true faith. . . .
(*Extract from a recent letter*).

"*We are His (God's) workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*"—Eph. ii., 10.

One thing we must never forget—that if we are to have practical guidance from God, it must be in a path which is itself according to His mind and will. Much of the uncertainty felt by Christians as to the details of their path arises from the fact that they look for guidance as to details when their entire position is such as God cannot own. (Present Testimony vii., 277-1855).

SALIENT FEATURES IN JOHN'S GOSPEL

Notes of an address by R. Duncanson, No. 1.

Scriptures read, John iii., 35; v., 20-26; xii., 27-28; xiii., 3.

These Scriptures bring the Lord Jesus before us in the relationship of Son to the Father, and in the Son there exists a system of divine affections of which He is the centre. We have read, "The Father loveth the Son and hath given all things into His hand." This sets forth the complacent love of the Father in Him Who ever was the object of His pleasure. In eternity He was the constant delight of the Father's heart; the object of His love; and though here found in Manhood still retains the same relationship and the same place of affection. To manifest how great His love for the Son is, He gave all things into His hand. The measure of the gift is the measure of the love. Nothing has been left out of the Son's hand for the love of the Father to the Son is infinite, boundless and eternal.

In John v., 20 the expression recurs with this addition, "And showeth Him all things that He Himself doeth." Here in the intimacy of love the Son is perfectly conversant with all the Father's work. From the very outset the Father had been working: now the Son says, "I work." The work of the Son was in unison with the work of the Father, since He had come to do the Father's will and to finish His work. The character of that work is brought out in Chapter ix., where, in relation to the opening of the blind man's eyes, He said, "I must work the works of Him that sent me while it is day, the night cometh when no man can work." (ix., 4). But the Son is not only manifesting divine power as seen in many cases in this Gospel, He is the source of life: for "as the Father has life in Himself, so has He given to the Son to have life in Himself." He not only quickens, but He raises the dead; and while these things evince His equality with the Father, it is blessed to see that He receives these things as Man and as Son from the Father as an expression of the Father's love.

The death and resurrection of the Lord are brought before us in chapter xii., 27-28. Anticipating the dread hour of death His holy soul is troubled, and in His sorrow He turns to the Father, saying, "Father save me from this hour, but for this cause came I unto this hour." What that hour meant to Him could only be known to the Father, and so it is to the Father that He turns. In deepest devotedness to the

Father and in subjection to His will as ever delighting in it, though it made Him a Man of Sorrows, He submitted Himself to all that that hour meant to maintain the Father's glory and secure all that lay in the Father's counsels. If in verse 27 He asks the question, "What shall I say?" He answers it Himself in verse 28, "Father glorify Thy Name." He would not say "Father save me from this hour," for then the Name of the Father would not have been glorified in the cross. Is it any wonder that the Father's voice is heard replying "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." The Father's Name had been glorified in the raising of Lazarus, but the Father would glorify it again in raising Jesus from the dead. In the resurrection of the Son the Father has established a circle of divine affections into which those who have been given to the Son by the Father have been brought.

Chapter xiii. unfolds how we are maintained in relation to this circle of divine affections. The Lord Jesus lays aside His garments and takes the place of a servant that He might wash the disciples' feet. What a wonderful stoop for such a glorious Person! He would ever have us in closest intimacy with Himself, hence the need for such a service. All the defilement contracted in our pathway here must be removed that no shade of reserve might remain upon our spirits in relation to Him. May the Lord give us to enjoy more deeply, part with Him, in this blessed sphere of affections in which He dwells and into which He has brought us.

THE HUMANITY AND DEITY OF CHRIST.

Inferiority of rank as man, as mediator, as the apostle and servant of His Father—having for us spontaneously stooped from the throne of His glory—is asserted in John xiv., 28: equality of nature as to co-operation, self-existence, infinite knowledge, universal trust, is proved in John v., 17-23. The texts which declare the humanity of Jesus, are sufficient to refute those who from them would deny His Deity. How could a mere man, without absurd presumption, solemnly announce that God the Father was no greater than He? How could He be made flesh? How could it be a proof of His humility that He was made in the likeness of men? The Jews accused our Lord of making Himself equal with God, because He said God was His Father. Instead of protesting against their construction of His words, which, if only a man,

He would have done with indignation and abhorrence, He proceeded, while acknowledging the subordination of His mission as man, to set forth the essential supremacy of His person as God. For if the Son doeth whatsoever the Father doeth: if the Son quickeneth whom He will: if the dead shall hear His voice and live: if He executes judgment on the universe: if all men must honour the Son, even as they honour the Father: then is He equally Almighty, the communicative fountain of life, God who alone can raise the dead, the Omniscient who alone can judge an assembled world, and equally the centre of universal homage and adoration!

If our souls are filled with the condescension of God we shall not be stumbled at passages which speak of his exceeding humiliation. As we assign no limit to the height of His glory, we shall assign none to the depths of His grace. Yea, so far from taking offence at the inferiority of the position which He assumed, the very lowliness of his incarnation and degradation of His death will kindle in us a brighter and more burning gratitude, when we remember that though rich it was for our sakes He became poor; and that for us, His wayward and wandering sheep, the chief Shepherd offered up Himself as the Lamb of God, laying down His life of His own accord and taking it again to die no more. Every generous feeling brands it as the basest ingratitude to allege these proofs of His humanity in disproof of His Deity, trampling on His lowliness to pluck the diadem from His brow, finding cause in the true sympathy of Him who was in all points tempted like as we are, and touched with the feeling of our infirmities, for denying the excellence of that glory which He had with the Father before the world was. If a sick prisoner in Newgate, nursed and taught by the philanthropic Howard, had argued from the self-devotion of that noble man spending long hours in the loathsome cell, that he could not possess a princely mansion and a fortune. Even if he had reproached that ministering angel, saying, "You must surely be a wretched convict like myself," we might pity his infatuation and pardon his ingratitude:—but can we forgive ourselves, if we deliberately select the instances of our Lord's humiliation and cast them in His teeth, as proving that He never dwelt from eternity in the light that no man can approach, nor inhabited from everlasting that shrine of unfathomable delight, the bosom of the Father? Let us beware and remember the solemn warning, "Whosoever shall fall on this stone (Himself in

prostrate humility) shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall (Himself returning in glory), it will grind him to powder.”

If our doctrine is the truth, that there subsist in the essence of One Jehovah, three who are called the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, co-equal and co-eternal; and that it is the design of the Father and the will of the Son, with the consenting pleasure of the Holy Spirit, that the Son, for the recovery of fallen man, should empty Himself, not of His Godhead, which were impossible, but of His glory, and take our human nature into mysterious union with His Divine nature, so that God and man make one Christ: if this is spoken of in Scripture as the extremity of Divine condescension and humiliation that hereby guilty men might have a medium of access to the Holy Deity or have a mediator betwixt us and God, one with God by reason of His eternal essence, one with us by reason of the humanity He deigned to assume: how otherwise could such a relationship have been expressed than, “There is one God and one mediator betwixt God and man, the man Christ Jesus; who gave Himself a ransom for all?”—or such a salvation than, “This is life eternal, that they should know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent?” Looking forward, as the man Christ Jesus, to translation from this world of suffering to the glory of His Father’s throne, how otherwise could He describe His return from that present estate of afflicted humanity, than, “If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father; for my Father is greater than I?” Having descended with the express design of doing the Father’s pleasure, of serving a perfect service, of rendering a spotless obedience to the law, of exhibiting a Divine model of self-denial; how otherwise could He declare His mission than, “I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me?” Standing forth the exemplar of that faith we are to copy; as man, working His miracles not by virtue of His Divinity ever inherent in Him, but by virtue of a perfect faith in the power of the Father; that faith which with us is intermittent, being with Him constant without defect and victorious without defeat; how otherwise could He reveal the entire dependence of His soul on God, than, “I can of mine own self do nothing.” “The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works?”

E. H. B.

THAT I MAY KNOW HIM. Phil. iii., 10.

These words were from the pen and heart of the Apostle Paul. As I meditate upon them in faith in the presence of Christ, my own heart also breathes out, "Oh, that I might know Him." It may seem strange that such words should be written by the Apostle Paul who:—(1) When journeying to Damascus to persecute and imprison the saints had been arrested by the Lord, who spake to him from heaven and drew him to Himself in true heart repentance (Acts ix.). (2) was caught up into Paradise and heard unspeakable words (2 Cor. xii., 4). (3) was many times in bonds for Christ (Phil. i., 13). (4) could say, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Phil. i., 21). (5) counted the things which were gain to him naturally as loss for Christ (Phil. iii., 7, 8). (6) declared, "For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day (2 Tim. i., 12). Surely none knew the Lord Jesus Christ like the Apostle Paul! It was because He knew Him and loved Him with deep devotion, that he desired to know Him *fully*, even to conformity to His death. We may well ask, Who is this person whom the Apostle desired to know?

In the past eternity He was with the Father "Daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him" (Prov. viii., 30), whilst by Him all things were created (Col. i., 16). (We do well to remember this and to be in the good of it at present, when kingdoms which appeared stable are oppressed by another power!) In the fulness of time He had come forth from the Father into the world (John xvi., 28) and, whilst in it, so delighted the heart of the Father that He declared from heaven concerning Him, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye Him" (Matt. xvii., 5). In John x., 17, we read the Lord's words, "Therefore doth my Father love Me, because I lay down my life that I might take it again." Of His own volition He went to the Cross in our stead, "His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree" (1 Peter ii., 24). Before He bowed His head and gave up the ghost, He said, "It is finished" (John xix., 30).

Now our precious Saviour is alive for ever more, and He has entered into heaven itself, having obtained eternal redemption (Heb. ix., 12). He now appears in the presence of God for us (Heb. ix., 24). Soon He will come and take us to heaven to be with Himself and like Himself for ever

(1 Thessalonians iv., 13-18). What a wonderful Saviour He is, how deeply *we* should love Him and desire to know Him more! *If we are willing*, He will draw us to Himself, into a sphere which is abiding where all is of God. There we learn Himself in the preciousness of His love, there we long to dwell for ever with the Lord. If we are there already in spirit there will be the corresponding answer whilst we are left here. There will be flow of worship to the Father, acceptable through Christ Jesus our Lord; there will be love one toward another as those who are members of His assembly; also there will be ministry of Christ amongst us followed by the telling forth of the glad tidings in the power of the Holy Spirit. May the true language of each of our hearts be **THAT I MAY KNOW HIM!**

P. JACKSON.

CHRIST OUR RESOURCE.

In the present time things viewed morally and spiritually are like things after an earthquake; all is out of order and disjointed. We cannot now turn round and view the church as it once was—a body of heavenly-minded men keeping themselves unspotted from the world, manifesting the presence of Christ by their holy walk, shining as lights in the world's thick darkness. We must each feel his own individual weakness and failure. The heart is very apt to take counsel of self, and droop under the circumstances around, but instead of being cast down, the question should come in, "What is the spring, what the source, of the sustaining strength on which we lean?" It is in *Christ Himself* and in *His* power. If two or three desire now to meet in His name, and to walk unspotted in the midst of evil and failure, it is in the mighty power that never yet failed and never will, that they can do so. The church is loved and cherished by Him who is to present it to Himself. Nothing in earthen vessels can do this. Christ's own living power alone can sustain, nourish, and at the end present it to Himself without spot or wrinkle. How precious to be able to turn from our weakness and failure, and see this power up there in the living Person of that One who is the "Same yesterday, to-day, and for ever," to see Him sustaining and nourishing me because I am bone of His bones, and flesh of His flesh, risen with Him, one with Him.

G. V. WIGRAM.

ISAIAH LX.

No O. T. Scripture makes known to us the Lord's coming to the air for His saints; it is a N. T. revelation and not the subject of prophecy. The Church of God has a heavenly destiny and came into being consequently on Christ's ascension, so it is not to be expected that this hope which may be realised at any moment would be revealed until after the assembly was formed to receive it. A little band of faithful followers were the last to see the Lord leave this earth; those who will see and join Him at His return to the air are Christ's own people (1 Thess. iv., 13-18). Unlike the coming of Christ to the air, His return to set up an earthly kingdom fills largely the O.T. prophecies. The latter event, however, takes place some time after the former. Isaiah in striking language gives details in our chapter of God's order of blessing and future wellbeing for Israel and the nations. The inspired writer's description of this order contrasts sharply with the final condition to which our boasted civilisation and modernism advance. Between the two events referred to at the beginning of this paper the former part of v. 2 "For behold the darkness shall cover the earth and gross darkness the people" is what will characterise Christendom. Whatever order leaders in our day propose for the future, "New Birth" must be the starting point if permanent blessing is to be the result: "darkness" here does not mean irreligious or uneducated, but ignorant of the true God and His purposes. The new era according to God's plan assumes a certain order for Christ's appearing to establish His kingdom, takes precedence, and Jewish restoration is vitally connected with it. The Lord will "shine" upon Israel and repentant and fully judging past sins they will receive the Messiah Who as the Deliverer brings them again into divine favour, for "thy sons shall come from far" v. 4, *i.e.*, the twelve tribes uniting in Zion at Jehovah's side. In this "order" God decrees Jerusalem to be the world's centre, neither the Stock Exchange nor Wall Street will be the pulse of the world's values; for the wealth of the nations flow eastward and all join together to "glorify the house of Thy glory." The good things of that day extend to others, for through Israel testimony reaches the Gentiles and "times of refreshing come from the presence of the Lord"; they also form part of the divine purpose. Paul in his great dis-

pensational discourse (Romans xi., 12) declares if the temporary fall of Israel means present blessing for Gentiles "how much more their fulness." Israel reinstated will be the channel of blessing to all peoples. If lasting blessing be entered upon by men or nations, irrespective of dispensation, light is the first requisite—this light is Christ, Who is the world's hope. As in patriarchal days, God's promises are here made good and all nations "together" share in the common desire "to beautify" the place of His presence.

It could be said that from 70 A.D. to the present time as in v. 10 "in my wrath I smote thee": but "favour" rests so markedly upon Israel *restored* that it is added "the *sons* also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee." These nations that caused God's chosen people so much suffering in the past shall then call them blessed. Readers of Isaiah's day would think it strange indeed to speak of the city "gates open continually"; safety for them meant the gate was closed by night! However, the subjects of this kingdom are not only blessed but have embraced the principles laid down by the King in Matt, vii., *i.e.*, they reflect His character. "Thy people also shall be all righteous" and "violence shall no more be heard in Thy land" (v. 21). Blessed indeed are the peacemakers! Their office-bearers too are messengers of peace and righteousness and far beyond Israel's shores are borne the beneficent results of Christ's reign. It was doubtless reports of this nature which set the Queen of Sheba on her worth-while journey to Jerusalem centuries before. The titles of v. 16 invite special attention. They convey no ordinary meaning! First of all blessings rightly appreciated lead to the Blesser, so the people of God find their highest joy in what He is in Himself. Lord is Jehovah in covenant-keeping relationship; Saviour most comprehensive in its meaning; Redeemer what He has done, and Mighty One of Jacob, tells that He knew the kind of people He was transforming. "For brass I will bring gold," etc., there will be no comparison between the return and the expenditure! To-day under man's administration the necessities of life are afflicted, *e.g.*, margarine for butter. If earth derives all blessing and prosperity from the "sun" the glories and prosperity emanating from the Light of Israel transcend all joys. "The days of thy mourning" end in joy.

DUNCAN CHISHOLM.

THE WONDROUS WORKS OF GOD.

*(Notes of an address by J. S. Bertram at Galashiels,
(23/11/40).*

Read Job xxxvii., 14-16; xxxviii., 4-7; I. John iii., 8;
John xvii., 4; John vi., 27-29.

The outstanding feature in all these Scriptures is that of works! In the first a halt is called and Job is instructed to hearken, stand still and consider the wonderful works of God. Whenever God has something important to communicate He calls man to stand still and listen. The wonderful works in creation (revealing God) are described in Job Ch. xxxvii.-xxxix. Everything in creation is an evidence of God! In Romans Ch. i. we read that the things that are made evince His eternal power and Godhead, so that men everywhere are left without excuse. No one can plead ignorance. Every whit in creation declares the Glory of God. Nothing has appeared by chance, but by design and that of God. Gen. i., 2, shows that chaos and darkness were everywhere and the Spirit of God brooded upon the face of the waters and everything was brought into order by the word of God, and finally life appeared. God's power is shown in every line of creation and as a keystone to creation, God formed man. His work being accomplished He rested on the seventh day. "The sons of God shouted for joy" (Job xxxviii., 7). From Ezekiel we learn that there were other created intelligences. Satan was presented in the guise of the King of Tyre. In such a dignified person pride was resident and as a consequence he fell and with him vast hosts of angelic beings. In an early moment in the world's history that mighty being had introduced himself into God's fair creation and inserted a lie in the minds of our first parents and they succumbed to his temptation. The beautiful harmony which had been established was spoiled by Satan. The devil's ingenuity has always been directed to securing his own glory! The seed which he sowed in men's minds was soon manifested by the fruit thereof. Creation came to be marked by the works of the devil. Murder and general wickedness were rampant, so that God had to sweep His creation with a flood; but that did not eradicate the works of the devil. The earth which emerged from the cleansing power of the Flood soon manifested a

continuance of the features which had permeated the antediluvian world.

The Son of God was manifested to annul the works of the devil, and not only so but ultimately Satan himself. Satan tried his wiles on Christ. He suggested "if Thou be the Son of God, etc.," but the latter's power was not to be in evidence to please Satan. He was here dependent on God and was an overcomer! Immediately the Lord commenced to relieve those under the power of Satan. Relative to His power there is love shown, *e.g.*, in the relief of the demoniac and the woman with the issue of blood. He relieved the captives of Satan; but while on earth his work had relation to time. Yet when He came forth from the Father He had an eternal work in view. "I have finished the work that Thou gavest me to do" (John xvii., 4). This work outshone creation's glory. That will redound to the Glory of God for all eternity! His own glory was in harmony with that glory. He set his face steadfastly to go to the Cross and the work was completely accomplished at Calvary as distinct from the works which bore witness to the Father. On His last journey from Jericho to Jerusalem He was dispensing blessing to His creatures although the Cross was before him and He knew all that would befall Him at Jerusalem.

The whole prophetic word of the Old Testament pointed forward unmistakably to that moment. To what indignities He was subjected! The callous indifference, the gambling and jibing manifested the bitter hatred residing in man's heart. What meekness and love were manifested as He went forth bearing His cross! Satan thought that he had secured a permanent triumph. But when man had done his worst, that last word "finished" was the triumphal shout of a victor and He dismissed His spirit. That finished work was that by which propitiation has been made and sin removed from the eye of God, while a universe of bliss can be formed on the sure basis of that redemption. The work completed and God glorified, in virtue of the value of His work He has taken His rightful place at the right hand of God. What a rich revenue of glory has accrued to God in consequence! A mercy seat has been established as the only meeting place of the sinner with God and the Holy Ghost has come down to make good the truth in souls and so effect the wondrous work of God. The work of God is to believe on Him Whom God has sent

(John vi., 29). That belief produced by the Holy Spirit brings life and salvation. (There is also a belief which is purely mental!) Faith cometh by hearing and that by the word of God! The Holy Ghost is brooding over the darkness and chaos in the souls of men, working in a moral way, awakening them to their true condition before God. The result is a new condition which answers to God. If we have been freed by His power, there is also that created which will withstand all the wiles of Satan's ingenuity and abide as an everlasting witness to the wondrous work of God.

THE HOUSE OF GOD. No. 2.

Subsequent evidence in the Old Testament. Part I.

In the Book of Joshua, reference is made:—(1) to the valuable part of the spoil of Jericho being put in the treasury of the House of the Lord (typical of what the triumph of Christ has secured for God's glory). (2) to the Gibeonites being condemned to be hewers of wood and drawers of water for the House of God (teaches government). (3) after the land had been conquered the tabernacle of the congregation was set up at Shiloh. (4) when the 2½ tribes were free from warfare returning to their lands beyond Jordan they built an altar at the passage of Jordan and were accused of seeking to break away. The whole congregation indicated the land of the possession of the Lord as wherein the Lord's tabernacle (His centre) dwelt. In the chaos marking the period of the Judges people paid little attention to the tabernacle. In only one instance is mention made when they sought to punish the tribe of Benjamin for an evil deed wrought amongst them. Israel went to the House of God, sought counsel and after their defeat, they returned, wept, sat before the Lord, fasted and presented burnt and peace offerings before the Lord.

In Samuel, his introduction to the House of the Lord and subsequent service and the calamity of the Ark being captured by the Philistines were prominent points in the early part of the book. Then interest was transferred from the Tabernacle to the Ark and God's holiness was vindicated amongst the Philistines, at Bethshemesh, at Kirjath-jearim and in the house of Obed-edom, until the Ark returned to its proper place after the absence of nearly a century. It

would appear that Gibeon superseded Shiloh as the place of the Tabernacle. (1 Chron. xvi., 39). As soon as David was secure on the throne of all Israel, he essayed to build a house for the Lord, but he had to learn that however laudable might be his desire, the proposal was not according to the will of God. The acquiescence of the king in the decision was beautiful! He devoted himself with unabated zeal and love to finding a habitation for the mighty God of Jacob in spite of affliction. Although he was not permitted to build the temple he secured the place and found the material. God helped him marvellously in acquiring a vast treasure of gold, silver, etc. The temple or house could not be built until the kingdom was established. All the wealth and resources of the kingdom contributed to the grandeur of the house. The people were delivered from every foe. They dwelt safely under their vines and fig trees. God gave them rest on every side. Whereas in the tumultuous conditions in Judges every man did what was right in his own eyes since there was no king, everyone in David's kingdom was controlled according to the will of God. All these features are beautiful types of what would come to light in the spiritual house of the following era. In the Psalms the aspirations and the exercises of the soul of the Psalmist relative to the House of God are shown in a remarkable way. The desire for and communication of instruction were prominent features relative to the Temple, *e.g.*, beholding the beauty of the Lord and enquiring in His Temple (Ps. xxvii., 4), also therein every whit spoke of His glory (Ps. xxix., 9). The usage "House of God" is more comprehensive and more frequent than "the Temple" in the Psalms, especially with relation to dwelling therein and going thereto, and His appreciation of even such an external connection as being a doorkeeper, rather than dwelling in the tents of wickedness (Ps. lxxxiv.). But in his exercises the Psalmist did not dwell altogether in the future, his thoughts were constantly recurring to the tabernacle, *e.g.*, in the secret of His tabernacle shall He hide me and the offering of sacrifices of joy (Ps. xxvii.); and worship in the tabernacle (Ps. cxxxii., 7). Those showed the prophetic bearing of the passages, as the Psalmist could not have access to the Tabernacle then existent, since he was not a priest! Holiness was the prime feature. "Holiness becometh Thine house, O Lord, for ever" (Ps. cxiii., 5).

At length the desire of David was consummated in the early part of the reign of his son Solomon, the King of Peace, The structure of the Temple in the main followed the lines of the Tabernacle. In the fourth year of his reign Solomon began to build the House of the Lord, in Mount Moriah, where the Lord appeared unto David his father and in the place David had prepared at the threshing floor of Ornan where God's grace and mercy intervened on the ground of the acceptance of the burnt offering. In the temple the dimensions of the tabernacle were doubled, both as to length and breadth. In addition there were extra features such as a magnificent porch and two gigantic pillars, *viz.*, Jachin (meaning "beauty or established") and Boaz (meaning "strength"), each 60 feet high, said to have contained about 300 tons of stone and 900 tons of brass, then a molten sea was borne by twelve oxen besides a large brazen altar and ten lavers were in the outer court. In the Holy Place there were 100 bowls of gold, 10 golden candlesticks and 10 tables with 12 loaves on each and in the middle between was the golden altar of incense. In the Most Holy Place (20 cubits square) stood the Ark containing the two tables of stone. (Apparently Aaron's rod and the golden pot of manna had disappeared!) Solomon made two new cherubim of olive tree, their faces looked towards the house as the witness of blessing for the earth in the day of glory to come secured through redemption by blood. These overshadowed the two small golden cherubim forming part of the ark. The wings of the former stretched across the width of the House. The walls of the Temple consisted of fine cedarwood and hewn stone (polished marble). The inside was carved with figures of cherubim and palms and the whole was overlaid with gold. No light was admitted to the Holiest, but the larger external chamber had narrow windows. The two chambers were separated by the veil. In the Tabernacle there was no room for the priests dwelling, not even a seat for resting, but in the sides of the Temple were 90 chambers hence the House was not only for approach to God but a place for the priests dwelling, so beautifully indicated in the Psalms. (In the Lord's closing ministry in John xiv., he made analogous reference "In My Father's house are many abodes or rest rooms.") In the Tabernacle there was no singing but in the Temple certain families of Levites whose primary function was bearing the

burdens of the House of God came under instruction in the use of musical instruments for the service of the House of God; that was typical of the day of glory yet to come, and also significant of the Spirit's Day when those who by grace partake of the resources and gladness of the House of God are praising people. The temple was seven years in building and near the end of the eighth year just before "the feast of tabernacles" the Ark and other furniture were transferred from the Tabernacle to the Temple and Solomon dedicated it with a transcendent prayer. Just as he finished fire from heaven consumed the burnt offering and the glory of the Lord filled the House so that the priests could not enter. Then the king made a vast peace offering of oxen and sheep, and kept a seven days feast. After that the people were sent away with glad hearts due to the goodness of the Lord. (The tabernacle was the pattern of things in the heavens and was anointed with oil. The temple was neither!) The fact that God should dwell on earth with men was prominent in all Solomon's arrangements (2 Chron. vi., 2, 18). The result was blessing to man and its reflex action praise to God.

The first twenty years of Solomon's reign were occupied with the building of the House of the Lord and his own house (which took thirteen years), and many other works and his way was prospered greatly. The Queen of Sheba, attracted by the fame of Solomon from distant Ethiopia, tested his incomparable wisdom and viewed his resources and works, but the copestone of wonder was reached when she beheld the ascent by which he went up to the House of the Lord, her heart was completely captured and she broke out into a majestic panegyric! Solomon's unparalleled success seemed to have made him careless, so that in the latter half of his reign he sadly belied the principles of the House of God, getting a multitude of horses from Egypt and taking many foreign wives who turned his heart from the Lord so that he built high places and offered sacrifices to the gods of the nations around. His example induced the people to imitate his practice. T. OLIVER.

O Lord and Saviour, we recline
On that eternal love of Thine,
Thou art our rest, and Thou alone
Remainest when all else is gone. (*G. Helyar*).

STATEMENT OF POLICY.

As several correspondents have asserted that this is a party magazine, possibly due to judging by signatures rather than contents, I may state that after 26 years' exercise it was initiated by me without consultation. In 1915, its advent was hindered by several circumstances and not until 1940 was I free to do the arduous work entailed. All expense has been met by me and no subsidy, other than the advertised price, has been or will be taken from any one. So the "party" allegation fails! Current ecclesiastical matters will be rigorously eschewed! I desire that brethren may dwell together harmoniously, expressing the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Hence this "Quarterly" will (D.V.) proceed with the exposition of Scripture, all fragrant with the preciousness of Christ which alone can lift us above dissension and will cause our thoughts and speech to spread refreshment instead of discontent wherever we go!

T. OLIVER.

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The Editor cannot undertake to answer correspondents on what may be published from time to time as he is single-handed for both editorial and publication work. Any letter which he deems to be of general interest may be published if space will admit. A letter requiring reply should be accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope! Articles on the lines of those already published may be submitted on the understanding that sentences may be altered or omitted or the whole article rejected without apology. (Letters should not exceed 300 words nor articles 600 words). Prolixity next to inaccuracy is the greatest fault in writing! "Masterpieces" from living poets are not received, as the Editor is unable to assess such. Genuine enquiries on doctrine distinct from mere quibbles may be answered to the best of the Editor's ability! Money is not received for any other department of the Lord's work, as there is no intention of interfering with existing stewardships.

Letter on "The Nets" from T.F. and article on "Sanctification" from J.W.H.N. received after space filled.

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A Scripture Quarterly

EDITOR - - DR T. OLIVER

*This Magazine is Devoted mainly to the Exposition
of Scripture.*

*"Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation
(encouragement), to doctrine." (I. Tim. 4, 13).*

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Vol. I.

JULY, 1941.

No. 3

GALASHIELS	T. Oliver, 90 Channel Street.
LONDON	Bible Truth Depot, 11 Little Britain, E.C.
TORONTO	Evangel Bookshop, 418 Church Street.
SYDNEY	Tract Depot, 302 Pitt Street.
NEW YORK	Bible Truth Depot, 19 West 21st Street.

Published Quarterly by T. OLIVER, 1s. 6d. per annum.

A SUGGESTED REMEDY.

Over a century ago, souls were retrieved from a condition of things far worse than anything that exists at present; a blight rested on the whole of Christendom and even a profession of religion was almost extinct! There was at that time a power manifested that enabled saints to walk in the light, see eye to eye, dwell in unity, harmony and mutual confidence. That developed such an atmosphere that looseness and kindred evils could not breathe and where the voice of contrariety could not find utterance. The vivifying effect of good was apparent in every feature of their activities; it was the secret of their power! It may be asked, "In what way was the good seen?" First and foremost, it was the truth of the oneness of the body of Christ expressing itself in a congenial medium; the truth of the Headship of Christ operating in that body in the harmonious working together of every part; there was the consciousness of the individual's part and place in the assembly, built on the foundation of the Son of the living God; the call of the saints from every worldly and ecclesiastical system being responded to, made them in reality strangers and pilgrims, while waiting for their Lord. Perhaps the knowledge of the fact of the organic link with a Man in heaven was as potent an influence as any other in the formation of a Christ-like walk here. Such being the hope of the Church, the ministry to the saints was naturally of the character that fostered desire after these realities. Service was carried on in the light of the unity of the Spirit and had the body in view. Fellowship in every sphere of the work of the Lord was co-ordinated by that one thought; the prophet, the evangelist, the pastor and the teacher wrought in harmony. Rivalries and jealousies of the gifts of others could not exist where the presence of the Holy Ghost prevailed; neither could the gifts to the Assembly be exercised in watertight compartments. These things known and ministered by the Holy Ghost will touch the consciences of the disorderly sooner than all else, and free souls from the ways of the world, coldness of heart and irregularity of walk!

(Extract from "Reflections" by the late S. Scott about 1925).

HEAVEN OUR HOME.

(Notes of an address by J. A. Trench, 1890).

(John xiii., 1-10; xiv., 1-18; xx., 11-18).

It is a wonderful thing for our souls to have the Father's house revealed to us, so that we can enjoy it before we get there. There is no moral link between the Father's house and this world; no possibility of putting them together in our hearts. Do we know anything of the complete break between these two scenes? The moment the Lord knew His hour was come, His first thought was, to give those whom He left in this world part with Himself where He was going. There is the first communication of divine life and nature, that brings with it the capacity for the entrance into our souls of all these things: it needed the knowledge of what He had wrought, to enter into them. But He knows the need we meet at every turn, and He provides for it. All this is preliminary; up to this the Father's house has not been mentioned. When the Lord Jesus is able to count upon the sorrow of hearts that will miss Him, He says, "Let not your heart be troubled . . . , in my Father's house are many mansions." What a revelation! There had been no such thing up to this time in Scripture. Much of the Lord's ministry had prepared the way for it; now the moment has come for the full revelation to break on us, a home where He has gone, His own home, now revealed and made ours.

Then He goes on to address His disciples, "Whither I go ye know, and the way ye know." How were they to know it? Philip thought, if only he knew the Father, he could know the Father's house. Jesus says, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?" He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." Every trait of the blessedness of the Father's house was revealed and shining forth in the Person and ways of the Son here below. The heart that knows the Son, knows the Father too, even the feeblest babe, for it is no matter of attainment; the Lord Jesus would start us with it. The cardinal truth of the revelation of the Father is found in the Gospel of John, as the One to Whom I am related. For this reason we all turn to the Gospel of John, for there we have all the precious revelation of the Father in the Person of the Lord Jesus here.

“ I go to prepare a place for you.” There is nothing more important than to seize the meaning of that little sentence; it is not that any preparation is going on now, but how did I ever come to have a home prepared up there? Accomplished redemption prepares us for it. The Lord Jesus closing our whole history here, opens to us a heavenly home, fitting that home for us by His presence there, and fitting us perfectly for that home. Thus, at the very opening of our way, we can give thanks to the Father; He has made us meet. Truth only becomes real to us as it supplies a need created in our souls. That need had been created in Mary Magdalene. The disciples were satisfied when they had inspected the sepulchre; they returned to their homes; but Mary had no home to go to, and she stood without the sepulchre weeping. He had delivered her from the fearful power of Satan, and the sense of what He was detained her there, until His voice broke upon her ear. She wished to resume the intimacies with which she had known Him before, but He says, “ Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father.” He was going to introduce her into far deeper and fuller blessing than she could have known before. “ Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God and your God.” What additional light this is upon all that we have found of the revelation of the Father’s house. He is now able to open to us the place where He has gone and to associate us in the fullest way with Himself. “ I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also.” How simply this gives us our place; the yesterday of my life closed in the cross of Christ; the to-morrow to be with Him in glory, and the present so wonderfully filled with all we have been brought into while here. Are we living in the power of the things that are ours already? Do we know what it is in a little measure to bask in the light of the Father’s love? We have the Holy Ghost to be the power of the enjoyment of all these things in our souls, while we are waiting on the tip-toe of expectation for Him to come again, that where He is, there we may be also. What I seek is that we may enter into the power that is given us for the enjoyment of these things. “ Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him ” (1 Cor. ii., 9). Arrested by this thought, many of us stop there, and put it all off to the future; but

the Apostle only quotes this from Isaiah to contrast it with what we have. "But God hath revealed them unto us, by His Spirit." The things that God has prepared in His eternal counsels, are now revealed to us by His Spirit, that we may know them, and enjoy them as our present possession; that our hearts might live in them as a present reality.

"We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen" (2 Cor. iv., 18). Do we know anything of such an attitude? Have we been looking at the things which are seen, to-day, or at the things that are unseen? These things are revealed so that we can look at them. "Set your *mind* on things above, not on things on the earth" (Col. iii., 2). Associated with Him, risen with Him, set your *mind* (N. Tn.). The affections and the mind are distinct things; the Spirit assumes that the affections will follow Christ there, but is the mind there? The cross upon earth answers to the heavenly glory. How fatal the influence of man that comes between me and that risen, glorified, Christ. Are our hearts lingering in the scene out of which He has gone? Or are our hearts and minds set upon Him, where He is in the glory? "Our citizenship is in heaven" (Phil. iii., 20). Citizenship was everything to a Grecian, it came before the dearest relationship. All that forms the moral life is in heaven now. How feeble is the grasp of these things! What is the practical formative power of them? Does everything about us, bear witness to them, so that we are only waiting for Him to come, to take us to Himself, in Whom all our joys and our hopes have centred while here? Not one thing has been withheld from us, and He is engaged in service for us in the glory, so that there may be no hindrance to our enjoyment of these things, so that we may be going about this dark world with our faces lit up, or at all events our hearts, with His love. We have found what satisfies us divinely and for ever.

Note on the "Nets" article in No. I. In Luke v., we see a scene short of Resurrection . . . In John xxi., we see a scene teeming with Resurrection:—The Lord was associating the disciples with Himself, thus the net did not break. At His word, the net was cast on the *right* side. The effect on Peter was that he cast himself into the sea to get to Jesus The millennium is short of Resurrection, although in spirit looking on to it. T. FAWCETT.

THE RAPTURE AND ITS SEQUEL—No. 2.

While the prospect of the rapture, of which we wrote in the last issue, must fill with joy the hearts of all who love the Lord Jesus, the knowledge of that which will follow gives cause also for unbounded delight. (1) Because Christ will have His rightful place. (2) Because all will be under His control; and, (3) Because all will lead to the fulfilment of the divine purpose. Following the rapture, interest will first centre in Heaven where two great happenings will take place: (a) "The Judgment Seat of Christ" for believers (2 Cor. v., 10); and, (b) "The Marriage of the Lamb" (Rev. xix., 6-9). The first is the necessary prelude to the second. The Judgment Seat will not be of a penal character. For those who will appear there "the sins" question has been settled at the Cross, and, on the ground of the work accomplished there, they will, when they stand before Him, be in the likeness of the One who died for them. Then all will be seen at its true value as appraised by Him.

"Deeds of merit as we thought them,
He will tell us were but sin;
Little acts we had forgotten,
He will tell us were for Him."

We cannot fail to see the connection between this and the bridal dress of Rev. xix., 8; "for the fine linen is the *righteousness* of the Saints." What a day for our blessed Lord that marriage day will be! Great will be the day of His coming forth as "King of Kings, and Lord of Lords"; but greater far surely will be the day when He shall claim His bride whom He saw in the mirror of eternity; for whom He came into manhood and gave Himself; whom now He nourisheth and cherisheth; and whom on that day He will present to Himself all glorious (Eph. v., 25-32). As to events that will happen upon earth, we cannot do better than refer to an informative pamphlet by our esteemed Editor, entitled "The Kingdom of God." If in the first Epistle to the Thessalonians we learn about the rapture of the saints, in the second Epistle we are informed as to the appearance of Anti-Christ, the debut of the Man of Sin, and we learn that those who would not receive God's truth will accept Satan's lie! Then there will be the remnant of Israel who will at last recognise and receive their Messiah. They will ask, "What are these wounds in Thy hands?" He will answer, "Those with which I was wounded in the

house of My friends ” (Zech. xiii., 6). Then shall come forth their confession:—“ He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed ” (Isaiah liii., 5). These will be the Evangelists of that day, and going to the numberless people who have not heard the Gospel of the Grace of God (*and to none other*), they will proclaim “ the Gospel of the Kingdom ” (Matthew xxiv., 14); will call for allegiance to Christ; and Matthew xxv., 31-46 indicates the result of their labours. Then will come the great tribulation when a man will demand universal worship and those who refuse to do him homage will suffer. At last, and when least expected, the Lord will come in kingdom, power and glory, and there will be His beneficent reign for a thousand years. Finally, Satan, loosed from his imprisonment, will make his last attack only to see his hordes wiped out by fire from Heaven, and he himself will be consigned to his everlasting doom—the lake of fire. The last act in the drama of this world’s history will be the “ Great White Throne ” for all those who have died out of Christ, and from which they will be sent to share the doom of Satan for ever. Thus will the way be cleared for the absolute triumph of God over the enemy, the victory of good over evil, and the introduction of a world “ where sin, nor want, nor woe, nor death can come,” but where God shall be all in all. The consideration of that, however, we must leave for our next paper, if the Lord will.

W. BRAMWELL DICK.

THREE ARKS.

Read Hebrews xi., 23, 7; ix., 3-5.

The three arks, connected with the passages we have read, present our Lord Jesus Christ in three different aspects. In the first scripture, we have a beautiful child, fair to God; a type of the Lord Jesus, who grew up before Jehovah as a tender plant. On Him God’s eye rested continually with delight, for He was the altogether lovely One. Moses was born at a time when the children of Israel were suffering under the oppression of Pharaoh, and he was the one through whom God was to deliver them, and bring them to Himself. When the ark was opened, the child wept; a beautiful picture of the Man of Sorrows, who was born under the law that He might redeem them that were under the law. “ He hath borne our griefs, and carried our

sorrows." We read, "The man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth" (Numbers xii., 3). This beautifully portrays Him who said, "I am meek and lowly in heart." Such was the character of Him in whom God intervened for the deliverance of His people.

In the second scripture (Hebrews xi., 7), we read, "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." He lived in an evil age, and "It repented the Lord that He had made man, and it grieved Him at His heart. And the Lord said, 'I will destroy man.'" How sad this is to read! Is there no remedy? Yes, thanks be to God! He found a means of perpetuating humanity, and that was by the ark which Noah built. In this, I believe, we have a type of the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. In His death the end of all flesh came before God. Sin, the flesh, and the world, were all judged and condemned at the Cross; and, of this, baptism is a sign (1 Peter iii., 21); but, in resurrection, Christ is the head of a new race, who are entirely free from condemnation, and who shall be to the eternal pleasure and glory of God.

In the third scripture, we have the ark of the Covenant, speaking of Him, who has entered in, and abides forever before the face of God; the One who is crowned with glory and honour. Before reaching that place, He must first be the Man of Sorrows. How beautiful that life was in God's sight, a life of perfect love and of sorrows meekly borne. All is treasured up before God, as set forth in the golden pot that had manna. Then we have the truth of Christ's death and resurrection brought before us in Aaron's rod that budded. He was cut off in the midst of His days, but He lives now "in the power of an endless life" as our Great High Priest. The tables of the Covenant teach us, that in Him God's disposition towards us in grace is expressed, and God's will has been established: and lastly, the Cherubim of glory remind us, that in Him all God's claims have been met, and His nature glorified. As we meditate upon these truths, we make no wonder that, in the description of the Holiest, the Golden Censer is mentioned first; for what can we do in the presence of God's glory, but worship and adore!

JOHN B. DUFF.

CHRIST HEAD OVER ALL THINGS.

Continued Notes of address No. 2 by W. H. Westcott, 1929.

Now turn to the end of Ephesians, chapter i., and there we read more about the Person. The Apostle prays in verse 17 of the first chapter, "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your heart being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of your calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead." Attention is drawn to this Person already named in the 10th verse. But He was found in death. Every power that is adverse to God had been put into movement to place Him there; all the power of Satan, all the judgment of sin, all the hatred of man, all the hidden forces of evil, had been brought to bear upon His holy Person. He had gone down into death. You can see the power that was against Christ. But while in grace He submitted to those conflicting powers, and when they had done their worst, and Christ had gone down to the very bottom, when sin had risen to its greatest height, God raised Him from the dead. We who believe upon the Lord Jesus Christ can also trace in that death the removal of our sins and our sinful state in Adam; but we can see also all the working of the power of evil against Christ and its seeming success in putting Him in death and the grave. But then God in the might of His power raised Him from the dead. There is a power greater than all the power of evil, greater than death, and greater than the grave, seen in God.

Then in verse 20 we read, "He set Him down at His right hand in the heavenlies" (N. Tn.). It is not only that He rose superior to the powers of evil, and triumphed over death and the grave, but God has proved the might of His power by setting the Man of His purpose, the Person Who is the centre of His plan, at His own right hand in the heavenly places. "At His own right hand" implies that in Christ God has vested all His power. The right hand signifies the strength, and the power, and the authority of God. In setting Him at His own right hand He has constituted Him the great administrator of His own authority,

and His own mind, as well as His own blessing. He has set Him thus "in the heavenly places," away from this earth. The true source of power is not here, the executive that will give effect to the purpose of God is not now resident here; the Holy Ghost truly is come from the right hand of God, from Christ there, and is here provisionally; but the power that is going to set the earth right, and put the whole universe in harmony with God, comes from the right hand of God. "He set Him at His own right hand in heavenly places, far above all principality and power." They are not to be named in the same breath: Christ is supreme, above every other name, above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named. "God hath put all things under His feet," everything is subjected to Christ in the plan of God, and will be effectually put beneath Him according to God's mighty power. It may be said, "How is it that everything is not put under Christ now?" There is a reason for this. The saints, redeemed by Christ and formed into one body, the church, are the only people that have this wonderful secret communicated to them at the moment. God has made known the plan (verse 10), but He has also disclosed to us who are believers, the Person, the One destined to be both Head and Centre of His plan. I love to think that God has so far proceeded with the plan; He has already displayed the smash up of the power of evil in the cross, and He has exalted the Person Who overthrew sin and Satan, to His own right hand. You can see the Person to whom God has entrusted this high place of dignity and glory is in position, Head over all things, and all things put underneath His feet. God is not inactive; He has already seated Christ at His own right hand in heavenly places, He has exalted Him, and He has put the church into the knowledge of it. The rest of the world does not yet acknowledge it, but the redeemed ones do who form the assembly. When it says the assembly it means all Christians from the descent of the Holy Ghost to the Rapture. The whole church of God is in the secret of God as to the Person to Whom God has entrusted the fulfilment of the plan. *We* acknowledge Him in the meantime as Head, but for the moment we Christians are the only ones who really do so. Let us be consistent in our subjection to Him.

Then it says that the church is His body, the complement, "the fulness of Him that filleth all in all." In further

explanation of this we may turn to the 5th chapter and there we find the unique position in which the church is placed. When the earth was first formed for man's habitation, you get an indication that God had this in His mind. After this world had been started, all free of sin, in its beauty, its productiveness, and its serviceability, man was created and specially formed according to the counsel of God. It was said, "Let us make man after our image and in our likeness." He then put man at the head of all this lower creation. After He had been constituted the head to have dominion, God brought the animals before him. God had endowed him with such qualities that he knew exactly in what language to describe each animal; and whatever he designated each animal, that was its name. He was truly the head of this lower creation. But of all the creation of which he was head, for the moment it was just nothing but a splendid isolation, because there was not anyone with whom he could share it, to whom he could communicate his thoughts, or with whom he could enjoy the privileges that the Creator had placed upon him. He was alone in it; head, but alone. Then in His goodness God crowned the position for him. He said, "It is not good for the man to be alone, I will make him an help-meet," and He did. He gave Eve to be the partner with him in this place and scene of glory. It is so plain that we ought easily to grasp it; and yet it can only be by the Spirit of God.

Come now to the anti-type, and we find that God raised Christ from the dead, and set Him over all, Christ personally; but is Christ to be alone? That is where the counsel of God comes in regard to the church. For the church, composed as it is of all believers in this present dispensation, is to be with Him in His place of dignity and glory—even as Eve was given to Adam—to be His partner in His greatness. In the 5th chapter of Ephesians, we find that the model, the example, is set before us of marriage; in the 22nd verse of the 5th chapter, we read, "Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands as unto the Lord." It is often commented upon that it does not say, "Wives *obey* your husbands" as though they were children or servants. In the 6th chapter you have "Children *obey* your parents" that is a question of authority, and rightly so; and then in the 5th chapter, "Servants *be obedient* to your masters" comes in again; but with the wives—"Submit yourselves unto your own husbands." In this chapter the husband is

looked at as being the representative of the fulness and authority of God for his wife; all that Christ is to the church the husband should be to the wife. We are obliged to think of these things in a somewhat abstract way, for what husband is there amongst us but must feel how far he comes short of it. But the wife is to submit herself to her own husband as unto the Lord, finding in the husband the one who directs and leads. It is not a question of obeying exactly, but the husband regards the wife as given to him of God to be his helpmeet in the partnership; and that loving her as Christ loves the Assembly he may be the supplier of all that the wife needs; giving guidance, direction and help, in every matter; the wife meanwhile submitting herself unto her husband as unto the Lord.

Then in verse 23, we read, "For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the Head of the church." Let us humbly seek to take it in. Christ is the Head, and we gladly bow before Him owning His supremacy and glory; we can say, "How rightly crowned is Jesus, Who once atonement made." Is it not wonderful that you and I, and all the redeemed of this dispensation, are to be with Christ, and to be to Christ what the wife is to the husband? In verse 25, we read, "Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." It is not the individual saint that is in view, but *the church*; that he might sanctify and cleanse it. "That He might present it to Himself a church glorious, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing"; that it might be in every sense suitable and compatible with Himself. A true wife will always seek to enter intelligently into the responsibilities in the midst of which her husband is placed; she will not regard herself apart from him, walking in a spirit of independence, but will freely enter into her husband's concerns; not to disown his leadership, but to be sympathetic and intelligently able to enter into all the circles of his interests.

What a wonderful thing it is that we Christians should be made meet companions even for Christ. What a wonderful thought that we are to be such in the midst of all the stupendous glory that He will enjoy, able to enter into His interests, and be sympathetically and intelligently companionable to the Lord Jesus Christ. It is not exactly like an earthly prince who may place his affection on a partner very

much below him in station, and then have to feel how difficult it is for her to share his dignities and glories, because she is unable to look at things from the prince's point of view. God has given us the same life and nature as our risen Lord, and brought us into the same relationship as He; we are really His kinsfolk, His brethren, and can enter into the whole range of His interests. The Christian even down here is acquiring competency in view of that coming union with Him. Whatever we can learn of Christ's interests to-day let us give ourselves very heartily to them, so as to be more and more qualified to take our place intelligently in that wonderful day, when we shall be with Christ and like Him, and associated with Him; sharing His administration in all that vast scene of glory. There is (1) *the Purpose or Plan of God* in chapter i., (2) the *Person Who* is the centre and Head of all that Purpose, and (3) the church looked at in ch. v. as the *Partner* in that wonderful position. To that church, by the grace of God, you and I belong at present. It is our privilege to study all we can learn of His love, His greatness, and His will, in order that we may be more intelligent and qualified to share with our Lord Jesus Christ when the day of display and glory comes!

TITLES OF THE PENTATEUCH.

The titles of the Mosaic books in the Bible are taken from the Septuagint which was a translation in Greek; for Exodus in particular compare the Greek of Luke ix., 31. The Hebrew headings are respectively (1) "Beginning," (2) "These are the names," (3) "And He called," (4) "In the wilderness," (5) "These are the words." The last four titles are simply the phrases introducing the several books. They have no relation in meaning to the titles in the English A.V. We find them already in Jerome's day, but it is clear that they could not be original titles and that they result from the disintegration to which the Torah was subjected by those concerned in the translation called the Septuagint. The rest of the Old Testament titles for the most part follow the Hebrew. In the Jewish Mishna, Leviticus is spoken of as the "Law of the Priests" and Deuteronomy as "the Duplicate of the Law."

E. E. WHITFIELD.

THE CHRISTIAN COMPANY.

(John xv., 9-16).

As we listen to the Lord's gracious words, recorded in John, Ch.s xiii. and xiv., telling of His service for believers in feet-washing, to keep us in communion with Himself; telling us that He has gone to prepare a place for us in the Father's house; that He is coming again to receive us unto Himself in the glory, and that between His going away and coming again for us, He will come to us and manifest Himself to us through the Holy Spirit—as these blessed truths pass before us—we realise that the leading truth therein is that *Christ is for us*. Then, as we pass to Chs. xv. and xvi., and listen to the Lord tenderly exhorting His disciples to bear fruit, to follow Him as His disciples, and witness for Him in a world in which He is hated and rejected, and hear His warning that in this world we may expect persecution and tribulation, we further realise the great underlying truth is that we are *to be for Christ*. Moreover, there is surely a divine order in the way in which the truth is presented, for we must first be thoroughly established in the great truth that Christ is for us before we can, in any little measure, be here for Him.

In the first eight verses of Ch. xv., the great truth brought before us is fruit-bearing. This division of the discourse closes with the words, "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples." Then, at the close of the chapter, the Lord refers to the coming of the Holy Spirit, with the result that the disciples become witnesses for Christ. Fruit is the lovely character of Christ reproduced in the lives of believers in the power of the Holy Spirit. In as far as this fruit of the Spirit—"love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, fidelity, meekness and self-control" (Gal. v., 22, 23)—is found in us, the Father will be glorified and it will be manifest that we are disciples of Christ, and, in as far as we follow Christ we shall become witnesses to Christ in the world from which He was cast out. Thus we realise that it is the Lord's desire that believers should be in this world for the glory of the Father, known as disciples of Christ, and witnesses for Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit. Fruit-bearing, discipleship, and witnessing, are the great themes of chapter xv. Moreover, in verses 9 to 16 the Lord sets before us a most beautiful picture of the new Christian company, with

the outstanding moral characteristics of that company according to the mind of the Lord. These express, indeed, the desires of the heart of Christ for the whole Christian company, but what should mark the whole company should surely be true of any little local company of His people. Therefore in a day of ruin when the great Christian profession has wandered far from the Lord's revealed mind, it is still possible for two or three gathered to His Name in any locality to seek to be marked by the characteristics that are pleasing to Him. We may well challenge our hearts as to how far we have done so.

The Lord opens this part of His discourse with the words:—“*As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you: abide in my love* (N. Tn.). Thus, the first great outstanding mark of the Christian company is that it is *loved by the Lord*, and the desire of His heart is that believers should walk together in the realisation of His love, and thus answer to His words, “Abide in my love.” The Lord gives the love of the Father to Himself as the measure and manner of His love to believers. The Lord speaks, not of the Father's love to the Son in eternity, but the love of the Father to the Son incarnate—to Jesus as Man. This was a love that entered into all the sorrows of His path, all the enmity He had to meet, and the sufferings He had to endure. In the same way we are loved by Christ with a love that enters into all our trials, feels for us in perfect sympathy in all our sorrows, and, in our case bears with us in all our failures, and restores our souls when we have wandered far from Him. Whatever we have to meet we can count upon a love that never changes and will continue to the end. In the conscious sense of this love the Lord would have us to continue.

The exhortation to abide in His love leads to the second great mark that the Lord desires to be found in the Christian company. He would have His people marked by *obedience to His commands*. His words are:—“*If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love*” (v. 10). Very happily one has said, “The love of Christ rests on the way of obedience, and shines along the path of His commandments. The keeping His commandments does not create the love, any more than walking in sunny places creates the sunshine; and accordingly the exhortation is not to seek or merit or obtain the love, but to *remain in it* by continuing in the state and life to which alone it belongs.”

Again, the Lord sets Himself before us as the One who, in His path as a Man, is the perfect example of obedience. He could say, "I do always those things that please Him" (John viii., 29). Whatever the cost to Him, be it insult, shame and spitting, He was obedient even unto death, and that the death of the cross. Never seeking His own will, ever walking in obedience to the Father's will, He abode in the sunshine of the Father's love!

The third great mark of the Christian company is "joy" as the Lord can say:—"These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full" (v. 11). The Lord speaks of this joy as "My joy," and further that it may be "in you." As regards outward circumstances, He was the Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, but He ever walked in the inward joy of the Father's love, and the glorious prospect before Him. He could rejoice in spirit in carrying out the Father's will, and for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross and despised the shame, and the contradiction of sinners, that He had to meet (Luke x., 21; Heb. xii., 2, 3). The Psalmist could say, "Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and wine increased" (Ps. iv., 7). The world's joy depends upon prosperous circumstances—the increase of the corn and wine. The believer's joy is that inward gladness of heart that finds its springs in the unchanging love of the Lord, and the glorious prospect that only faith can enter into. In these verses the Lord speaks of, "My love," "My commandments," and "My joy," and these marks follow in beautiful order. The Lord's unchanging love is over all; walking in obedience to His commands we shall abide in His love, and abiding in His love we shall taste of His joy.

The fourth great mark of the Christian company comes before us in the Lord's words:—"This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (Vv. 12, 13). The Christian company is not only loved by the Lord, but it is His command that they should love one another. As with the previous marks, Christ is the perfect pattern of what He enjoins upon His people, so now, this love to one another finds its perfect expression in Christ's love to His people. We are loved as He was loved; we are to obey as He obeyed; we are to rejoice with His joy, and to love one another as He loved us.

Such was His love that He could lay down His life for His friends. Here His death is not viewed in its atoning character, which could be no pattern for us, but as the highest expression of love for one's friends. It has been truly said that in these verses there "is condensed a whole history of love in the love of the Father to the Son, the love of Jesus to His people, the love of His people to one another; each stage being both the source and the standard for the next."

The fifth great mark of the Christian company is that they should be distinguished as being treated by the Lord as *His friends*. He can say:—" *Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you*" (v. 15). It will be noticed that this high privilege of being treated as the friends of the Lord is contingent on our obedience to His commands. He has told us that His command is that we love one another. The company in which love prevails is the company that the Lord will treat as His friends. A friend is one in whom we confide; to whom we can freely unfold our thoughts, our feelings, and the purposes of our hearts. Obviously we only open our hearts to those in whose love we can trust. Believers have the true privilege to be the servants of the Lord. The Apostles Paul, Peter, John and James, as well as Jude, delight to describe themselves as the servants of the Lord Jesus (Rom. i., 1; 2 Pet. i., 1; Rev. i., 1; Jude 1). But if the privilege of being servants is great, the privilege of being friends is yet greater. Viewed simply as servants we only need the plain directions of the Lord to carry out our allotted task. Treated as friends we are let into the secrets of the Lord's heart as to the great end of all service. Thus, treating His disciples as friends, the Lord can say, "All things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." Thus service can be taken up in the intelligence of the Lord's mind, in fellowship with the glorious end in view—the carrying out of the deep eternal counsels of the Father's heart.

A sixth mark of the Christian company is that they are *chosen by the Lord*. He can say:—" *Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain*" (v. 16). How blessed to realise that our eternal links with Christ do not depend upon our choice, but His. Knowing His absolute

perfection, and that He is "altogether lovely," we might well have chosen Him. The wonder of grace is, that knowing all our imperfection, and foreseeing all our failures, He should have chosen us. Having chosen us, He will never go back on His choice. He may, indeed, have to deal with us because of our failures, but He never flings away His pearls because of the specks of dirt that may be found upon them. But not only has He chosen us to share with Him His home and Kingdom glories, but, in the meantime He has set us to serve Him and bring forth fruit that may abide, whether that fruit be souls saved by grace, or saints established in all the counsels of the Father's heart. Writing to the Colossian saints, the Apostle Paul can speak of the gospel of the grace of God coming to them and bringing forth *fruit* in the conversion of sinners. Writing to the saints at Rome, he expresses his desire to see them and impart some spiritual gift to them to the end that they might be established in the truth and that thus he might have "some fruit" among the saints (Col. i., 6; Rom. i., 11-13).

The seventh great mark that should characterise the Christian company is *dependence upon the Father*. The Lord desires that every other mark that we have considered should lead up to this, that there may be found a company on earth of whom He can say:—" *That whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in My Name, He may grant it -you*" (v. 16). If we are to be the servants of the Lord, if we are to bring forth fruit that shall abide, it can only be as we are kept in dependence upon the Father—a dependence which finds its expression in prayer in the Name of the Lord. Moreover, behind our prayers the Lord's words imply that we are in the condition set forth in this part of His discourse. Then, indeed, we should pray in accord with His mind and thus be able to count upon answers to our prayers.

Thus we learn that during the time of His absence the Lord would have a people on earth, (1) Abiding in the conscious sense of His love, (2) Obeying His commands, (3) Enjoying His joy, (4) Loving one another, (5) Treated as His friends, (6) Chosen by Him for His service, and (7) Dependent upon the Father. Let us remember that in all this beautiful picture there is no mention of great gifts that might bring particular individuals into prominence amongst the saints and make a display before the world. It is rather the moral conditions that should mark the life of the whole Christian company, that the Lord sets before us, and that

are of such value in His eyes, and without which all activity in service will be of little value. Moreover, though, alas! we have so little answered to the Lord's mind let us remember that there is nothing in the Lord's instruction that is not possible for any little company of saints to carry out in a day of ruin. May we then have grace to judge our condition in the light of the perfect pattern and seek, by that same grace, to answer to the expressed desires of the Lord, and thus, in some little measure become witnesses for Him in the time of His absence.

H. SMITH.

SALIENT FEATURES OF JOHN'S GOSPEL. II.

Notes of an address by R. Duncanson, No. 2.

Chapters iii. and v. of John show the Lord Jesus to be the object of the Father's love; and in chapter xiii. we see the circle of divine affections established in relation to resurrection, and the Lord serving His own to maintain them in moral suitability to Himself so that they might have part with Him in that circle. The Scripture read introduces us to the Home of Love. He Who had come from the Father is about to return to the Father, and because of this sorrow filled the hearts of His own. To comfort them, the Lord opens out before them the truth of the Father's House. Although He would be absent from them, He was to be the object of their hearts in the Father's House, and He desired that they would have the same confidence in Him as they had in God. While hidden from them, He would still find pleasure in them; and His going to the Father's House was to prepare a place for them. All that they were to Him He treasured with fond affection, and nothing would part them from Him, for in His own presence in the Father's House they would soon dwell. For this, He would soon return and take them to be forever with Himself. What a joy it will be for His heart when He shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied!

Next, we come to the source of love. Everything originated with the Father, and it was His purpose that the Son should not be alone, but that others should share in His place of affection and glory. This is most touching and bows the heart in worship! In verse 8 Philip says, "Show

us the Father and it sufficeth us." This brings from the Lord such a wonderful unfolding, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." In the Person of Jesus, all that the Father is in life, nature, disposition and affection has been made known. His whole pathway expressed the Father's grace to sinners and revealed that the resources of the Father had been opened for the blessing of men. Every act of the Son, every movement in that life of perfect love and obedience and His every attitude Godward and manward proved that He was in the Father and the Father in Him. But the Father was not only revealed in what Jesus was Personally, and in His activities of grace, but also in the words He spoke, He said, "I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak, and I know that His commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak" (ch. xii., 49-50). We see Him sitting at Sychar's well, wearied with His journey, pouring into the ears of that poor degraded Samaritan the words of the Father. But the Father was also made known in all His works of power, as opening the eyes of the blind man in ch. ix., and in raising Lazarus from the dead in ch. xi. Therefore in three ways is the Father revealed in the Son. (1) In all that the Son was in His Person. (2) In the words spoken by the Son. (3) In the works wrought by the Son.

In verse 20 we learn that the Holy Spirit has been given so that we might know the present place of the Son. The Son is in the Father, and we can look up to heaven and by the Spirit see the Son in the bosom of the Father. As we learn of the Son's place in divine affections we learn our own place in Him. This is our present place and portion. We are in Him before the Father's face to rejoice in the circle of divine love and favour into which we have been brought, and until the moment comes when we shall enter with Him the Father's House, He is in us down here that we might set forth in testimony and that under the Father's eye for His pleasure, the beauties of the Son. May we therefore ponder more constantly the Home of Love to which we soon shall be brought with Jesus; and as we do so worship the Father the source of love in the power of the Spirit; and in result be found here in the enjoyment of that love reproducing the moral features of Jesus.

STEPHEN AND JOSEPH (Acts vii.).

(Notes of an address by P. R. Phare at Hawick, 1/1/1898).

During 4,000 years, the responsible man had broken down completely under trial. Stephen's indictment of the Jewish leaders was crushing. It was summed up under four heads, *viz.*, the law broken, the prophets persecuted, the Just One slain, and the Holy Ghost slighted. That was a terse statement of fearful import. But the climax of his arraignment came in the words, "Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost!"

Joseph is described in the prophetic witness of Jacob as a fruitful bough, yet hated and separated from his brethren, on the other hand taken up by God as a type, passing through long trying experience and ultimately blessed in a wonderful place of exaltation. Jacob's love for Joseph was typical of the delight of God in Christ. Joseph's brethren after the flesh were envious and could not brook their father's obvious preference. Joseph was despised, ill-treated and sold for 20 silver pieces. We read that it was for envy that the chief priests delivered the Lord to Pilate (Mark xv., 10). Christ was robbed of His kingly glory and Messianic rights, sold for 30 silver pieces and separated from his earthly connections. So the only perfect link between God and man of that order was completely severed in the death of Christ. Notwithstanding that on feast days the world celebrates the birth and death of Christ, He is really rejected here. There is no place in this poor world for Christ! But although rejected here He has been received in the glory by God, from whence He is the dispenser of blessing to the whole universe. The devil stepped on to the virgin soil of God's fair creation and inserted a lie in the mind of the first man. But God raised up another man, *viz.*, Christ, who was here completely for the good pleasure and glory of God. The devil could not stand such a display from God and he did not rest until he succeeded in inducing man to put Christ out of the world by way of the Cross. He thought that he had quenched the light of the world permanently, but in the act he completely outwitted himself. Christ is still the light of the world in an exalted sphere and He has countless thousands of light-bearers reflecting that light to illuminate the darkness of the world! Even as every knee had to bow to Joseph and he was the supreme administrator of all the resources of Egypt, so

God has decreed that every knee must bow to Jesus owning Him as Lord, and He is the administrator of all the wealth of heaven!

In Gen. xlv. we see the affection of Joseph in revealing himself to his brethren and that every Egyptian had to go out from his presence while he was doing so. No matter how cultured the Egyptian was he could not enter in to that affection. So to-day the Lord makes Himself known to His own whom He loves to the end. No philosophic conception can understand that love! The Spirit of God is charged with the mission of revealing to us the glory of that Blessed One. Stephen beheld the heavens opened to enable him to look up into the glory of God and to see Jesus as if ready to come back. Hebrews ii. presents him to the eye of faith as the centre of all God's administration. There are two parts of the purpose of God concerning Christ. He is already set over everything, although everything is not yet put under His feet, but by faith we see Jesus as the One crowned with glory and honour. He is the true antitype of the High Priest clothed with the garments of glory and beauty of the Old Testament. The Hebrews epistle takes us much further in the development of the doctrine presented in Acts vii. There we are told about God's purpose concerning us showing how God is occupied in bringing many sons to glory. He is taking us home to the place of sonship. Stephen became a reflection of his Master, in the brief moment before he was stoned to death. As the first martyr he became the pattern for the long line of witnesses loyal unto death, who were filled with the Holy Ghost and with the vision of the opened heavens and the Glory of God and Jesus there. What a wonderful effect the knowledge of that will have upon us. Otherwise we will be in this benighted and confused world as a ship without a rudder!

A SCRIPTURAL SEQUENCE.

(1) Thy words were found, and I did eat them; Thy word was *unto me* the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: . . . (2) I sat not in the assembly of the mockers, . . . (3) if thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as My mouth: (Jer. xv., 16-19).

Note (1) shows remnant character loyal to the Word, (2) is the consequence in a separate path, while (3) is the result in discriminating ability which leads to suitable testimony.

T. OLIVER.

HEBREWS IX.

(*Expansion of Bible Reading Notes at Harrington, 2/1/41.*)

In following on a little our consideration of Ch. viii., we come now in this magnificent discourse to the consideration of the sanctuary itself. To this end, in the first ten verses we have a reference to the tabernacle of old, and most of the furniture contained therein. The first thing we must note is that the tabernacle was divided into a first place and a second. The first is called the Holy, and the second the Holy of Holies (vv. 6-7). Into the first the priests (plural), had always access but into the second the high priest (sing.), went *alone* once every year. The sons of Aaron never went at any time into the second place. The reference in this verse is to the great day of atonement when Aaron went alone into the presence of God once every year, to sprinkle the mercy-seat with blood. The second veil barred man from entering the presence of God. We are not left in any doubt as to what this meant for we read in v. 8—"the Holy Spirit shewing this, that the way of the (holy of) holies has not yet been manifest while as yet the first tabernacle has (its) standing."

Two reasons are given in the Ch. as to why man could not go in to God. Sins were not put away and consequently the potential worshippers never knew what it was to have a perfect conscience (v. 9) or a purified conscience (v. 14). Until the question of sin was settled, God could not have man in His holy presence. Moreover, until man's conscience was cleared he could not stand in peace in God's holy presence. The result was that access into the presence of God could not be his experience so long as the first tabernacle "had its standing." As to the system connected with the first tabernacle it was "only in meats and drinks and divers washings, ordinances of flesh, imposed until the time of setting things right" (v. 10).

This is the most obvious teaching of these first ten verses. A less obvious point, but of the utmost importance, is found in the enumeration of the holy vessels. *The Golden Altar is not mentioned* yet special reference is made to the *Golden Censer*. They are both vessels of approach. One in the first place and the other in the second. We seem to have this Golden Censer mentioned only in Lev. xvi. Here, on the great day of atonement, Aaron is told that he must take that Censer full of burning coals from off the Brazen Altar

and his hands full of sweet incense. The cloud of the incense covered the mercy-seat all the time he was occupied in sprinkling the blood upon the mercy-seat and seven times before. This was the only occasion on which Aaron entered the presence of God and the censer was taken by him. It was a vessel which obviously belonged to the Holy of Holies. Only in Hebrews are we told that it was *golden*, possibly because all in that place was made of gold. There is no mention at all of this vessel in the instructions given to Moses when God gave him instructions concerning the holy vessels. Would this not suggest that here is something that has been definitely reserved for Christianity? While the first tabernacle was standing, approach was limited to the Golden Altar in the Holy place. Every morning and every evening, Aaron burned incense thereon when he dressed the lamps and lit them. From the Golden Altar in the Holy place, the cloud of incense ascended for the pleasure of God. To-day the cloud of incense ascends from the Golden Censer in the Holy of Holies! Now that the time has come for worship in the immediate presence of God, the Golden Altar is passed over and the Golden Censer is introduced in its place.

“ His deep perfections gladly sing
And tell them forth to thee.”

As we pass on to vv. 11-14, we read how the second place and the system connected with it is brought to pass. At once our thoughts are turned to Christ. He is presented as the high priest of good things to come. These *good things to come* are connected with the *world to come*, yet meanwhile they are all available for us in Christianity in the power of the Spirit. We have them now, in association with Christ in the inside place. At this point, I call the attention of bible students to a very interesting point of doctrine. Do these verses teach that Christ has become *high priest* “ by his own blood,” or that *He entered in* “ by His own blood ”? First, a reference to the footnote in the N. Tn, will shew the force of the preposition “*dia*” here. As all can look this up we leave it. We add a quotation from the pen of E. Dennett, on this very passage which is well worth thinking over. He was writing against a doctrine that purported to prove that Christ took His blood into heaven to sprinkle the heavenly mercy-seat.

“ According to the punctuation of this passage in the Authorised Version, Christ is made to enter the holy place

‘by His own blood,’ and this having been commonly accepted, many different interpretations of these words have been offered. But a closer inspection of this scripture shows that this punctuation is based upon a misconception; *viz.*, upon a supposed correspondence between the entrance of the high priest of old into the holiest with the blood of the sin-offering, and the entrance of Christ with His own blood into heaven. And yet the very words employed might have indicated the mistake; for the phrase *dia tou idiou aimatos* (by His own blood) is peculiar, and could not be translated by either ‘with’ or ‘in virtue of His own blood.’ The question then is whether the words ‘by His own blood’ are necessarily connected at all with the word ‘entered.’ We unhesitatingly answer in the negative; and as confidently affirm that they are connected with the commencement of verse 11. To shew this we leave out, for the moment, the intervening words; and it will then read thus: ‘But Christ being come . . . 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.’” (*Christian Friend*, P 232, vol. 1888).

We are assured in verse 12, that before He entered in, He found an eternal redemption. “For us” is better left out. We judge it was more for God, even if on our account. Redemption has been resolved by the Godhead. All three Persons are mentioned here. This takes our minds back to Ch. i. where we read, “when He had by Himself made purification for sins.” Not by Moses nor by Michael but “*by Himself*,” *i.e.*, the Son in Manhood. In other words, God has met His own claims in the person of the Son, who became Man to carry out the work of redemption perfectly for the Glory of God (Ch. i., 3, and ii., 9). The result is stated in ver. 14., *viz.*, a purified conscience from dead works (Judaism) to worship the living God! Hence the service of the living God has begun in a company with a purified conscience, who with peace in their hearts about the question of sins, are fitted to give worship to God in the Holy of Holies, ascending like the incense from the Golden Censer and not now from the Golden Altar.

It is here that we can see the need of the New Covenant a little more clearly. It bears out what we said in a previous paper, that it is a necessity to prepare us to go in to God. As soon as we have mention of serving the living God, the New Covenant is again brought before us, called by a more

suited word here, "testament." Without going over it again, we must notice the one outstanding fact connected with it. *It was inaugurated with blood.* We have before seen Christ presented as the Minister of the Sanctuary and the Mediator of the better Covenant, Ch. viii. We have now in this Ch. the fact that both His High Priesthood and the Covenant have been inaugurated by His own blood. They are presented in Ch. viii. to shew the greatness of Christ. Here we see the foundation of them. We read that it necessitated the death of the testator. This would teach us that both the service of the Sanctuary and the New Covenant could only be brought to pass after Christ had died. Neither were effected in His life. It meant the end of the old system in His death and the beginning of the new in His resurrection. By the Cross, He both met the failure of the old and laid the foundation of the new. The old system on earth has passed away and the new system in heaven has taken its place. Not only have we mention that His priesthood and the Covenant have been inaugurated by His own blood, but the whole heavenly order has come under the efficacy of the same precious blood (v. 23). Here is the complete answer to the typical work of Aaron in Lev. 16, when after sprinkling the blood upon the mercy-seat for God, he then brought the whole tabernacle under the power of that same blood (Lev. xvi., 33).

So in our last section (vv. 24-28), we read that Christ has gone into heaven itself, the place of the New Sanctuary, and He has gone there representatively for US. Here we have the answer to Aaron in his garments of Glory and Beauty with the names upon his breast and on his shoulders. Three times the Lord is spoken of as appearing in these verses and in each case it is different. He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. That is past. He appears in the presence of God for us now. That is present. He shall appear apart from sin unto salvation. That is future. Of the first two we have already got the gain. For the last one we are waiting. A reference to Lev. ix., 22-24, will shew this in type. Aaron, after offering the sacrifices lifts up his hand and blesses the people. With Moses he then goes into the tabernacle and comes out again to bless the people. The Glory of the Lord appears and all the people fall down in worship on the ground as the sacrifice is accepted by the Lord. So Christ has lifted up His hands and blessed the people after His great sacrifice.

With hands uplifted He has gone into heaven (Luke xxiv., 50). We wait the moment when He shall appear to bless His people on the ground of the acceptance of His offering. With Him shall come in the Glory of the Lord and all will bow in worship to God. Israel will then get the blessing of the New Covenant and in that day both the heavenly and earthly companies will take up the service of God. Needless to say in that day we shall be in heaven but this is not taught in Hebrews. It is not our going to heaven that is the point in this epistle but Christ coming out; the true Melchizedec to sustain the whole scene for the pleasure of God.

G. DAVISON.

GOD'S CARE FOR HIS LAMBS (Continued).

(*Expository Notes on i. Thess. ii. by Hamilton Smith*).

(c) *The fruit of the Apostle's care (13-20).*

In the latter part of the chapter we see the beautiful fruits of this ministry of grace, in gentleness and faithfulness. It set this company of believers in the path of *faith* (13-16); brought them into the circle of *love* (17-18); and gave them the sure and certain *hope* of the coming glory (19, 20). (V. 13) First, the Apostle can thank God that the faith of these believers was established on the solid foundation of the word of God. Faith is in Christ; but our authority for believing in Christ is, not the word of a teacher, however gifted, but, "the word of God." The evidence of the divine authority of the word is that *it works effectually in those that believe*. The word of God reaches the conscience as no mere word of man can do; it turns the soul to God from idols and produces the great principles of Christianity, "faith," "love," and "hope" in our Lord Jesus Christ. (Vv. 14-16) Moreover the word of God effectually working in these young believers, led them whole-heartedly to identify themselves with the people of God. They became followers of the assemblies of God, which in Judæa were in Christ Jesus. Not only did they share with them in the privileges in Christ Jesus, but they became their companions in suffering for Christ. The Thessalonian believers suffered from their own countrymen,

even as the assemblies in Judæa suffered from the Jews. But even so, the opposition of the heathen Gentiles was fermented by the deadly hatred of the Jews. The Jewish nation had not only rejected the prophets and killed their own Messiah, and thus rejected every proffer of grace to themselves, but they filled up their cup of guilt by seeking to stop the grace of God going out to the Gentile. This effort to stop the grace of God being preached to the Gentile rose to its height in their persecution of Paul, the Apostle of the Gentile. They "please not God," and "are contrary to all men," thus bringing wrath upon themselves to the uttermost. (V. 17) Secondly, if on the one hand in taking the path of faith these young converts had to taste a little suffering from their countrymen, on the other hand they enjoyed the love and communion in the new circle into which Christianity had brought them. They were bound together with the Lord's people "*in heart.*" Truly, for a time, saints may be bereft of one another's company by circumstances, and "separated for a little moment," but, says the Apostle, "not in heart." We are linked together with bonds that are as eternal as the love that binds us. (V. 18) The practical expression of this communion of saints will involve conflict, for the one great end of Satan will be to hinder its expression. So the Apostle can say, "we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us." Could not the Lord have thwarted Satan's efforts? Doubtless He could, and does when in accordance with His ways. Shortly He will tread Satan under foot, though at the present He may use Satan as an instrument wherewith to try His people. Had the Lord hindered Satan the saints might have missed the blessing that resulted from the trial of their faith. (Vv. 19, 20) Finally we learn that the love circle on earth with its trials prepares for "the presence of the Lord Jesus at His coming." This leads the Apostle to refer to "our hope." Thus the blessed effect of the Apostle's ministry was to bring these Gentile believers into a new circle marked by faith in the word of God (13); love to one another (17); and "hope" in the coming of the Lord Jesus. The Lord is the true gathering centre of His people, the One that calls out our affections to Himself and thus unites our hearts with one another. In His presence, at His coming, we shall enjoy communion with one another in our common joy in the Lord, where no power of Satan can intrude.

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

There are two rites or ordinances in Christianity: (1) Baptism, which puts the baptised person on ground of profession; (2) the Lord's Supper on the line of privilege. The truth of the latter was clearly given to Gentile believers through the Apostle Paul, "I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you" (1 Cor. xi., 23). It is primarily a memorial feast, having its inauguration and type in the memorial and ordinance of the Passover. In Exodus xii. we get the type; the slain lamb, unleavened bread and bitter herbs speak of the character of the passover feast; while the girded loins, shoes and staff set forth the pilgrim features of the participators. It would seem that it was the custom of the Jews to "break bread" and "drink of the cup of consolation" for their departed parents (Jer. xvi., 7; also Deut. xxvi., 14; Job xlii., 11, and Hosea ix., 4). This "mourning feast" would have significance to a godly Jew familiar with the Hebrew scriptures.

Now on the night of his betrayal, the Lord instituted this feast of remembrance on the day of unleavened bread when the Passover must be killed (Matt. xxvi., Mark xiv., Luke xxii.). Luke distinguishes between the "cup after supper" and the "cup of the Passover supper" of the preceding verses which refers to the "fruit of the vine" in the coming kingdom. Thus the Lord leads on to our present portion, the loaf speaking of His body given for us, and the cup His blood shed for us. Clearly "the cup of blessing which we bless" is "the communion of the blood of Christ" and "the bread which we break" is "the communion of the body of Christ." The one loaf also sets forth that believers "being many are one bread," which is in contrast to the twelve cakes of Lev. xxiv., setting forth administration and the 12 tribes in their representative character. The "shewbread" upon the table of Ex. xxv., 30, speaks of Christ, "the bread of God" and "bread of Life" (John vi., 33-48). The manna sets forth Christ in His path of humiliation (the living bread from heaven), the wilderness food of the believer. We keep the feast, but, we have the sheaf of the "morrow after the sabbath," Christ risen!

It is important to see that while 1 Cor. xi. gives the order and privilege of the Supper, 1 Cor. x. that with which the Supper has identified us. It involves our baptism, to which the Apostle refers in type "our fathers were all baptised

unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." Believers are baptised into His death (Rom. vi., 3). Then he adds " they did all eat . . . and did all drink," alluding to the cup and the bread. This is fellowship (as to our participation), the New Testament anti-type of the peace offering! Moreover it is the anti-type of the Passover for " even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us " (I Cor. v.). But where do we eat it? As to our place, in the wilderness, but to faith within the borders of the land; as another has said, " between Egypt and God's Israel rolled the Red Sea and the Jordan." Yet how different is this to the Egypt Passover; there judgment was impending, now in the wilderness observance we partake as a people wondrously blessed, a " people near unto Him " (Ps. cxlviii., 14).

The Supper is the assembly's greatest privilege, the rallying point to Christ, the Divine Centre. This involves both *privilege* and *responsibility*. As our highest privilege how blessed it is to respond in bridal affection to our absent Lord's request " this do in remembrance of Me " (Luke xxii., 19). The Supper is our response to His love. In the early days of the Church's history, the act of " breaking bread " had its own peculiar place in the lives of the early believers (Acts ii., 42, 46; xx., 7). It is clear from I Cor. x., we have three centres, (1) the Jewish altar, (2) the Lord's table, (3) the table of demons. We must distinguish these, the " table " sets forth the fellowship into which we are called, of which the Lord Himself is the bond (I Cor. i., 9). The Supper is the supreme expression of this fellowship (I Cor. x., 16, 17), and the Holy Spirit, the power (2 Cor. xiii., 14). From the solemn words of I Cor. xi., 27-34 we learn that self judgment is needed in order that we may be in a right spiritual condition to take the Supper. We are not told to examine ourselves and stay away but " let a man examine himself and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup." The Supper sets forth the assembly's privilege, that of all saints, and being the *Lord's Supper* it should be taken in character with the holiness of the House, where God dwells; where the Father's love is known and enjoyed; where the glories of the Son and the wondrous depths of His love become real and blessed to faith. We see in the fine flour of the *meal* offering and the frankincense beautiful types of the Lord's life (Lev. ii.). The *sin* offering is expiatory and substitutional and the *trespass* offering is making restitution. Yet we show forth His

death and the fragrance of His life and His death sets forth the undying devotedness of the Son to His Father's will. "This is the law of the *burnt* offering because of the burning upon the altar all night unto the morning." "The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out" (Lev. vi., 9, 13). Let us not forget that we show the Lord's death "till He come," when the night of His absence will end in the "morning without clouds"; His blest presence for evermore! Meantime how blessed it is to respond to His request, to keep the word of His patience, and though marked by little strength to keep His Word and not deny His Name (Rev. iii.).

T. D. WOOD.

GLORYING IN THE FLESH.

Man glories in anything that will bring honour to himself—anything that distinguishes him from his neighbour. It does not signify what it is (it may be even that he is the tallest man), anything his pride may come in, in that which gives him advantage over others. Some may glory in their talents. There are differences in men's minds; vanity is seen more in some, wishing for the good opinion of others; pride more in others, having a good opinion of themselves. Wealth, knowledge, anything that distinguishes a man, he will glory in, and make a little world around himself by it. Whatever you are decking yourself out with—it may be even with a knowledge of Scripture—it is glorying in the flesh. Ever so little a thing is enough to make us pleased with ourselves; what we should not notice in another is quite enough to raise our own importance.—J. N. D.

Tyndale, who gave us our first New Testament from the Greek was strangled; Coverdale, who gave us our first printed Bible, narrowly escaped the stake by exile; Rogers, to whom we owe the multiform basis of the A.V., was the first victim of the Marian persecution; Cranmer, who left us the Psalter, was at last blessed with a death of triumphant agony. Such men were "of whom the world was not worthy" (Heb. xi., 38). Although the persecution nowadays in this country may be less evident, we have to guard against a no less real opposition of the world in spite of its being expressed more politely!

THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL AND THE CROSS.

The fact that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable is calculated not only to develop the true Berean spirit in us but also to stimulate enquiry into the teaching connected with the different terms used therein. At first sight these two foundations upon which the Apostle Paul reared the edifice of his preaching at Corinth may not present the intended significance. It is, therefore, with a view to unfolding the thoughts suggested by these two things that a few words may not seem out of place. In verse 17 of 1 Cor. i., it is the preaching of the Gospel and in verse 18 it is the preaching of the Cross. This is godly order, for God is first of all introduced in all His grace before man is shut out in all his sinfulness. These two lines run parallel from Genesis to Revelation (see Gen. iii., 9 and Rev. xx., 9).

The Gospel is a theme which thrills the heart of the believer and which may fall upon the ears of the unbeliever without raising either enmity or controversy for it reveals the love of God in all its surpassing excellence. It launches us into an ocean of salvation with no obstruction in the slipway as to the question of judgment. To this give all the prophets witness in both the Old and New Testaments; may we just cite three references from the New Testament? "God our Saviour who will have all men to be saved" (1 Tim. ii., 3-4), "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself" (2 Cor. v., 19), "The grace of God that bringeth salvation to all men hath appeared" (Titus ii., 11). These and allied scriptures like 1 John iv., 10 are all connected with the Gospel and present the attitude of God as being that of favour to all men. But let it be noted that this was only one of the Apostle's foundations, and he had two!

Coincident with his announcement of the Glad Tidings was the preaching of the Cross which is the abiding witness that man by nature will not do for God. It has often been said that the man whom God could not correct, He ended in the Cross. Scriptures such as Gen. vi., 5, Luke xviii., 23, John iii., 6 (first clause), and Rom. viii., 8 (the flesh being the body plus the will) reflect very accurately what man after the flesh is before the eye of God and suggest the necessity of the Cross before there could be anything for God's

pleasure relative to man. Preaching of this description is foolishness to the unbeliever for it sets him aside as worthless before God, no matter what wisdom he may possess as to things here, but to the believer it is the power of God for it gives him the sense of his nothingness and causes him to look to the One who alone is his resource. Were the preaching of the Cross more fully understood amongst the Lord's people there would surely be a deeper realisation of the power of God and a corresponding depreciation of the wisdom of men! May the Lord give us to understand a little better the distinctions presented in the Scriptures of truth!

J. WILSON.

THE MERCIES OF THE LORD.

“ *The Lord is my helper, I will not fear what man shall do unto me.*” Heb. xiii., 6.

When the widow cried unto the prophet, “ The creditor is come to take unto him my two sons to be bondmen,” what answers Elisha? At first as if embarrassed by this touching appeal, he replies, “ What can I do for thee? Tell me ” (he continues as if he had discovered the mode of relief), “ what hast thou in thy house?” God does not allow us to be placed in circumstances which bear no evidence of His providing mercies. They may be very small and scanty, yet faith appropriates them, and encouraging the soul in God proclaims, “ The Lord is my helper,” not *outside* His own mercies, but *through* them. The widow here borrows from abroad from her neighbours empty vessels. The testimony in asking the loan of an empty vessel was that she who was *known* to be in such abject circumstances had something to put into them. She might doubtless have been taunted that her poverty was notorious, and that it was folly to borrow empty vessels. She had only *boldly* to say, “ The Lord is my helper!” Now this is an example of the simple action of faith in the use of means. Nature would have despised the “ pot of oil,” and sought unto the king and those in high estate, or to the lender for relief; but this is not God's way. God only wants to bring Himself into the scene, for He can touchingly appeal to His people, “ What could have been done for my vineyard which I have not done for it?”

(*Present Testimony v. 254*).

JUSTIFICATION.

“Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth” (Rom. viii., 33). From the above Scripture we learn, that to be justified is to be free from the *charge* of sin. Until we believed the gospel the charge against us was, that we had “sinned, and come short of the glory of God”; but, having believed, we have the privilege to know that we have been “justified from all things” (Acts xiii., 39). To any who would question our right to this position or bring any charge of sin against us the divine answer is: “It is God that justifieth.” If God, the God against whom we had sinned has justified us, who is he that shall condemn? In the epistle to the Romans, justification is said to be (a) by grace; (b) by blood; (c) by faith.

Justification by Grace (Rom. iii., 24). Until, by the advent of Christ, the grace of God was revealed, the Jew was under the law. But as Rom. iii., 20 tells us, the law did not justify. It had, indeed, quite the opposite effect. The law was a standard by which man’s shortcomings were revealed and instead of clearing him of the charge of sin, established his guilt. But what of the Gentile? He, too, is proved to be “under sin” (Rom. iii., 9). True, he was never tested by the law publicly; but the trial of the Jew was sufficient to prove that “by the deeds of the law *no flesh*” (neither Jew nor Gentile) could be justified in God’s sight. All human effort as a means of obtaining blessing is thus ruled out and God discloses that “by His grace” He can justify all who believe.

Justification by Blood (Rom. iii., 25; v., 9). It is never God’s way, however, to act in grace at the expense of righteousness; nor does He justify the sinner by ignoring his sin. Sin is a challenge to the righteousness and supremacy of God and to vindicate His righteousness, God must judge sin. But how could God execute the judgment on sin that His righteousness demanded and yet justify the sinner according to the desire of His grace? It is in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ we find the answer to this question. On the cross, the unsparing judgment of sin that God’s righteousness required was carried out and thus His attitude to sin was plainly declared. Since the Lord Jesus has borne all the weight of divine wrath against sin, God is just in justifying all who have faith in that which is the witness of His death—the blood.

Justification by Faith (Rom. v., 1). If on God's side justification is by grace, on man's side it must be by faith. Grace is in contrast with law: faith is in contrast with works. Grace implies gift, and no one works for a gift. "To him that worketh," says the Scripture, "is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt." That is to say, had it been possible for men, by works of righteousness to have fulfilled God's demands, then they would have been entitled to justification. But, as we have seen, law and the deeds of the law are ruled out; hence if men are to be justified it must be by grace on the principle of faith.

ALEX. WHITESMITH.

ANXIOUS CARE.

(From Notes of Reading with J. McDonald at Innerleithen, 16/10/97).

I have been much struck lately with the literal meaning of the Greek word "*Merimnao*" which in the New Testament is used to convey a meaning of anxious care. It is derived from a root word which signifies "to be pulled in opposite directions." A cart pulled in opposite directions will never go on! But if we are going on with God, care will serve to give us spiritual exercises. In all circumstances we should bring in the victorious character of Christ into our lives and walk in the power of the victory that He has won for us. He was crucified through weakness, yet He was not raised through weakness but by the power of God. When we get the knowledge of this in power in our souls it has a wonderful influence on all our actions. It was the sense of the victory achieved that enabled Abraham to refuse the spoil of Sodom even from a thread to a shoe latchet! We ought to act rightly and not to be grumbling at our circumstances; *e.g.*, if we are underpaid, the Lord has His eye on this. He will see to it in many ways. A man once told me that he used to be very discontented with his wages; at last he got an increase, but the next month after, some of his family turned ill and he had a large doctor's bill to pay, so that he did not gain anything by the increase. God could make poor fare afford more sustenance to the body than the richest food in the world. There are many instances in Scripture where God made man's insufficiency superabundantly sufficient for the needs of individuals. We can depend upon it that His wonders have not ceased!

THE AMEN AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

A soliloquy on 2 Cor. i., 18-22.

“God is faithful,” is a prominent statement in Ch. I. of the first epistle. The same statement “God is true” or “faithful” is made at the opening of the above passage in the second epistle. So it was a logical conclusion that the apostle’s preaching was not equivocating, not saying “Yes” and “No” in the same breath or saying one thing and meaning another! Then the subject of his preaching, the Son of God, necessarily partook of the same character. The argument was one in ethical congruity, *i.e.*, it was unbelievable that one who had such a subject to preach and who enforced it emphatically would be untruthful or controlled by considerations of expediency! Then he leaves the subject of the character of his preaching, changing the verb tense from the aorist (*egeneto*,* was) in the first passage to the perfect (*gegone*) in the second passage, signifying that the substantiation of the truth is in Christ, the Son of God. The alternative and possibly better reading of v. 20 is “in Him is the yea, wherefore also by Him is the Amen to God for glory by our means,” *i.e.*, by means of the apostle and his associates. The promises of God have been fulfilled and ratified in Christ. He is the incarnate Amen of these promises. His words were based on immutable certainty. In His life and works the promises of God were fulfilled and justified. Similar scriptural references are “I am the truth,” “He that is true,” and “the Amen, the faithful and true witness,” all putting emphasis on the same fact. To the Greek *nai* is added the Hebrew *Amen* to give greater emphasis, as in the Revelation where the most solemn expressions are rendered in both Greek and Hebrew.

(Justin said the congregation uttered Amen after the prayers in the synagogue, the people shouting the Amen “so be it.” They read “open ye the gates that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth, literally the Amen, may enter in” (Isa. xxvi., 2). An Amen if not well considered was called an “orphan amen.” Whoever said such his children would be orphans, *i.e.*, due to a hasty Amen his days would be shortened. But when distinctly said at length, lengthening his days would be the result).

* Alternative reading is *estin*, 3rd pers. sing. pres. indic. of *eimi* to be, but the change to the perfect represents the action as completed re the present time.

Then the Apostle in v. 21, includes his readers in the association in establishment or confirmation in (or attachment unto) Christ, *i.e.*, an actual incorporation with Him. As to such there are frequent occurrences in Scripture. Here is a notable three-fold statement: (1) confirmation or establishment (*bebaion*), (2) anointing (*chrisas*), (3) sealing (*sphragizo*), by God. It is always instructive to compare scripture with scripture, so (1) Confirmation "shall confirm you unto the end," (1 Cor. i., 8) in the future tense; "stablished in the faith" (Col. ii., 7); "the word confirmed unto us" (Heb. ii., 3); "the heart established" (Heb. xiii., 9) are other examples of the usage of the same verb. (2) Anointed, used in Luke iv., 18 of Christ also in Acts iv., 27, Acts x., 38 and Heb. i., 9. How wonderful it is that what is predicated of Christ should be credited to us, that we should be anointed as He. This thought is continued as "unction" (1 John ii., 20), and anointing (1 John ii., 27). A spiritual intelligence in the power of the Holy Spirit (3) "Sealed," used in sealing the stone (Matt. xxvii., 66) Jesus the Son of Man was sealed by God the Father (John vi., 27), so we are sealed with the Holy Spirit (Eph. i., 13), "sealed unto the day of redemption" (Eph. iv., 30). We are the property of God. In the Revelation, there are many instances of sealing, mainly referring to the servants of God, the tribes and the sayings or documents of prophecy. In 2 Cor. xi., 10, "no man shall stop me of this boasting" (literally "this boasting shall not be sealed to me"). Coupled with the sealing is the earnest of the Spirit given in our hearts. The Greek word *arrabona* is an exclusively Pauline expression appearing three times, *viz.*, in 2 Cor. v., 5; Eph. i., 14, and here. Originally a Hebrew verb (see Jer. xxx., 21; Neh. v., 3), meaning to mix or to exchange or to pay first instalment as a pledge, it is also used as a cognate noun in the last sense in Gen. xxxviii., 17-18. It was probably carried to Greece by Phoenician merchants, then into Latin writings, hence to modern languages even into old Scotch as "arles" at the engagement of a farm worker! In the New Testament the Christians were not to think that their present spiritual endowment was final. It was a pledge of greater things to come. Under a Hebrew image, "first fruits of the Spirit" (Rom. viii., 23), the expression may be taken as an example of the genitive of apposition, *i.e.*, the earnest which is the Spirit.

OMICRON.

SANCTIFICATION.

Perhaps no truth of Scripture has been more distorted and misunderstood than the doctrine of "Sanctification." The Scriptures are sublime in their simplicity, but often the simplest statements have been beclouded by those who have sought to find in them support for their particular opinions. Some of the misunderstandings regarding sanctification have perhaps risen through giving the word a wrong meaning. It comes from two Latin words *sanctus* (sacred) and *facere* (to make), *i.e.*, to *set apart to sacred use*. Its earliest mention is in Genesis ii., 3, in connection with the Sabbath day.

In Exodus xiii. the firstborn of beast as well as of man was sanctified. In Leviticus xvii., 14, a man sanctified his house or his field (v. 17). The tabernacle and its vessels, the temple and its furniture, were all sanctified; so that it is evident sanctification had to do with *things* as well as persons. Certain misleading terms are frequently used now by some persons as "getting sanctified," "fully sanctified," "losing sanctification," etc. The users of these terms generally teach the doctrine of holiness by our own efforts; they insist upon a moment of definite surrender as the time when the "second blessing" is obtained. That every Christian should desire practical holiness is perfectly right; it is indeed the aspiration of the new nature, and Scripture ever exhorts to holiness of life; but this is not attained by human resolutions. Sooner or later the lesson must be learned which the apostle Paul experienced, "I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing" (Rom. vii., 18).

"How are we sanctified?" is a question answered by Scripture in Heb. x., 10—by the will of God and the offering of the body of Jesus Christ. I Cor. vi., 11 speaks of it as a definite act, "Ye *are* washed, ye *are* sanctified." Hebrews ii., 11 also, "They who *are* sanctified. Again in Hebrews x., 14, "Them that *are* sanctified." All this is *positional* sanctification, the result of God's act in grace, and true of every believer on the Lord Jesus Christ the moment faith receives Him as a personal Saviour. Set apart to God by the work of the Lord Jesus and the sovereign power of the Holy Spirit (I Pet. i., 20), the believer's standing before God is unassailable. As born again by the Holy Spirit and the word of God (see John iii., 5), and sealed by the Holy

Spirit upon receiving the gospel, who in imparting this new nature separates us from the world to God (Eph. i., 13), the believer's sanctification, *positionally*, could not be more perfect than it is. It is of this aspect of sanctification that Scripture most frequently speaks.

To confound our "standing" before God with our "state," is frequently productive of much soul-misery. The believer can never be more meet for heaven than when he is first brought to Christ as Saviour. "Giving thanks unto the Father, who *hath* made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light" (Col. i., 12). Our meetness, then, is not the result of any effort on our part. The thief on the cross was made meet for Paradise by sovereign grace based on the sacrifice of Christ, else he could not have gone there. To make *positional* sanctification subsequent to justification is a great error, and destructive of the appreciation of the work of redemption; it casts the soul upon itself and its experiences, only to result in self-occupation, and leads to self-complacency or despair. The prodigal in Luke's Gospel gives an illustration of this common error when in the far off country he soliloquized, "I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son; *make me as one of Thy hired servants.*" His thought evidently was to crave an opportunity to improve his state, and enable him to prove himself worthy of a better place. How little he knew the Father's heart! How different the father's thought! The kiss of forgiveness settled the past and secured the future, so that the prodigal was unable to propose what he had purposed. Fellow-believer, you have been received, not as a servant but as a son!

That the believer's condition, or state of soul, should ever be a cause for exercise before God, however, it is important to recognise; and the more we understand the wondrous position God has given us in the riches of His grace, the deeper will be our desire to answer in a practical way to this grace. Here comes in such scriptures as John xvii., 17, "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." 1 Thess, vi., 3-4, "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification." 2 Tim. ii., 21-22, "A vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, prepared unto every good work. Flee also youthful lusts," etc. We

cannot detach practical sanctification from the new nature received at new birth, and it is important to see that we are dependent upon the word of God and the Holy Spirit for this. Man is mentioned in 1 Thess. v., 23 as "spirit, soul, and body." By departure from God, he became enslaved to his natural lusts. Now grace has wrought, but this does not render one independent but rather brings into gladly-recognised dependence upon God. Christ, who loves us, is by the Holy Spirit set before our hearts as the object of our affections; and the Father's word to us is, "Be ye holy, for I am holy." Being born of God, the new nature in the believer has holy tastes and desires; but because the flesh, the old Adam nature, is also in us, power for holiness lies in *walking with God* in conscious dependence. *Judicially*, "our old man has been crucified with Christ . . . that we should no longer serve sin" (Rom. vi., 6), and we are to arm ourselves with this truth, to "*reckon* ourselves dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord," whose death entitles us to deliverance from sin and from the law.

But how many there are who, conscious that they had no righteousness to present to God, came to Him for forgiveness and rest; but while receiving these blessings apart from works, now seek to gain sanctification by works. Practical, progressive sanctification is not by effort of the flesh therefore (for a legal basis is an impossible foundation for holiness), but as the soul realizes its standing before God and the wonderful truth that by faith in Christ (Acts xxvi., 18) the believer is sanctified, the desire is inwrought by the Spirit that everything incompatible with this should be denied. The conduct is brought into conformity with the truth: "Ye *are* sanctified." The standard of holiness is not lowered thereby, but the reverse; for self is treated as worthless and corrupt, the true standard being normal conformity to Christ, and the Holy Spirit the only power for its accomplishment. "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you *perfect in every good work* to do His will, working in you that which is *well pleasing in His sight* through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen" (Heb. xiii., 20, 21).

J. W. H. NICHOLS.

BUT YE ARE COME TO MOUNT ZION:

The blessed God would have us to know where in infinite grace He has brought us; but infinite grace on the part of God avails us nothing unless faith is active on our part for the laying hold of these matters. Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, so God by His word is the producer of faith. Grace on the part of God, and faith on their part linked the worthies of Heb xi. with an order outside the sphere of nature, where everything was stable! Abraham looked for a city which had foundations, whose builder and architect was God. Moses esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt; he had learned not to trust in the shadow of Egypt (Isa. xxx., 2), although brought up in all the learning of Egypt. The light of another day and order had dawned on their souls and enabled them to make calculations according to God. Now in faith we come to something positive, a new day; a new order; another world (the world to come). Alas, to many Christians the world to come remains such, in place of allowing the Spirit of God to make future things (which now obtain in the Spirit's realm) present to our souls.

The apostle says, "Ye are not come to Mount Sinai," which brings to light God's righteous claim relative to man, man's unsuitability to Him, and maintains the distance already brought in by sin, whence comes the ministration of condemnation and death. But "ye are come to Mount Zion" (Heb. xii., 22), introduces grace and gives righteousness, *i.e.*, something positive. Here is a moral journey; not only come to Jesus the Saviour, thank God for that step! Mount Zion is where God has chosen to put His name, it speaks of Christ risen, all the era of shadows gone, the dawn of a new day, having its inception in His resurrection. After His resurrection Mary would have embraced Him as previously, His word to her was, "touch Me not"; that order was past. He was now graciously and tenderly leading her and eventually the other disciples into the light of a new day which must essentially take its character from Himself risen, not only a new day, but a new order and system, the city of the living God, which reflects the glory of God, the new seat of authority. When the people, the priests, and the king had failed God introduced Mount Zion and Jerusalem, wrested from the hand of the Jebusite, as the seat of authority and the centre of the kingdom.

In the new day, the seat of authority is in the city of the living God on the heavenly Zion. As heavenly in constitution, it is independent of outside contribution, self-supporting, perfect in harmony, and administration. Our souls derive from such now, whose builder and architect is God, in which there is the consummation of that hope connected with faith referred to in Heb. xi.; they looked for a city; the day of display will bring all this out to a redeemed universe. Connected with the city is the innumerable company of angels, the servants of the Divine Will, swift to do His bidding, messengers of mercy, a "vast universal gathering" (J. N. D. Tr.). The apostle in the thought of the city seems to touch on the line of the other apostles relative to the kingdom, now hid, but known to faith, and soon to be seen in display. He then comes to what is peculiar to his own ministry, *viz.*, the church of the first-born whose names are written in heaven; this surely connects us with the eternal purpose of God, *i.e.*, His thought from the outset relative to Christ. No power in earth or hell can erase these names; the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Now we come to the supremacy of God, who is Judge of all, manifestly relating to the world to come, but at present evinced in connection with the spirits of just men made perfect. That perfection could only be imparted in virtue of redemption, God must be just to the work of Christ, How this enhances the perfect work of Christ, hence God is the great discriminator, His word is final. What follows touches the depths of our moral being. Jesus the mediator of the new Covenant (what He has done, and what He is in Himself), has endeared Himself to our hearts. He is the centre of all God's thoughts. In Him alone there could be a perfect display of all that God is. The terms of the new Covenant (the new conditions on which God can be with His people), are all of grace, forgiveness, and moral suitability to Himself. The writing of the Spirit of God on the fleshy (*i.e.*, the impressionable) tables of the heart, implies that capacity in the Spirit for the reception of the revelation.

Finally we come to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. The blood of Abel cried for vengeance." The blood of thy brother crieth out of the ground." The earth was not to yield its strength to Cain on account of his foul deed. The blood of Christ speaks of cleansing, and sanctification. The better things speak, too,

of the bringing in of the world to come on the sure foundation of the precious blood of Christ. All now known to faith in Mount Zion shall be in manifestation in that morning without clouds, when the curse shall be removed, and the earth shall yield her increase, and be in accord with heaven. The desert shall blossom and all shall know the Lord from the least to the greatest. What a place of privilege is ours to be in the light of these things. May we then in these days of constant upheaval live in the constant good of these superb matters!

J. S. BERTRAM.

THE HOUSE OF GOD, No. 3.

Subsequent Evidence in the Old Testament, (Continued).

Shortly after the accession of Rehoboam the son of Solomon as king, the kingdom was divided by rebellion. A little later Shishak, king of Egypt, robbed the Temple of many of its choice golden treasures, so that the Temple only lasted about 30 years in its pristine grandeur. Under later wicked kings the Temple fell into decay, although repaired by Joash, Hezekiah and Josiah successively. The kings in general used the treasures for mercenary purposes. Indeed Manasseh raised altars to the heathen gods in the sacred courts of the Temple. Uzziah usurped the place of a priest and was smitten with leprosy and cut off from the House of the Lord. On that occasion Isaiah was witness of the majesty and holiness of the Lord in the Temple. The features of recovery in Hezekiah's day are instructive: (1) the altar and table with their vessels were cleansed, prepared and sanctified (2 Chr. xxix., 18-19); offerings were made for *all Israel* (although ten-twelfths had disappeared); the Levites and their instruments were set in the house of the Lord according to the command of David, God and Nathan (although these worthies had been dead for 250 years). Nothing new was introduced; all details in worship and praise were arranged according to the word of God. The feast of unleavened bread was revived in the pristine purity of its institution and that became a logical antecedent to the revival of the passover feast a century later. At the later date, Hilkiyah found the book of the law in the House of the Lord and the reading of it to King Josiah affected the king so greatly that it led to a revival

such as had not been seen since the days of Samuel. In the closing years of the kingdom in the brief reigns of the sons of godly Josiah, the chief priests polluted the House of the Lord. The Lord sent His prophets with messages having compassion on the people and His dwelling place, but they mocked and misused them, despised His word until there was no remedy and the wrath of the Lord arose against them. Nebuchadnezzar attacked Jerusalem, took away the treasures and demolished the temple and city.

Ezekiel had a vision of the glory of the Lord (1) going up from the cherub, (2) departing off the threshold of the House, (3) going up from the midst of the city, (4) standing over the mountain on the east of the city, successively as if reluctant to leave (evidence of God's long-suffering).

Yet Ezekiel did not close his prophecy until he saw the glory of the Lord coming back to the House by the east gate and then filling the House (Ezek. ch. x., xi. and xliii). In Ezekiel xl.-xlvii. we get remarkable details of the house in its latter glory. Everything is divinely measured, from the details of the wall and the gates to the inheritance of each tribe. The wall sets forth that all evil will be excluded; the gates that there is access for God's people. From the house there issue the living waters for the blessing of the land; and the trees of the river shall be for food and the leaves for medicine. In Ezekiel xliii., 10-12 the pattern and law (or principle) of administration of the house are referred to tersely "most holy"! The last verse of Ezekiel states the privilege of the house, *viz.*, "the Lord is there."

After 70 years of the captivity, the Lord stirred the spirit of Cyrus, the king of Persia, to invite volunteers in exile to return to Jerusalem and erect a house to the Lord God of heaven. So a remnant under Zerubbabel returned to Jerusalem. Their first act was to erect an altar on which they offered burnt offerings to the Lord. Although the city was in ruins and the wall not rebuilt, enemies around and the bulk of the people still in exile, they clave to the word of God and offered for all Israel. The adversaries in the land sought to help in the building of the house but on their offer being emphatically declined they sought the aid of friends at the Persian court to hinder the building and they succeeded in getting an interdict which lasted a few years until another king arose who was favourably disposed to the building of the house. The prophets Haggai and

Zechariah stirred up the people in Jerusalem to renew building. In spite of many hindrances, the work was finished in about 20 years from the start and dedicated to the service of the Lord. The rebuilt temple lacked the Ark and associated furniture, the Shekinah glory of the Lord, the holy fire and the Urim and Thummim (oracle). The old men who had seen the grandeur of the former house wept, but the young men who had not seen anything better shouted for joy, nevertheless all praised the Lord. Haggai in the word of the Lord of Hosts encouraged them by saying that the latter glory of this House shall be greater than the former (Haggai ii., 9). About 80 years after the first return of the exiles, Ezra of Aaron's priestly family requested the king to be allowed to go to Jerusalem with a band of volunteers. At Jerusalem they found that separation had become largely a lapsed principle! Ezra proclaimed a fast, assembled the people, prayed and confessed the general sin before the House of God. The people wept, repented and decided to cut their wrong associations. The recovery of Ezra's remnant has marks similar to that of Hezekiah's. Their worship, as presented in the altar was "as written in the law of Moses the man of God" (iii., 2). Their praises were "after the ordinance of David, King of Israel" (ii., 10). Every activity in God's house must have the sanction of His word.

About ten years later Nehemiah, who had attained to high position in the Persian court, heard of the sad plight of the remnant in Jerusalem. He wept, fasted and prayed before God. His sorrowful countenance led the king to enquire the reason, with a result that Nehemiah got leave of absence and in due course arrived in Jerusalem. He successfully exhorted the priests to rebuild the walls and gates which had been destroyed. The stubborn proud nobles shrank from the humiliation of manual labour! The powerful enemies were angry, ridiculing the work and even threatening to use force in restraining the builders. When they saw that these tactics were unsuccessful, they tried to entice Nehemiah to leave the work and meet them in an outside village. But Nehemiah was a man of unswerving purpose. Then a false friend suggested that Nehemiah should seek seclusion in the temple in case he should be assassinated. The suggestion was met beautifully in the words "should such a man as I flee to the temple to save his life? I will not go in." Immediately he perceived that the suggestion was not

of God and that the enemies had hired the counsellor. In 52 days the wall was rebuilt which is one of the greatest feats in history. Nehemiah committed the charge of the gates to faithful men. The people were gathered together and heard Ezra read the Law and the people bowed their heads and worshipped the Lord. They kept the feast of tabernacles, dwelling in booths, in a way they had not done since the days of Joshua. They kept the feast for seven days and on the eighth was a solemn assembly with fasting and repentance, the Levites confessing the goodness of God and their own sins. Throughout the proceedings the attention paid to the word of God was an important feature. The result was separation from what was inconsistent with the principles of the House of God. A grandson of the High Priest had married a daughter of the chief opponent of the work. Nehemiah chased him away. It has been said that the youth ultimately became High Priest in Samaria where a spurious imitation of the ritual at Jerusalem was instituted!

Four centuries later, Herod, to win the support of the Jews and foster his own vanity, built a new temple which took 46 years to erect. The building did not follow the pattern of the original. It was sought to eclipse its grandeur and magnitude. The front, composed of white polished marble, was specially beautiful. The enclosure, over 200 yards square, was surrounded by a wall of huge stones on the verge of a precipice over the valley 600 ft. deep. At the top of the precipice were wonderful galleries supported by marble pillars. Solomon's porch, called "Beautiful," was at the East Gate. The gates were 50 ft. by 25 ft. The roof, covered with gold, had a glorious appearance in the sunshine. That was the temple when the Lord came in lowly grace. It existed less than 70 years, serving as a fort in the famous siege by the Romans, when to the great sorrow of Titus, the Roman General and contrary to his command, it was accidentally burned by one of his own soldiers. Two subsequent attempts to rebuild the temple ended disastrously. These were in defiance of the words of the One greater than the Temple Who said, "there shall not be left here one stone upon another." Could anyone gainsay that dictum? A Moslem mosque now occupies the position of the former Holy Place!

T. OLIVER.

THE LANGUAGE OF THE GOSPEL.

The reader has probably often asked himself, "What language did the Lord and the Apostles use?" That is not easily answered. Scholars have mostly assumed that Aramaic was the language that underlies the discourses of the Lord in the Gospels and of the Apostles in the Book of the Acts, but some have held that Greek was the usual language they employed. The only solution of the difficulty is to suppose the Lord and His immediate followers were bilingual, speaking both Aramaic and Greek; employing the one language in the midst of the less cultured portion of the community, the other oftentimes in parts of the country such as Galilee, or in intercourse with Hellenist Jews. There is a modern analogy familiar to people acquainted with Wales or the Channel Islands where the upper grade will address his guest in the English tongue and afterwards turn to address his servant in the vernacular. Who could suppose that in Luke ii. the angels addressed the shepherds in any language but Aramaic? It is as little likely such could speak Greek, as English peasants in olden times could speak Norman-French. That Greek was not in the time of our Lord the usual language of the common people in Syria (at least) would lie in the fact of the need being early felt amongst the Christians of an Aramaic translation of the New Testament as much as the Old. It is a fact that the Lord spoke from heaven to Saul of Tarsus in "the Hebrew dialect" (Acts xxvi., 14) which Paul himself used as well as Greek according to the circumstances in which he was placed or his object (Acts xxi., 37, 40). Greek (like modern French in diplomacy) was the medium of communication between the upper classes of the Jews and their rulers. On the other hand when Peter conversed in the hall of judgment, he must have used Aramaic, because of the reference to his provincial accent!

E. E. WHITFIELD (1883).

Let them ever shout for joy because Thou defendest them (*i.e.*, covers or protects them), (Ps. v., 11). It is very encouraging to hear of obscure people here and there who practise what we preach, just as recorded in Malachi iii., and they will receive the same recognition: an unfading order of merit.

T. O.

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A. WALKER & SON, LTD., Printers, Galashiels, Scotland.

A Scripture Quarterly

EDITOR - - DR T. OLIVER

*This Magazine is Devoted mainly to the Exposition
of Scripture.*

*“Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation
(encouragement), to doctrine.” (I. Tim. 4, 13).*

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Vol. I.

OCTOBER, 1941.

No. 4

GALASHIELS	.	.	.	T. Oliver, 90 Channel Street.
LONDON	.	.	.	Bible Truth Depot, 11 Little Britain, E.C.
TORONTO	.	.	.	Evangel Bookshop, 418 Church Street.
SYDNEY	.	.	.	Tract Depot, 302 Pitt Street.
NEW YORK	.	.	.	Bible Truth Depot, 19 West 21st Street.

Published Quarterly by T. OLIVER, 1s. 6d. per annum.

NOTES ON THE FIRST DIVISION OF BRETHREN.

“ There was strife between the herdmen of Abram and of Lot.” (Gen. xiii., 7).

Lot's story (one of the saddest in Genesis) is important to be noticed in a day when God having revealed to us the truth of our heavenly calling, it is plain that there are many Lots. With Abraham outwardly, he was not at heart what Abraham was; later with the men of Sodom outwardly, yet not a Sodomite either. He corresponds to a saint untrue to his saintship! His was a downward course. Lot merely followed Abram. Abram walked with God; Lot only with Abram. How easy it is to walk where another's faith leads without exercise of conscience! How many such there are, practically but camp followers, adherents of a cause for which they have no thought of being martyrs, balanced between what they know as truth and a world which has never been seen by them in the light of truth. Egypt had acted thus for Lot. The attraction it had for him came out plainly where the coveted plain of Jordan seemed in his eyes “like the land of Egypt.” Abram's failure in going there had loosened the moral hold he had hitherto retained on his nephew. Still true to the weakness of his character, Lot did not propose separation; but Abram did, after it was plain they could no longer happily walk together. Their possessions, increased largely in Egypt, separated them; but Abram manifested his own restoration by the magnanimity of his offer. Lot beheld the fertility of the plain of Jordan and he chose to be there. He covered the choice with a veil of piety! The plain of Jordan was “like the garden of the Lord,” like paradise: Why should he not enjoy God's gifts in it? He forgot the fall and that paradise was barred from man, argued religiously while under all the real secret was found in this:—
“ it is like the land of Egypt.”

Subsequently Abram dwelt in the land of Canaan, God bade him walk through it as his own. He moved and dwelt in Mamre (fatness) which is in Hebron (communion). May we only know and live in the portion of Abram here!
(*Extracts from F. W. Grant's “ Genesis in Light of N.T ”*
1870 or so.)

CHOSEN IN CHRIST.

(Notes of an address by J. A. Trench, 1890).

It is a wonderful thing for our souls to be carried back, as we are in Ephesians, to God's counsels for us from all eternity, in contrast with His ways with man on earth. There are these two distinct lines in Scripture—the history of the first man, and God's counsels in the second. How blessed to have all that belongs to the first man blotted out, so that nothing remains before our eyes but the perfection of the second. Have we been able so to learn the history of the old man, as to have done with it, so that we may be free to bask in the wondrous truth of Ephesians i. We cannot begin there. The first thing is that God has to deal with us about our sins, that our links may be broken with the first man. All through the Old Testament we have the history of the failure of the first man when tried in every way. Placed in innocence in Eden man is given one command, and he breaks it: Noah, set over all the world after the flood, fails to govern himself: God chooses one nation and commits to them His testimony, and the first and cardinal commandment is broken before it reaches the camp: He sets up priesthood, strange fire is offered before Him, and the priesthood breaks down: He gives them a king, and how soon the kingdom fails. Turn where we will, we find the same thing. The last test was applied to man when God said, I have yet one son it may be they will reverence my son. The only answer to this was, "This is the heir, come let us kill him." Stephen sums up that history in Acts vii.—the promises despised, the law transgressed, the prophets slain. What a history! From the first act to the culmination, nothing but sin, and all this is ended in the cross of Christ. It is a blessed thing when the trial of the ages, carried into the conscience, discovers me to myself as belonging to a lost race before God.

There is, however, another side to the presence of the Lord Jesus here on earth; it was the dawn of the accomplishment of God's eternal counsels. How sweet to trace Him in that lowly path, as we find Him in the Gospels fulfilling God's pleasure. We see the heavens opened over Him, and hear the Father's voice saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." But God's glory had to be made good. We follow Him to the cross, there we see Him Who knew no sin, made sin for us—

identified with all that we had been found to be; the infinite One infinitely enduring God's judgment of sin, and sin turned into the occasion of infinitely glorifying God. All that I am, there judged, condemned, and crucified with Him; the history of the first man ended, so that now God can reveal His own eternal counsels for us. Up to the cross man was dealt with as alive in the flesh, now as dead in trespasses and sins. Into that scene of death God comes to raise up one Man from the dead. Before the dear women could be at the grave, He had been raised by the glory of the Father.

In this epistle the Spirit of God fixes our eyes on the risen Christ in the glory of God. Carried back into God's eternal thoughts and counsels, the apostle's heart can only find relief in worship. Then the Spirit of God leads him on and back. Having chosen us before the foundation of the world, Christ was there before Him, and we chosen in Him, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love. He was alone in that perfection when here. "Except a corn of wheat die it abideth alone." Now we see in Him the full fruit of His death, in that He has united us to Himself where He is, and we stand before God in all His perfection. How sweet to be able to drop everything connected with ourselves, and to enjoy His eternal thoughts and counsels for us. He has "predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself." This is not something for you and me merely, to satisfy us; but to satisfy His own heart. He could have made us angels, but that was not what was in His heart for us; He has made us sons. Christ's place before God, is the only measure of the place which He has had for us before Him in His eternal counsels. Redemption is but the threshold of all the fulness of the blessing into which we are now brought, and now revealed that faith may know it. By redemption, God the Holy Ghost is given to us, as surely as we have received salvation. He is the earnest for us, of all that lies before us in the glory. What rest, to be set up in all the perfection of Christ! If responsibility entered into that glorious position, how soon would it break down. Blessed be God, there is no question of responsibility there. Have we entered into the truth that we are in the perfection of the second man?

Now we come to the responsibility that flows from this position. With the first man, his position depended on how he walked, therefore he had no standing before God:

now our responsibility flows from the place in which we are set. We come, out of heaven, to walk here on earth as sons before the Father. God, the Holy Ghost, given to us, as that mighty power working in us: He must not be grieved! Oh! that we might have a deeper sense of it, that there may be nothing of the old man in us to grieve the blessed Spirit of God. As children beloved we are before God the Father, sent out to shine before men. If God has shined into our hearts in all the perfection of the revelation of Himself, so He is to shine in the two characteristics of His life,—love and light. What a confirmation of the place that the responsibility which flows from it, should be that we come from heaven, and manifest nothing but what God is. (Eph. iv., 17, 30: v. 1, 2, 8).

We may say who is sufficient for these things? We have the power working in us to walk according to it. Turn to the service of the Lord Jesus for us, as set before us in ch. v., 25-27. He “loved the church and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.” This is not only a love of the past; He is *now* sanctifying and cleansing it, presenting Himself to our hearts, so that we may be more and more answering to Him, that He may at last present us to Himself “a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.” The distinct object before His heart is, that we should answer perfectly to what we are in Him as we find it revealed in Ch. i. How blessed, when humbled at the thought of all the failure to be able to turn to Him. He did not cleanse that He might love the church, but because He loves it. Oh that we may yield ourselves to the power of the truth, so that we may be formed more like Him, until He will be satisfied, when He has us before Himself! What rest to know that not one will be missing there!

THE SILVER LINING.

In Romans xv., 4, we read that through the comfort of the scriptures we might have hope, that is why at such a juncture we turn to the scriptures without any formal recitation or performance of ritual. In the face of death, the greatest enemy of mankind, human philosophy has been and is shrouded in hopeless gloom. There is probably no greater cloud in human affairs than the cloud of bereavement, yet the scriptures invest that cloud with a silver lining, and there is no other agent which can affect that end!

T. OLIVER,

SUFFERING AND GLORY.

Luke ix., 22-36 very touchingly presents the sufferings of the Son of Man and the glory that shall follow. At the hands of men He was to "suffer many things," to be "rejected" and "slain." Then, on the Mount of Transfiguration we have a passing vision of the glory and honour with which it is the purpose of God to crown the Son of Man. (Ps. viii.). Moreover the passage challenges our hearts, for it clearly shows that if His disciples have the privilege to share in His glory, they are also first called to partake of His sufferings. Thus there passes before us the path and portion of those who follow a rejected Christ in this present evil world; and the glory to which the path leads in the world to come.

The Path of Suffering (v. 23-27). The Lord opens His instruction with the words, "If any man will come after Me." Touching words that presume He has gone before and marked out a path for His own, and, drawn by love, that they would seek to tread where He has trod. At the entrance of this path we find these searching words, "Let him deny himself." Men speak of self-denial, and have self-denial weeks, by which they mean denying themselves certain things for a limited period of time to help some benevolent cause. This, however, is the very opposite of denying self, for it rather adds to self-complacency and the exaltation of self. The denial of self is not simply denying ourselves certain things, but the denial of the man that lusts after these. The denial of self is the ignoring of self altogether in order to serve others in love. Such was the path that the Lord ever trod while passing through this world of need. Moreover, as rejected by this world, Christ is in the outside place of reproach, and those who follow Him will find that they too will have to face reproach. Thus the Lord exhorts the one that comes after Him to "take up his cross daily." For the Lord the cross meant not only suffering and shame from the hands of men, but also the far deeper sufferings from the hand of God. He was alone in His sufferings at the hand of a holy God, when made sin; but in His sufferings from men we can in our little measure share, and He has left us the perfect example of such sufferings for we are told to consider Him that "endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of God" (Heb. xii., 2). We are exhorted "To go forth . . . unto Him without the camp, bearing

His reproach.” Moreover, this reproach is to be taken up “daily.” This is a searching word, for it is comparatively easy to make some great sacrifice on some special occasion, but the “daily” acceptance of the path of reproach and suffering for Christ’s sake in everyday life calls for great grace. But how is it possible to deny self and accept reproach? Only as we have an object that is greater than self before us. Thus the Lord adds the words, “Follow Me.” Futhermore, to follow after Christ must mean the letting go of the present life. Whoever, believer or unbeliever, lives only for the present life, is living a life that he must inevitably lose, for at best it is but a passing life. To have Christ before us, is to live a life that will never pass away:—a life that can be enjoyed now, but will only be known in all its fulness in life’s eternal home. Lastly, it is impossible to follow Christ and at the same time walk with the world and seek its advantages. Paul, with Christ as his life, could say, “What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.” Even for the unbeliever what advantage is there in gaining the whole world for a few fleeting years and then to be lost for eternity? For the believer to associate with the world and seek its advantages and honours must mean the loss of all present joy in the Lord, the end of all testimony for the Lord, and the forfeiture of His approval in the day “When He shall come in His own glory, and in His Father’s, and of the holy angels.” Thus to follow truly a rejected Christ will mean, as to this present world, the refusal of self, the reproach of men, the loss of the present life with the world and its advantages.

The Coming Glory (v. 28-36). The path of reproach and loss of present things involves suffering for the flesh. But the suffering is only for a season, the eternal weight of glory is on before. The Lord would impress our souls with a sense of this glory by unfolding before us the blessedness, as well as the moral traits of the home of glory that lies at the end of the path of suffering. To enter into these heavenly things we must have our spirits lifted above this present world; therefore we read, “He went up into a *mountain*.” Amidst all the sorrows of this world, and the heart-breaking trials amongst the people of God, is it not a joy to be lifted above things seen and heard, and, in spirit on the mountain top, catch a glimpse by faith of the coming glory? It cheers and calms the spirit as we pass through this dark valley to see the sunlight on the hills beyond.

Having ascended the mountain the first great sight that passes before the disciples is a praying Man, for we read, "*He prayed.*" Prayer is the expression of dependence upon God, and communion with God. The sorrows of earth can be traced back to the disobedience and independence of one man—Adam. The glories of the world to come are introduced by the perfect obedience and dependence of one Man—Christ. The world to come will be a world of bliss, for there everyone will be dependent upon God. Good for us to go up "into the mountain" to spread everything before God, so that we may come down "into the plain" to do everything for God, while we wait for the coming of Christ. Thus Jude, in his Epistle, links prayer with the coming of Christ, when he exhorts us to be found "praying in the Holy Spirit" while "looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."

(1) In this great scene we learn the change that will pass upon the saints when Jesus comes. We see set forth in Christ the image of the heavenly that we shall wear in the coming glory; "As we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly" (1 Cor. xv., 49). Thus, as He prayed, the disciples saw in the Person of Christ the earthly changed into the heavenly. Peter, writing of this great scene, can say, "We made known unto you the *power* and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Mark the word "power." Peter, says as it were, "We not only foretold but we have *seen* what would happen when He comes. We saw Him as a lowly Man, and behold, in an instant, the garments of humiliation were exchanged for garments of glory; and His face that was more marred than any man's became shining as the sun. We saw in Him the mighty power, that in 'the twinkling of an eye' will change these bodies of humiliation into bodies of glory like His own." (2) It is brought home to us in the mount that, in the coming glory, we shall not only be like Him, but we shall be with Him, for, we read, "Behold, there talked *with Him* two men." He will not be alone in the glory. He will have companions; though truly He will be anointed with the oil of gladness above His companions. In such a scene of glory we might have expected to see Him surrounded by a host of angels, but His companions will be men. They are men for whom He died; whom He is bringing home to glory; and men that will share with Him in His glory as the Son of Man. In heaven there will be "No

more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain"; but the greatest joy of all will be that we shall be "with Him"—we shall be with JESUS. Thus, the great passage in which the Apostle Paul tells us that we shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, concludes with the words, "So shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. iv., 17). (3) We learn that, not only shall we be with Him in the glory, but we shall be at home in the glory, for we read of these two men that they "*talked with Him.*" Had it been written merely that He talked with them, we might judge that in the glory we shall be delighted but silent listeners. If, however, they can talk with Him, all distance and reserve will be gone. The disciples had indeed held sweet intercourse with Christ on earth, howbeit, at times, with a measure of restraint. In the glory there will be holy happy intercourse without a trace of reserve. Blessed, indeed, that He can come to two disciples on the resurrection day and, in their sorrowful wilderness circumstances they can say He made "our hearts burn within us, while *He talked with us by the way.*" But how far more wonderful is this scene in which He brings two saints to talk with Him in glory. (4) Not only shall we be like Him, and with Him, but we shall share His glory, for we read of these two men, they "*appeared in glory.*" They share in the glory of Christ as the glorified Man. So we read of believers, "When Christ who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory" (Col. iii., 4). It is no great hardship to let go the passing glories of this world, and accept the path of suffering, when we know that we are going to share in the glories of Christ in the world to come. (5) They "spake of His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem." A little later two other disciples, treading a dreary road to Emmaus, speak of His decease as accomplished by men, for they say, "The chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to death, and have crucified Him." No wonder they were sad, for all they could see in the death of Christ was that which brings judgment upon man. But here, on the Mount, two men lose sight of man and his wickedness, and they see only Jesus and the death "which He should accomplish." They see in His death the perfect setting forth of His obedience to the Father in carrying out the Father's will by offering Himself without spot to God. Thus they see in His death what brings glory to God and opens the way of

blessing for men. How good to ascend the Mount, and rising above all the wickedness of men, and the failure of the saints, to see that transcendent love that led the Lord to give Himself, and find rest in that death which He accomplished. Even so in the day of the coming glory the assembled host of the redeemed will still speak of the death which He has accomplished, for the language of the new song will be, "Thou hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood." (6) In this great scene we are carried in spirit beyond the Kingdom glory into what speaks of the Father's house. We read, there "came a cloud and overshadowed them." The death which Christ accomplished not only opens the way for believers to share the Kingdom glories of Christ, but enables them to enter in company with Christ into the immediate presence of God the Father, of which the cloud speaks. Peter, in his Epistle, speaks of the glory that excels, for he says, "there came such a voice to Him from *the excellent glory*." There is the glory of the earthly kingdom, but there is the more excellent glory—the glory of the Father's presence in the Father's house. The disciples had seen the glory of the Son of Man. But there is another glory—a greater glory—a glory of which the Lord speaks in His prayer when He asks, "That they may behold *my glory*." We share in His glory as the Son of Man; we shall behold His glory as the Son of God. (7) In this more excellent glory we are permitted to hear the Father express His delight in the Son, for we hear the voice from the excellent glory, saying, "This is my beloved Son: hear Him." The voice does not say, This is my Son that you ought to love, but, This is my Son that I love. We are taken into the Father's house, there to have fellowship with the Father in His delight in the Son.

Thus there passes before us the blessed portion that will be ours when Jesus comes. We shall be like Him; we shall be with Him; we shall be at home with Him; we shall share His kingdom glory; we shall delight not only to share it all, but owe it all to Him, for we shall speak of His decease; we shall be taken beyond the Kingdom glories, to enter the more excellent glory of the Father's house, there to know and enjoy the Father's delight in the Son. Moreover, as we journey on to be with Christ in glory, let us ever remember that we have the Lord with us in our wilderness path. Thus we read, "When the voice was past, *Jesus was found alone*." The vision passes, Moses and Elias depart,

the cloud fades, the voice is silent, but JESUS remains. As we take our journey through this world with all its trials and sorrows, He is with us according to His own promise, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Loving us unto the end, He will be with us until the end when we are with Him to go no more out and the blessings of the Mount will be our eternal portion.

HAMILTON SMITH.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE HEAD (Eph. iv.)

(Notes of address No. 3 by W. H. Westcott, 1929).

In our previous addresses we considered the Headship of Christ; in the first we noticed that every person who believes the gospel, has, in receiving the facts of the gospel, received also what prepares him for the understanding of every other truth. As you advance in divine things you will never be able to leave out, or to leave behind, the basic facts of the gospel. In trusting yourself to Christ in the simplest way as Saviour, there is the gift of God, the grace of God bestowed upon you, the pardon of your sins, the gift of the Spirit, and eternal life: thus the simplest believer has in his soul the germ of all that God has to say to him. In our second address, looking at the same subject, we noticed the purpose of God in the 10th verse of Ephesians i.:—that He is going to head up all things in Christ, which are in heaven and in earth. Everything is to be redeemed, everything to be brought into the good of the gospel. We are told first that God has made known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, that in the dispensation of the fulness of the times, Christ is to be the Head, Centre, and Administrator of all the will of God in heaven and in earth. It is mightily comprehensive: and as our hearts take in God's plan, we find that we have a peculiar and unique place in connection with that plan.

Secondly, we looked at the Person of Whom we read in the end of the chapter. God raised Him from the dead, leaving behind all that belongs to sinful man and the first man's sinful history, all of Satan's power, and the world. He is beyond everything. Not only has God raised Him from the dead, but He has set Him at His own right hand in heavenly places. He is not on the earth, but He is exalted as the risen Man far above all principality and power.

Whatever we may know of these mighty beings, mightier than ourselves—far above them all is Jesus at God's right hand in the heavenly places. He has put all things under His feet and gave Him to be head over all things to the church. Every believing heart, every young Christian as well as every mature Christian, can look up and say, "I see that this worthy Saviour whom I have confessed as my Lord, is the One whom God entrusts to carry out this stupendous plan, He is 'Head over all things.'" And when it says, "Head over all things to the Church," it is not the same as Head of the Church. The church down here on earth, composed of every Christian, is connected with a Person whom God has set as Head over the creation, Head over men, Head over kingdoms, Head over everything. The church *recognises* that Christ is Head over all things; it is a sweeping inclusion of everything in heaven, and in earth. We know the One Who is the divinely designated Head. The church in the meantime is His body, as it states at the end of the first chapter.

Thirdly, we saw in the 5th chapter the Partner that is given to Christ in connection with that wonderful place. The Church of God called out at the present time, is quite different from the saints of the Old Testament and from those of the world to come. We live in a parenthesis in the ways of God. While Christ is set there, hidden from the world at the right hand of God, God is gathering out for Him a living, heavenly, company. Their calling is not the same thing as the calling of Old Testament believers, it is quite distinct. They are a company spoken of as His body, or the assembly, the church which is to be given to Him. But more than that, it is a company so united to Christ, so equipped, so indwelt by the Holy Ghost that as a whole it will be an adequate object for the love of Christ, to be the real sharer of His throne. *His* throne; I do not say the Father's throne. It is ours to be the companion of Christ through unending years, a unique place. You get illustrations in the Old Testament. You find, for instance, after Joseph's refusal by his brethren when he was carried down into Egypt, he obtained an Egyptian bride to share his honours. But let us understand that at the present time God is gathering out a heavenly company and to that company every saved soul, every Christian, belongs in this present dispensation.

(To be continued).

THE RAPTURE AND ITS SEQUEL—III.

“ *Then cometh the end* ”—and what an end! What we outlined in our last paper is tersely summed up in the triumphant resurrection chapter:—I Corinthians xv., 24-28. Religionists, politicians, social reformers and others may have their own ideas as to when the end will be and what it will be like, and these may be coloured by their particular obsessions. We turn, however, to the infallible Word, and there we find in a few sentences just what will happen. As we have already indicated, and as this chapter shows so plainly, the Lord Jesus Christ will take the reins of government. He will put down all that is contrary to God. “ He *must* reign ” and “ He *will* reign.” The last enemy with which He will deal, will be what was the first enemy, and which for well nigh six thousand years has decimated homes, has broken hearts, and has wrought havoc irrespective of position, nationality, age, or anything else. Death will be annulled, everything in the Universe will be brought into subjection to Him, and “ *then cometh the end.* ” There will immediately follow “ A new Heaven and a New Earth ” (see Revelation xxi., 1-7), no more sea, which certainly means no more separation, but also no more commotion, no more war, no more evidence of the work of Satan. There the Assembly will have her own peculiar place as the bride of Christ, and, a thousand years after the marriage, she comes forth “ prepared as a bride adorned for her husband,” in other words, in all the loveliness and beauty of Christ Himself. God’s original purpose to dwell with men will be realised, and He *will* dwell with them. All that marks and mars this world now, and with which we are so sadly familiar, will then be done away; no more tears, nor death, nor sorrow, nor crying, nor pain, but all things new! Then will sound forth the note of complete and final victory:—“ IT IS DONE.” He who on the Cross, with His dying breath, said, “ It is finished,” will, from the throne, exclaim, “ It is done.” The great, mighty, marvellous work accomplished. He will deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father, that God—the triune God, God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit—“ that God may be all in all.” In the Council chamber of Eternity the plan was formed; in the region of time, for some four thousand years, man took his own way, sinned with a high hand, disgraced himself and dishonoured God. His crowning act was when he “ crucified the Lord of Glory.”

God made man's great sin the occasion for displaying His great love.

“ Where sin o'er all seemed to prevail,
Redemption's glory shed.”

At the Cross the foundation was laid in the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, on the ground of which every sinner can be saved who believes in His Name; for clearing the world of every trace of sin, and of meanwhile forming the Assembly to be the vessel for the display of God's purpose centred in the risen and glorified Man at His right hand. That accomplished, all creation will, we suggest, re-echo the cry, “ IT IS DONE!” and will be vocal with the praise of Him Who has done it!

“ To Him that is able to do far exceedingly above all which we ask or think, according to the power which works in us, to Him be glory in the Assembly in Christ Jesus unto all generations of the age of ages. Amen.”
(Ephesians iii., 20, 21, New Trans.).

W. BRAMWELL DICK.

SALIENT FEATURES OF JOHN'S GOSPEL—III.

(Notes of an address by R. Duncanson, No. 3).

In John xii. we have the hour of the Lord's death and resurrection, in chapter xiii. the hour of His ascension noticed, while in chapter xvii. it is the hour of His glory. Turning His eyes to the Father He says, “ Glorify Thy Son that Thy Son may glorify Thee.” Having glorified the Father upon the earth by the maintenance of all that was due to His holy Name, and having finished the work which the Father had given Him to do that a basis might be laid to give effect to the Father's eternal counsels, He takes His new position as Man in the glory that from thence He might glorify the Father. As receiving authority over all flesh, He communicates the blessing of eternal life to those given to Him by the Father: a life consisting of the knowledge of the only true God the Father, and Jesus Christ the Sent One. Verse 5 presents the essential Godhead glory of the Son; what He had with the Father before the foundation of the world. Here we have the privilege to listen to the voice of the Son speaking to the Father of the place of relationship and equality that were His with the Father before the world was. In these sweet and blessed communications there are depths beyond our feeble apprehension, but with

adoring hearts, as we listen to the words of the Eternal Son, we wonder and we worship.

In v. 21-24 we have the prayer of the Son for those who should be brought into the Christian circle by the preached word: and this brings us, the saints of the present moment, into living touch with the very source of the affections that move our hearts. "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also that 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." As brought into communion with the Father and the Son we have the privilege to come out in this world in divine testimony, expressing the moral features of the Man who is in heaven. Who can tell the blessedness of the communion in divine affection subsisting between the Father and the Son? Nothing can mar or hinder the sweetness of the eternal communion belonging to that circle. In the same way we are brought into a circle where divine communion and affection subsist, and as we enjoy what is there we come out in the features of the Son to represent Him in this world.

At verse 22 we are introduced to the scene where in Christ's own company we shall share His glory which displays the moral beauties of the Son. The world will then know that the Father loved the Son and that He was the Sent One of the Father, when they see the features of the Son manifest in His own. Their being there is the fruit of His work: the result of His coming into the world; so that the presence of the saints in His company is the testimony to His being here as the Sent One. But the saints having the glory of the Son are sharing His place, and this is the public manifestation that they are loved by the Father with the same love as rests upon the Son. Then in verse 24 we have the Son's expressed desire to the Father that His own should be with Him in the Father's House. After the display of the world to come has served God's purpose, and we are with the Son for ever in that unchanging scene, we shall gaze upon the Son in that peculiar glory that is His and in which none can share. This glory is the eternal answer to all His toil and suffering here; but in that glory we shall read and learn that the Son was constantly the object of the Father's love before the world's foundation. What an object is this for our contemplation and heart's affection for the ages of ages!

THE TWO WORD ASPECTS OF "NEW."

There are two Greek words *kainos* and *neos* translated in our New Testament by the word "new." *Kainos* is new in kind and in contrast to what previously existed, so taking the place thereof. In that sense *kainos* looks backward, while its synonym *neos* looks forward. *Kainos* is equivalent to "not yet having been": *neos* is "not having long been." The conjunction of the two words occurs in Matt. ix., 17. Luke v. 38, where new (*neos*) wine is put into new (*kainos*) skins and both are preserved. *Kainos* looks backward (retrospective) in that the skins had never been used before, opposed to those which had lost their strength and elasticity through age: the new (*neos*) wine was of that vintage or harvest looking forward (prospective) for future use. In Luke v. 36 a new piece of cloth (*kainos*) is opposite to old garment. This receives emphasis in Mark ii. 21 where the new unmilled piece of cloth was unsuited to patch the old, for even then the new by the grace of God was being wrought out; not for the old garment of a legal system or for the first man, but for those who by virtue of divine power were fitted to receive the blessing. In Matt. xxvii., 60, the new (*kainos*) tomb had never been made ceremonially unclean by a dead body. It might have been hewn out of the rock years before, therefore it is not called *neos*. In Heb. xii., 24, a new (*neos*) covenant is fresh and perennially new by virtue of the link with its mediator Jesus, looking forward it will retain eternally that youthful character. While *kainos* is the word mostly used for New Covenant, *neos* is the word here, but not in contrast to the old; it is not the old, but what God had recently given.

Kainos is the typical word in the Revelation as in name, song, heaven, Jerusalem, etc., and finally "all things new." The antithesis which *kainos* bears to the past is in evidence in Rev. xxi., 1. The new (*kainos*) heaven and earth supersede the first (*protos*), again Heb. viii., 13, in saying new (*kainos*) covenant, he has made the first old (*protos*). On the other hand, *neos* does not express opposition to what already existed, so in Col. iii., 10, having put on the new (*neos*) man, who is being renewed (*anakainoō*, compound of *kainos*), in the character and spirit of the ideal, *i.e.*, according to the image of Him who created him thus excluding and supplanting the old. The compound *ananeoō* is simply to renew in youth; has nothing to do with

the old (Eph. iv., 23). Hence the same subject may be *kainos* or *neos*: if contemplated under aspects of time as recently given or inaugurated, it is *neos*: if contemplated as a new and specific kind in contrast to the old as outworn and effete and taking its place, it is *kainos*. In their derivatives and compounds as above, the same distinction is clear as in 1 Tim. iv., 12. "Let no man despise thy youth" (*neotees*), but (*kainotees*) newness of life in Rom. vi., 4, is newness as being entirely different according to the resurrection life in Christ thus supplanting the other.

OMICRON.

REDEMPTION, PEACE AND COMMUNION.

"I will pass through the land of Egypt this night and will smite all the firstborn" (Exod. xii., 12). Solemn sentence! God's longsuffering could not continue any longer. But with the message of judgment came the message of redemption. "When I see the blood, I will pass over you." It was a message of hope for the people of Israel. It can therefore be seen with what eagerness they conformed to the conditions set out by God. Dear Christian, can we remember the eagerness with which we conformed to God's conditions when the thought of God's judgment first penetrated our darkened hearts. The Israelites were to take a lamb of the first year, without blemish, which was to be kept from the tenth to the fourteenth day of the month. This calls our minds to the words of John the Baptist. As he beheld Jesus as He walked, he exclaimed, "Behold the Lamb of God." The lamb of our chapter speaks clearly of "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." "The tenth to the fourteenth day" speaks of His pathway here before the eye of God and before the eye of man. There was no blemish to be seen by either in that Blessed One. As we read in 1 Peter i., 18-19, "Ye know ye were not redeemed by corruptible things such as silver and gold . . . but with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." The lamb was to be killed and the blood sprinkled on the two side posts and upper door post of the house. They exalted the blood! It came between them and God. The blood indicated that another had died in the stead of the firstborn and God was satisfied; His righteousness was met. It is thus God

views us to-day. The blood of Another has been shed on our behalf, the blood of the Lamb of God. As the Israelites could dwell safely and peacefully within their houses because God had said "when I see the blood I will pass over you," so we can be here in safety, trusting that same Word of God; "God is satisfied with Jesus, I am satisfied as well!"

The children of Israel were not to be indifferent after they had a sense of safety and peace, but were to be engaged with the lamb under whose blood they were sheltering. "They shall eat the flesh that night roast with fire and unleavened bread and with bitter herbs shall they eat it." So God would have those who have taken refuge under the blood, to be occupied with the "Lamb that was slain." The "lamb roast with fire" speaks of Christ when He was exposed to the unsparing judgment of a Holy God against sin; when He bore "our sins on His own body on the tree." "Unleavened bread" shows there must be purity. "Bitter herbs" suggest self judgment. Only certain parts of the lamb were to be eaten by the Israelites on that memorable night, "his head with his legs and with the purtenance thereof." It is our privilege to have communion with our Lord as to His mind, as no doubt this is what "the head" teaches us. It is only as we partake of "the head" we can be marked by "one mind"; it is also the only way to intelligence in Divine things. The "legs" suggest the walk of Christ. We have to feast on His pathway here; what wonderful lessons there are for us in that beautiful life! As we feast on it so shall we be able to "follow in His steps." The "purtenance" or inward parts; this is the affections of Christ opened up to us. As we are engaged with His love fully displayed at Calvary so shall we respond in praise and adoration. There will also shine forth love one to the other, and in this way men will know we are His disciples. As Israel partook of the lamb roast with fire they were to be ready to leave Egypt, having their loins girded, their shoes on their feet and staff in hand. So we who have been redeemed by blood, have peace through faith and enjoy communion with our Redeemer, are to be freed from all earthly ties ready to enter into our promised rest, there to join the whole redeemed company in singing the "new song" unto the "Lamb that was slain!"

J. R. GORDON.

HEBREWS X.

The late J. N. D. pointed out the three outstanding subjects therein as:—"The Will of God" (vs. 1-10). "The Work of Christ" (vs. 11-14). "The Witness of the Holy Ghost" (vs. 15-18). They all combine to prepare us for approach. There are three words in the first verse of the Ch. that require consideration and will help to shew the great theme of this discourse. They are:—"Shadow," "Image," "Perfection." A shadow can only be caused by a substance. An image is a presentation. The word rendered "perfection" here really means "completion." The whole "law" system was but a shadow, not the substance. Christ and the heavenly system of which He is the centre form the substance. These heavenly spiritual things could not be presented in an earthly material order. Hence, completion could not be attained by an earthly material shadow. The weakness of the whole of the first order is demonstrated in the opening verse. If we keep these three things in mind, we will be prepared to transfer our thoughts from the shadow to the substance as seen in v. 7; from the material to the spiritual as seen in v. 9; and from imperfection to perfection as seen in v. 14.

Mention is made of the institution of animal sacrifice and the shedding of blood to deal with the question of sin. This we are told is a shadow. What then is the substance? It is the perfect work of Christ, counselled in eternity. This is clearly stated in v. 7. "In the volume of the book." We must keep in mind that He did not die merely to fulfil the types. His death had been counselled in eternity, of this the various types were the shadow in time. If we think then that His death, counselled in eternity was primary and as a result, in time, the offerings are brought in secondary, we can clearly understand why the whole law system was but a shadow! Then the imperfection of the first order is witnessed in this fact. Being repeated every year proved that those who approached (N.Tr.) had never by these sacrifices been made perfect. If once they had been perfected, no more need of an offering would have arisen. Hence the shadow carried its own witness of imperfection, in that the offerings were constantly repeated. Yea, instead of witnessing that sins were put away, they repeatedly called to mind that sins were not put away. They constantly called sins to mind as stated in v. 3. The reason for this is clearly stated in v. 4. "For blood of bulls and goats

(is) incapable of taking away sins.” Note the statement:— “take away sins.” This involves the work of Propitiation by Christ Himself! To effect this, it was necessary that the One who was the substance of all the shadows should come into the world in manhood. It appears now that all the offerings under the Law gave no pleasure to God, v. 6. The reason was, they could not fit man to come into the presence of God. But when He comes into the world in the body prepared for Him (Luke 1-35), we read, “Lo I come (in the roll of the book it is written of me) to do O God thy will,” v. 7. His coming into the world was the fruit of Eternal Counsel. Writing in scripture carries the thought of what is unalterable. Cf. Luke iii., 4; Rev. xxi., 27. Nothing in that book can be altered. The word “roll” here too is interesting. It is *kephalis* (N. Tr. footnote) and means “a heading up” or “summing up.” It would suggest that the subject matter of Eternal Counsel is summed up in this, “Lo I come to do thy will O God.” Every detail of the will of God was counselled in eternity and Christ comes into the world to carry it to fruition. “He takes away the first that he may establish the second,” v. 9. The shadow is removed that the substance may abide. In Ch. 9 we had mention made of a first and second place but in this verse it is more the first and second order. No doubt the first order allowed man into the first place but the second order has fitted man for the second place, *i.e.*, inside the veil.

How wonderful to read next, “by which will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.” He took that body to accomplish the will of God, and here we are told God had willed our sanctification. So in coming into the world to do the will of God, we read here that He has done this by sanctifying a priestly company who are thereby fitted to enter the presence of God. So perfect has that one work been, that it has never needed to be repeated. Having done the work He “sat down in perpetuity” and as a result we are “perfected in perpetuity,” vs. 12-14. This perfection was never effected while the shadows were running their course, for sins were not put away. He has by one sacrifice settled the question forever. It has meant the sanctifying of a company, complete or fully furnished with all that they need, to fit them for the presence of God. It is to this perfect work, done once and for all, that the Holy Ghost bears witness. What a contrast in the two systems. The first

brings sins to remembrance but the second says they are remembered no more. Brought to remembrance in the first because they had not been put away. Remembered no more in the second because they have been put away, v. 17. As year succeeded year under the old order, the total of sins would be increasing, for the past year's sins had not been put away. Remembered afresh every year as the total increased, till at last the sum total was remembered for the last time, on the head of Christ at the Cross but this time, they were put away. Now, as a result, they will be remembered *no more*. It is to this fact that the Holy Spirit bears witness, following the perfect work of Christ on the Cross. It was the "will of God" that they should be put away. "The work of Christ" has put them away. "The witness of the Holy Spirit" to us would have in view, our acceptance of it by faith. Faith on our side is the first step to approach into the presence of God, v. 22.

We now come to the exhortation to "draw near," v. 22. Why should we stay away? All that would keep us from God has been removed by the death of Christ, in order that with holy boldness, we can approach the presence of God. On the one hand His blood has fitted us to go in and on the other, it has met the claims of God. We are fit to go there and God in His righteous and holy character can have us there. Christ has dedicated that way for us by going in, having become priest by His own blood. The way is said to be "through the veil, that is, his flesh," referring to His manhood. It is by becoming man He has opened the way for us into the presence of God. Both revelation and approach are complete in Him. God was revealed in Him and as consequence, we go to God in the light of that revelation, in Him. He is the Apostle and High Priest of our confession. God coming out in revelation in Him is seen typically in the rending of the veil of the Temple when He died. Our going in to God is seen more in the veil of the Tabernacle (Ch. xi., 3). That is the building before us in this Epistle, not the Temple. We have no record of the veil of the Tabernacle being rent! It is Christ in Manhood, whether coming *from* God as Apostle or going *to* God as High Priest. We must of course free our minds from the material and get the spiritual import as seen in Christ Himself. Entering the Holiest means that we are consciously in the presence of God in the faith of our souls. In the presence of the God who has been perfectly revealed in His Son.

When we get there we find ourselves in company with the Great Priest over the House of God. In answer to Aaron and his sons on the day of consecration, we have Christ and the Assembly in the blessing of the "Heavenly Calling" and in function as the new spiritual company, inside the veil. High or Chief Priest, would be relative to the company but Great Priest would be absolute, because of Who He is. The first would tell us of His infinite grace in associating us with Himself but the second would preserve His Personal dignity for He is the "Son, perfected for evermore." Here then are the inducements we have to encourage us to draw near to God. The blood of Jesus has met the claims of God and put away our sins. He has opened up as a consequence a new and living way by going in to God. By becoming man, He has perfectly revealed God as the Apostle and still in Manhood, He has gone in to God as High Priest. Through that revelation we can know God and now in Him as the fruit of His work we can go to God. Then when we approach in the faith of our souls, we are conscious of being in His company as the Great Priest over the House of God. We join Him there as the Minister of the Sanctuary and He sustains us and leads in the worship of God. Now we have the exhortation, "let us approach with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, sprinkled as to our hearts from a wicked conscience, and washed as to our body with pure water." In referring once again to Aaron and his sons, we learn that they were washed in water and then sprinkled with blood. Ex. xxix, 4, 29. The water for cleansing and the blood for expiation. The washing with water would give us a "true heart" as dealing with our state. The sprinkling with blood would give us "full assurance of faith" as dealing with our guilt. The word here translated "pure" is *katharos*, and really means *clean*. A concordance will show that the word for purge in Ch. ix., 14; x., 2, is the same as that used here for "pure." In each case it means "clean." The twofold result is that we have a clean heart and a clean conscience. The first would give us a new state as the result of the washing by water, *i.e.*, morally cleansed by the word. The second gives us a clean conscience as believing in the precious blood of Christ. The way has been opened up on the divine side by Christ making God known and going in to God. We are fitted on our side to lay hold of the privilege as having a clean heart and a clean conscience. Everything for God and for us has been done by Christ, who has thus accomplished

the will of God in securing a company to approach the sanctuary to take up His praise and worship. May we know what it is to join Christ as the Great Priest over the House of God and as the Minister of the Sanctuary, that under His direction, as associated with Him in the presence of God, He might lead out our hearts in praise and worship for the pleasure of His God and Father.

G. DAVISON.

VISION AND VITALITY.

The reference to Moses in Deut. xxxiv., 7, has been used to illustrate the inflexible nature of the Law retaining its unimpaired strength to the end. We venture to speak of the verse in another way, as the title suggests. By way of contrast we recall the closing days of Eli. "There was no open vision" and the word from the Proverbs was abundantly proved in the history of Israel! As to Eli himself we read, "his eyes were dim" and the sad end of his life is one of departed glory. Returning to Moses we suggest there is a link between Deut. xxxiv., 7, and Hebrews xi., 27. In both verses we have what is equivalent to vision and vitality! In the pathway of faith these two features are complementary. It was the "seeing him who is invisible" which made Moses endure. He had seen the glory of Egypt, had tasted of its pleasures, but when faith's vision laid hold of Him who is outside all of sight and sense, Moses refused, chose, esteemed and endured! Before applying the lesson to ourselves, we think of the beloved Apostle. Writing to the Corinthians he could say, "Last of all he was seen of me" (1 Cor. xv., 8). How that vision changed everything for him! How telling were his words to King Agrippa, "I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision" (Acts xxvi., 19). As a last reference we turn to Phil. iii., where we learn how the effect of that vision was to relegate all he could boast in as a man to the refuse heap! We turn to ourselves. The lesson may not be easy in execution. It is simple in teaching. The way of strength is found as faith's vision is turned to Christ. Where He has gone is where our souls must and can only find rest. As to things here (ourselves included), all is of a transitory nature. We feel the pressure of change. But we have links with what is eternal:—the scene which He fills, "While we look" on these things, the things here assume their true position and calibre in our minds. It is "while we look." The Lord grant we may be marked by vision and vitality!

G. HARKESS.

MINISTRY TO THE LORD.

There are many valuable lessons to be learned from the life of Abraham, the father of the faithful. We find activities common to saints, not the least of which is the one recorded in Genesis xviii., 1-8, to which we desire to draw attention. It is a detailed example of Luke viii., 2-3, "and certain women . . . which ministered unto Him of their substance." Not often do we find this; numerous occasions there are of the Lord ministering to others, for "I came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." Even the twelve were guilty of selfish desires. How happy to be as the women, so the appreciating recipients of His boundless grace and salvation, that we both follow and minister to Him. From Gen. xviii. we learn the remarkable fact that the Lord seeks the company of those who, appreciating Him, are ready to accept an opportunity to minister to Him. We read "comfort ye your hearts . . . for therefore are ye come to your servant." The moral fitness of Abraham is most important to note. He was called out; obedient; a sojourner; looking for a city (see Heb. xi., 8-10); and circumcised (flesh mortified) Gen. xvii. His competence to meet His Lord's desire is seen also in the way he serves, as also the food he provides. The manner of ministering is delightful. His readiness, also that of his household, is noted. "He ran," v. 2; "hastened," v. 6; "make ready quickly," v. 6; "ran," v. 7; "hasted to dress it," v. 7. Paul urges this spirit in 2 Cor. viii., 11.

Abraham's recognition of his visitor is striking, for despite the disguise, Abraham seems immediately to discern who it was, for he addresses Him by a title which in scripture is given to none but God. The provision for the meal showed his knowledge of the Lord's taste. Water to wash the feet provided, three measures of fine meal were in requisition. This sets forth the Person of the Lord as the One in whom dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. He was God manifest in the flesh. What praise there is as our hearts fill with a sense of the exceeding preciousness of this truth. In contrast, the parable in Matthew xiii. shows the three measures of meal permeated with leaven, foretelling the pollution of this mystery of godliness by the responsible insubject church. Abraham then calls for a calf tender and good. This speaks of the work of the Lord Jesus and His character as a servant. In Luke xv. a calf

fatted is the food of the Father and His now living son. How precious the communion there intimated as they feed upon the accumulated excellencies of the One who so willingly undertook, even to death, the will of God. But if in Luke the thought of "fatted" is presented, in Genesis we have the ideas of tender and good. Isaiah points to this when he writes, "He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant." What tenderness and goodness are seen in our adorable Lord as He walked here as man. Isaiah surely states God's estimate of Christ, and we gather that Abraham too appreciated this in presenting the calf tender and good as fitting food to his heavenly visitor. To arrive at the meaning of the third provision, milk, we are helped by the description of Israel's inheritance, "a land flowing with milk and honey." Our heavenly inheritance is the place where there flows without limit, throughout its vast extent, the "unsearchable riches of Christ." May we possess like spiritual substance, and follow in Abraham's steps, offering to our Lord that which is due. The order taken by Abraham indicates spiritual growth, for firstly we have the Person typified, secondly His work, and thirdly the riches of the inheritance. How proper!

L. B. HOGG.

STEADFAST CONTINUANCE.

(An extract from a letter by the late Dr Wolston at Oslo, Dec., 1914).

I have been struck of late to see how long the Apostle of the Gentiles stayed in many places he visited. At Antioch he remained "a whole year" (Acts xi., 26). At Corinth "he continued a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them" (Acts xviii., 11); and at Ephesus, as his centre, he was certainly two years and three months (Acts xix., 8-10). It is a grave question if servants of the Lord to-day are not too meteoric in their movements; hence the too often evanescent results of labour. We are none of us apostles; but we may well learn from his wise ways how the work of the Lord is best carried on. Such a line of ministry demands faith and patience on the part of the labourers.

THE NEW ORDER AND NEW POWER (Rom. viii.)

How comforting it is to be even in a small measure in the light of the death and resurrection of Christ. Rom. iii., 25 speaks of the propitiation, *i.e.*, mercy seat, the meeting place and what needs blood, so we thank God unfeignedly for the blood of Jesus. The apostle goes on to show that not only do sins need to be dealt with, but the sinful condition from whence they come. God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin condemned sin in the flesh, so that in the death of Christ this matter has been for ever brought to an end, His death signifies this (our baptism commits us unto His death): that involves the closing completely of that order to which sin attached and the impending judgment of God. Here it is not pardon but deliverance from that order which could only be effected by His death, so we thank God for the death of the Lord Jesus. In Christ's death there is the closing of the old sinful order and in Christ risen there is the opening of the new order, while a new principle operates, *viz.*, the principle of the Spirit of life, in contrast to the principle of sin and death manifest in the old order. The name "Christ Jesus" signifies Christ risen, and that means everything for God and for man. Rom. viii., 1 speaks of those who are in Christ Jesus. God has set us there, consequent on our identification with Him in death, but in the light of that He would have us to see that we now belong to an order taking its character from Christ, where life and righteousness are, and where can be no condemnation. Everything meets God's holy eye with perfect delight. We stand in the holy liberty of a new order, and rejoice that there is now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus. The last part of the verse should not be there, it was added probably by an over-zealous scribe who thus sought to make the blessing conditional on conduct instead of an accomplished fact. Verse 2 speaks of being made free from the principle of sin and death by the agency of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. Freedom in this order brings power with it. We are now free to please God and have power so that the righteous requirements of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit. What could not be effected by the law on account of man's condition, is now definitely expressed consequent on the new condition "in Christ Jesus," and the new power "the spirit of God," so

we come to be in the light of the value of the death and resurrection of Christ.

J. S. BERTRAM.

THE GOOD PLEASURE OF GOD.

(Notes of address by Wm. Huggins at Hawick, 1/1/98).

The good pleasure of God's goodness is presented from God's side in 2 Thess. i., 11. It is the privilege of every christian in the world to be for that. The question may well be asked "for what are we here?" We should be able to say that we are here for the good pleasure of God! The Apostle's statements were not legal prescriptions or enactments, but the expression of exercises in the soul of the Lord's servant. The Spirit of God would so minister Christ to our hearts that they would be made good in us in a practical way. We require a deeper apprehension of the One who was here perfectly for God's good pleasure. Luke ii., 14 speaks of God's good pleasure in that One when born in Bethlehem's manger and the heavens burst forth in glad acclamation. Near the close of His pathway in Luke xix., we see a sample of earth joining in that acclamation. Man had been 4,000 years on earth and God had not found his good pleasure in any one. When man was set up at first in innocence in the Garden of Eden God pronounced everything very good, but man's disobedience led to an unhappy sequel of sin and corruption in the human race. It was necessary that a man of a totally different order should be disclosed, *viz.*, the second man, the Lord out of Heaven; in whom God could find His good pleasure. He was the centre of His purpose and His pleasure. The first man was morally set aside when the Lord Jesus was born and at the Cross he was judicially set aside. Finally at the Great White Throne there will be a complete blotting out of his remembrance! Consequent on the Lord Jesus going into death, rising therefrom, and being placed above everything, the Holy Ghost has come down to make good the truth of God; a living reality in our souls according to the purpose of God. That is no mere mental assent, but the Spirit forming us in the divine nature. The result will be that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ will be glorified in us. That is not only light but a deeper acquaintance with His love and of the Person Who is crowned with glory and honour. John viii. says, "We shall know the truth and the truth shall make us

free.” That liberty will not be to do our own will but to be here for God’s good pleasure!

Phil. ii., 12 speaks of working out your own salvation with fear and trembling. How many stop short at that! It is quite scriptural, but only part of the truth. The next verse goes on to say, “that it is God who works in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure.” We are to work out what God is working in. The consequence on the practical side will be “that we shall be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom we shine as lights in the world.” While He was here the Lord was the perfect answer to what we have read. There is no question about the particular nation to which we belong. All are in the nationality of fallen man. The only light shining in this dark world comes out in the bodies of the people of God. The light is to shine out in the christians holding forth the Word of Life. That is not a question of preaching but of practice. It is the privilege of every christian to be in this verse. Preaching would shut out all our sisters and many brethren, but the Lord is the great administrator of the word of God in the pleasure which is worked in us. We have a responsibility as lampholders to display the light. God lights the candle. Paul said to Timothy, you have fully known my doctrine and manner of life. They were in accord with each other. He lived as he preached. He went on to adjure the young man to take heed to himself and the doctrine. He was not merely the depositary of God’s revelation. I do not believe that there is anything going on in our hearts if it does not come out in our bodies. We may have much in our heads and little in our lives. We are to be living exponents of the truth! May the Lord deepen the work in everyone who has been taken up by sovereign grace and the love of God.

THE PERSON OF THE SON.

“*He smote the men of Bethshemesh, because they had looked into the ark of the Lord*”—I Sam. vi., 19. Let us beware of unhallowed thoughts of the Son of God. Let us eschew curious disquisition about His Person. His name is wonderful; no man can unravel the mystery. He is presented to us as the object of adoration, not as the subject for inspection (Present Testimony ii., 33).

AT HOME WITH THE LORD (2 Cor. v., 6-9).

(Substance of address at the graveside of Mrs R. H. Brown, at Galashiels, 31/5/41).

In the passage the words translated in the A.V. (1) as present means "at home with," and (2) as absent is literally "to be away from home." So that we can substitute these phrases for the words: "present and absent." Our beloved sister who was snatched from us so suddenly three days ago is obviously away from home as to the body since we have put it in the grave, but that she is at home with the Lord is not evident judging by sight or appearances. It is only as we walk by faith, that fact becomes good to our apprehension. The sentence begun in v. 6 is partially broken off so as to introduce that explanation and is resumed in v. 8. Apparently the Apostle preferred death to life because that would bring him to be "at home with the Lord." We are content rather to be away from home as to the body and thus to be at home with the Lord. If death comes before the coming of the Lord the Christian will have the far better part, hence we need not mourn in reality for our departed relative and friend because she has a far better part than if left here. She had a sudden death but that does not imply sudden glory as is so often said, for that she has to wait (as we have) the glad resurrection morning to receive a body of glory, like unto His body of glory! But she is happy at home with the Lord, waiting that certain first resurrection which will be indescribably blessed and glorious. Wherefore the Apostle could say we make it our ambition that whether present or absent we may be well pleasing to Him. Hence our main exercises are not relative to the departed, but for those who are left over in view of the great re-union. Her sudden home-call has the object in view that in the infinite grace of the Lord we may be found walking before Him as children of the family of God, growing in grace and in our apprehension of the preciousness of Christ, stimulating one another to love and good works. The sudden transition from the seen to the unseen is very desirable for the christian. There has been no time for heart-rending farewells but we should live each day with relation to each other so that farewells will be unnecessary. But for anyone who does not know the Lord, sudden death would be an irrevocable disaster for eternity.

Therefore such should seize the opportunity because now is the day of salvation. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be safe for time and eternity! T. OLIVER.

CANAAN AS A TYPE.

A correspondent writes, "thanks for the little books with which you so kindly favoured me, but I do not agree with all they contain: *e.g.*, in 'Cities of Refuge' it is stated that 'the land of Canaan in O.T. type does not represent heaven in N.T. relation, as it is often caused to do in sentimental hymnology.' Heb. iii., 7; iv., 11 are a warning against stopping short of God's purpose, and the rest of God frequently mentioned in the passage clearly refers to Canaan as type and this rest in my opinion is definitely future and is not reached until we get to heaven! To show that I am not alone in reading the passage, I refer you to Hymn 76 in the 'Little Flock' book, v.v. 9, 10. I have heard it contended that as there was fighting in Canaan it could not be a type of heaven, but the argument is spurious because the passage has Canaan in view as the type and the thought of rest forbids the idea of warfare. So shall we not continue to sing with heaven in view?"

The writer is quite entitled to his opinion! But a type has not a private or single interpretation, even as a mountain like Arthur's Seat has many aspects depending on the viewpoint, *e.g.*, one looks like a lion recumbent, and another like an ordinary peak, yet it is the same mountain in spite of its varying aspects. So the truth has many aspects too! If our correspondent quotes Hymn 76 he must accept also the following passage from the same writer's Vol. xxvii., p. 145.

"I sometimes wonder that it does not strike people what an odd thing it is that although Jordan means death and Canaan heaven (which they do) fighting should characterise the place in Joshua, for the first thing he meets there is a man with a sword drawn Yes, heaven will be ours! I am not quarrelling with the use of the image in that way. Jordan is a type of death and Canaan of heavenly places."—J.N.D.

That is our point in the passage cited. We do not object to the use of the image in a secondary way. The contention about Heb. iii. and iv. is clearly wrong, because that passage specifically teaches that Joshua did not bring them into rest, but that the rest awaits us!—EDITOR.

THE HOUSE OF GOD.

Evidence in the Gospels.

In the New Testament, the doctrine of what has been presented previously in a material or typical way is unfolded. There was nothing real or living in either tabernacle or temple. It was all symbolical but in the gospels Christ entered and that infused life into the types. The House of God was only in a representative way in the Old Testament and could not be formed in reality until redemption was accomplished. Therefore we are not disappointed to find in the Lord's own ministry the main features of the House of God. In Matt. Ch. xvi. we have its divine foundation and constitution contingent on Peter's confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God." The Lord answered "Thou art Peter (a stone) upon this rock (what Peter's confession set forth) I will build my Church and the gates of hell (the administration of the authority of darkness) shall not prevail against it." No human organisation has a place there in spite of the way in which the scripture has been perverted to prove the opposite contention. The complete revelation of God is declared in Christ, the Son of the Living God, *i.e.*, the foundation of the church, the intrinsic element of the House of God. What purported to be the House of God was full of dead ritual. But "Christianity is Christ," and that is living. The Holy Spirit stimulates fresh exercises of soul and thus the expression in true prayer and praise will never be formal. May we be delivered from mere correct recitation, which springs from the exercises of yesterday!

In all the gospels the record occurs of the Lord's cleansing the temple and driving out those who had so grossly misrepresented God therein. Shortly after the start of His ministry, in John Ch. ii., He recognises it as His Father's House in which as a house of merchandise they had prostituted its purity for material profit, while the other gospels refer to the incident near the close of His ministry of similar character. While still referring to it as the House of God which should have been maintained for prayer for all people (one of the initial aspects presented in Gen. xxviii. as "the gate of heaven") the leaders of the people had made it a den of thieves. A little later in His ministry He disowned the house as of God and called it "*your* house

shall be left unto you desolate.” The two-fold aspect had been apparent from the outset but so long as the Lord was on earth it was God’s centre for those who feared the Lord and thought upon His name. So there were those like the widow who bestowed all their possessions (even two mites) in the treasury of the house irrespective of what base gain others might be extracting from contact with the temple. There had been at the birth of the Lord antiquated people like Simeon and Anna, but intelligent as to the mind of God, who clung to the temple (blind to its blemishes) not in a vague sentimental way but positively waiting for the consolation of Israel and looking for its counterpart, *viz.*, redemption in Jerusalem. Although the Jewish leaders had given a false impression, the true character of the house was unchanged and the Lord could speak of it as “My Father’s house.” In John Ch. i. we have the record that the Word was made flesh and dwelt among the disciples. That is the true idea of the Tabernacle and in the next chapter the thought of Christ’s body as the Temple is expressed definitely. The mind of man was so absorbed with the grandeur of Herod’s temple that it failed to see that the Lord’s words implied a vastly greater work than that conception implied. In John i., 38, 39, the two disciples said, “Master, where dwellest Thou?” He answered, “Come and see.” Their seeing Him at home must have affected them greatly! God was revealed as dwelling in Jesus. In Ch. xiv., He was going away to prepare a place for His own. In the interval till His return, the Comforter was to be here and abide with them. God would dwell here in consequence. The Son dwells in the Father’s love; we dwell in His love and He dwells in our love. In John Ch. xx. administrative forgiveness in the assembly or House of God (but not in a public way) has reference in the words “whosoever sins ye remit they are remitted, etc,” which is analogous to the commission to Peter in Matthew xvi. In spite of the fact that the hands of the people were imbrued with the blood of the Lord of Glory the Holy Spirit could speak of Jerusalem as “the Holy City” at the moment! (Matt. xxviii., 53). In the great supper of Luke xiv., 16-24, it is shown that all who are brought into the house come by receiving the Kingdom (*viz.*, by the compulsion or sway of grace). The thought of the House of God is contiguous to that of the Kingdom of God in the passage. The latter is individual, the former

collective in bearing and is consequent on the individual's reception of the kingdom by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, accepting God's testimony of accomplished righteousness.

Evidence in the Acts.

Although the term "House of God" is not mentioned in the Acts except as referring to the material temple, nevertheless its more visible features are prominent throughout the book. Indeed the prime cause of the formation of the spiritual house is seen in the second chapter, ten days after the ascension of Christ, when the Holy Spirit came upon the Apostles and filled the house where they were sitting. So what is set forth doctrinally elsewhere is exhibited practically in the Acts, consequent upon redemption having been accomplished. The death, resurrection and ascension of Christ had taken place and the Holy Spirit had come down to earth in consequence. There is a man in the Glory of God and He is Lord of all! The third person of the Godhead came down to earth to testify to the glory of the Lord. The One who came down is as great as the One who went up! Therefore He is able to reveal the precious things of heaven to our souls. The coming of the Holy Spirit was not confined to the twelve disciples but fell upon the whole 120 gathered in one house. That was the proximate fulfilment of the prophetic word in John Ch. xi., that the scattered children of God should be gathered together in one. That was the institution of the House of God in an entirely new character. The people of God on earth became the dwelling of God. Hence the presence and guidance of the Holy Ghost became prominent. The disciples were filled with the Holy Ghost who empowered them to act, gave them right words and utterance, crushed opposition by spiritual power, excluded fleshly considerations, *e.g.*, in Ch. v., deceitful reputation was summarily annulled by death. In Ch. vi., murmuring was disarmed. In Ch. vii., Stephen met persecution to death by the power of the Holy Spirit. In Ch. viii., Philip was guided by the Holy Spirit. Every possible contingency was met by the same power. Subsequently, the lapse in Christian progress has been due to the gradual loss of appreciation of the significance and presence of the Holy Ghost. Ecclesiastical organisation can never make up for spiritual enablement which is entirely due to giving the Holy Spirit His rightful place!

Then the House of God is where His love towards all men is known. What unsurpassable love was manifested in the fact that God proclaimed an amnesty to the murderers of His Son in the very place where He was murdered. That offer included Pilate, the unjust judge, the religious leaders, the wicked accusers, the jeering mob, even the brutal ruffian who drove his spear into the side of the dead Christ after his fellows had done their worst while their victim was alive. The injunction of Peter to all was "repent and be baptised" without qualification, and obedience to that command would entail the forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Ghost to each. That magnificent good news went forth from the House of God! The testimony that emanated therefrom was God's message and sent forth in His way by His selected messengers. They were not philosophers nor men of renown nor of noble origin. They were simple fishermen and rustics from despised Galilee! They were erstwhile illiterate people, yet on that day of Pentecost there was not a language under heaven but received recognition. The confusion of Babel which had been introduced by the power of God was neutralised for the time being by the same means.

The prophetic word in the message of the Apostle was "the promise is unto you and your children" (Acts ii., 39). To win over the vacillating governor Pilate, the people had lightly said, "His blood be upon us and our children" (Matt. xxvii., 25), now the proclamation annulled the vow for the repentant Jews and their children. The latter were admitted to a place of privilege on earth, *viz.*, the House of God. The promise was to the very people who had so flagrantly abused God's approach to man in Christ. The external sign was in baptism. "They that gladly received his word were baptised." That suggests the thought of separation from the world which crucified Christ. In Matthew Ch. xvi., Peter received the keys of administration. In Acts Ch. ii., he opened the door to the Jew and in Acts Ch. x., to the Gentile in Cornelius and his house. In Acts Ch. xvi., the households of Lydia and the Philippian jailer entered into the new sphere of life in separation from the sphere of death in the world. They came under the authority of the Lord. It is quite likely that however different had been the features which marked those households previous to the conversion of the heads, subsequently they agreed in the essential character of being run under the

same management, *viz.*, that of the Lord. Nowadays the promiscuous association of christians and worldlings in what is described as "the House of God" shows the grave slump in appreciation of the divine principles relative thereto!

The converts continued steadfastly in the Apostle's doctrine or instruction. The House of God is where intelligence as to the mind of the Lord is manifested. Therefore, it is a prime necessity that a premium should be put on collective reading of the scriptures because therein is enshrined the doctrine which is not affected by the flow of time and the changing fashions of men. The next feature was that they continued in fellowship, *i.e.*, in consequence of the enlightenment from the Apostle's doctrine. They owned the one Lord and partook in the community of interest of His administration. He is the bond of the partnership. The practical expression of that fellowship was in the breaking of bread! The concluding element of the manifestation of the House of God was in prayers. That is where we express our need of the help of God, first as to the needs in the work of the Gospel and then as to the interests of the people of God.

T. OLIVER.

When Christ was here it did not signify what He went through, so that His Father's name was glorified; when His life took hold of Saul of Tarsus, Saul learnt to feel that it did not signify what he went through, so that Christ was magnified in his body whether by life or by death. He was altogether for Christ! If Christ up there be wholly for me, cannot He make me to be entirely for Him down here? I would not shut out the thought of Christ being magnified through everything. The bitterest things need the sweetness most! ("The Voice" ix., p. 377).

PUBLISHER'S NOTICE.

We regret to say that paper stringency regulations have caused us to reduce the number of pages by 25%. Moreover, for Vol. II. current difficulties have led to the decision to confine the publication (for the time being) to:—(a) Extracts from old-time ministry; (b) Notes of Bible Readings; (c) Answers to correspondents (which have been crowded out in Vol. I.); (d) Editorial articles and notes. Since paper restriction is serious it will be helpful if intending subscribers will intimate their probable requirements during October as we go to Press with No. 5 (D.V.) early in November in order to despatch overseas parcels with reasonable expectation for their reception in January. The subscription will be, as for Vol. I., 1s. 6d. per copy per annum.

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