

August (August)

RUTH and TIDINGS



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JANUARY, 1956

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EDITOR ----- A. W. JOYCE, 26 Munro Blvd., Willowdale, Ont., Canada.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS --- F. G. WATSON, 92 Regal Rd., Toronto, Ont.

G. G. JOHNSTON, 140 Woodycrest Ave., Toronto, Ont.

HECTOR ALVES, 338 W. King Edward Ave.,

Vancouver, B.C.

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TIDINGS

ARBORFIELD, SASK.—S. Maxwell had a week of meetings to saint and sinner. While there a day's meetings were arranged at which he Jas. Ronald and A. W. Joyce gave appreciated ministry. S. Maxwell went on to Mervin, J. Ronald to Armley, and A. W. Joyce returned to Taylorside.

TAYLORSIDE, SASK.—In spite of very cold stormy weather with roads at times blocked with snow, A. W. Joyce was encouraged by a number of souls professing to be saved. The last two nights the people could not get to the hall and the meetings had to be cancelled.

SWAN RIVER, MAN.—J. Ronald continues faithfully sowing the seed with blessing in northern Manitoba.

MUNCEY, ONT.—The little Indian assembly on the Onieda Reserve is depleted in numbers and desires the prayers of the Lord's people. They have been encouraged with a good turn out of children at meetings held by Elijah Davis.

LINDSAY, ONT.—John Adams and Stanley Simms had good meetings in a rented store, two professed to be saved.

VICTORIA RD., ONT.—J. Meridew had four weeks' meetings, two professed, another has applied for baptism, thus the assembly has been encouraged.

TORONTO, ONT.—The brethren in West Toronto were much encouraged by a good number of souls professing to be saved during the Gospel meetings held recently by brethren Linstead and McCullough.

OUR OUTLOOK — UPWARD — OUTWARD — ONWARD*A. W. Joyce*

It is natural at the dawn of a New Year to wonder what it holds for each and all of us. God has not given to us the gift of prescience; this is His alone. While we cannot pierce the future, it is not only our privilege but it is most necessary for our spiritual wellbeing, to look upward, outward and onward — UPWARD TO HEAVEN, OUTWARD TO THE WORLD AND ONWARD TO THE COMING AGAIN OF OUR LORD.

The Upward Look

We often speak of the saints of this dispensation as "Heavenly People" and the people of Israel in the Old Testament as God's earthly People", and rightly so. Yet is it not to our shame that, in following the lives of some of the men of God of the past dispensations, we are struck by the fact that many of them were more heavenly-minded than so many of us in this present, highly favoured dispensation. This should not be so when we consider three outstanding privileges which we have that they did not.

1. The Holy Spirit indwelling "forever" to empower, sanctify and instruct.

2. The Word of God in its completion to guide, cleanse, feed, and to reproduce by the power of the Spirit the moral features of the Lord Jesus.

3. A real Man at the right hand of God to restore, as the Great Advocate, to Represent, as the Great High Priest and to "save to the uttermost" all who come unto God by Him. Therefore there is no excuse for worldly-mindedness and every reason for heavenly-mindedness in God's people to-day.

It is possible for us to live in the atmosphere of Heaven, but to do so we must go in for it, and a price must be paid. We must seek for it diligently. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness" (Matt. 6:25-34). After bringing before us many examples of heavenly men in the Old Testament in Hebrews 11, the inspired writer follows with the exhortation to us, "*Looking of unto Jesus* the author and finisher of our faith." Obedience to these two exhortations involves self-denial and faith, but it will result in producing a peaceful, contented mind, and will preserve us from being caught in the current of the world's ambitions, pursuits, strife and sorrow.

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above . . . Set your affection on things above" (Col. 3:1-2). Not only must we seek heavenly things, but having tried and proved their preciousness we must "set our affection" (mind R.V.) on them, as if we had already died to the things of this world (as indeed we have

in God's reckoning, verse 3). The sphere of our blessings is "the heavenlies" (Eph. 1:3), "Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ."

The Worldward Look

The only way that we can safely look at this world is from the Divine and Scriptural standpoint. To look at it as Lot did, admiringly (Gen. 13:10), is to imperil our souls and our testimony. To see anything attractive about the world which hates God, which murdered Christ, which insults His Spirit, proves that backsliding already has begun in the heart. If this condition is not quickly remedied it will soon manifest itself in the outward life.

To look at the world from God's standpoint is to see a world that is reeling on to judgment, a world that is "waxing worse and worse." This look will fill the heart with love and compassion for the lost and perishing. "Lift up your eyes and LOOK ON THE FIELDS; for they are white already to harvest" (John 4:35). It will fill the soul with zeal to "rescue the perishing" by giving to them the Gospel of the grace of God. But this look will also fill the heart with loathing for the evil practices of the world and with desire to separate from it in its every form and phase. Indeed, to look *only* at the world as it is portrayed in the Word of God would fill us with pessimism and dismay did not that same Word turn our eyes to

The Onward Look

Dismay and foreboding is changed to brightest hope as we look beyond the darkening shadows to the coming of "the Morning Star". "We look," not for war, disintegration, lawlessness and atheism (though all of these are on the increase) but for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, "Looking for that blessed hope, and appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13, R.V.).

Let us then gird up the loins of the mind afresh, let us grasp the pilgrim staff anew, let us face the New Year with confidence and purpose of heart as we take the Upward, Worldward and Onward Look, remembering that

The true heavenward look will transform us.
 The true worldward look will separate us and make us
 soul winners.
 The true onward look will purify and encourage us.

Many truths are best preached by practising them.

He is wealthy who is contented; he is poor that wanteth more.

NOTABLE CHARACTERS IN HOLY WRIT

Jeroboam, Who Made Israel to Sin, I Kings 14

G. G. Johnston

Certain kings, prophets and others in Israel are remembered in Scripture by some outstanding characteristic, or by some peculiar act during their lives. King Solomon, though not always wise, is remembered for his exceeding wisdom; David, as the sweet singer of Israel, because of the precious psalms he wrote, and evidently sang, bringing cheer and comfort to the hearts of many who feared God. That which seems most outstanding in the life of Jeroboam, king over the ten tribes of Israel, is the introduction of a false form of worship, definitely designed to keep the people away from God's one centre in Jerusalem.

Upon the death of Solomon, king over all Israel and Judah, his son, Rehoboam, came to the throne. It was one of those times of national crisis, in which great statesmanship was necessary. But it was lacking in this man. The sons of wise men are not always wise, nor are the sons of good men always good. The glory and fanfare of Solomon's reign had cost the nation a great deal, and though its financial status was exceedingly high, many evidently felt they were paying dearly for its upkeep.

This was particularly felt by those tribes which were more separated from Jerusalem and less enamoured by the glory of the court. Sending a committee to Egypt to recall the exiled Jeroboam, representatives of the ten tribes of Israel came with him as leader to supplicate the new king that he might lessen their burden of taxation. A critical moment had arrived. One would readily imagine the godly David in such a moment seeking the face of God for wisdom, but we see nothing of this in Rehoboam. He seeks the counsel of the older men, and they advise lessening the burden. But, refusing their advice, he turns to the younger men of his court, and they hastily advise him to apply increased pressure. In the pride and folly of his youthful heart, he took the latter course, answered the men roughly and sent them away angry.

Critical moments arrive in the experience of all God's people, and is this not true also in the histories of many assemblies of saints, moments in which hasty, harsh words can, and do, cause breaches, some of which are never healed? A godly, humble seeking of help in prayer, coupled with kind treatment of brethren, would have resulted very differently, but that spirit was lacking, and the results were disastrous.

One evil usually leads to another. The pride of Jeroboam in separating the ten tribes from Judah that he might be their king, has

usually been at the root of many similar divisions of God's people. Far from gaining from the division, Israel very evidently lost in every way and became not only idolatrous and corrupt, but weaker and weaker as a nation, until they were overpowered and taken into captivity. Judah, while plagued by failing kings, continued the worship of the living God in God's chosen place at Jerusalem.

In Israel, a new form of worship commenced. Fearful lest the people should gradually return to own the Jerusalem centre of government, if they went there to worship, Jeroboam invented a system of worship after his own heart. Going back to the idolatry of Egypt, from which all Israel had been delivered long before, he made two calves of gold, and set up one in Dan and the other in Bethel — in two very convenient centres. An easy religion is always pleasing to carnal or unconverted men.

Now some form of clergy was necessary to carry on this new worship, and the king made priests of the lowest of the people; he built altars and instituted feast days after his own heart. From a wrong beginning, he went from bad to worse. Not only sinning himself, but "making Israel to sin".

Much of the religion of to-day is after the pattern of Jeroboam's, and many are those who are sinning against God in this thing, because they are simple enough to be led, and do not enquire: "What saith the Scriptures?" What they do is greatly in contrast, and has little in common, with the Scriptural pattern, yet they follow on as they are led.

From the divine centre, our Lord Jesus Christ, they turn to gather around some man or some doctrine, forming a religion after their own heart. Leaving the leading of the Holy Spirit in worship and service, they are satisfied to be led by a pastor, or some sort of cleric, not realizing that all clerisy is an abomination to the Lord and in this, to them a very lovely service, they are "sinning against the Lord". Considering how very plain and simple is the pattern given in the New Testament, there is little excuse for anyone who is born of God and guided by the Spirit, taking a course after his own heart, or after the heart of another.

Let all who seek to lead among God's people search their own hearts. Let them beware lest something of the spirit of Jeroboam be lurking there, aimed at turning from the Lord and His ways to do after the dictates of their own hearts, and even at turning others from God's ways and God's place, making them also to sin.

DEVELOPMENTS IN THE BOOK OF THE ACTS

A. McShane, North Ireland

Luke's repeated references to joy and gladness have earned for him the reputation of being the happiest writer in the New Testament. Whether or not he actually was might be difficult to say, but one thing is clear, he had just cause for rejoicing as he penned the Acts of the Apostles, for the history of the early church is, unlike many other histories in Scripture, one of progress and development. In it Judaism, like the house of Saul, "waxes weaker and weaker" while Christianity, like the house of David, "waxes stronger and stronger". A brief survey of some of its main avenues of development might stimulate us to become more progressive in life and service for Christ.

Development in the Spread of the Gospel

The book opens with the final parting of Christ and His apostles. His last words to them ere He ascended were, "Ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." In this commission He outlined the work in which they were to engage during His absence, and the rest of the Acts gives an account of how that work was accomplished. So energetic were these early disciples that in about thirty years the gospel had been preached not only in Judaea, but as far as Rome on the West, Galatia in the North, Ethiopia in the South, and Babylon in the East. We might well inquire how such rapid progress was made and why it has not been maintained throughout the Church period. If we do so carefully, it is most probable that we shall have to admit that what has retarded the progress of the gospel has in large measure been the neglect of some of the principles which were so marked a feature in this first evangelization of the world.

It seems needless to mention that throughout the Acts those who proclaimed the gospel were at all times dependent upon the power of the Holy Spirit. The disciples were not to commence their work until they were "endued with power from on high." No one doubts that the great ingathering of souls during pentecostal days was the direct result of this power operating without hindrance in and through the Church. What is equally evident is the total absence of every form of human device to attract men to the message. Neither instrumental music, solos, nor performances of any kind were used to draw the crowd. Not even human oratory or education was considered necessary; but plain, simple men preached the good news to the hearts of their fellows and depended upon God to use it for His own glory. Are not many of the modern innovations associated with the gospel under the plea that they are needed to gather the

people, only a miserable substitute for the power of God? And is it not also to be feared that the growing demand for oratory on the platforms is an attempt to make up for the lack of this power in our preaching?

We must all acknowledge the usefulness of the printed page as a means of reaching the lost, yet the Scripture would teach us that it was "by the foolishness of preaching" that the gospel was spread in the days of the apostles, and when all is said, this is still the most fruitful way. Our energies therefore, ought to be concentrated upon getting the words of life to the ear of the people. The early believers "went everywhere preaching the Word". Is not one of the weaknesses of the present the failure to take advantage of the opportunities of speaking to all with whom we come in contact? Have we not reached the stage where preaching is to a large extent left to the platform speaker, with the result that it is out of the reach of the masses? Are we ashamed to confess Christ before those amongst whom we mingle in workshop, business, and in the street, or has our poor testimony closed our mouths? Nothing could be more incongruous than to be constantly talking about the needs of the regions beyond, and yet to have no exercise concerning the need of the perishing at our own door step.

It has often been pointed out that the first ambition of the preachers of apostolic times was to reach the large centres with the gospel and to plant assemblies there, which would in turn, like the one at Thessalonica, sound out the good news to all the regions around. In many parts of the world these centres have been established, but alas in some cases this has been the beginning and end of the work. Many districts within easy reach of assemblies are left in the dark, and might as well be thousands of miles away. Since God has set us as His watchmen, will He not require the blood of these unreached souls at our hands? Surely the very least we can do is to warn the lost of their terrible danger, and tell them of Him who is mighty to save. To look out for openings for the gospel in new districts would be a healthy exercise for many assemblies. If, instead of the formal Sunday evening meeting with possibly few unsaved present, a room or hall in some different locality were taken for a gospel effort, the results would be not only the salvation of the lost, but the refreshing of the saints through their exercise in the work.

Another practice in the days of the Acts which greatly helped in the spread of the gospel was the opening of the homes of the saints to the servants of the Lord. Think of Priscilla and Aquila; these tent-makers combined business with pleasure. Their pleasure was

that of having the gospel preachers in their home, and thus they facilitated the commencement of new work for God. Both at Ephesus and Corinth, Paul and others shared the comfort of their hospitality, when possibly there were few others in these places to welcome them. Their labour in this way was a cause for thanksgiving to the apostle, and will receive its due reward from the Lord "in that Day!" As the result of circumstances outside their controls, many of God's people have, like the pair just mentioned, found themselves in an area unreached by the gospel. How blessed it is when such are exercised that their home should be the means of bringing the gospel to the district. Whether it be for gospel meetings or for the hospitality of the messenger, it could not be used for a more honourable purpose. God is no man's debtor, and even when the neighbours make no response, He is often pleased to save some of the household.

We shall draw attention to one more principle which contributed largely to the spread of the gospel in the early days, namely, the persecution of the saints. Strange as it may seem to many in our time, the more it was opposed the more progress the gospel made. Whether we look at the scattering of the saints in Jerusalem, the imprisonment of the apostles, or the slaying of God's servants, we learn that these painful trials were instrumental in furthering the work of the Lord. Possibly our efforts to evade reproach and suffering, by courting the world's favour, and copying its ways, are far more damaging to the gospel than we realize. The fruitful times of the not too distant past were those when the preachers were met with stones and rotten eggs, and almost all of our older brethren agree that they would prefer these unpleasant experiences to the modern cold indifference, so prevalent in many parts. The truth of God will never be popular, and it is no advantage either to dress it up or trim it down, to suit the carnal tastes of men.

May the Lord give us grace to encourage all who strive to spread the light in the dark regions beyond, and at the same time may we take advantage of every opportunity to preach the gospel to the perishing around us, until none can say, "Nobody ever has told it to me!"

Alone with God! O hallowed blessed spot,
The place where every care may be forgot;
Or if remembered, they may be made known
To Him Who makes them every one His own.

* * * *

Where Jesus wore a crown of thorns we cannot expect coronets of honour. Should the servant be above His Lord?

LESSONS FROM THREE NEW YEAR'S DAYS

Hector Alves

Another year has passed into eternity; 1955 has seen many changes, and not a few of the Lord's own, whom we loved and revered, have been taken home to heaven during the year that has passed. A New Year has been ushered in. What 1956 holds for us we do not know; we stand as it were, blindfolded, at the threshold of another year. It is just as well for us that we do not know what a day may bring forth; "My times are in Thy hand" (Psa. 31:15).

Looking at "eternal salvation" and "everlasting life", we do not observe days and months and years; yet, as God's creatures here on earth we do reckon time in that way. Eternity is incomprehensible to the human mind; but we read in Genesis 1:14, that God gave the sun and the moon "for signs and for seasons, and for days, and years." So the first day of each new year serves as a reminder of how swiftly time goes by, and ought to "teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom" (Psa. 90:12).

There are three outstanding New Year's Days recorded in the Holy Scriptures, and the events which took place on those days teach us seasonable lessons.

(1) "And it came to pass in the first month in the second year, on the first day of the month, that the tabernacle was reared up" (Exodus 40:17). The tabernacle was God's dwelling place amongst His people from the days of Moses to the days of David, some five hundred years. It was "a figure for the time then present" (Heb. 9:9). This was followed by the temple built by Solomon. Of both of these we read that "the glory of the Lord filled the house" (Exodus 40:34; 2 Chron. 7:1). Today, God dwelleth not in temples made with hands, but amongst "living stones", "builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph. 2:22). In this house the child of God has a dual responsibility. (1) "Let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon" (1 Cor. 3:10). (2) "That thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God" (1. Tim. 3:15). From the first day of 1956, and through the year, until the Lord comes, we will be building into God's house. Two kinds of materials are mentioned; one is classed as "gold, silver, precious stones"; and the other as "wood, hay, stubble". The former will abide; the latter will be burned up. Let us then in this new year build that which will abide to the glory of God.

(2) "Now they began on the first day of the first month to sanctify, and on the eighth day of the month came they to the porch of the Lord: so they sanctified the house of the Lord in eight days" (2 Chron. 29:17). The work on this New Year's Day also has to do

with the house of God. In the preceding chapter we read that Ahaz had "shut up the doors of the house of the Lord," and "made him altars in every corner of Jerusalem" (verse 24). But when his son Hezekiah came to the throne, "he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord". On New Year's Day they began to cleanse; they began inside, and finished at the porch on the eighth day. Perhaps we have been keeping up a fair outward appearance, the usual meetings throughout the past year have been attended, but how are things inwardly? Has there been a decline? Has dust been accumulating in the house of God? Is there the same fervour in the prayer meeting? The same warmth in the worship meeting? The same power in the Gospel meeting? Let us search and see, and cleanse the house of anything that may savour of defilement, beginning inside on the New Year's Day, and not let up till we get to the porch.

(3) "Upon the first day of the first month began he to go up from Babylon, and on the first day of the fifth month came he to Jerusalem, according to the good hand of his God upon him" (Ezra 7:9). After seventy years in Babylon, we have a beginning to return to Jerusalem on New Year's Day. There was a hard road ahead of them, beset with difficulties along the way. We find them spending a time in prayer, "To seek of Him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance" (8:21). This was a very different journey from the one they had taken many years before, from Egypt to Canaan. That one was marked by murmuring and complaining; this one is marked by singing. The "Songs of Degrees", Psalms 120 - 124 are said to have been sung by this returning remnant. Be that as it may, there is no doubt their hearts were filled with the spirit of faith and hope at the prospect of gaining what they had lost. We must confess that with us too, there has been departure from "the right ways of the Lord" but on this New Year let us take fresh courage and "Go on", and "Hold fast" and "Look up", and "occupy" till He comes for us. We may soon hear the shout, so let us build the house, cleanse the house, and return to the right ways of the house.

TITHING

I was so poor, my purse so small,
 I hardly felt one-tenth at all.
 I gladly gave from my poor store
 With but the wish I could give more,
 But now my purse, which was so small,
 Contains one million, all in all;
 And wonder I each passing day
 If I can give one-tenth away.

—Anon.

ISRAEL AND THE CHURCH

Part 8

Wm. Hoste

We will now seek to distinguish between Israel and the church, as to the character of their WORSHIP.

Perhaps in no particular has Christendom more flagrantly and universally departed from the Divine pattern. Practically everywhere worship is according to the "rudiments of the world", that is, after the Jewish system. We shall divide this part of the subject under four heads: (1) The Worshippers, (2) The place of Worship, (3) Preparation for Worship, (4) The Worship.

1. The Worshippers. — Speaking generally, we may divide Israel into three classes: (a) the Warriors — that is, every male of the twelve tribes "from twenty years old and upward; all that were able to go forth to war" (Num. 1:3). (b) The Workers—The Levites who were given to Aaron "that they might minister unto him" and "do the service of the tabernacle" (Num. 3:6-7); and (c) the Worshippers — namely, one family alone of the tribe of Levi, Aaron and his sons, "they shall keep their priesthood" (Num. 3:10). These three classes were distinct and separate; their functions did not overlap. The Levites, as such, were not expected to fight the battles of Jehovah. No other tribe but they, could do the service of the sanctuary, but even they could not perform the office of a priest. That belonged alone to the priestly family. It will not be needful to enter at length into the privileges and duties of Aaron and his sons, it will suffice to notice certain points which distinguished them from the rest of Israel.

1. They occupied a *Separate Position*. It was Jehovah Who called them to this, not themselves nor their fellows, as we learn from Ex. 28:1. The Lord said, "Bring them near unto thee, Aaron thy brother and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel." They were sanctified or set apart to their office, with elaborate divinely-appointed ceremonial (Lev. 8:6-24). The daughters of Aaron might eat of the offerings, but did not act publicly as priests.

2. They were called to a *Definite Service*. The object of the call is specified "that he may minister unto Me in the priest's office, even Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazer and Ithamar, Aaron's sons" (Ex. 28:1). No other family on earth has ever been recognized by God as priests unto Him, but the family of Aaron. The warning to all outsiders was a solemn one, "The stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death" (Num. 3:10). Not even was our Lord Himself a priest on earth, being of the tribe of Judah (Heb. 7:13, 8:4). It

was a serious offence calling at once for Divine judgment for even a Levite (e.g., Korah, Num. 16) or a king (e.g., Uzziah, 2 Chron. 26:16-20), to usurp the priestly functions. How serious, then, must have been the sin of Jeroboam, "who made priests of the lowest of the people" (1 Kings 12:31), and of those who in our own day consecrate to a fancy priesthood unregenerate and even ungodly men.

3. They wore a *Distinctive Dress*. Their priestly garments were Divinely appointed and described (Exod. 28). Nothing was left to the imagination or invention of man. Texture and make all had a divine meaning, and as the sons of Aaron moved through the camp or appeared at the door of the tabernacle they were conspicuous to every eye as the priests of Jehovah.

4. They enjoyed *Peculiar Privileges*. As those who had received the anointing oil, they alone could offer burnt offerings (Lev. 1:5-8), the skins of the victims belonging in each case to the officiating priest (Lev. 7:8). They alone could enter into the holy place (Exod. 28:43; Num. 4:5, 19, 20), to burn incense upon the altar of gold (Exod. 30:7). For their sustenance they received a tenth of the best of the tithes of the Levites (Num. 18:28), and also all the hallowed things of the children of Israel (Num. 18:8-19).

5. They ate a *Certain Food*. To them belonged the ram of consecration and the bread of consecration (Lev. 8:31), as also the meal offerings (Lev. 6:16, 17), the trespass offerings (Lev. 7:6), and the sin offerings of which the blood had not been brought into the tabernacle to make atonement (Lev. 6:26). They had certain parts of the peace offerings (the right shoulder being for the officiating priest, Lev. 7:33). They alone enjoyed the privilege of eating the twelve loaves of shewbread in the holy place (Lev. 24:9; Matt. 12:4).

6. They had *Particular Responsibilities*, such as keeping the burnt offerings always burning, and seeing that the candlestick was always alight (Num. 8:1). They alone were qualified to discern between leprosy and other diseases, and to carry out the cleansing of the leper according to the divine ritual. To them, too, belonged the responsibility of teaching the statutes of Jehovah to His people Israel (Lev. 10:11).

7. They were called to a *Special Holiness*. They were to wash in the laver before approaching the altar or the tabernacle (Exod. 30:19). They were to abstain from marriage with certain persons (Lev. 20:7), and from defiling themselves generally for the dead (Lev. 21:1). They must be without defect in order to offer the holy

things (Lev. 21:21), and without defilement in order to partake of them (Lev. 22:4-6; 10-13).

All this clearly shows that the priests formed a privileged and strictly exclusive class among the children of Israel. They alone might draw near to God. They were the indispensable intermediaries between the people and Jehovah.

It can hardly be denied that now in the matter of priesthood the present great religious systems of Christendom correspond very closely to the Jewish model. They, too, have their orders of priests separate from the "laity" or common people. Such do not, it is true, belong to any divinely appointed family, nor are they required to give any proof of personal conversion to God, or of a saving knowledge of Christ. If, professing to feel called to the office, they can exhibit a certificate of moral conduct, and satisfy their examiners as to a modicum of theological attainment, they are set apart with solemn services to their sacred office by their fellow-men. They enjoy henceforth a position and privilege which, it is believed by some, they can never lose either in time or eternity, according to the phrase, "once a priest always a priest." They alone are qualified to perform certain functions, for instance, to dispense the Lord's Supper, or as it is termed, "celebrate the Eucharist," or "say Mass."

THE LORD IN THE MIDST

Thos. Newberry

In time and in eternity, the place which the Father gives to the Son is the centre. He is in the bosom of the Father, as the centre of Divine affections, in the midst of the throne, as the centre of universal empire, in the midst of the church as His proper and rightful place on earth.

He is seen as walking "in the midst of the seven golden lampstands," and He is in the midst of the assembly of disciples gathered to His Name; not *in* His Name merely, but *to* or *unto* His Name; that is, to His Person.

When the Lordship of Christ is owned, every question is easily settled as to the church and its discipline; and when the Lordship of Christ is recognized and submitted to in the assembly, the blessing is unbounded; when none lifts hand or foot without Him; not only *not acting contrary to His will*, but *not acting without His will*.

Now that the Lord Jesus is away, the Holy Spirit is not setting up a democracy, but is maintaining the Lordship of Christ and bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Him.

LOST, WITHIN SIGHT OF HOME

A.W.J.

"SIX LIFEBOAT MEN DROWN OFF THE FAMED INCHCAPE ROCK" — Such was the heading of a newspaper clipping sent to the writer. An article followed —

Arbroath, Scotland, Oct. 27—(A.P.)—Six lifeboat men, weary from an all-night battle with a gale tossed sea, were drowned early today, within sight of the lights of their own homes. Only one of the crew survived.

The 35-foot lifeboat put out last night in answer to a report that a vessel was in trouble off Inchcape Rock. That rock, the graveyard of many ships, was the subject of a poem by Robert Southey. The lifeboat failed to find the vessel.

Friends and relatives gathered along the harbour wall as the returning lifeboat approached the breakwater. They watched in horror as a giant wave caught it. Shouts from the crew reached them as the boat was tossed on to the rocks fifty yards from the shore. Then nothing could be heard but the roar of the sea and the howling of the gale.

A rocket line fired from shore tangled around the body of the only survivor, Archibald Smith. With its help he pulled himself to safety.

Seafarers found the body of the coxswain, David Bruce, in the wreckage of the lifeboat. He had lashed himself to the helm. Three bodies were recovered and a search is under way for the others.

Thus another saga of the sea has been added with its description of heroism, sacrifice, escape and tragedy. The thought that immediately strikes one in reading the above account is, "How near they were to safety, within the sight of the lights of home and before the eyes of their loved ones and yet they perished! How many times such circumstances have been repeated in a spiritual sense. Souls have listened again and again to the message of the Gospel, yet have gone down amid the wild waves of sin to perish forever in Hell.

There are, however, a number of contrasts to the incident of the Inchcape Rock, when souls perish in their sins. These men were on the path of duty and perished in spite of their desire to be saved and of the efforts made to save them. Those who are now in their sins and exposed to the judgment of God are not in the path of duty but in the path of folly. There is One Who, to make salvation possible for all men, left the Throne of His glory, came down to earth and upon the cross of Calvary endured for us the storm of infinite wrath that our sins deserved, and, satisfied the utmost claim of Divine justice. He died; He rose again; He is able to save to the

uttermost; He sends forth the life-line of salvation in the Gospel message to each sinner who listens to it. If men and women go to Hell it is only by the wilful rejection or the careless neglect of that offered life-line.

How especially sad it will be for some who have been specially privileged by Christian upbringing, by many opportunities of salvation, by oftentimes being striven with by the Spirit of God, to be "almost persuaded" (Acts 26:28), yet to be lost "within sight of home".

"Near to the door, while the door stands wide,
Near to its portals, but not inside,
Almost persuaded to give up sin,
Almost persuaded to enter in,
Almost persuaded, but lost."

There is one in Holy Scripture of whom we might say, not that he perished within sight of home, but that he was saved almost within sight of Hell. In Luke 23:39-43 a dying sinner paying the law's penalty for his own sins, hung beside a dying Saviour paying the penalty for the sins of others. Though so near to death and Hell, yet that one thief was brought to repentance, acknowledged his guilt turned in faith to the Saviour and heard the word of assurance, "Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise."

No matter how far you have wandered in sin the Saviour is longing, waiting, able to save you now, if you will but acknowledge your guilt and turn in faith to Christ alone and rest upon His finished work on Calvary. But no matter how many privileges you may have had, no matter how respectably you may have lived, no matter how often you have been dealt with by the Spirit of God in the past, if you neglect God's great salvation you will be forever LOST WITHIN SIGHT OF HOME.

CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST

The Cross of Jesus, whether one lie beside it, or beneath it, or, *best of all*, hang upon it with the Lord Jesus (Gal. 2:20 and 5:24) is the very sweetest spot in all the world.

Happy, happy they who have learned in blessed experience (whatever be the cost) not only its priceless value as making the soul truly rich, but also its unequalled sweetness, as filling the heart with peace and gladness. But for this purpose it needs to be a cross which crucifies and puts to death. And the crucifixion must be a real crucifixion, issuing in an actual death — a death to the world (Gal. 4:14, compare 1 John 2:15-16), and a death also, to the cursed self-life (Gal. 2:20), including every single form and degree of self-will. A sham Cross comes out of an unreal profession, and leads to a self-deceiving joy.

A NEW YEAR MESSAGE FOR HEAVY HEARTS

Mervyn Paul

It may be you are an invalid. Or perhaps you have been crippled, disabled, or otherwise handicapped. Or it may be that your heart is bowed down from bereavement; or possibly you may be carrying a burden of anxiety, and grief bordering on despair, for an erring loved one. Or marriage may have passed you by. Whatever the burden may be, let me ask for you a Happy New Year — through a better understanding of “the reason why”.

Be assured that you have our deepest sympathy. Yet I do not write to tell you of our sorrow for you; but, as the Lord may be able to express His thoughts through this article, to say to you that although life may have lots its pattern, **IT CANNOT BE THAT IT HAS LOST ITS PURPOSE.**

From some personal experience I know what it means to be “on the shelf” through illness. I know quite well how hopeless everything can seem — the wistful yearnings to be like other people; to be able to do something towards earning one’s living; the striving to keep up an interest in, and so to be a part of, the life that goes on around you and from which solicitous loved ones often try to shut one out. There are the hopes as well — those hopes which prove to be in vain so very often — and the final sinking down into the resignation of defeat. But perhaps the hardest to accept of all the frustratings of a normal human spirit (next to incessant pain) is the prospect of being useless . . . What earnestness there is in the prayers for some measure of recovery. What clings to promises, — as we judge them to be! What disappointments and silent grief; or it may be murmurings, or even loud complainings, — to be followed by an accusing conscience, tears, depression, and sometimes chilling doubt!

Yet again there are some of you who suffer in a similar manner as you walk in the darkness with a sorrow more bitter than death — a sorrow for which so few are fitted to sympathize since they have never passed that way — grief for a straying loved one, or from the shame of your own sin, or from the blighting of your most cherished hopes.

For all of you dear ones, whether you are one of His “hidden ones”, or are exposed to public gaze, life has lost its pattern. And with its loss there has come a confusion of thinking, and a bewildered seeking for the cause of it all. For doubtless your heart has sought some consolation from the oft-repeated, “there must be a reason for it all!”

Yes, Beloved, there is a purpose behind it all: Isa. 48:17. For if the pattern of our lives be lost, then it generally is so because it was ours — not that of our loving Father in heaven. Sometimes its

loss means only that He is changing our course. In any case, if it be changed, then surely the Lord has changed it, and all must be well.

But how shall we understand what it all means? Let me point out that we shall not have the slightest success in solving the riddle of the "Why?" so long as we shall seek to see things through the dust — the perplexities — of the daily struggle. Instead, like David in his rejection days, we must withdraw from the fighting, and CLIMB UP INTO OUR HIGH TOWER, UP ABOVE THE FOGS AND MISTS OF EARTH INTO THE PRESENCE OF OUR GOD. WHERE WE SHALL SEE THINGS IN THE CLEAR LIGHT OF HEAVEN. Only away up there, in communing with Himself, shall we get Light on the outworkings of His purposes for our lives (Psa. 18:2; Phil. 2:13; 1:6).

But do we do that, Beloved? Do we humble ourselves, and seek to lay ourselves out before Him that He may be able to reveal to us something of His mind concerning our lives? Or do we keep on asking Him to make us better, or to lighten the burdens so that we may be relieved of our troubles, or to stop him, her, in his, her, mad career, or to take us home to Heaven out of it all? For just so long as we keep up the battle to get OUR purposes to come to pass, then just that long are we hindering THE LORD'S purposes from coming to pass. For after all are not our own attitudes our greatest hindrances towards acceptance of an unwanted position in life? We need only to ask ourselves, "What is my attitude towards this burden?" to discover where all the dissatisfaction, the struggle to change things, comes from.

Oh, Beloved, surely it requires no great spirituality (only *willingness*) for us to "sink our will in His will" — to say with His beloved Son, "Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in Thy sight" (Matt. 11:26). Then a New Year can have a truly happy beginning if we will realize that:

(a) After some real honest heart-searching before the Lord;

(b) After the recognition of our fault, and a humble confession of our unwillingness to accept *what He has allowed to come to us* as our portion in life;

(c) WE CAN CHANGE OUR ATTITUDES by humbly accepting that which He has allowed, praying, "not my will, but Thine be done," and then asking for grace (Heb. 4:16) to really mean it, and to live it out — something that will not be nearly so hard as some of you will be imagining.

And then He will be able to begin to show you that all the while He has had in mind for you A PLANNED FUTURE (Job 23:14 with James 5:11).

Then all the struggling against the conditions which have been so hateful — so utterly contrary to all that you have desired — will come to an end. In place of *Frustration* and *Resentment* there will be a growing sense of *Restfulness* and *Fulfilment*, since you will have made it possible at last for Him to widen out, and so to begin to reveal, the avenues of His purposes for you. For once our wills are broken He can start to lead us into His.

And so for you dear, heavily-burdened ones, I am asking a truly Happy New Year, in that it shall bring you into a consciousness of having entered into a God-planned life, which, if He be not come, He now shall be able to open up to you.

But remember, a sulky Resignation to His will is no substitute for a downright Acceptance of it!

NOTES ON SCRIPTURAL HYMNS AND THEIR WRITERS

Hector Alves

“There is a Name I love to hear,
I love to speak its worth;
It sounds like music in mine ear,
The sweetest Name on earth.”

In one book on hymnology, this hymn has been called “a first rate hymn”, yet it is not the one by which its author is most generally known. His most popular hymn is —

“I need Thee, precious Saviour!
O Thou art all to me;
Before the throne forever
I stand complete in Thee.
Though Satan loud accuses,
Yet I can ever see
The blood of Christ most precious,
The sinner’s perfect plea.”

Frederick Whitfield was born at Threapwood, Shropshire, England, January 7, 1829. He was a well known preacher, and the writer of several books. His best work being, “The Tabernacle, Priesthood, and Offerings of Israel.”

Four of this man's hymns are found in *The Believers' Hymn Book*. "There is a Name I love to hear," was written in 1855. In the same year he wrote —

"I need Thee, precious Saviour."

In 1861, he composed —

"I saw the cross of Jesus,
When burdened with my sin,
I sought the cross of Jesus
To give me peace within;
I brought my sins to Jesus,
He cleansed them in His blood;
And in the cross of Jesus
I found my peace with God."

The fourth is —

"Jesus! O Name of power divine
To all of heavenly birth!
Jesus! the never-failing mine
Of richest, sweetest worth."

Mr. Whitfield passed away in 1904, at the age of seventy-five.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question. What is your mind about singing verses of a hymn more than once, at the Lord's Table?

Answer. The repetition of a verse of a hymn sung at the Lord's Table should occur only when that particular verse strikes a chord in line with the theme of thanksgiving or worship that recurs as the meeting progresses. Too much singing at the Lord's Table does not lead to giving expression to the thoughts of the heart as exercised by the Holy Spirit. Beginning the meeting with two hymns, then having a hymn follow each prayer, as we have often seen, is likely to be a sign of a spirit of dearth in the soul, and a lack of true worship in spirit and in truth, which is due to His holy Name. Our tongue ought to be as the pen of a ready writer, speaking of the things we ourselves are entering into as touching our Lord Jesus Christ. See Psalm 45:1. One could easily give out a hymn, or repeat a verse of it, without having the fire burning in the soul as it ought to be. How many times we have seen it occur, that one brother exalting the worthiness of the Lamb has drawn out worship to Him, more than the repeating of hymn verses however apt these may be.—H.A.

Question. Can you suggest a good way to keep our young people in the assembly, apart from introducing things that are unscriptural, and foreign to the Word of God; such as sports, clubs, and do's, as they are called?

Answer. I do not know what "do's" are, but noting that this is associated with sports and clubs, I gather that it means doings along the same line. To properly answer this question, one would like to know just what kind of young people these are who require to be kept in the assembly, which is "the house of God", and "the pillar and ground of the truth." (1 Tim. 3:15). Some time ago I heard of the following strange remark being made; "We have a lot of nice young people in our assembly; I really believe that most of them are saved." Certainly one would not try to keep those who were not; and it might be rather difficult to keep them. An assembly of God's people is just what each one in it contributes to it. This question is one of vital importance, and a matter which ought to give concern and exercise to every brother who is a guide and an overseer in the assembly. Also to those who are parents. Perhaps the remedy begins in the home; godly training, a spiritual atmosphere in the home; sons and daughters in subjection, and a daily reading of the Word of God with the members of the household. All of this lays a good foundation. Next, a good Assembly Bible Reading, taking up subjects that will interest and instruct the young people; and conducted in such a manner that they will have a working interest and part in it. Not ignoring the young brethren when they ask questions; nor reprimanding them should they give an answer to a question asked, which might not be the best of theology. Seek to interest the young in the Gospel Hall, Sunday School, and also in opening up work amongst the children in some new district. Open air meetings), and all sorts of evangelical work or efforts by the young brethren ought to be encouraged by those who are older in the assembly. Young people with a desire to please God and to serve Him, ought not to be treated as know-nothings. Their confidence ought to be gained; their welfare should be given no small place in assembly matters. Some young people just will not be driven in these times, but they can be led on. Give them plenty to do, and make each of them feel that they are one of us. No scriptural principle need be sacrificed in all this. Try it, leading brethren; and if this will not hold them, there is something amiss in the soul.—H.A.

Question. I heard a brother recently speaking on "Faith, Hope, and Love" (1 Cor. 13:13, R.V.). In the course of his remarks he said, "There will be neither faith nor hope when we get home to heaven." Now, I can understand why there will be no hope in

heaven, because we will have realized our hope when we get there. But will there not still be faith in heaven?

Answer. Earth is the sphere for the exercising of our faith; whether it be as sinners or as saints. "For by grace are ye saved through faith," etc. (Eph. 2:8). "For we walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Cor. 5:7). "The trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth," etc. (1 Peter 1:7). "The just shall live by faith" (Heb. 10:38). "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Heb. 11:1). We see from these Scriptures that faith has to do with —

- (1) The salvation of our souls.
- (2) Our walk on earth.
- (3) Our trials while here.
- (4) Our daily life on earth.
- (5) Our future enjoyment of things not seen or entered into.

In heaven, those things we now hope for will then be fully realized and possessed. Faith will give place to sight, realization, possession and enjoyment. H. A.

SINGING THE TRUTH TO GOD

The words made use of in addressing God, whether in praise or prayer, should surely exercise the minds and consciences of His saints. How often words expressing intense devotedness to God, and entire surrender to the Lord Jesus, are flippantly sung by persons rigged out in the world's fashion, and fully in sympathy with its ways. Is this the meaning of "consecration" or of "full surrender" or of being "all for Jesus"? Alas! how the bleating of the Amalekite herds contradict the loud-sounding professions of having devoted all on God's altar. The eager haste among professed followers of the rejected One to secure positions of worldly greatness or to gain worldly honours tell how feebly they have apprehended the lessons of the Cross. God is not mocked, He will have reality. Unless we are prepared to share the rejection, the shame of the Cross and joyfully accept a place with the outcast Christ of Calvary, it is sheer hypocrisy to loudly express devotedness by our lips.

* * * *

Those who joy most in God are those who mourn most over sin.

CAMPBELLFORD, ONT.—The saints enjoyed a week of ministry by Stanley Simms. The Word was helpful and encouraging.

HENDERSON, ONT.—T. Kember and R. Harris continue Gospel meetings in this new place. Our special prayers and interest should be for the brethren who are reaching out into new territory.

ROLLET, QUE.—The Gospel series held in the assembly here by V. Davy and N. Gratton was blessed in souls trusting Christ.

QUEBEC CITY—H. McCready has been encouraged by some trusting Christ through the regular meetings held here.

SHAWINIGAN FALLS, QUE.—In visiting among the people, J. Darling was encouraged by a soul professing in a village near here.

BEDEQUE, P.E.I.—A. Ramsay and Bert Joyce have had good attendance and one professed in a portable hall.

BLOOMFIELD, P.E.I.—R. McIlwaine has rented a hall in Bloomfield and is getting a good hearing in the Gospel.

PORT BICKERTON, N.S.—J. McCracken and D. Petherick had Gospel meetings, then the latter went on to Hansford. J. McCracken had a good interest at Louisbourg helped by Sydney brethren.

SYDNEY MINES, N.S.—F. Holder is having helpful meetings with an "Egypt to Canaan" chart. Some Christians are exercised about God's gathering centre.

U.S.A.

BRYN MAWR, PA.—The conference was good and well attended. Fifteen of the Lord's servants were present and those who ministered were on plain practical lines to regulate and encourage the walk of the saints. Hector Alves and Oswald MacLeod continued with Gospel meetings.

FERNDALE, MICH.—Brother E. J. Wickert writes, "We will be returning, in the will of the Lord, to Cuba by boat from Miami on Dec. 16th, arriving in Havana on the 17th." His new address will be Apartado 1745, Havana, Cuba.

LORAIN, OHIO—The conference was a time of real blessing with ministry by Bren. Calderhead, Wickert, Lipke, Sherlock and N. Crawford, with visitors from Cleveland, Akron, Toronto, O., and Steubenville.

DETROIT, MICH.—The conference in the West Chicago Hall was a season of refreshment, with ministry to edification, exhortation and comfort. Nineteen of the Lord's servants were present and visitors from many parts.

INDIANA, PA.—A. P. Klabunda and G. Baldwin are having Gospel meetings. Please note brother Klabunda's new address, 2783 Archwood Place, Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, U.S.A.

FOREST GROVE, ORE.—L. K. McIlwaine is having meetings 100 miles from here at Springfield. His address is Box 436 Forest Grove, Ore. (The address which was given in a previous issue was only a temporary one).

WILLIAMSTON, MICH.—A. T. Stewart and Wm. Warke purposed starting Gospel meetings on December 4th.

HITESVILLE, IA.—O. Smith and L. Debuhr have seen some blessing in Hitesville.

PRAIRIE DU CHIEN, WIS.—L. H. Brandt and H. Wahls have been preaching in a school-house near here with interest.

MANCHESTER, IA.—Paul Elliott and G. McKinley have seen blessing.

DULUTH, MINN.—S. Hamilton had some interest in a farm home near here till the weather hindered. He also visited Duluth and had two weeks in Port Arthur, Ont.

EAST BOSTON, MASS.—The two-day conference was a time of blessing with good ministry and a happy spirit prevailing with about a dozen preaching the Word in English and Italian.

AKRON, OHIO—After the first of the year, the Akron assembly which met at 397 Locust St., will meet in the new hall located at 1225 Wooster Ave., Akron, Ohio.

OTHER LANDS

TALCA, CHILE—“We are living in Talca once again, having moved back last week after spending exactly a year and a half in Constitucion. We felt deeply leaving the believers in that town, but God’s time had arrived, so from now on we shall seek to help with weekly visits. Two weeks ago we had the joy of baptizing seven believers in the river at Constitucion, and a week ago last Lord’s Day we were able to sit down with the saints there for the first time to remember the Lord Jesus, in the breaking of bread. Several of the Talca brethren were present to rejoice with us. This past Lord’s day two of the young men from Talca went down, returning on Monday with a good report. This morning brother R. Hanna went down to be with the believers for the prayer and ministry meeting. There are twenty in fellowship in the little assembly there.

After having two days to get our house somewhat straightened out, brother Parada and I commenced Gospel meetings and thus far we have been cheered by seeing a splendid attendance. This is the first series in the new hall in Talca, which was finished over a year and a half ago.”
—Wm. McBride (Casilla 9, Talca, Chile).

WITH CHRIST

NIAGARA FALLS, ONT.—After an illness of several months our sister, Margaret Shillady Sherriffs, wife of Jas. Sherriffs, went home October 27th. She was born and born again in Boston, Mass., where she was in happy fellowship until she moved here in 1926. Chas. Pinches spoke the Word at the funeral.

SYDNEY MINES, N.S.—Our brother, James Thomson, passed quietly into the presence of the Lord after a long illness in which he bore faithful testimony by word and tract. He was born in Scotland in 1872 and born again in Sydney Mines in 1910 and in happy fellowship in the assembly. F. Holder and D. Sharp preached the Word at the funeral.

MERLIN, ONT.—Our brother Isaac Brown went home on Nov. 16 aged 79. He was saved as a young man and was for many years in the assembly in Merlin. The funeral was very large at which brother A. T. Stewart spoke words of comfort and preached the Gospel.

NEW YORK, N.Y.—Brother Charles Reubsam, formerly of Washington, passed suddenly into the presence of the Lord Whom He loved, on Nov. 8th, aged 42. He was saved as a young man, took a real interest in the work of the assembly, and will be missed.

SAN DIEGO, CAL.—Mrs. Thos. Robinson passed quietly into the presence of God on Nov. 21, at the age of 74 after an illness of years. She was saved at Shakespeare, Ont., in 1899 and suffered much reproach for the truth which she loved. She delighted to entertain the people of God as long as she was able. The funeral service was conducted by brethren A. Morrison and Gordon Grant, when fitting words of Gospel and comfort were spoken.

WINNIPEG, MAN.—Mrs. Mabel Harriet Bentley went home on Oct. 27, aged 63. She was in fellowship in the West End assembly for a year and a half. Brethren Keeling and Vanstone took the funeral services.

TRUTH and TIDINGS



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EDITOR ----- A. W. JOYCE, 26 Munro Blvd., Willowdale, Ont., Canada.
ASSOCIATE EDITORS --- F. G. WATSON, 92 Regal Rd., Toronto, Ont.
G. G. JOHNSTON, 140 Woodycrest Ave., Toronto, Ont.
HECTOR ALVES, 338 W. King Edward Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C.

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Since the majority of our subscriptions fall due at the end of the year, this makes December and January our busiest months. If your subscription is due, your prompt renewal will relieve us of added work, and will assure you of not missing an issue. Your co-operation in this matter will be appreciated. United States postal orders cannot be cashed in Canada unless they are marked in Canadian funds as well as U.S.A. When remitting by a small cheque, please add 15 cents for bank charges.

The bound volumes have not yet been received (January 11), from the book-binders, but as soon as we receive them we will mail to those who have sent in their orders. Further orders will be filled until the supply is exhausted. The price of the 1955 bound volume is \$2.50 post paid.

TIDINGS

VANCOUVER, B.C.—Jim Currie has been preaching the Word in various assemblies and giving accounts of the Lord's work in Japan. He sails for his field of labour in Japan on March 12, D.V.

SARNIA, ONT.—The new address of the correspondent is John Kember, 1393 Murphy Rd., Sarnia, Ont.

GORE BAY, MANITOULIN ISLAND—The work has been very encouraging during the past summer and fall. Robert Booth baptized 15 and 13 have been added to the little assembly.

TORONTO, ONT.—J. Govan and D. Moffat commenced Gospel meetings on January 8 in the Brock Ave. Hall. On account of the pressure of five Sunday schools in different districts during Sunday afternoon the brethren in the West Toronto assembly are changing the time of the Breaking of Bread from 11 a.m. to 10.30 a.m.

LINDSAY, ONT.—Local brethren from Toronto have been continuing with interest on Thursdays and Lord's Days. F. G. Watson and A. W. Joyce gave a little help.

HENDERSON, ONT.—Timothy Kember and Russell Harris are doing a good work in this new place about 60 miles north-east of Deseronto. About eight homes have opened up for the Gospel.

THINGS WHICH ARE MOST SURELY BELIEVED AMONG US

A. W. Joyce

The Word of God is filled with expressions and statements which carry with them an air of authority and assurance. This is not to be wondered at when we remember that "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God" (2 Tim. 3:16). When Luke wrote the Gospel which bears his name, there were things most surely believed by the people of God which had been taught to them orally. We learn from Luke 1:1 that many took in hand to set forth in order, in writing, a declaration of those things. From among these, God selected Matthew, Mark, Luke and John in order that we might have a full-orbed picture of the Lord Jesus Christ in His birth, life, death and resurrection as the King, the Servant, the Son of Man and the Son of God. From the many writings then extant, by an "inspiration of selection", God chose out these four accounts which had been given to His people, in which every word had been inspired and therefore was absolutely without error. Thus Luke, along with the other evangelists and apostles, was used to give us in permanent, written form the Holy Scriptures of the New Testament.

We can thank God with all our hearts therefore that

1. We have a Book which speaks with all authority.
2. We most surely believe all that is in the Book.
3. We are in a place where God's Word is not challenged.

For in spite of the fact that undoubtedly there is failure in the most Scriptural of God's assemblies, yet there is an acknowledgement that every Word of God is true, and the faithful Word of God can be ministered to rectify things that are wrong. If any company of God's people refuses to allow corrective ministry in the Spirit, that company is in grave danger of soon losing all the distinctive features of a scriptural assembly and of the presence of the Lord in the midst.

The Preaching of the Gospel

One of the things most surely believed among us is the Gospel and our responsibility to preach it, "publicly and from house to house."

The Gospel in its essence is declared to us in 1 Cor. 15:1-4, and is expounded in all its fullness in the Epistle to the Romans. Every Christian should be familiar with the great doctrines of the Gospel. It is possible, however, to have a good theoretical understanding of the Gospel and yet fail lamentably to tell it forth. How often the enthusiasm of a new convert, who knows very little more than that his sins are forgiven through the death of Christ on Calvary, puts older

Christians to shame. He is "not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ", the Name of Jesus is constantly on his lips and God uses his simple testimony to the awakening and salvation of others. It is to be feared that there is much failure among us in confessing Christ, in personal giving of Gospel tracts, and in personal invitations to our Gospel meetings. Let us go in for the knowledge of the Gospel, but do not let our knowledge outrun our enthusiasm and love for the souls of the perishing.

Unless the Gospel is regularly and faithfully preached, the title on our meeting place, "Gospel Hall", becomes a mis-nomer. Not only should the Gospel be preached each Lord's Day, but we believe every assembly should be exercised about a series of Gospel meetings nightly, at least once a year. Brethren who have been commended to the work of the Gospel are not fulfilling their ministry (Col. 4:17), if they do not keep at series of meetings constantly, as health and strength permit, not only in the more highly favoured larger centres, but among struggling little assemblies off the beaten path. Also, the custom seems to be largely dying out of endeavouring to get into a new place at least once a year and give it a good faithful try. If the Lord be not come, we believe our younger brethren who have not done this, will look back with regret when strength begins to wane, that they did not use their best years in the establishing of new work and in the planting of assemblies. Certainly they will regret it at the judgment seat of Christ.

The Positive Assurance of Eternal Love

Another of the things most surely believed among us is the eternal security of every real believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. Oftentimes, opponents of this scriptural doctrine have complained that this truth makes Christians careless in their living, as if to keep saints in doubt of their final salvation would make them more careful in their lives. Are they wiser than God? No truth of God, if rightly held, will cause us to tend toward careless living. The Apostle Paul takes up this very objection in Rom. 6, when he asks, "Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, who died (R.V.) to sin, live any longer therein." The new nature which God has implanted in the believer rebels at the thought of "turning the grace of God into lasciviousness". It could only be unconverted professors who would plan their lives according to such a principle.

The work of Christ on the Cross of Calvary assures the believer that, "It is finished". The resurrection of Christ to the right Hand of the Father proves our complete justification (Rom. 4:25). The immutable Word of God emphasizes that we are the possessors of eternal life and shall never perish (John 5:24). The present work

of Christ as the great Advocate of His people must fail, ere one of His own could be lost (1 John 2:1-2). The body of our Lord would be incomplete for the ages of eternity if one of His members missed Heaven and went to Hell. "We are members of His Body, of His Flesh, and of His Bones" (Eph. 5:30).

Instead of "the falling away doctrine" leading to a more godly life, it keeps God's children in spiritual babyhood and in torment of mind instead of enjoying perfect peace with God and the peace of God which perfect confidence brings (1 John 4:18). May this wonderful assurance lead us to a deeper appreciation of the Person and work of Christ and of the Word of God, and cause us to serve more whole-heartedly as we sing on our homeward journey:

"A debtor to mercy alone, of covenant mercy I sing,

Nor fear with God's righteousness on, my person and offerings
to bring."

(To Be Continued)

FERVENCY IN OUR PRAYERS

Let us seek earnestness and fervency in our prayers. What fervour marks the prayers recorded in Scripture! What conscious dealing with God! What refusing to be denied! How Jacob prayed, and would not let the angel go until he blessed him. These things characterized Elijah's wondrous prayers — a man, nevertheless, "subject to like passions" with ourselves. The prayers of David, of Hezekiah, of Daniel and his fellows, and of many others, were such as would admit of no denial. Of our blessed Lord Himself, we read, that "He offered up strong crying and tears," and that, "being in an agony He prayed more earnestly." Paul speaks of his "great conflict", and makes honourable mention of Epaphras, who "always laboured fervently in prayers."

* * * *

A GOOD PRAYER

O Lord, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change;
The courage to change the things I can;
And the wisdom to know the difference.

* * * *

Many preachers are more concerned about preaching the Gospel so that Christians will appreciate the message, rather than that sinners will understand it.

SOME NOTABLE CHARACTERS IN HOLY WRIT

EZRA, THE SCRIBE

G. G. Johnston

It is certain that God disciplines His people, yet His dealings are in grace and mercy. By the mouth of His prophet Jeremiah (chapter 29:10-14) He had promised "After seventy years be accomplished at Babylon, I will visit you . . . I will bring you again."

"God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform." The hearts of certain godly souls, such as Daniel (chapter 9), were deeply exercised about the state of Israel in Babylon, and more than this about the condition of the house of the Lord in Jerusalem. At the same time, the heart of Cyrus, king of Persia, was stirred up to make a proclamation throughout all his kingdom calling upon those who so desired to go up to Jerusalem to rebuild the house of the Lord.

Seventy long years had not sufficed, with many, to blot out their affection for the place where God's name could be honoured, in separation from the abominations of Babylon. While some, perhaps many, of those captives of Judah had settled down to life in Babylon, many more mourned over the separation from their land. These pined for the tabernacles of their God. They could not fully serve their God in Babylon; they must come out of her.

Some dear saints who once knew the sacred privilege of separation from the Babylonish systems, where the will of man rules, have today returned to bondage in them. They are no longer free to exercise their priesthood, as the Holy Spirit might lead. They may be satisfied thus to continue, while others are groaning under the unequal yoke and long to be free. The language of their hearts is: "Oh that we were free to worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness!"

After this first company had left Babylon and reached the land of Israel, they made an effort to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem. All seemed to go well until certain "adversaries" of the cause of revival came forward, seeking a share in the effort. The wiles of the enemy are indeed many, and often take the form of a feigned co-operation. The true character of these would-be helpers is seen when the people of God refused to allow them to share in the work.

The unconverted today are often willing to give, or to work, but when told that until they are converted they can do nothing to please God, nor can they have any share in His work, then they will do all they can to hinder, thus showing whose they are. The Jews were accused before the then ruling Artaxerxes of rebuilding a rebellious city and of setting up the walls thereof, which latter was not then true.

The work was stopped by order from Babylon, and it seemed as though the whole movement would result in failure. But God has His men and His means. Two prophets, Haggai and Zechariah, come on the scene, encouraging the feeble remnant to renew the work, and assuring their opponents that they had received due authority from the late king Cyrus to do it. What an influence for good were those two godly prophets! Are we helping forward what is of God, or are we among the adversaries who object to the strengthening of the outside position?

Another band of exercised Jews was stirred up to leave Babylon for Judea, with the godly scribe, Ezra, as their leader. It is said of him that "he had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments." That there was great need for such teaching is evident, as we read the succeeding chapters. Though the Jews had left Babylon, they were mixed up in unholy marriages in the land. There is always much about which we need to be taught and exhorted, even when we occupy the outside place of separation from the denominations of men. What about our ways? Are we definitely seeking to please the Lord in all things, or are we living much as do those who are strangers to God?

This fresh revival met with serious difficulty upon discovering the state of those who had previously come up from Babylon. However, there was room for the Word of the Lord among them, and they were prepared to obey it at all costs. Are we? There was trembling at the Word of God, confession and forsaking of sin, and real recovery as a result. All true revival has been costly, but it has paid good dividends.

Ezra the scribe and teacher of Israel saw the fruit of his exercise and toil in a purified people, separated not only positionally but also conditionally, a people who now "trembled at the commandment," a people whose desire was to serve the Lord.

Are we truly desirous also of a right position, and not only so but of a proper condition as well?

ELECTION

I will leave God's side to God, and He can look after it well. I am responsible for my side — to preach Christ to every man. And every sinner is responsible for his side — to repent and believe the Gospel.

* * * *

When you can shake the Cross, then, then only, you can shake the peace the Cross has brought to me.

A CHRISTIAN SCHOOL-GIRL'S ESSAY

Recently, in one of the Junior High Schools in the U.S.A., a teacher asked the class, without previous preparation, to write an essay on "The person who has influenced my life more than any other" (apart from parents). J—— felt very nervous, her teacher was a worldly young woman. Would she resent the subject and penalize her on her marks? J—— lifted up her heart to the Lord and began to write.

His Death Made Me Choose Life

During his life he always did his best to help me be the kind of girl he wanted me to become. But it wasn't his life and all he did for my good then that I am writing about. It was his death. His death led me to do the most important thing in my life.

It was the death of my grandfather that woke me up to the fact that I was a sinner going to Hell, and if it were I who were dead instead of him, that is where I would be. I knew that grandfather had accepted Christ as his Saviour as a boy over in Ireland, and he had always warned and entreated me to do as he had done. However, in the past I always thought there was plenty of time, I was young, and these things were for older people. But it was his death (though I had been expecting it for over a year) that brought it so clearly before me.

I went to the funeral and stayed with his family, but was as one in a daze. I wanted to be saved more than anything else. I did not, or could not mourn for him properly until later. I could not even shed a tear, for when something hurts or grieves me very deeply I cannot cry.

When I returned home the next night, I saw, as grandfather had seen at my age, for the first time, that when Christ was on the Cross, during the three hours of darkness, after man had done his worst to Him, then God laid all my sins on Him. He bore my punishment, and by trusting Him I would be free from them all. "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree." I knew then that I was saved. Since then I have tried (though I have failed many times), to live as he and my Saviour, with Whom grandfather is now, would have me.

With fear and trembling J—— handed in her paper. The result? When her paper was returned it was marked "A plus" and the teacher's written comment was, "I think this is your best piece of work so far this year! Keep it up."

May some other Christian girls be encouraged by the reading of this paper to confess Christ and not be ashamed of their best Friend.

DEVELOPMENTS IN THE BOOK OF THE ACTS

A. McShane, N. Ireland

Assembly Principles

The Acts being an historical book, is naturally not the place in our Bibles where we should look for preceptive teaching; nevertheless, the record of apostolic practices contained in it are of inestimable value, and were written for our learning and example. Few will question the old maxim, "Apostolic practice is equal to apostolic teaching". The principles which obtained in the early church have neither been modified nor abrogated, and any departure from them can only lead to confusion, such as already exists in Christendom. It is therefore important that we should be acquainted with these first principles, especially those which have to do with corporate testimony. We suggest that in the book of Acts there is a gradual development of these church matters, the main features of which we purpose tracing in our present paper. Before attempting this, however, it might be wise to restate that the Church period of the Acts was transitional, and for this reason discernment is needed in distinguishing between what was Jewish and temporary, such as the visiting of the Temple, the bestowal of sign gifts, etc., and what was permanent and for our example.

Notwithstanding the fact that most of the twelve apostles were Galileans, the Lord was pleased to retain them at Jerusalem, and to plant the first local testimony in that city. Thus the place of His rejection became the first centre for the display of His grace and power. The early chapters of the book of the Acts are an account of the practices and experiences of this church. We learn from chapter 2 that it was composed of those who had repented of their sin, received the gospel, submitted to baptism and had been added to the fellowship. This new community was directed solely by the apostles' teaching and habitually met together for the purposes of breaking bread and offering prayer. These RUDIMENTARY ASSEMBLY PRINCIPLES, operating as they do from the beginning of the Church period, are vitally important, so much so that no company that fails to hold each and all of them can claim to conform to the New Testament pattern. Almost thirty years later, we find Paul seeking to put right the saints at Corinth in these very matters; for it will be recalled that they had gone wrong in their fellowship (1 Cor. 1-4), in their behaviour at the breaking of bread meeting (1 Cor. 11:23-34), and in the apostles' doctrine which, of course, included the gospel (1 Cor. 15). What should be particularly noted is that although the Corinthian church was mainly Gentile in background,

the pattern was not modified nor the standard of truth lowered to suit the new surroundings.

Closely linked with the elementary principles we have been considering is another aspect of early church testimony, namely, **SOCIAL SYMPATHY**. Class distinctions, so emphasized in Jewish circles, had melted away in the hearts of the believers by the power of the indwelling Spirit. Food for the needy was provided by their more fortunate brethren, and when persecution arose and material needs increased, those blessed with possessions sold out, and distributed the proceeds to the poor. Later, when the burden of this business became too great for the apostles, deacons were appointed to take charge of the allocation of the funds. In chapter 11 a still further development is seen in this love of the saints, for the Gentiles of Antioch, moved with sympathy towards their Jewish brethren, sent by the hands of Barnabas and Saul a gift for their relief. It would seem that God providentially ordered the circumstances of the saints in Judea, so that they were sufficiently humble to appreciate the fellowship of Gentile believers, and thus the trials became a means of removing the barriers that had formerly existed between these two peoples. The Jews carried the treasure of the gospel to the Gentiles and received in return the material things which they sorely needed.

Towards the end of the book of the Acts this sympathy amongst believers is seen to reach even to higher heights. We learn from chapter 24:17 that one of the chief purposes of Paul's last visit to Jerusalem was to bring to his brethren an offering from the churches both of Europe and Asia. No greater symbol of the power of the gospel could he have taken with him than this love gift, and it must have been a thrilling moment in his life when he laid it down at the apostles' feet.

Although prosperity in many lands may have removed some of the distress from amongst saints, we must remember the Lord's words: "the poor ye have with you always". It is therefore an abiding principle of church testimony that funds for the needy should be provided by their more wealthy brethren, and even if the need is in lands far removed from us, our duty to send relief by accredited brethren is none the less binding.

The fulness of joy and warmth of zeal which characterised the church at Jerusalem did not prevent it from exercising care in the important matter of **RECEPTION**. Assemblies are expected to grow numerically as well as spiritually and should always be concerned that the Lord may add to them those whom He has saved. During the

early Acts period, God's manifest presence and power amongst His own, coupled with the cost of being identified with the saints, helped to preserve the testimony from being intruded upon by unreal converts. In light of this fact, the wisdom and caution of the apostles in the case of the reception of Saul (Acts 9:26-29) is all the more striking. Had some of them learned from their visit to Samaria (ch. 8) that it was possible for one still "in the bond of iniquity" to be baptised and seek the company of the saints? It will be recalled that Saul had returned to Jerusalem, but was unknown as a believer to the church of that city. Had reception been on the principle of one's own responsibility, all he had to do was to walk in and take his place amongst the disciples. But no, the apostles were not taking any risks. They wanted proof of his conversion and of his sincerity in seeking their fellowship. Saul's credentials for a place amongst them were all that could be desired. First of all, he had a clear experience of salvation, (op. "seen the Lord in the way"); secondly, he had a good testimony (op. "spake in the name of the Lord Jesus"); and thirdly, he sought full fellowship (op. "he was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem"). If these simple but vital principles were kept in mind by assemblies when considering candidates for reception, much sorrow and pain would be spared us.

ISRAEL AND THE CHURCH

Part 9

THE PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS

Wm. Hoste

The priesthood, as generally recognized in Christendom, is a distinct official class enjoying peculiar privileges, and exercising certain functions which without their intervention cannot be performed.

When we turn to the Acts and Epistles we see at once how great is the contrast between all this and the simplicity and spirituality of the Divine order of the Church.

The priesthood, sacrifices, and holy places of the old dispensation were but "figures of the true". Those who frame their worship on the Jewish model are putting back the clock 2,000 years, and are turning from the substance to the shadow. As we have seen, no Israelite could be at once a soldier, a Levite, and a priest, but every Christian is all three. He is a soldier in his conflict with Satan and the world. He is a Levite in his ministry to the Church and his fellow-men. He is a priest in his worship to God. This is the highest privilege, and it does not belong to some separate caste in the Church of

God, to "the clergy" or to some human order of priests. All believers are priests. "Ye also," writes the apostle Peter to all believers, "as living stones are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 2:5).

Then, again, the apostle John, writing to the seven churches in Asia, representative of the whole church of Christ, ascribes glory to Jesus Christ in these terms, "Unto Him that loveth us and loosed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father, to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen!" (Rev. 1:5, 6, R.V.).

All who by faith are regenerated by the Holy Spirit are born into the priestly family, both those who fail, like Nadab and Abihu, and those who are faithful, like Eleazar and Ithamar. A sinner who believes is not only forgiven, he is constituted a worshipper. There is no order of high priests or of officiating priests recognized in the Acts and Epistles as distinguished from the rank and file of Christians. Not one mention is made from 1 Cor. 11 to 1 Cor. 14 of any official class of presiding persons corresponding to the modern "clergy". We have "a High Priest over the house of God", "Jesus the Son of God" (Heb. 4:14, 10:21), and there is not another. When we read in the Acts "that a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith," it simply means that a number of Jewish priests became believers in the Lord Jesus, and so *ipso facto* priests of the heavenly order.

I well remember the interest of a young converted Jew in Paris, of the name of Cohen (priest), when told that, claiming as he did to belong by natural birth to the one family whom God had recognized as earthly priests, he had now through faith in Christ become a spiritual priest to God. It will be seen at once that if all believers are priests, one class among them should not be distinguished from the rest by a special dress, title, food, or privileges. All such pretensions are but a counterfeit and sham; a denial of the spiritual character of the dispensation in which we live.

There are three things constantly confounded, but essentially different — oversight, gift and priesthood.

(1) *Oversight* is the work of the bishop (bishop is only a corruption of the Greek word *episcopos* — one who oversees) or overseer, called also elder in Acts 20:28, where the apostle, speaking to the elders of Ephesus, says, "The flock . . . over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers" (bishops). A bishop may be gifted as an evangelist or teacher, and so "labour in the Word or doctrine" (1 Tim.

5:17), but this is not essential to his position as overseer, which depends rather on his character and experience as a Christian, and on the possession of certain qualities and graces rather than on the possession of a gift properly so-called.

No young believer is called to the work of oversight in the Church of God, nor are all old believers either. All who "stretch forth" to this work (not office) of oversight should weigh themselves solemnly in the light of 1 Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus 1:7-9.

(2) Then as to *Gift*. Though all believers are called to some service (at any rate to be "helps" (1 Cor. 12:28) if nothing else), and so may be viewed from this point of view as "Levites", yet all are not gifted in the sense of Eph. 4:11 — all are not evangelists, nor yet pastors and teachers. It is a serious abuse when a brother, under cover of his priestly liberty for worship, insists on inflicting unprofitable ministry on the assembly. Liberty as to priesthood, does not in itself qualify a man to edify the saints. For this the Spirit will use those who are gifted for this service. Those who are thus gifted are to be known by their work, rather than by the title of their gift. It is somewhat cold comfort for a flock to learn that a certain man is to be called "Shepherd So and So," if he does not give them anything to eat. We never read of Dr. Paul or of Pastor Barnabas, much less of the Reverend Silas or of his lordship Bishop Timothy of Ephesus, but we know what these men were by their works.

(3) When we come to *Priesthood* it is different. Not all believers are bishops, nor have all received distinct gifts, but all are priests unto God. All have not the same spiritual energy, nor the same preparedness of soul for the exercise of their priesthood, but all have "received the anointing oil", and all are priests in the same sense and with the same title. What more blessed sight on earth than a redeemed company around the table of the Lord worshipping the one Father as a holy priesthood. and what more glorifying to God? Any one who dares to intervene between his fellow-believers and God, as an intermediary priest, is setting on one side the High Priesthood of Christ, quenching the action of the Holy Spirit, and infringing on the liberty of his fellow-priests. One man priesthood is a dishonour to Christ, the death-knell of spiritual worship, and the bane of Christendom.

Our responsibility is to come back to the Word. We have nothing to do with what we see around us in the world.

LEPROSY

Wm. Williams

There is much said about leprosy in the Word of God. Many details are given about how it was to be detected, and many instructions as to the cleansing of the leper. Leprosy is a type of sin in its secret and unseen working, and also in its open, outward, gruesome manifestation. To be smitten with leprosy was a living death.

There are three cases where leprosy was sent as the punishment of sin to which we wish to call your attention.

1. The case of Miriam for evil speaking, in Numbers 12.
2. The sin of Uzziah for presumption, in 2 Chron. 26:19.
3. The case of Gehazi for covetousness, in 2 Kings 5:27.

Much has been written and spoken about the sin of evil speaking. It is the besetting sin of many a Christian. Very often, evil speaking is the outcome of envy and jealousy, as in the case of Miriam. It is very sad that the young lassie who stood by her brother and watched until Pharaoh's daughter came and adopted him; the same Miriam, who, when grown up, could lead the praises of her sisters after the Red Sea crossing, has now in her old age become a grievous critic of the very brother she loved and served in her younger days. How often have those who were good men or women in their early life become old, crotchety, critical and cross.

Jealousy is surely "cruel as the grave". It spares no one, and vents its spleen very often on the innocent. In this case we read, "And the Lord heard it." God hears unjust criticism. We love to think that God hears prayer, but we wish that He would turn a deaf ear to our criticisms. Now whether Moses did right or wrong in marrying the coloured woman is beside the point. Miriam had no right to find fault with her brother and God punished her with leprosy. How many lepers would there be today if God visited all evil speakers against the Lord's servants with the plague of leprosy? What grace Moses showed when he prayed for his sister! What mercy God showed when he healed her! But God's forgiveness does not mean God's indulgence. "One sinner destroyeth much good." The whole camp was held up for seven days.

How many assemblies are at a standstill through evil speaking? We quote from a letter we had from a brother the other week. — "Another source of strife is the fact that one of the sisters is well taught in the Word of God and stands firmly for the truth, but alas, she has grown more in knowledge than in grace." Christians who are not conditionally right do more harm than good to the truth when they harp on being positionally right. There is no use in a person standing hard for the truth if he is not right in his character

and life. Nor are "arm-chair" critics any good who do nothing themselves by way of example but just sit down and criticize others whose ways are unscriptural. There are too many today "at ease in Zion", they are in the right place and know it, but they have settled down on their lees and are a stumbling block to the truth of the Word of God.

We now come to the case of Uzziah. His history is a little oasis in the barren history of the kings of Judah at that time. How sad to read, "And his name spread far abroad; for he was marvellously helped, till he was strong. But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction; for he transgressed against the Lord his God, and went into the temple of the Lord to burn incense upon the altar of incense" (2 Chron. 26:15-16). There were men of God who counted God's order and honour before their personal safety. However, pride filled the heart of King Uzziah. He would brook no contradiction and was angry with the priests. He had the censer in his hand and he would use it. But now God smites him with leprosy that rose up in his forehead, the priests thrust him out and God made him willing to go. He dwelt in a leper's house and was cut off from the house of God. How dreadful is presumptuous sin! "Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults. Keep back Thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me" (Psalm 19:12-13).

The vast religious systems around us are honeycombed with presumptuous sins, from the proud, pretentious Pope down to the Bible School prepared "pastor". God has still an order, and only God's choice of men can carry out that order. All ecclesiastical titles are the sin of presumption and should be avoided by the saints.

Lastly, we come to the leprosy of Gehazi. The leprosy of Miriam lasted a week, that of Uzziah until his death, but the leprosy of Gehazi not only ruined him, but it clave unto him and his seed forever. How solemn! The leprosy of Gehazi speaks of covetousness — that insidious sin so hard to detect, like leprosy. This sin may be latent for years before some act brings it to the surface. Covetousness means to "love more"; not content with what God has given, but always ready to get gain, covered, if possible, by a religious pretence. Balaam was a gifted man undoubtedly, but for filthy lucre he was ready to sell his gift to Balak. How many today have gifts from God but they sell them "for a larger sphere of usefulness," as they say. The Lord help us to be content with such things as we have. To depend on God is the essence of Christian service, to depend on man, or any group or committee of men, is the bane and blight of the soul. "My soul wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from Him" (Psalm 62:5).

ABOUT THE WAY WE TAKE THINGS

Mervyn Paul

Ignored . . . Pushed off . . . Shoved aside . . . Shut out . . . Lonely . . . Longing to fly away from it all! If the reader should know of any Christian to whom these words might apply, then this message is for him, for her . . . of whatever age.

Very much I should like (were it possible) to begin by telling you a few real-life stories of some of the Lord's dear ones who, even while you are reading this, are suffering from grievous frustration. In some cases these stories commenced in early childhood when there were unsatisfactory parents, children unwanted, poverty, hardship. From such beginnings they struggled on up into later youth; they got saved, then married, only to experience more poverty with its endless struggle to keep out of debt. But "hope springs eternal in the human breast." If Childhood, Youth, Married life have all been disappointments, perhaps (they reason) when the children have grown up, and have married, things will be different. So it is that when the family has grown up and married (and have things so very much nicer and easier than ever we could have!), life's cup of bitterness seems filled to over-flowing when the same old pattern emerges once more; Ignored . . . Pushed off . . . Shoved aside . . . Shut out . . . and Lonely . . . and feeling a gnawing resentment.

But before I write another sentence, if the reader should know of any to whom these words might apply, whether in Youth's unsatisfied days, or in Married Life's disillusionment and endless demands, or in Later Life's disappointments and unwantedness, let me ask you to tell them that there is a happy "way out".

If they will read Luke 2:10-12 they will realize that likely there were a number of babies wrapped in swaddling bands to be found in the great crowds gathered in Bethlehem at that time. But there was only One which would be found lying in a manger. This was to be their sign — surely a symbolic sign that, in full agreement with Isa. 53:3, was to be seen so often throughout His sojourn among men: Ignored . . . Pushed off . . . Shoved aside . . . Shut out . . . But NOT lonely, NOT frustrated, and without a particle of resentment!

Do we wonder — remembering the power of His Deity, and the greatness of His condescension when He "became in the likeness of men" in order to redeem us — do we wonder how He could take things as He did?

In John 4:34, speaking as Jehovah's perfect Servant, He gives us the answer, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me" . . .

the servant-attitude that made Him (and can make us, also) completely proof against such things as Frustration, Resentments, Conflicts, Depression, and resultant Nervous Tension.

Your attitudes, my attitudes, every body's attitudes — these are the things that condition our lives (including Temperament and Character) and so make or mar them. For example, suppose someone "snubs" or otherwise humiliates me. You will see at once that the effect on me will depend on how I take such treatment. If my attitude is one of "don't care" my reaction will not be the same as if I should take the mental position, "Who does he think he is? I'll show him he can't do that to me!" It will be different, also, if I conclude, "Well, I deserved it;" and still more so if I shall take David's attitude toward Shimei, "Let him alone, and let him curse; for the Lord hath hidden him!" 2 Sam. 16:11.

These four possible reactions resulting from differing attitudes should be enough, I hope, to help my readers to think still further about the very great importance of Attitudes in the business of Christian living. For *it's the way we take things* that so often decides whether or not, we shall recognize our loving Heavenly Father's hand in all our troubles . . . or shall tumble into one of Satan's snares, such as the Frustrations — Boredom — Resentment triad, with spirits very, very low because we are Ignored . . . Pushed off . . . Shoved aside . . . Shut out . . . Lonely.

Now, as I have said, there is possible a blessed release from such weariness. But I must warn our readers that it just isn't likely to come the way so many of us think it ought to come — by a change in our circumstances! In fact when these continue to be what we consider unfavourable, unfair or unbearable, we can make up our minds that they are that way because God intends to make a change, **NOT IN THEM, BUT IN US;** Rev. 3:19 with Matt. 11:29-30.

To say it bluntly: He seeks to teach us by experience that the happy, easy life so many of us desire is not at all His will for us. Indeed, were we to achieve it, it would be but an empty shell. *For release from frustration tensions cannot be wholly gained through the fulfilment of the wishes of our wills;* Eccl. 1:8. It does come, fully and blessedly, when we abandon the struggle to get what we want, and set ourselves to seek, unreservedly, to "**LIVE THE REST OF THE TIME . . . TO THE WILL OF GOD;**" (1 Pet. 4:2).

Let me try once more to tell you, briefly, what can be done about it . . . and don't forget Matt. 11:30:

(1) We can overcome Complaining by practising the Grace of Acceptance; Matt. 11:26.

(2) We can "set to our seal" that *at all times, and in everything*, "Ye serve the Lord Christ" (Col. 3:17, 23-24) . . . and so bring ourselves into the servant-attitude so blessedly seen in our Master . . . counting our entire lives as being lived unto Himself, no matter how disagreeable, or unjust, or hard-to-bear He may permit the conditions of such service to be. It would be wise to memorize Col. 3:17, 23-24, so that their counsel shall be available at all times.

(3) We should make it a habit to seek our Master's face every morning (Prov. 8:34; Isa. 50:4-5) in order to learn from Him what He wishes us to do that day. When we have prayed, let us not jump up and run away, but stay on silently before Him (Psa. 46:10) and so give the Holy Spirit a chance to form in our minds His directions; Prov. 27:18; Psa. 73:24; Neh. 9:20a.

He may bring before us some passage from the Word that will teach us His way. Or we may be reminded of some neglected duties; or He may set before us some particular need, or send us on an errand. To an invalid He may impart some of His thoughts to be passed on to others. It would be impossible to suggest all the possibilities. But in thus allowing Him to direct our everyday steps, our Attitude towards Himself changes into a servant - Master relationship in which He assumes all responsibility for the direction and management of our lives. And it is in this way, in which we are seeking *to accept everything* as from Himself, and are *doing everything* as unto Himself, that the old sense of being Ignored, Pushed off, Shoved aside, Shut out and Lonely, with all the Frustration-resentments, will fade away. Even hateful tasks, or weary waiting, will be replaced by a new realization of Purpose and Achievement. And "the reason why" all the unhappiness was permitted will be recognized as His method of altering our attitudes — "for the rest of the time".

The mention of Thy Name shall bow
 Our hearts to worship Thee,
 The chiefest of ten thousand Thou,
 The chief of sinners, we.

* * * *

Take time to pray, before the day
 Goes on its full and busy way,
 Let God be first — it is His time,
 The day will ring a happy chime,
 Take time to pray, before Him lay
 The precious gift of each new day,
 Give up yourself to Him anew,
 Ask Him to guide the whole way through.

THE MAN AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART

Leslie C. Garnham

Recently we read in a magazine, "Many have been puzzled to know for what particular reason God speaks of David as 'a man after His own heart!'" (1 Sam. 13:14). Mr. Newberry in his translation prefers to render this portion thus, "The Lord hath sought Him a man after His own heart, and the Lord hath commanded him to be *leader* over His people."

In the word of the Lord through Ahijah to Jeroboam we read in 1 Kings 11:34, "I will make him prince all the days of his life, for David My servant's sake, whom I chose, *because he kept My commandments and My statutes*. This is also emphasized in verses 33 and 38. This is in contrast to 1 Sam. 15:23 where Samuel said to Saul, "*Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, He hath also rejected thee from being king.*"

GOD SETS GREAT VALUE ON OBEDIENCE TO HIS WORD.

Again, we read in 1 Samuel 2:35, "I will raise Me up a faithful priest that shall do according to that which is in Mine heart and My mind, and I will build him a sure house: and he shall walk before Mine anointed forever." This was spoken by a "man of God" verse 27, to Eli in rebuke, because his sons *disobeyed* the Word of the Lord, both in their public service (1 Sam. 2:13-17, 28-29), and in their private lives (vs. 22).

The Lord rewarded Jehu (2 Kings 10:30 with the promise, "thy children of the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel," the reason given was "because thou hast done well in executing that which is *right in Mine eyes*, and hast done . . . according to *all that was in Mine heart.*" (Well would it have been for Jehu had he only continued in the path of obedience).

SHEPHERD CARE OVER THE PEOPLE OF GOD

Another thing that is in the heart of God (Jere. 3:15), "I will give you pastors *according to Mine heart*, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding." David was a true shepherd for we read, "He chose David also his servant, and took him from the sheepsfolds . . . He brought him to feed Jacob His people and Israel His inheritance. So he fed them according to the integrity of his heart; and guided them by the skilfulness of his hands" (Psalm 78:70-72).

Two outstanding things in the life of David then are, *his obedience to the commandments of the Lord* and *his care for the people of God*. If the point is raised about David's great sin, another thing might be added — his broken-hearted confession and repentance, plus his life-long submission to the chastening Hand of the Lord which fell upon him and his family as the result of his fall.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question. It was stated recently that "Christ did not atone for our sins". That the word "atonement" in Rom. 5:11 ought to be translated "reconciliation". Would it not be right to say that Christ has made atonement for our sins? Please take this up in the magazine, both for my help, and that of others.

Answer. "Atonement" is an Old Testament word. In the Authorized Version it is found only once in the New Testament; "By whom we have now received the atonement" (Rom. 5:11). The word in the margin, and in most other good translations is "reconciliation". "Atonement" in the Old Testament is from the Hebrew word "kaphar", which means "to cover". In Gen. 6:14 we read concerning Noah and the building of the ark; "and shall pitch it within and without with pitch." The word there is "kaphar"; he "kaphared" the ark; that is, covered it with pitch. God, on the great Day of Atonement, (Lev. 16) covered over His peoples' sins year by year. However, to say that "Christ did not atone for sin" would be wrong. Using the word "atonement" in the New Testament, we would get the meaning by breaking the word in English into three parts, at-one-ment. That is exactly what our Lord accomplished on the cross; He brought the sinner and God at-one-ment. Man reconciled to God. But it would be better to speak of His death as that of expiation, and propitiation, rather than that of atonement. The child of God has received more than atonement through the death of Christ on the cross; he has been fully justified, cleared of all guilt; not simply forgiven, or having his sins covered over. We sing, "The atoning work is done," etc. That is quite true, but it is only part of the truth; there has been infinitely more than atonement accomplished by our Lord's death on the cross. In present day English the meaning of propitiation has been attached to the word "atonement". Christ has sins, He has completely cleared us before God. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." Rom. 8:33.—H.A.

Question. I have read your answer in the October number, regarding the question of a closed platform, at Conference meetings. Would you please go into the subject a little further? Do you not think that the open platform gives opportunity for unqualified, as well as disqualified men to occupy time to no profit? Does not the pre-arrangement of speakers save us from this affliction?

Answer. In the earlier years of our assembly life, such a question as this would never have been raised; much less would such a thing have been practised. The fear of God was prevalent in our Conference gatherings, and the Holy Spirit generally had His way un-

hindered, and ungrieved. But today we freely acknowledge the truth of what our correspondent states, that unqualified men do, at times, take advantage of the open platform. But we do not believe that a human arrangement is a remedy, nor does it assure God-given ministry. Two wrongs do not make a right, either in the sight of God or man. To close the platform and appoint speakers, giving each an allotted time, may keep the man with little or no ability to speak, off the platform; but it would not guarantee ministry suited to the present need of those who are gathered together "before God, to hear all things that are commanded of God." (Acts 10:32). There likely would be exercise of heart on the part of some of the Lord's servants present, but such an arrangement would exclude them, and prohibit them from giving their message.

Regarding public ministry, there appears to be two principles set forth in the New Testament.

(1) Acts 14:27. "And when they (Paul and Barnabas) were come and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how He had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles." With this example before us, it is quite scriptural for any servant, or servants of the Lord, to arrange for meetings for the ministry of the Word, and for such meetings to be wholly in their hands. They bring the saints together, and are fully responsible for the ministry. Others may be praying for them, that the right messages may be given, and help from God to deliver them.

(2) In 1 Corinthians 14:23-33 we have an altogether different principle. Verse 23, "the whole church is come together into one place." Verse 19, the speaking is "in the church". Verse 26, there is no pre-arrangement; "each of you hath a psalm (or hymn) hath a doctrine (teaching), . . . hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying." Verses 29-30, "Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge. If anything be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace." A careful reading of 1 Corinthians chapters 12 and 14 shows clearly that this will give place for the Lordship of Christ, and leave room for the leading and guiding of the Holy Spirit. A recognition of these divine principles will not guarantee that all will be done to edification, for the flesh we have always with us; but we do believe that these scriptural principles are still workable, and we have seen them work again and again. A chairman on the platform, arranged speakers, and announced time limits, and in some cases announced subjects at Conference Meetings, all tell a sad story, a confession that God's order is unworkable.

We would state again, if there seems to be the danger of any brother being obtrusive, or of occupying the time to no profit, it

would be quite within the scope of, "Let all things be done unto edifying" (1 Cor. 14:26), for two or more of the brethren responsible for the Conference, to take such an one apart quietly, and in the spirit of meekness bring him the advisability of his keeping off the platform at such a time.—H.A.

NOTES ON SCRIPTURAL HYMNS AND THEIR WRITERS

Hector Alves

"Come ye, who bow to sovereign grace,
Record Immanuel's love;
Join in a song of grateful praise
To Him who lives above."

This hymn is from the pen of Charles Haddon Spurgeon, sometimes called "the prince of preachers". So much has been written about this man that there is little need to rehearse it here. Born at Kelvedon, Essex, England, he began to preach at the age of sixteen. In the life of this great preacher, hymn writing is not outstanding; although he did write a few good hymns. The above is the only one of them found in *The Believers Hymn Book*. Also well known amongst us is —

"Amidst us our Beloved stands,
And bids us view His pierced hands;
Points to His wounded feet and side,
Blest emblems of the Crucified."

frequently sung when sitting around the Lord's Table.

His Prayer Meeting hymn is often sung —

"The Holy Ghost is here,
Where saints in prayer agree;
As Jesus' parting gift — is near
Each pleading company."

C. H. Spurgeon died at Mentone, France, Jan. 31, 1892. Funeral services were held on Feb. 11 in the Metropolitan Tabernacle, London, where he had so faithfully ministered the Word during the greater part of his lifetime. On his coffin lay an open Bible. The sides of the hearse bore the text, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." (2 Tim. 4:7).

DESERONTO, ONT.—G. P. Taylor had a setback by a serious attack of pneumonia besides the heart trouble. He is slowly recovering. Hector Alves had an appreciated visit for five nights.

VALLEYFIELD, QUE.—Cottage meetings held each week here and at Farnham by B. Grainger, using the "Two Roads" in French are encouraging to the believers and some unsaved come out regularly.

SHAWINIGAN FALLS, QUE.—N. Gratton and V. Davey purpose having a series of meetings in January.

NORANDA, QUE.—Jim Smith is having some cottage meetings.

CLEMENTSVALE, N.S. — Exceptionally heavy snowstorms have hindered work in the Maritimes. J. McCracken expected to start meetings in Westbrook but has been hindered by his wife's illness.

LOUISBURG, N.S.—Fred Holder had a few meetings, one professed. He expected to visit Baddeck and Halifax.

OXFORD, N.S.—D. Petherick is following up the work, interest continues.

BLOOMFIELD, P.E.I.—R. McIlwaine helped by L. Mackenzie had to close meetings on account of snow-blocked roads. One man professed.

BRISTOL, CONN.—C. Patrizio was encouraged in Gospel meetings. Two boys professed. He also visited Hoboken, N.J. and Jersey City.

BRYN MAWR, PA.—O. L. MacLeod and Hector Alves had well attended Gospel meetings which went on right through the holiday season and a number professed to be saved. The latter expected to have some meetings in Bridgeport, Conn.

AKRON, OHIO—The brethren have moved into a fine commodious new hall and had well attended opening meetings on January 1 and 2. L. E. McBain, S. Mick and A. W. Joyce ministered the Word. The latter two remained a short time for further ministry. Word has just been received that brother Ross Campbell, who worked hard on the new hall, has suffered a stroke and is in a critical condition. Pray for him.

PRAIRIE DU CHIEN, WIS.—L. Brandt and H. Wahls had meetings in a school-house till December 23rd, with some blessing to saved and unsaved.

HITESVILLE, IA.—Well attended, good meetings were held over the New Year.

CEDAR FALLS, IA.—O. Smith and P. Elliott have started in a school-house.

GARNAVILLO, IA.—J. Gray is having a few ministry meetings.

WILMAR, MINN.—L. DeBuhr intends visiting here to help the young in Christ who have been reached during the past few years.

CYLINDER, IA.—S. Hamilton is preaching to saved and unsaved.

SEATTLE, WASH.—Bro. Peacock was here for some appreciated ministry meetings and was joined by L. K. McIlwaine.

NEW ADDRESS

The address of the correspondent for Bridgeport is now, Samuel Rainey, 202 Colony St., Stratford, Conn.

LOS ANGELES, CAL.—The West Jefferson conference was one of the best we have had. Seven of the Lord's servants ministered the Word with freshness and power. Many assemblies were represented. S. Maxwell remained for some meetings.

CAMDEN, N.J.—The conference held at Haddon Heights was well attended and ten of the Lord's servants ministered the Word to the profit of all. There was an excellent spirit in the meetings and the Gospel also was faithfully proclaimed. After, Jas. McCullough had a few meetings in Barrington and George Graham in Camden.

VENEZUELA—Our brother, Wm. Williams, writes of having four months of happy service for the Lord with Sr. Naranjo and they saw the Hand of the Lord with them in a real way. They were preparing for the 41st conference in Puerto Cabello.

CONFERENCES

MANCHESTER, CONN.—The annual conference will be held, D.V., March 30, 31 and April 1 in the Masonic Temple, E. Center St., Manchester at 10.30 a.m. and 2.30 and 7 p.m. Prayer meeting will be in the Gospel Hall, 415 Center St., at 7.30 p.m., March 29. Corr. Wm. McBride, 98 Church St., Manchester, Conn.

WITH CHRIST

VANCOUVER, B.C.—Our brother, Alexander McGregor, passed into the presence of the Lord in his 90th year on October 26, 1955. He was formerly in fellowship in Brandon, Man., then in Vancouver, latterly in the South Main assembly. He maintained a good testimony to the end. G. Campbell and J. Harris spoke the Word at the funeral.

CALGARY, ALTA.—On December 18th, our esteemed brother in the Lord, Frank Matheson, departed to be with Christ in his 89th year. A steady, God-fearing man who will be greatly missed in the assembly at West Hillhurst.

ROCHESTER, N.Y.—Frank Perrott passed quietly into the Lord's presence on December 22, with a heart attack. He was born in 1885 in Devonshire, England, and born again at the age of 16. He was in fellowship in York, N.Y., a faithful brother who will be missed.

TORONTO, ONT.—Our sister, Miss Hilda Croker, who had been an invalid for years, passed quietly into the Lord's presence on January 7. She had a good testimony, was a patient sufferer, and was a diligent tract distributor from her sick-bed. A. W. Joyce spoke to saved and unsaved at the funeral.

TRUTH and TIDINGS

BEHOLD I HAVE SET BEFORE THEE AN OPEN DOOR

THOU
HAST
A
LITTLE
STRENGTH

AND
HAST
KEPT
MY
WORD

AND HAST NOT DENIED
MY NAME

Rev. 3:8

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EDITOR ----- A. W. JOYCE, 26 Munro Blvd., Willowdale, Ont., Canada.
ASSOCIATE EDITORS --- F. G. WATSON, 92 Regal Rd., Toronto, Ont.
G. G. JOHNSTON, 140 Woodycrest Ave., Toronto, Ont.
HECTOR ALVES, 338 W. King Edward Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C.

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NEW ADDRESSES

Correspondent for the Kensington Ave. Assembly—Mr. N. Davidson,
206 Rosedale Ave., Hamilton, Ont., Canada.

New correspondent of the Grace Gospel Hall Assembly—Mr. Hiram
N. Williams, 1445 W. 112th Place, Chicago 43, Ill., U.S.A.

TIDINGS

SAULT STE MARIE, ONT.—We had 3 weeks' ministry meetings
by J. Gray which were greatly appreciated. The saints were helped.
We also had Charles Fleming from N. Ireland for a few nights on his
way to the West.

TORONTO, ONT.—J. Govan and D. Moffat have seen some blessing
and several have professed to be saved. A number of assemblies have
been encouraged in the regular Lord's Day Gospel meetings during
January with souls professing in Pape Ave., Birchcliff, Lansing and
Eglinton. Frank Pearcey and Fred Holder have commenced Gospel
meetings in the Eglinton Ave. hall, with a good interest.

HENDERSON, ONT.—Timothy Kember continues in this new ef-
fort. He is alone at present as Russell Harris has had to return home
sick. Remember them in prayer.

LINDSAY, ONT.—The work goes on with help from various breth-
ren. Recently some from here were baptized in Peterborough.

GRAND BEND, ONT.—T. G. Wilkie and J. Blackwood are being
encouraged with a good interest and attendance and a number have
professed to be saved.

LAKESHORE, ONT.—A. T. Stewart had some ministry meetings,
and then went on to Sarnia where he and A. W. Joyce are now preaching
the Gospel with good interest and attendance so far.

SOUTH RIVER, ONT.—G. L. Shivas and J. Clark had helpful meet-
ings, the latter is now preaching the Gospel in Orillia, one has professed.

SUDBURY, ONT.—Stanley Simms had a few meetings on his way
north to New Ontario.

HITESVILLE, ONT.—B. Widdifield has not been so well and has
had to remain home. John Adams is expected for Gospel meetings.

PARRY SOUND, ONT.—Earl Pears has been helping around Orillia
and expected to go to Parry Sound for meetings.

HALIFAX, N.S.—Albert Ramsay and Bert Joyce are preaching the
Gospel.

CHARLOTTETOWN, P.E.I.—Robert McIlwaine came on to the city
for meetings. The country roads are blocked with snow.

AKRON, OHIO—Hector Alves has commenced Gospel meetings in
the new hall. The homecall of Brother Ross Campbell is keenly felt.

FREMONT, OHIO—Norman Crawford and J. Lipke continue at
Fremont, with one meeting weekly at Flat Rock, a nearby village where
the interest is promising.

THINGS MOST SURELY BELIEVED AMONG US

Part 2

A. W. Joyce

In our last paper we noticed two things which are most surely believed among us (Luke 1:1),

1. The Gospel and the necessity of preaching it.

2. The assurance of eternal life to all who receive the Gospel. Now let us notice.

(3) The All-Sufficiency and the Inerrancy of the Holy Scriptures

At times the question has been asked of those in assembly fellowship, "What is your creed?" Our reply of course is "The whole Word of God." Many well-meaning Christian leaders in the past have assayed to put down in writing the "articles and tenets of the faith" of the particular denomination to which they belong, from the "Nicene Creed" A.D. 325 till modern times. The purpose doubtless was that thereby they would preserve the purity of their doctrines. The modernism and departure from the faith of so many denominations has proved that this is no safeguard. "The whole counsel of God" preached, received and obeyed is sufficient to preserve the Christian and the scriptural assembly from error, whether doctrinal or moral. Declension and departure are not the result of a lack of written articles of faith but are the direct result of departure from, and disobedience to, the Word of God.

Because the Word of God is absolutely without error (as originally given by God), it does not need to be altered or added to in order to meet changing modern conditions. The young believer of course will understand the possibility of minor errors or obscurities resulting from the translation of the Scriptures into other languages, hence the value of other translations to which reference is often made such as R.V., Newberry, J.N.D., etc.

Included in the commission to preach the gospel, we have believer's baptism, and in the Acts of the Apostles we find that Paul remained with the young believers and taught them the truth of God. Where this was impossible, he left dependable men like Timothy, Silas, Titus, etc., to teach them. There is no such thought contemplated in the Scriptures as preaching the Gospel and seeing souls saved, and then leaving those newborn souls to be neglected or fed (?) by those who are mere hireling shepherds who care not for the sheep. In the apostolic days, baptism with its teaching separated the believers from the past life and its habits and its associations, and further truths completed that separation from the world in all its phases and forms.

In modern mass evangelism, the "counsellors", whose work it is to point troubled souls to Christ, must then advise these young converts to go back to their various unscriptural denominational associations, even though they are presided over by an unconverted minister (provided at least that this "church" was affiliated in the mass campaign). How Christians, professedly intelligent as to the path for the Christian as laid down in the Word can do this, we cannot understand. Their advice is "Go back", the first command of the Lord would be "Come out". Zeal for soul-winning cannot be divorced from zeal for the welfare of His sheep, without being disobedient to the Word. No man could dare accuse the apostle Paul of lack of zeal for souls. Look at his body, striped and scarred through his sufferings for the Gospel sake! Trace his path of sacrifice, loneliness, imprisonment, shipwreck, hunger and finally martyrdom! His like is not to be found on the earth to-day in zeal for souls. But his zeal for the upbuilding and welfare of God's people equalled his zeal for the salvation of sinners. (Christ) "Whom we preach, warning *every man* and teaching *every man* in all wisdom; that we may present *every man* perfect in Christ Jesus: whereunto I also labour, striving according to His working, which worketh in me mightily" (Col. 1:28-29).

(4) Personality and Abiding Presence of the Holy Spirit

in every believer in Christ. How much erroneous teaching there is in the religious world in regard to the Holy Spirit. It is most surely believed among us that the Holy Spirit is a distinct Person, not merely an influence from God. The Holy Spirit, with God the Father and the Son are a Trinity — the One True God, as we have it in the benediction of the closing verse of 2 Corinthians 13. Nothing has ever been done for God except by the power of the Holy Spirit, whether in the Old Testament or the New. In the Old Testament, however, the Spirit of God came and went and there was no promise or assurance of His abiding presence, hence David prayed, using language which an instructed believer would not use in this dispensation, even, as in this case, in the confession of serious sin, "Take not Thy Holy Spirit from Me" (Psalm 51:11).

In John 14:16-17, 26, 16:7-15, we have the great promise of the Lord Jesus that He would send the Holy Spirit. The coming of the Spirit was consequent upon, and subsequent to, the death and resurrection of Christ. The Son of God must go up, before the Spirit of God could come down (John 16:7), "that He may *abide with you forever*" (John 14:16).

Some of the erroneous teachings in regard to the Spirit are that a person may be saved yet not be baptized in the Spirit, that the

baptism of the Spirit is a further "work of grace" which may take place years after conversion, that it takes place as the result of prayer and effort on the part of the Christian, that as a result of the baptism of the Spirit one may get rid entirely of the flesh and may live an absolutely sinless life. All this is contrary to the Word.

Every real believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, upon believing, is born of the Spirit, becomes a child of God, and is a possessor of eternal life (John 1:12, 3:3-16). Every child of God is indwelt by the Spirit and is thus empowered to live for God (John 7:37-39), and in this day receives the Spirit by believing, not by praying, see verse 39. The Holy Spirit came down on the day of Pentecost, Acts 2, resulting in the baptism in the Spirit of every believer as foretold by John the Baptist in Matthew 3:11, "He shall baptize you with (in) the Holy Ghost." From then until the present time, each person who has truly believed in the Son of God is baptized in the Spirit into the body of Christ. This is not an attainment of some of the people of God. It is striking to note that the apostle wrote to the *Corinthians* "For in one Spirit were we *all* baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles" (1 Cor. 12:13, R.V.). The very Corinthians of whom the Apostle had previously written, "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ" (1 Cor. 3:1). They had believed in Christ, they had been thereby baptized in the Spirit, but they had not grown spiritually as they should have done. Every one who has trusted in Christ is also "sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise" (Eph. 1:13), which suggests the two-fold thought of ownership and security.

"Then on each He setteth, His own secret sign,
They that have My Spirit, These, saith He, are Mine.

There is of course the practical side of all of this. The privilege and obligation of the believer is to "Walk in the Spirit", to "Grieve not the Spirit", to "Quench not the Spirit", but this is beyond the scope of this paper, and a subject in itself. However, in closing, may we not only understand from the Scriptures our wonderful privileges, but may we live and walk in the power of them day by day to the glory of God and to the blessing of those with whom we come in contact.

God did not leave His people to think for themselves, and have their own views in matters pertaining to God's service and worship. This is very solemn. It should speak to us, and it will where there is the fear of God.

NOTABLE CHARACTERS IN HOLY WRIT

Nehemiah and His Walls and Gates

G. G. Johnston

The book of Nehemiah naturally follows the one entitled "Ezra". With the temple rebuilt, the priests of God worshipping at the golden altar, and the smoke of sacrifices rising from the brazen altar in the court, some may have been quite satisfied. They may have desired nothing more. But there still lacked one important matter. The sacrificing at the brazen altar might be taken to symbolize the gospel and its presentation today to a needy world, but in the *wall* we recognize a figure of separation from the world in its religion, as well as in its folly and sin. Nehemiah was exercised by God particularly in the matter of the *walls* and the *gates*. These would keep in the people of God, and also keep out the uncircumcised world.

There is ever a number of Christians who profess interest in the spread of the gospel, and who are ready to join hands with any who seem to preach it clearly, without pausing to consider whether or not these men faithfully fulfil the commission of our Lord in baptizing those who believe, then teaching them to observe all things. In other words, they have no desire to erect a wall to divide between what is according to Holy Scripture and what is not. Nehemiah knew that God's glory could not be maintained if the ungodly were allowed to come in, or if Israel were to go out and mingle with the uncircumcised.

This clear mark of separation was very evident in New Testament times. Those early assemblies founded by the apostle Paul and his companions had a definite wall of separation, and gates by which those who were truly the Lord's could enter, not to come and go, as some would seem to imagine, but to form a definite part of that assembly. If guilty of grievous sin, they were disciplined and put outside, until their repentance was evident to all, when again they could be restored to full fellowship.

The character of the local assembly of saints is as clearly outlined in the epistles, as is that of the universal Church, yet some fail to duly appreciate the difference between them. Men and women are made members of the Universal Church by divine act upon believing the message of the Gospel and receiving the Holy Ghost, while entrance to the local church does not take place until the applicant is admitted by common consent of that assembly, guided by the Word of God.

To become part of a scriptural assembly usually presents no difficulty when the believing applicant seeks this privilege in a humble way, provided he is sound in doctrine, and of godly behaviour. Those who are sound in doctrine and practice will desire no part with those places where the Holy Spirit is grieved by a one-man ministry, where those who make no profession of having been converted are members, where scriptural discipline of the erring is not carried out, etc.

When Ezra was rebuilding the temple, certain ones desired to share with him in the work, who were not Israelites. When told that they had nothing to do with Israel in this work, they demonstrated their true character by turning enemies of the cause, by persecuting those who were doing the work, and thus causing it to cease for some time. When God raised up a man (Nehemiah) with special interest in restoring the *wall* and the *gates*, another group of opponents appears, bent upon hindering that work of separation. In fact, there was no suggestion of their helping to build the wall and restore the gates. They had no desire for such work. Is there not a danger today of rejecting such ministry from God's Word as would separate us from the world's religion? Some of us left unscriptural gatherings to meet in the Lord's name alone; others have received this heritage of truth from their predecessors. Shall we now agree to the removal of the walls and gates, so that all who say that they are Christians may come and go at pleasure?

Surely if we have learned anything from the Word of God it is that the New Testament assembly has a "within" and a "without", that due care should be taken to keep the walls of separation repaired against all that is unscriptural, and that careful watch be kept at its gates that none be kept out who should be allowed to enter, nor any permitted to enter who should be excluded.

We should most certainly rejoice on hearing that the gospel is preached and souls are saved. The apostle Paul did, though some preached it in a spirit of contention (Phil. 1:16). The proclamation of the perfect sacrifice of Christ is glorious, but should we help forward a cause which is definitely opposed to what we know to be God's mind regarding the walls and gates of God's assembly? Should we not rather spend our efforts in building up that which we know to be in accordance with the Word of God?

Let us apply ourselves diligently in attending to the altar and its sacrifice (in preaching the gospel in every land), but let us not despise those men (or their message), who would faithfully build the wall of separation from all that is not in accord with the pattern given us in the Word.

MEDITATIONS IN FIRST PETER

L. E. McBain

We note in the opening verses in this epistle that Peter is writing to the Christians of the dispersion who were scattered abroad after the death of Stephen, Acts 8:1, and who were passing through a fiery trial of their faith. Several expressions such as "the sprinkling of the blood", verse 2, and "the girding of the loins", verse 13, would cause us to think that Peter had the journey of the children of Israel from Egypt to Canaan in mind, but these suffering saints in contrast to them, had a heavenly inheritance which is beyond death, sin, decay and time, verse 4.

Like Israel's history, these Christians began with redemption, verse 18, and Peter reminds them of the great truth of the

Salvation of Their Souls

of which salvation the prophets had prophesied and which was preached with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, verses 9-12. They had been delivered from tradition, verse 18, and had obtained the salvation of their souls, verse 22. This would be exceedingly precious to these dear saints who were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. It is to be feared that the salvation of the soul is not as precious to many as it should be because of their conforming to the world rather than their being transformed from it. In former times the saints rejoiced in this great salvation and McCheyne wrote in one of his hymns:

"When I hear the wicked call
On the rocks and hills to fall,
When I see them start and shrink
On the fiery deluge brink,
Then, Lord, shall I fully know,
Not till then, how much I owe."

After speaking of their deliverance in the first chapter, Peter warns them of the dangers to which they were exposed; i.e.,

The Snares of the Soul

in these words, "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul," 1 Peter 2:11.

What a disappointment and disillusionment it is for the young believer to find that he still has the "old man" with its passions and lusts! A warfare has begun that was never experienced when unsaved, Gal. 5:17!

It was after Israel was delivered by blood from Egypt and had drunk the water from the smitten rock that Amalek attacked those

who were faint and weary and those who followed afar off, Deut. 25:17-18. It was both cowardly and cunning, 1 Sam. 15:2! The story of the attack and subsequent victory is recorded in Exodus 17 where Moses' hands were upheld by Aaron and Hur while Joshua used the sword on the foe in the valley below.

The Lord has made provision for us to deal with our old nature by giving us an intercessor before the throne of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, and an intercessor within us from God, even the Holy Spirit, and the Word of God, the sword of the Spirit, by which we mortify the flesh and reckon ourselves to be dead indeed unto sin but alive unto God, Rom. 6:11. By keeping in communion with God and using the keen edge of the Word of God upon our flesh we are able to wage a victorious warfare.

In verse one of chapter two, we read of some of the things that war against the soul of the child of God: malice, guile, hypocrisies, envies, evil speakings. They must be laid aside and the Word of God must become the source of the Christian's strength and growth.

In this same chapter, verse 25, it is refreshing to read of the

Shepherd and Bishop of the Soul.

As the Great Shepherd of the sheep, He cares for them and Peter exhorts these tried and tempted believers to cast all their care or anxiety upon Him for He careth for them, 1 Peter 5:7. As the Bishop or overseer He watches over them day and night, 1 Peter 3:12.

Just as Jehovah fed Israel with manna from heaven and guided them by the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, so the Lord was watching over His tried and tested ones to whom Peter was writing. Israel was not called upon to make plans of their own, nor even to know the route for one day ahead, and when they camped they did not know how long they would stay and when they marched they did not know how long they would be moving. They had only to watch the guiding pillar, and by following it they were absolutely dependent and were absolutely safe.

In chapter 5:2-4, we read of the responsibility of the under-shepherds to feed and to go before the flock and Peter encourages them by bringing before them the reward which the Chief Shepherd shall give to those who care for the flock. Happy is the assembly that has godly shepherds who watch for the souls of the believers, Heb. 13:17, and who feed them with the Word of God, Acts 20:28. Timothy had a care for the spiritual welfare of the saints for Paul wrote of him in Phil. 2:20, "I have no one like minded who will care with genuine feeling how we get on," (Darby). May God raise up brethren with this spirit!

How comforting it must have been to these suffering ones to read Peter's words in chapter 4:19, "Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well doing as unto a faithful Creator." Here he assures them that Christ was the

Sustainer of Their Souls.

In chapter 2:23 he tells them that when Christ suffered He threatened not but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously and now they were to do the same. Just as Jehovah bore Israel on eagle wings and sustained them by His everlasting arms about them, so our Blessed Lord Jesus will sustain His own for He knows their strength and will not suffer them to be tempted above that which they are able, 1 Cor. 10:13.

"He lives, the great Redeemer lives;
What joy the blest assurance gives!
And now before His Father, God,
Pleads the full merit of His blood.

"In every dark, distressing hour,
When sin and satan join their power;
Let this blest truth repel each dart,
That Thou dost bear us on Thy heart."

MY OLD BIBLE

"Though the cover is worn,
And the pages are torn
And though places bear traces of tears,
Yet more precious than gold
Is this book worn and old
That can shatter and scatter my fears.

"This old Book is my guide,
'Tis a friend by my side,
It will lighten and brighten my way;
And each promise I find,
Soothes and gladdens the mind,
As I read it and heed it each day.

"To this Book I will cling,
Of its worth I will sing
Though great losses and crosses be mine,
For I cannot despair
Though surrounded by care,
While possessing this blessing Divine.

(Found in an old Bible formerly belonging to Mr. W. B. Johnston,
a servant of the Lord now in Heaven)

CHRISTIANITY

S. J. Saword

“What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?” Romans 8:31.

A number of years ago Mr. John Brunton, a well known Evangelist who made his home in London, was on his homeward journey by train after having fulfilled one of his preaching engagements. As they approached the great city, two men sitting opposite him began to air their views concerning Christianity. They had nothing good to say for it and finally one of them asserted emphatically that “Christianity had the bottom knocked out of it a hundred years ago”.

At this juncture Mr. Brunton could not refrain from interrupting them. Addressing the last speaker he said: “My friend, excuse this intrusion on my part but you have made a very serious statement which I cannot allow to pass unchallenged. If Christianity had the bottom knocked out of it a hundred years ago, please tell me *who knocked it out?*” The man was so taken by surprise that he closed up like a clam. It was then Mr. Brunton’s opportunity to talk, so after rebuking the man for making such a rash statement which could not be proved, he assured those two men that Christianity has never had the bottom knocked out of it, and that in proof thereof he could take them to different places every night in the week, within a radius of ten miles from where they were sitting, where they would see hundreds and even thousands of true Christians gathered together to hear the Word of God and to praise the name of their Saviour and Lord.

A small dog was once seen at the edge of the river Apure in Venezuela and as a sailing boat came gliding along the dog began barking furiously as if to arrest the onward course of the boat. The boat sailed on, but the dog’s barking had attracted a hungry alligator, which came gliding silently near to the dog and as it passed swung its great tail suddenly around knocking its victim into the water and then carried it away.

Atheists, infidels, communists and sceptics have “barked” away to their hearts’ content but it has all been short lived; the monster Death has swept them into eternity; their “barking” has ceased, but Christianity sails on majestically and in triumph.

DEVELOPMENTS IN THE BOOK OF THE ACTS

Assembly Principles (Continued)

A. McShane

It is rather a striking coincidence that the first mention of the word "church" in its local aspect, both in Matthew (chapter 18), and in the Acts (chapter 5), is associated with the solemn subject of DISCIPLINE. No company of saints is moulded after the pattern of the New Testament that neglects, or refused to deal with, wrongdoing. The assembly is the high court for all matters that have to be dealt with amongst the saints. If any hope to find a company immune from sin and failure, they are doomed to disappointment. Nevertheless, every effort ought to be made to preserve the purity of the saints, and, if evil is committed, the assembly is responsible to deal with it according to the Word of God. Perhaps nothing so much tests our knowledge of God and His Word as to be faced with a case for discipline. Two extremes have to be carefully avoided; first, that of acting with undue severity; secondly, that of passing over sin lightly. Some we fear have been treated in a manner that was nothing short of cruelty, and others have been so carelessly handled that sin was glossed over to the ruin of the testimony.

In the case of Ananias and Sapphira (chap. 5:1-11) the Lord executed judgment both swiftly and severely, thereby teaching the infant Church that His spiritual house was no less holy than His material house of old. To this day evils are at times committed by members of assemblies, which are, as in this case, difficult, if not impossible, for us to discover, but the Lord knows what has been done, and if the assembly be in a spiritual state, He will not fail to deal with it Himself. We can only deal with known sin. Suspicion is never sufficient grounds for discipline; so if after diligent search clear evidence is not forthcoming, the matter must be left in the Lord's hand. No one will question that the founders of the churches in the Acts were endowed with authority and power not possessed by any leader in our day. The apostolic "rod" has not been transmitted to even the most gifted of God's servants.

A careful study of The Acts will reveal that the early churches were not companies of saints in which the modern doctrine that "Jack is as good as his master" was believed and practised. Rather were they well ordered communities under proper GOVERNMENT by accredited elders. An assembly may exist without leaders, but it certainly cannot prosper without them. Both lambs and sheep need shepherding. In the very early days the apostles shouldered this burden, but we learn from chapter 11 that, in the church at Jerusalem, there

were "elders" who received the alms from the hands of Barnabas and Saul (v. 30). How these men were appointed we are not told. In all probability they became recognized because of their fitness for, and their willingness to undertake, this responsibility. Later in the book we learn that Paul did not appoint elders in the churches which he had founded until he paid them a return visit. Evidently he left the new converts for a time so that the gift of leadership might develop and become manifest. It then became a simple matter to acknowledge those whom the Lord had raised up to guide His people.

A further development in the book of the Acts with regard to elders is seen in chapter 15. Throughout the private consultations, when the serious matter of circumcising Gentile believers was being considered, they are seen to be linked with the apostles, and to share the responsibility with them.

The growing importance of these men reaches a climax in chapter 20 where we learn of Paul's interview with the elders of Ephesus. Is it not significant that the solitary example of ministry, or preaching, to saints, given us by Luke, is an address to elders? It would be a healthy exercise for every elder to read this message over at least once every week. In it Paul brings before the Ephesian elders the example of his own unselfish labours, the responsibilities incumbent upon them as leaders, the dangers to be averted, and last of all, the Divine and unfailing resources at their disposal. It would seem that the apostle, whose care for the assembly he had seen planted was unequalled, is convinced that if these overseers can be helped and strengthened, he need have no fears for the flock in their hands.

Every assembly in keeping with the New Testament pattern is a centre of EVANGELISM. A common failure of God's people in all ages, alas, has been to become circumscribed in their outlook. This selfish viewing of their own little sphere, as though it were the world, is neither good for themselves nor glorifying to God. If His purposes extend to the regions beyond, it is no doubt fitting that our exercises should reach just as far. Churches should not only evangelize their own neighbourhoods, but should also be anxious to have those raised up amongst them who will carry the gospel into the distant parts of the earth.

A beautiful example of this principle is seen in the church at Antioch (Acts 13). The Spirit separated Barnabas and Saul to the work and the assembly responded by letting them go. We must not imagine that this was the beginning of full-time service for these two men. It is clear that neither of them was a native of Antioch, and but for the work of God neither of them would have been there.

Much more has been read into the passage than was ever intended. While it is unmistakable that Paul and Barnabas had the hearty fellowship of the Antioch saints in their going to their new field of labour, neither of them regarded this assembly as having commended them to the work. It is important to note that the word translated "recommended" in Acts 14:26 ("committed" R.V.) in no way implies approval, and is not to be confounded with the usual word for commendation used in Rom. 16:1; 11 Cor. 3:1, etc. These points being conceded we must not on the other hand, fail to appreciate the joy the Antioch assembly must have had when they listened to the report of these two servants whom the Lord had used so mightily. The fact that the two men had laboured in their midst and had been released by them for this service, must have caused their joy to abound.

No doubt assemblies would like to retain at home those whom the Lord has gifted to proclaim the gospel and edify the saints, but if the example of the early churches be followed in this matter, it will be found that God will raise up others to fill the gaps their departure may have made.

This exercise in missionary work continues throughout the Acts, so that almost all the churches which Paul planted had a representative with him in the work:—Timothy from Derby, Luke from Troas, Aristarchus from Thessalonica, Trophimus from Ephesus and Epaphras from Colosse — what a noble band of workers! Perhaps they were the best in their respective assemblies, yet all were sacrificed for the regions beyond. Had this vital assembly feature been maintained during the past century, few places on earth to-day would be un-reached by the gospel. One thing is certain, that any failure in this matter cannot be blamed on the bad example of New Testament churches.

By the daily reading of the Scriptures you will be led into increasing acquaintance with the truth, and thereby drawn into closer fellowship with the Father and His son, Jesus Christ.

* * * *

You cannot be too much in prayer. If you dwell in the presence of God, you will find both the heart and the occasion for prayer. Our responsibility is to pray without ceasing, always maintaining uninterrupted the consciousness of dependence and our need of Divine grace. Thus we shall be always cast upon God, always enjoy liberty of heart in His presence, and consequently be always finding in the constant reception of mercies, grace and blessing in answer to our cries, and new themes for thanksgiving and praise.

ISRAEL AND THE CHURCH

(Part 10)

The Place of Worship

Wm. Hoste

We have now to compare the place in which the priests of Israel exercised their priesthood with the church's place of worship. In Exodus 20:24, 25, provision was made for the erection of temporary altars as in Patriarchal times (e.g., Josh. 8:30), but these were exceptional, and were in no way inconsistent with the thought of a special habitation for Jehovah in the midst of His people, to be their centre of gathering and place of worship. So in Exodus 25 we read, "Let them make Me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them . . . according to all that I shew thee after the pattern of the tabernacle which was shewed thee in the mount" (verses 8, 9, 40).

This was fully carried out, and the glory of Jehovah filled that tabernacle. How this ought to have stilled every murmur, allayed every fear, and filled their hearts with praise! But priest and people soon departed, and in the prophecy of Amos we have the divine estimate of the tabernacle service during the desert wanderings. "Have ye offered unto Me sacrifice and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel? But ye have borne the tabernacle of your Moloch and Chiun your images, the star of your God, which ye made to yourselves (Chap. 5:25, 26).

Surely this may suggest solemn heart-searchings to our minds as to how our service appears to God. This condition of failure accounts for the exhortation of Deut. 12 as to the *ONE PLACE* which the Lord would choose to put His Name there, to which alone they should bring their sacrifices and there partake of them before the Lord.

This promise was temporarily and partially fulfilled in the choice of Shiloh in Ephraim (Josh. 18:1), which remained the centre of worship until the time of Samuel, when the ark was taken thence, never to return, and Ichabod was written over its gates. The fact that Moses, Samuel and others erected occasional altars, according to Exod. 24, 1 Sam. 7, etc., in no way proves that they were not subject to the direction of Deut. 12, and much less that such directions had not then been given — according to the arbitrary and topsy-turvy theory of certain "higher critics" — but simply that God had "refused the tabernacle of Shiloh" (Psalm 78:60), but had not yet manifested His choice of Mount Zion. Besides, it was a time of failure and disorder, and the condition for choosing the habitation

prescribed in Deut. 12:10, which was "rest from all your enemies round about," had not yet been fully realized.

It was only when "the Lord had given David rest round about from all his enemies" (2 Sam. 22:1), that the king had the Spirit-given thought "to find out a place for the Lord, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob" (Psalm 132:5). Though he was permitted to prepare materials and to communicate "the pattern of all that he had by the Spirit" (1 Chron. 28:11-19), it was Solomon who built the house. Then the glory of the Lord filled it (2 Chron. 5:13) and only withdrew four hundred years later, prior to the destruction of the temple by Nebuchadnezzar (see Ezek. 9:3; 10:4; 18; 19; 11:23). Then the Lord Himself became to His people "a sanctuary for a little while" (Ezek. 11:16, R.V.).

Seventy years later, the temple was rebuilt under Zerubbabel, and later, in its restored and beautified state, the work of Herod the Great, it was recognized by our Lord, first as "His Father's house" (John 2:16), and then when marked for judgment as "your house" (Matt. 23:38). Destroyed in A.D. 70, it will be rebuilt again by the nation when brought back in unbelief to Jerusalem, for we read of a temple as existing in the last days (see 2 Thess. 2:4; Matt. 24:15; Rev. 11:1). In the Millennial age, a temple will be built once more after a divine pattern (see Ezek. 40, etc.), again, be it noted, after the deliverance of Israel from her enemies — Gog and her hosts. It will suffice now to briefly sum up certain characteristics of the house of God of the earthly people Israel.

1. It was of *material construction*—"a building made with hands" (Heb. 9:24)—a worldly sanctuary; material and earthly as contrasted with spiritual and heavenly.

2. It was of *symbolical meaning*—"a pattern of things in the heavens" (Heb. 9:23). It included various vessels, two altars, a laver, a mercy-seat, etc. All were symbolical, and the very materials were figurative. The gold spake of Divine glory, the silver of redemption, the brass of Divine judgment, and so forth. "In His temple doth every one speak of His glory" (Psalm 29:9).

3. It was for a *temporary purpose*—"a figure for the time then present" (Heb. 9:9) the shadow of a coming substance.

4. It was of *aesthetic beauty*, that is, a beauty appreciated by the senses, that of gold, goodly stones, fine linen, blue, purple and scarlet, etc. The house of God on earth was to be, as David said, "exceeding magnificent" (1 Chron. 22:5).

5. It was *unique in its claims*. It was the only place where God chose to put His Name (see Deut. 12:11), the one place of sacrifice and of offering, the solitary building on the earth that has ever been rightly called "the house of God". The synagogues in the Gospels, were only Jewish places of gathering for reading the law, but made no claim to be the house of God.

6. It was *sacred in its character*, composed of the holy place and the holy of holies, accessible to high priests and priests alone. This was the temple proper (*naos*). Here Uzziah entered to burn incense (2 Chron. 26:16), and here Judas cast down the pieces of silver (Matt. 27:5). But our Lord never entered there. Besides this, there were the outer precincts (*hieron*) to which our Lord did continually resort. At the dedication of the temple by Solomon, Jehovah sealed it as His dwelling place with manifested glory, and as long as the day of long-suffering lasted, His glory filled the Holiest, as it will again on a future day (Ezek. 43). The absence of the glory in Zerubbabel's temple marked an abnormal state of things, though it was to be compensated for later, by the personal presence of the Desire of all nations (Hag. 2:7).

7. It was of *Divine pattern*. This is most important. Every detail of form, material, weight and colour was prescribed. Nothing was left to human fancy or art. Any addition or omission would have been grievous sin.

A LETTER TO YOU

Dear Young Christian:

Instead of the usual article, let me pen a few lines to you, personally, to ask for your help in the writing of my contributions to this space.

You see, it's like this: Sometimes it seems as if it is hardly of any use to keep on urging young Christians to believe the first half of verse two of No. 215, Believers Hymn Book, nor yet to go in for pleasing the Lord. Serve Him? Yes; but to seek to go in for only that which will meet His approval—well, that's asking too much. No use to expect old heads on young shoulders, you understand. But perhaps I am wrong in my apprehensions. What do you think? Indeed, I should like to ask you to be one of the judges, and to write me a note, short or long, giving me your views on the matter. Possibly there are angles to the business of getting clear of the ruts of customary world standards of living, in order to become re-adjusted to

the vastly superior will of God, for which I have failed to make allowance. So, if you, dear Reader, would outline for me something of how these things appear to you as a young believer, your letter would be useful as well as appreciated. You may write anything you wish; and I shall try to consider it most seriously — without scolding, rebuking, or passing on its contents to others. For unless such counsel as I may be fitted to give shall have a definite every-day application to young people's problems, why should I continue to use up valuable space in this magazine?

Now let me put down my thoughts just as frankly as I hope you may write to me in reply. The way it looks to me is like this: Rightly or wrongly, it appears that some dear young Christians have far more desire to please themselves than they have to please the Lord. Hence they go just as far into worldly things as they dare. Their first concern is to please themselves; and after that the Lord may have "the left-overs". It is of no use to pretend. The cold, bald fact seems to be, that, to them, Christ just isn't "enough the mind and heart to fill." **THEY SIMPLY MUST HAVE SOME EXTRA MIND AND HEART FILLERS . . . Right?**

First of all it was the cutting of the hair, with the excuse, "Yes, it says 'long hair'. But how long is 'long'?" Then it was imitation pearls, bangles (or whatever they call them), jewellery, heightened by the dabs of face, or lip colouring for which Jezebel received special mention (2 Kings 9:30). (Of course I do not know whether or not she left it off when she went to meeting. All I know is that the Lord made a note of it. See also Jer. 4:30.) Then it was, "there's nothing in the Assembly for the young people". Then it was, "Is there anything in the Bible against it?" Then it was party do's of various kinds. Then it was running to "Christian Concerts", where "real born-again Christians are the artists, and they only play hymns and good music." Then, since the radio is almost out-dated, T-V has become "a must" in some places — even for some responsible older brethren!

This list of Extra Mind and Heart Fillers could be extended, but there will be no need for it. Do you think it could be possible that God is not in all the thoughts of some of us who profess to be gathered to the Lord's Name — except at meeting time, or when we attend to our "religious" duties, or find ourselves in trouble?

Consider, also, the fact that many young men (and not a few older ones) feel they simply must try to get on in life — their idea of making the most of their talents. The possibility that the Lord might see better prospects for them by keeping them on a financial

level somewhat like that of the One Who had not where to lay His head just never occurs to them. Indeed, if it were to do so, the response would be, "Oh no! Not *that!*" Thus, as the acknowledged Director of their lives, God is rather a shadowy sort of figure, as it were, hovering on the side-lines of their pilgrim journey to Immanuel's Land, hopeful of being able to assist them occasionally. (In fact, some have been known to say that they were not interested in "pie in the sky", they wished for as many "good things" as possible, here, and now.)

Again, some of my young sisters, somehow or other, have gotten the notion that to be loved and to be happy are the main things in life . . . meaning the getting of a man, marriage, and a home. But let me ask my sister Reader: Could it not be possible that God's plans for the lives of His daughters need not include marriage? And if it should be so, must failure to marry result in pining away in lonely unhappiness? Has the will of God, accepted as such, no compensations to offer? 1 Cor. 7:8, for some reason, still is in the Bible. What's the matter with it, anyway? I wish you would write to me and tell me how you see this problem. For the way it appears to me is that for many young Christians, while the Saviour is important in that He has made them safe from the wrath to come, yet as to His being "enough the mind and heart to fill"—well, they regard that as a pleasant bit of "religious" sentiment, but not too realistic or practical.

Then as to the Lord being desirous of actually directing a person's life—well, didn't they go to school to learn to be self-reliant? And did He not give them brains expecting them to use them? In fact, why should the Good Shepherd need to carry His rescued sheep *all the way home*? Once out of danger, did it not have four feet? Surely it would seem (as per this reasoning) it could have "stood on its own feet," receiving a bit of help, now and then, when it couldn't make the grade by itself.

So, as I was saying, dear Reader, I believe it would help me if you could spare a bit of time to let me know what you think re whether or not it is of much use to keep on writing about such themes. I have written a lot to you. Now it's your turn to "talk back". You need not try to write like a preacher. Just jot down your own feelings in your own way, whether for or against.

My address is: R.R. 6, Galt, Ontario, Canada. Please — and thank you.

Through Him Who hath loved us,

Your brother, MERVYN PAUL

NOTES ON SCRIPTURAL HYMNS AND THEIR WRITERS

Hector Alves

“ ‘Man of sorrows!’ what a name
For the Son of God, who came
Ruined sinners to reclaim!
Hallelujah! what a Saviour.”

This is one of the last of a large number of excellent and scriptural hymns from the pen of P. P. Bliss.

Philip Bliss was born at Rome, Penn., July 9, 1838. His given name was spelled “Phillipp,” and from this unusual spelling, he altered it to Philip P. Bliss, omitting the unnecessary “l”, and making the last “p” a middle initial; so he signed his name Philip P. Bliss, and has become better known as P. P. Bliss not Philip Paul Bliss, as some writers have presumed. Philip was converted at the age of twelve, baptized, and soon began to take an interest in camp meetings where the plain gospel was preached. His hymns were among the first of what might be termed “gospel hymns”, specially adapted for evangelistic services and so he set a precedent in this field of hymn writing, which was soon followed by others.

In 1864 Bliss moved to Chicago, and from then on he was active in writing and singing the gospel in hymn form. His association with D. L. Moody, Major Whittle, and others of like mind, began in 1874, and continued till he was suddenly called from this scene. The following is the account of his tragic end — “On December 29, 1876, his wife and he left Rome, Pa., for Chicago. During the journey Mr. Bliss was busy with his Bible, and the notes of a new song which he was writing. At Ashtabula, Ohio, a bridge suddenly broke: the entire train was thrown into the valley below and the cars caught fire. Mr. Bliss escaped through a broken window, but lost his life finally, by trying to save his wife.”

A few weeks before his death Mr. Bliss visited the State Prison at Jackson, Michigan. While there, after a very touching address on “The Man of Sorrows”, he sang this hymn with great effect. Some of the prisoners dated their conversion from that day.

The great majority of Bliss’ hymns are found in gospel hymn books; so we hope to have more to say about these when we get over the hymns found in *The Believers Hymn Book*.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question. Is there anything in the New Testament, particularly in the Epistles, to teach us, or to prove to us, that a brother may be in the assembly, and yet not be permitted to take part in any or all of its privileges; preaching the gospel, praying, ministering the Word, teaching in the Bible Class, leading in the singing, etc.?

Answer. Yes, we believe there is. There are certain qualifications for bishop and deacon work. See 1 Tim. 3:1-13, and Titus 1:6-9. Then in Titus chapter 1, verses 10, 11, we read; "For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake". In chapter 3, verse 10, we read, "A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject." (R.V.—refuse.) This means, refuse his ministry, because he is an heretick, and keeps forcing his own opinions upon the people of God. Then in 2 Thess. 3, verses 6, 14, 15, we have a condition which could be described as "internal discipline". Such are not to be excommunicated, but are to be made to feel their wrong doing. An all-ordered condition in one's personal life, home life, business life, or behaviour in the assembly, might call for such an one to be silenced, or stripped of any leading or prominent place in the assembly. In the church there ought to be godly order and subjection, it is not a place where one can do as he pleases. Liberty unchecked by the Word of God, becomes licence.—H.A.

Question. In nearly all of our assembly prayer meetings, it seems to be the same six or seven brethren who do the praying, while more than a dozen others, old and young, attend, but sit through each prayer meeting in silence. To me this does not seem to be right. What can we do to remedy such a condition?

Answer. Of all the assembly meetings, the prayer meeting is the one where a variety of voices should be heard, and often the tone of the prayer meeting indicates the character of the assembly. This is a meeting that ought to be well attended, and every brother should come with exercise of heart. Perhaps one reason for the condition mentioned, is a lack of teaching regarding the privileges and responsibilities of brethren in connection with the prayer meeting. Ministry ought to be given, unfolding the meaning of the terms "supplications", "prayers", "intercessions" and "giving of thanks", as mentioned in 1 Timothy 1:1-2. We know that it is contrary to the teaching of the Scriptures to call upon this and that brother to lead in prayer; but it is often helpful when one of the brethren who has a care for

the flock, makes known at the beginning of the prayer meeting, some special cases for prayer; a sick brother or sister, some who may have been bereaved, or special efforts being carried on in the gospel, and problems or undertakings of one kind or another, confronting the people of God. This will both give encouragement to pray, and matter for prayer. Long prayers and pointless praying are things which often hinder others from taking part in prayer in a public meeting, and may quench the Spirit in a brother. Also, I have known of young men having been discouraged in taking part in public prayer because their prayers had been criticized by some unreasonable brother. It is one thing to give instruction and godly counsel in the spirit of meekness, but quite another thing to find fault with, or even ridicule another, and especially in public. The need in the gospel, the manifold need of the church as a whole, the powers that be, afflicted saints, and the daily problems and temptations which confront the individual believer, give a wide scope for exercise of heart in our assembly prayer meetings. When there is a lull or stagnation in the prayer meeting, one might be led to give out the hymn,

“Hear we the Shepherd’s voice,

Pray, brethren, pray!

Would ye His heart rejoice?

Pray, brethren, pray!

Sin calls for constant fear,

Weakness needs the strong One near,

Long as ye struggle here;

Pray, brethren, pray!

Surely that should stir up some hearts to pray.

—H.A.

THREE PERSONAL QUESTIONS

Before engaging in anything doubtful, ask yourself—(1) Is it lawful? May I do it and not sin? Can I do it to the glory of God? (2) Is it becoming to me to do it as a Christian? Can I do it and magnify Christ in the act? May I do it and not bring disgrace on my profession? (3) Is it expedient? May I do it and not wound the conscience of a weak brother? Will it bring blessing to my own soul, and be a good example to others?

CLEVELAND, OHIO—L. E. McBain and B. Dobson are preaching the Gospel in Addison Rd. with some interest among the unsaved.

TORONTO, ONT.—A. Klabunda and G. Baldwin are preaching the Gospel.

NORTH IRELAND

Conferences around Christmas and New Year were very helpful, especially in Gransha, Co. Down, and in Armagh, where the truth of God was faithfully told out in all its simplicity and freshness by Bren. Russell, Allen, Bunting, Thompson at the former place, and Russell, Allen, McShane and Johnston at the latter place.

VENEZUELA

TOCOPERO—S. J. Saword and Bruce Cumming had three weeks' meetings in this village with blessing in the Gospel. More recently brother Saword visited the jungle village of Palma Sola and were encouraged by the salvation of a woman who had been interested in her soul for some time.

Late items of news—**ARLINGTON, WASH.**—Ministry meetings by J. Currie (Japan), G. McKinley and A. Wilson. Bro. Currie also visited Seattle. . . . **CEDAR FALLS, IA.**—O. Smith and P. Elliott seeing blessing, a number have professed. S. Hamilton had a little blessing at Cylender, Wm. Warke at Hampton, Mason City and Hitesville, Ia. Brandt and Boyle at West Union, Ia. C. Yost and V. Young at Ontario, Wis. . . . **LORAIN, O.**—The Spanish and English assemblies seek to go on in the "old paths" and preach the Gospel. . . . **CLEMENTSVALE, N.S.**—J. McCracken has to help locally as his wife is still in the hospital. D. Petherick at River Hebert.

CONFERENCES

TORONTO, ONT.—The 70th Annual Conference will be held as formerly at the east and west sides of the city.

EAST END—In the Brock Ave. Gospel Hall, March 29th, prayer meeting 7.30 p.m. In the Central High School of Commerce, 570 Shaw St., March 30th, Ministry 10.30 a.m., 2.30 and 7.30 p.m. April 1st, Breaking of bread, 10.00 a.m., ministry, 2.30 p.m. Gospel 7 a.m. Correspondent, Mr. Samuel Moore, 882 Palmerston Ave., Toronto 4, Ont.

EAST END—In Broadway Ave. Gospel Hall, March 29th, prayer meeting, 7.30 p.m. In the Eastern High School of Commerce, 16 Phin Ave., March 30th, Ministry, 10.30 a.m., 2.30 and 7.30 p.m. March 31st, Ministry at 2.30 p.m. and 7.30 p.m. April 1st, Breaking of bread, 10.00 a.m., ministry 2.30 p.m. Gospel 7 p.m. Correspondent, Mr. John Robertson, 43 Howard St., Toronto 5, Ont.

MONCTON, N.B.—We purpose, D.V., holding our annual conference, March 29 to April 1 inclusive, commencing with a prayer meeting on the evening of the 29th. Correspondent, Norman L. MacNeil, 37 Bromley Ave., Moncton, N.B.

VANCOUVER, B.C.—Joint Annual Easter Conference of Hastings East and North Vancouver Assemblies will be held, D.V., at Sunset Memorial Centre, 404 East 51st Ave., Vancouver, March 30 to April 1 with a prayer meeting March 29 at 8 p.m. The prayer meeting and the Breaking of bread at 10.30 a.m., will be at the Hastings East Gospel Hall. All meetings will be at Sunset Memorial Centre. Correspondents, J. Dennis, 153 East 12th St., North Vancouver, B.C., R. Reid, 126 West 48th Ave., Vancouver, B.C.

McKEESPORT, PA.—The Annual Conference will be held, D.V., Saturday and Lord's Day, April 21 and 22, with prayer meeting April 20, at 7 p.m. All meetings in the Gospel Hall, 1301 Soles St., McKeesport, Pa. The Lord's servants walking in the "old paths" will be welcome to minister the Word. Visitors freely entertained but notify in advance the correspondent, William H. Moore, 2629 Hill St., McKeesport, Pa.

WITH CHRIST

AKRON, OHIO—Our dear brother in the Lord, Ross Campbell, was taken home to be with Christ on Jan. 11. He was born in North Ireland in 1884 and has been a pillar of strength to the assembly in Akron for many years. Grace, wisdom and faithfulness were blended in brother Campbell so that he will be greatly missed. Having retired recently from business he worked hard on the new hall, and after the opening he took a stroke from which he did not recover. The funeral was largely attended and the Word faithfully spoken by Wm. Warke and A. T. Stewart in the hall, and by A. P. Klabunda at the grave.

MONCTON, N.B.—On Nov. 20, our beloved sister, Mrs. Agnes E. Morton, wife of George Morton Sr., went home to be with the Lord after a short illness. She was saved six years ago during meetings held by I. McMullen and R. Jordan, after a long period of soul trouble. She was in happy fellowship in the assembly here, loved the Lord and His people and is greatly missed. A. Ramsay faithfully preached the Word to a large company, and N. L. MacNeil spoke at the graveside.

VANCOUVER, B.C.—Our brother, James Walker, passed suddenly into the presence of the Lord on Jan. 27, aged 75. He was born in Scotland in 1880 and born again in 1939. He was a quiet, reserved brother who has been in fellowship for years in Cedar Cottage assembly. Brethren George Campbell and Adam Dixon took the funeral.

NORTH IRELAND.—Mrs. Campbell, wife of Mr. Thomas Campbell, Evangelist, passed suddenly into the Lord's presence on Dec. 16, after a long illness patiently borne, resulting from a paralytic stroke. Saved 55 years ago through the labours of our late brethren, Wm. Rodgers and H. Creighton, our sister was in happy fellowship in assemblies ever since, of late years in Ebenezer Hall, Bangor. She loved the Lord, His ways and His people, was given to hospitality, and bore a bright testimony wherever she went. She will be much missed, especially by her devoted husband. The large funeral witnessed to the high esteem in which our sister was held. The services were conducted by brethren H. Bailie, Wm. McCracken and T. McKelvey in the home, and by E. Allen and Wm. Bunting in the cemetery.

Bro. William Palmer of the Bracondale assembly, Toronto, passed suddenly into the presence of the Lord on Jan. 25th aged 76 years. He was at the bible reading on Tuesday evening as well as usual and with the Lord, Wednesday evening. Saved as a young man in England. Shortly after his conversion he came to Toronto where he has been in fellowship in various halls ever since. He loved the Truth and was very definite in his stand for it. The funeral was large and was shared by Bren. Govan and Watson. His seat will be empty and he will be missed.

Miss Anne Aiken of Ahoynhill, Ireland (sister of our Bro. Andrew Aikin who labours in Nova Scotia) was called home suddenly on Dec. 11th as the result of an accident, aged 24 years. She was of a quiet disposition but ever sought to witness for her Lord as opportunity arose. Her untimely death has been a great sorrow to her loved ones, who have the sympathy of all who knew them.

On Jan. 12th, 1956, our dear brother Joseph Irvine passed into the presence of the Lord in his sleep after an illness of some months. He was born in Irvine, Ayrshire, Scotland, on Dec. 5, 1885, and born again in July 1903. Soon after his conversion he was lead to take his place outside to the Lord. Soon after that he migrated to Toronto, Canada, and was in happy fellowship there in the Brock Ave. assembly till his home call. The funeral service was large and the gospel was preached and words of comfort spoken by Bren. Fletcher and Watson.

RUTH and TIDINGS



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EDITOR ----- A. W. JOYCE, 26 Munro Blvd., Willowdale, Ont., Canada.
ASSOCIATE EDITORS --- F. G. WATSON, 92 Regal Rd., Toronto, Ont.
G. G. JOHNSTON, 140 Woodycrest Ave., Toronto, Ont.
HECTOR ALVES, 338 W. King Edward Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C.

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EXPIRY NOTICES

We are inserting an expiry notice in the April issue to our subscribers who have not yet renewed. If you wish to receive the May number please remit as soon as possible. If you remit by cheque please add 15 cents for bank exchange as the subscription does not cover the cost of production. If you have recently renewed kindly ignore the expiry notice.

TIDINGS

HUNTSVILLE, ONT.—John Adams and J. Gray are preaching the Gospel with good attendance, one had professed.

TORONTO, ONT.—Frank Pearcey and Fred Holder are having well attended Gospel meetings in the Eglinton Ave. E. hall, a number have professed. J. Blackwood and W. C. Bousfield are preaching Christ in Broadview.

HENDERSON, ONT.—T. Kember continues in cottage meetings in this neighbourhood with a little blessing from time to time.

SARNIA, ONT.—Interest and attendance in meetings by A. T. Stewart and A. W. Joyce kept up till the last with a number professing to be saved.

KIRKLAND LAKE, ONT.—S. Simms and Earl Pears commenced Gospel meetings.

ENGLEHART, ONT.—A good commodious hall has been opened recently; for some time the assembly used the basement. They had a profitable day at the opening with ministry by J. Clark, J. Smith and S. Whitehouse. B. Widdifield has been preaching the Word in these parts.

ORILLIA, ONT.—J. Clark had five weeks' meetings with blessing in the Gospel.

THINGS MOST SURELY BELIEVED AMONG US

Part 3

THE PRE-EMINENCE OF CHRIST

A. W. Joyce

One of the truths which was especially prominent and precious in the great recovery of truth about a century and a quarter ago was that of the pre-eminence of Christ, especially as the only centre of His people's gathering. Gathering alone unto the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ came to be seen just as clearly as Salvation alone through the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. It was seen that the taking of a denominational name, howsoever revered by history and tradition, was entirely contrary to the Word of God and lowered the unique dignity and glory of the One Peerless Name. Like the disciples on the holy mount when Moses and Elias disappeared from view, "They saw no man save Jesus only." The repudiation of sectarianism and the acknowledgment of the One Name gave a distinctive character to the scriptural assemblies which were brought into being by the power of the Spirit and Word of God. Just as in apostolic days, the attractive power of the Person of Christ brought exercised believing Jews out of religious Judaism with the cry, "Let us go forth therefore UNTO HIM without the camp, bearing His reproach" (Heb. 13:13), so did it bring exercised believers out of the confusion of religious Babylon.

On this side of the Atlantic, for the past eighty years, the wholesome searching ministry of separation from every phase of the world produced assemblies of God gathered to the Name of the Lord which were a testimony for God as a "pillar and ground of the truth". The Devil's great aim has always been to blight individual and especially collective testimony for God. Satan's most successful strategy has always been the corruption of that which is of God by the introduction of that which is of the world. When worldly wisdom, worldly policies, worldly fashions, worldly methods or worldly manners are insinuated into an assembly of God, in the measure in which it is permitted, the power for testimony to the Name of the Lord Jesus is lost. Another successful means of corruption is by the building of bridges of contact between the assembly and the religious world. The contact at first may only seem to be a slender and temporary bridge across which the young people, the unlearned or the carnal may cross for an occasional visit to help a "good cause", but unless faithful ministry cuts the link, the footpath will soon become a roadway, and the "reproach of Christ" will become a thing of the past. When the reproach of Christ is lost, the presence of Christ will soon be lost also.

The Prospect of the Coming of Christ

Another of the precious truths most surely believed among us is the coming again of our Lord Jesus Christ. How often has the troubled heart, the lonely heart, the tried heart, the bereaved heart of the child of God thrilled at the promise, "I will come again and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:3). How the devil hates this truth! How he has tried to steal it from the child of God! The earliest written portion of the New Testament, the epistles to the Thessalonians, shows how early in the history of the assemblies did the enemy attack this foundation truth. Every form of attack has been tried. Satan has attempted to spiritualize it, to adulterize, and to minimize it. He told the Thessalonians, "The day of the Lord is now present" (2 Thess. 2:1, R.V.), substituting the day of judgment for the coming of Christ. He has put some to sleep, others he has caused to ill-use their fellow servants by saying the "Lord delayeth His coming." He has introduced the "partial rapture" theory. He has suggested that prophecies must be fulfilled or the "great tribulation" must be endured — anything or everything to come between the Christian and the Coming. Perhaps most successful of all, he has tried to make the Coming a mere theory for the mind to speculate upon, instead of a living power in the heart and life.

O, may this blessed hope grip our hearts afresh, "He is coming soon." A short time ago I watched a dear husband take his last farewell on earth to his wife who had been very suddenly taken from him by an "accident". As he took the last look he whispered, "I'll be with you soon, dear." The blessed hope sustained him in his hour of deepest sorrow.

So then, while we have no "written articles and tenets of faith" apart from the whole Word of God, we have noted some of the things most surely believed among us. May we be faithful stewards of the truth of God that has been committed to our trust.

"Our yet unfinished story
Is tending all to this:
To God the greatest glory
To us the greatest bliss.

"If all things work together
For ends so grand and blest,
What needs to wonder whether
Each in itself is best?"

NOTABLE CHARACTERS IN HOLY WRIT

Esther, the Jewish Queen

G. G. Johnston

This interesting story, which explains the reason for the annual Jewish feast of Purim, is undoubtedly more than a legend — it is an inspired chronicle. Though the name of God is not once mentioned therein, His providence is everywhere in evidence.

One prominent feature is the manifest hatred that existed between the Jew, Mordecai, and Haman, the Agagite, a descendent of Amalek, with which race the Lord had sworn there should be war from generation to generation. Since Amalek represents the flesh in us, we may learn important lessons from God's dealings with them, and with Haman in particular.

Mordecai was a man who feared God. He had been an exile in Babylon since the captivity of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar. Through some cause not revealed in Scripture, Esther, his niece, had been left without father or mother, and Mordecai had reared her as his own.

The account of how Esther was chosen to be queen of the realm conforms with eastern custom, and would in no wise shock the sentiments of some nations, even today.

Though she was now queen in full standing, her liberties and powers were limited, according to their custom. Not even she dare enter the presence of the king, unless called, under pain of death, though the king had the right to waive this edict and extend his sceptre toward the intruder. The fact that Esther was Jewish was still a guarded secret — even the king was not aware of it.

God permits certain things to happen which may at first seem calamitous to His own. Haman, the Agagite, (see 1 Sam. 15:8) came into favour with king Ahasuerus, and he was advanced to first place in the kingdom. All bowed to him and did him reverence, with the sole exception of Mordecai, the Jew, who, when interrogated regarding the reason, declared plainly his racial origin.

Now Mordecai's action stung the pride of Haman! He would have revenge. To destroy Mordecai alone would not suffice. He must devise a scheme to destroy all the Jews in all the one hundred and twenty-seven provinces. As for Mordecai, he will just ask the king's permission to hang him on a high gallows, an object of contempt before the people. Suiting action to word, he prepares the gallows. He secures the ungodly king's consent to destroy all the Jews, and sends off messengers to all the provinces with the order of execution upon a certain day.

God never is before His time, and never is behind. On that third night sleep flees from the eyes of the king. The Jews have

everywhere been praying, with fasting, clothed in sackcloth and ashes. Upon request, the book of records is brought to the king, and it was found written that Mordecai had previously exposed a plot upon the king's life, the culprits had been hanged, but nothing had been done in honour of Mordecai.

At that exact moment Haman, having completed the erection of his gallows, was approaching the king's court to seek royal permission to hang Mordecai thereupon. He is called in and asked: "What shall be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honour!" Self-centred and proud as he was, he thought: "That is I myself," and he suggested that such an one be clothed with the king's apparel and crown, mounted upon the king's horse and led through the streets behind a herald, shouting: "Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honour." "You shall do all that immediately to Mordecai, the Jew," commanded the king. With what dismay he undertook this humiliating task! He who loved the pre-eminence had to take a place in the dust, as he gave honour to the man he hated.

But the fate of all the Jews was still in doubt. Mordecai had enjoined Esther that she should, even at the risk of her life, seek an interview with the king to petition him for her life and for that of her people. After much prayer, she had approached him, found favour, and had asked him and Haman, his chief officer, to a feast. The king sensed she had some serious petition to present to him, but upon asking her about it she only requested that they both accept her invitation again the second day.

There she requests of the king that her life be spared and that of her people. What a surprise to his majesty to find that his friend Haman is guilty of this plot! He seems to have been unaware of the extent of the devilish plan laid by Haman. His rage against him increases and he orders Haman hanged upon the galleys prepared for Mordecai. The order to destroy all the Jews in the province was annulled by the encouragement from the King to defend themselves, and an annual feast was instituted among the Jews in memory of God's goodness and mercy to them.

This Agagite is in each of us. Though we have been cleansed from our sins by the blood of Christ, and His Spirit dwells in us, yet the flesh is there — that proud, pretentious, vengeful, lustful flesh. As God sware that He would have war with Amalek, the enemy of Israel, so there can be no truce, or agreement, with the flesh in us.

"Death to the flesh," is God's attitude toward that evil within us, called "the flesh". This is not the flesh of our bodies, but that evil principle, the works of which are manifest in Galatians 5:19-21. "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh." (Romans 13:14).

PURITY AND PEACE

There is a tendency in our time to sacrifice everything for the sake of peace and unity among Christians. There can be no diversity of thought as to the desirability of peace among the Lord's true people. An assembly of saints living in peace and unity is a pleasant sight. But this, in order to be well pleasing to God, and of real blessing to the saints themselves, must be attained in God's way. There is a peace which is not of God; it is attained and maintained at the expense of righteousness. It may please men, but it dishonours God, inasmuch as it compromises His Word, and studies to suppress every truth that would bring unpleasantness into the circle, or offend those who need to be offended because of their worldly and disorderly ways. This is not the peace of God.

"*First pure then peaceable*" (James 3:17) is the Divine order. First "righteousness" then "peace" (Heb. 7:2), is the Divine way. The Lord's claim must first be owned and obeyed, and if this is done, He will bless His people with peace; such peace as those who make fleshly compacts, know nothing of. "Great peace have they which love Thy law, and they shall have no stumbling-block" (Psalm 119:135, R.V.). The maxim of carnal men, who love ease, and whose highest ambition is to pass their days pleasantly, pleased with themselves, and each other, is — "Peace at any price." But these are not the thoughts of God. The Divine claim must first be met; God's Word must be obeyed, God's order observed, then He will make His saints a peaceable people, for He is the "author of peace in all churches of the saints" (1 Cor. 14:33). Thus only shall the Lord's people be preserved from the latitudinarian indifference of these last days, which, with its false charity and love of peace, seeks its own pleasure, rather than God's honour and glory.

(Written over 60 years ago, yet how very true to-day).

No high priest with the blood ever stood so near to the Holy, Holy, Holy God as you and I redeemed sinners — at the table of the Lord by the blood of the Lamb.

Heb. 10:7. Not merely forgiven; not merely blotted out; but *remembered no more*. You and I sometimes cannot forget if we would. God only has the power to forget. The only one thing God is wearied with is — sin. The only one thing God is said to forget — the sin that the blood of Christ has put away.

DEVELOPMENTS IN THE BOOK OF THE ACTS**THE PERSECUTION OF THE SAINTS AND THE REJECTION OF ISRAEL***A. McShane*

One of the major objects of the Book of the Acts is to trace the gradual setting aside by God of the nation of Israel, and to show how its rejection led to the bringing into Divine favour the despised Gentiles. Running parallel with this rejection of God's earthly people, and closely associated with it, is the record of the persecution of the saints, especially those engaged in the public service of God. Invariably, throughout this book, the Jews, although given preference as regards the offer of the gospel, are seen to be sternly opposed to it. Indeed, most of the sufferings of the Christians, recorded by Luke, were either from the Jews directly or from Gentiles whom they stirred up. Surely all this reveals that the enmity towards Christ, manifested at the cross, was no temporary lapse, but a deeply rooted and incurable evil.

In connection with this opposition, it is interesting to compare the times of Jeremiah with the days of the apostles. For example, both were transitional periods in the Nation's history. During the prophet's ministry God was transferring world dominion from Israel to the Gentiles, and during the apostles' days He was removing Israel from being His witness upon earth and entrusting the responsibility of witness-bearing to His Church. On both occasions the guilty and intractable Nation refused to repent under the preaching of the Lord's servants; its leaders putting the messengers of God in prison, thus bringing upon themselves the fierce wrath of Jehovah. During both periods the servants of God received little except abuses from their brethren according to the flesh, and, what is more surprising, little but kindness from the uncircumcised heathen.

Important as it may be to dwell upon the numerous passages in the Acts which have to do with the persecution of the saints and the rejection of Israel, the purpose of our present paper is rather to point out the development of these two matters — a development, we believe, designedly traced by the writer of this book.

Amongst the Jews in apostolic days, two main schools of religious thought vied with each other for supremacy, namely, Pharisaism and Sadduceism. The latter sect appears to be the more prominent during the early chapters of Acts. It included in its ranks many of the priests and rulers of the people. As might be expected, it was from this quarter that the first opposition to the gospel arose, for these rationalists were bitterly opposed to the truth of resurrection preached by the apostles. In Acts 4 they arrested Peter and John and put them

in ward for a night. After a short trial, and a serious caution not to continue preaching their unwelcome doctrine, the servants of Christ were released the next day. This rather mild treatment was quickly followed by a more severe punishment, for these fearless preachers, anxious to obey God rather than man, continued to proclaim the good news, with the result that they were again apprehended and imprisoned. Although God miraculously delivered them, they were beaten publicly as well as being cautioned. An additional and still more significant development in the difficulties which arose at this time was brought about by the two rival camps — Pharisee and Sadducee — uniting to oppose the gospel. However great the differences which existed between them, they had this in common, that both hated what was of God. The Devil's ranks will always unite to withstand the truth.

Until chapter six of the Acts, persecution was confined to the apostles, but towards the end of this chapter, one of the newly appointed deacons — Stephen — was confronted with violent opposition. Almost the entire religious populace of Jerusalem were arrayed against this promising instrument of the Spirit. They apprehended him and brought him before the Council. In his trial, the enemies, using the same evil tactics as when Christ stood before them, employed false witnesses. If their purposes could not be accomplished by fair means, they had no hesitation in using foul ones. Instead of allowing him to finish his defence, they rushed upon him with maddened frenzy and cruelly stoned him to death. Thus the first martyr of the Church period was sent to heaven, to be welcomed there by his Lord Who waited in unclouded glory to receive him.

A climax in the Nation's history was here reached, its day of probation now being ended. The people had rejected the Spirit's testimony as they had earlier rejected that of Christ. The Jews, especially those of Jerusalem and its surrounding neighbourhood, were now beyond mercy and were no longer to be treated as "manslayers" but as "murderers". Henceforth, throughout the Acts we read of no major move of God in this guilty city.

This apparent victory of the enemy was thwarted in a way which was as much a surprise to the minds of men, as it was a display of the wisdom of God. Who would have dreamt that the ringleader in the persecution would be apprehended by grace and would become the most outstanding figure in the army he had so recently and so violently opposed! What a God is ours, Who can thus suddenly turn the darkest hour to noon-day splendour! The Church mourned the loss of faithful Stephen but his blood did not flow in vain, for Saul

who witnessed his execution became "baptized for the dead" and more than filled the gap made by the martyr's death.

Until the end of chapter eleven of Acts, the ill-treatment of the Christians was exclusively from the religious element, but in chapter twelve the political power, represented by Herod, joins the opposition. Herod fully maintained the reputation for cruelty of all the kings of this name. Here again we note a development in the persecution. It is seen not only in the uniting of the religious and political powers to oppose the gospel, but also in the slaying of James, whose death was the first break in the apostolic band. Unlike Saul, who was chiefly responsible for Stephen's death, Herod paid dearly for murdering James. In the one case we see the goodness of God in salvation, in the other, His severity in judgment.

WORD-FIGHTING ALWAYS EVIL

When the shepherds fall out, it usually fares ill with the lambs of the flock. Instead of having the tender and godly shepherd care, the feeding and the leading, which they ought to receive, they not infrequently have to listen to the "word fighting", and it may be the ungodly quarrelling of those who professedly are over them in the Lord, and whose words and ways ought to be ensamples to the flock. Need it be wondered if young believers become discouraged, if they become backsliders and wander from the Lord's path, under such conditions. Better, infinitely better, for those who have the honour of the Lord at heart, and whose desire is to see His saints fed in the green pastures, and led on in the paths of righteousness, to leave the fighting men alone, to manifest what is in them, than to continue an unseemly warfare even for right, which necessitates open debate among those who should be standing together before the saints of God. Sooner or later, God will manifest what is well pleasing unto Him, and with whom His truth is. Nothing is ever gained, but always much dishonour done to God, by Christian men, especially such as minister to God's saints, exposing their weaknesses, in fighting over "points" of difference, in presence of the feeble ones of the flock. If what is done be according to God, then it needs no defence. God will see to it. If wrong, no amount of argument can make it right before God. So that "word fighting", looked at from any point, is always wrong.

Everything which helps us to glorify God and enjoy Him alone, this is a precious good. Everything which tempts us, or enables us to indulge self, in enjoying the creature apart from God, this is evil.

DOST THOU BELIEVE ON THE SON OF GOD?

A. W. J.

This question was asked by the Lord Jesus of a man, blind from his birth, unto whom the Lord had recently given sight (John 9:7). He replied with another question, "Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on Him? And Jesus said unto him, thou hast both seen Him, and it is He that talketh with thee. And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped Him" (John 9:35-38). At the beginning of the chapter the blind man received his sight, at the close of the chapter he received Christ as His Saviour. All who truly believe on the Son of God have eternal life and they will never perish.

Again and again we hear people, especially those who have been brought up under the sound of the Gospel, say, "I believe the whole Bible, I believe Christ died for sinners, but I am not saved." This raises the question, "Are there two ways of believing?" "But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe *to the saving of the soul*" (Heb. 10:39). This infers that one might have a form of believing that did not result in salvation, even though the same Greek word is used in both cases. We have plain illustrations of this in John 2:23, the next verse proves that these were mere professors, Acts 8:13, "Simon himself believed also", yet he is later described as being in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. Whatever questions might be raised about the two foregoing cases, no one has ever suggested that King Agrippa was a Christian, yet Paul said to him, "King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest" (Acts 26:27). The king's reply was, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." Whether this was uttered in sincerity or only in sarcasm, as many believe, yet it plainly indicates that Agrippa had never acted upon what he knew to be true, and had no intention of doing so. Alas, how many there are to-day who acknowledge the truth of the Scriptures and believe all the fundamental facts of the Gospel, yet, like King Agrippa they are not saved. What then does it mean to believe to the saving of the soul?

Although Repentance is a subject in itself, and outside of the scope of this short message, it must be stated that saving faith is always accompanied with and preceded by Repentance, see Acts 20:21. Repentance brings the sinner into the place where salvation can reach him, giving the sinner the true consciousness of his own sin and helplessness and pressing from him the cry, "What must I do to be saved?"

Recently, the writer read from the Scriptures the truth of the finished work of Christ, His death and resurrection, to a troubled

soul. The reply was, "I believe all that, but I am not saved." We said, "Now let us see from the Scriptures what it means to believe to the saving of the soul" and we read together John 1:12, "As many as *RECEIVED HIM*, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His Name." The question was then asked, "Was there ever a definite time in all your life when you received Christ?" "No, there was not." This verse connects two expressions, "receiving Him" and "believing on His Name", and the result of receiving Christ is to become a child of God. The troubled soul saw that believing on the Son was *simply receiving Him as a personal Saviour* and was soon rejoicing in the assurance of the Word of God, "He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life" (John 3:36). **BELIEVING IS RECEIVING. DOST THOU BELIEVE ON THE SON OF GOD?**

DRESS, AT THE LORD'S TABLE

John Ritchie

One of the most incongruous sights that men and angels have to look upon, is gaudily-dressed, jewel-spangled and costly-apparelled Christians seated around the table on which are the emblems of the bruised body and poured forth blood of their Redeemer, the memorials of that death of bitterest anguish and deepest shame to which they owe their present salvation and their future glory.

Modest apparel is befitting for a child of God, an heir of Heaven, a stranger here, at all times. Surely of all places the Lord's Table is the last at which worldly dress, gay apparel, or whatever else occupies the thoughts and attracts the attention of either the believer himself or his fellow-worshippers, should be displayed.

The supreme object at the Lord's Table is, to remember Him, and to do this worthily we must forget ourselves. It is difficult to see how one who has spent much of the early part of the Lord's Day decking the person with gay clothing in order to be admired by others, whose personal appearance has been the chief subject of his or her thoughts all the morning, can when "the hour has come", suddenly forget what has been their chief concern, and become occupied with Him Who was despised and rejected of men, Whose visage was more marred than any man's, and Who, for sins that were not His own, was "stricken, smitten of God and afflicted."

It is hard to believe that those who come to the Lord's Table adorned with finery, decked with gay clothing, with flashing jewels on their fingers, and pearls around their necks, can realize that they have come to meet with a holy God; to enter into His most holy presence. Then, if the appearance of such a person is half as striking

as he or she thinks it is, it must sadly interfere with the devotions of fellow-worshippers gathered there. Worldly-minded ones may be gazing on, possibly with coveting eyes, while the devil suggests to them to follow suit and outdo their neighbours. Young believers may be stumbled and even led away from God and into debt in order to keep up with the fashions of the times, while the treasury of the Lord is impoverished and the poor of the flock are neglected to keep up the vain show.

Some may think this is descending into small matters, but straws show how the current flows. We have never yet found much of God, either in the individual or the assembly, where gay clothing and jewellery are conspicuous. We do not plead for sackcloth, but for modest apparel befitting the presence of God, and such outward appearance as will neither occupy our own thoughts or attract the attention of others, as we meditate on the Man of Calvary, and think of His cross of shame, in which we profess to glory.

(This was written over fifty years ago, how much more could be added today).

"I WANT TO SEE HELEN KELLER"

The following is a summary of news items reporting an incident during the visit to Tokyo last year by the 75-year-old blind and deaf lecturer, Helen Keller.

Little D— A—, the 5-year-old daughter of an American Major, had been blind from birth. Since she was old enough to understand, her mother has read to her, along with other things, chapters from the life of Helen Keller.

The mother and child attended a reception tea during Miss Keller's Tokyo visit. Unable to get through the crowd of 500, the mother began to describe the famous lady to her daughter.

"But mother, I want to see Helen Keller," she sobbed.

When Miss Keller learned of the child's wish she insisted that the crowd make room for the little girl. Bending forward she gently touched the little one's face. Then D— A—, reached up, hesitated, then traced her fingertips over the aged face above her. As a brilliant smile replaced her tears, the crowded room, now silent, heard her whisper:

"Mother, I SAW HER. I SAW HELEN KELLER."

This touching incident has a sweetness to the child of God as it reminds us of the One we have not yet seen with these natural eyes so that Peter could write: "Whom having not seen, ye love," 1 Peter 1:8. Just as that child by the delicate sense of touch was able to say, "I saw her," so have we by "precious faith" beheld the Lord Jesus Christ as dying for us and can say: "I SAW HIM." — The Son of

God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me" (Gal. 2:20). We know that blessedness whereof He spoke in John 20:29, "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

Through chapters of a life story D—— A—— had learned of one who had borne with and triumphed over similar yet greater handicaps than her own. So we through the chapters of the Word of God learned first of our sin and guilt, then of Him Who "hath suffered being tempted" and is "able to succour" and "able to save" (Heb. 2:18; 7:25).

As time goes on how much more each word she hears of Helen Keller will mean to the little blind girl and how eagerly she will listen! Thus it should be with us as we have opportunity to learn more of our Lord Jesus Christ through the Word. Yet that wonderful experience at the reception tea is not likely to be repeated to her. But what a blessed privilege it is to us gathered in His name (Matt. 18:20), to keep the feast (1 Cor. 5:8), each first day of the week (Acts 20:7), when, if in the right condition of soul, we can say, "We have seen the Lord" (John 20:25). Of us it can then be said, "Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord" (John 20:20). This joy will soon give place to a greater, for "we know that, when He shall appear we shall be like Him for WE SHALL SEE HIM as He is" (1 John 3:3).

And you, dear unsaved reader, YOU must see Him too, for "EVERY EYE SHALL SEE HIM and they also which pierced Him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him" (Rev. 1:7). May you by faith "behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29), and be saved now, for, "NOW is the accepted time; behold NOW is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. 6:2).

ISRAEL AND THE CHURCH

Part II

Jewish and Christian Worship

Wm. Hoste

As we look on Christendom to-day, we recognize without difficulty, that things ecclesiastical are conformed to the Jewish model in principle, if not in detail. Had Israel a "house of God?" — then Christendom must have her myriads of sacred shrines, cathedrals, churches, chapels, for each of which she claims the name of "the house of God". Like the Jewish temple, they are made with hands, costly in material, sometimes beautiful in design, dedicated to "divine service" with elaborate lustrations, consecrations, and anointings. They contain altars of sacrifice or tables of memorial, christening fonts, corresponding rather to the laver of the priests of Israel than to the baptisteries of early times.

In some cases the services are conducted in the light of "sacred lamps". Like the temple, these edifices are divided into a sanctuary where the bishop and the priests alone enter, separated off from the rest of the edifice by rails or rood screens. This enclosure is sacred too, but is intended for the "laity," and is called the "nave" — from the Latin ship — its old idea, for these buildings are adorned with sculpture, paintings, mosaics, etc., according to the means at the disposal of the architect and his individual fancy, though as in the Jewish temple the main plan is intended to be figurative and symbolical. There are, however, two radical differences between such "houses of God" and their Jewish prototypes. They are confessedly not built after any divine pattern, and though the presence of God is specially claimed, at least for part of the building, there is not, nor has there ever been, any ocular manifestation of Divine glory in them to attest this claim, as there was in the house of God in the midst of His earthly people.

Now the question arises, was the Christian Church ever intended to follow the Jewish model? It is conceded that generally speaking we must have places of gathering, corresponding to the Jewish synagogues. But where do we find anything in the New Testament of a "place of Christian worship" on earth, corresponding to the Jewish temple? Surely if such were intended, we should have received its pattern, materials, and measurements through Paul, the Church legislator, as these were given in the case of the tabernacle and temple through Moses and David. But, we search the apostle's writings in vain for one mention of such a building. Never once does he or any other New Testament writer use the word "Church" in the sense of a building of bricks and mortar, but always of a spiritual edifice of living stones. Even in Old Testament times, this thought had been present in the mind of God (see Isa. 66:1), and in the Acts, both Stephen and Paul declare plainly that the old state of things had been superseded by the new, and that now the "Most High dwelleth NOT in temples made with hands" (chaps. 7:48; 17:24), and that "He is not worshipped with man's hands". Paintings, sculpture, architecture, and all mere aesthetic beauty are nothing to Him. "They that worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). Surely "he that runs may read" that the old order hath given place to the new.

The Church's place of worship is in contrast with that of Israel. Was the latter a material building made with hands, of visible beauty and symbolical in character? That of the Church is "a greater and more perfect tabernacle"; spiritual, antitypical, and only to be apprehended by faith (Heb. 9:2). Christ is its minister (Heb. 8:1, 2), and

He has entered in within the veil as our forerunner (Heb. 6:20), not "into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Heb. 9:24). And we too have boldness (lit., liberty) to enter into the holiest by His blood (Heb. 10:19).

It is retrogression of the worst kind for Christians to be occupied at this time with symbols and shadows, with material buildings and literal vessels, when we possess the spiritual reality and substance of which they all spake. Our privilege is "to draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith," into the heavenly temple — the very dwelling-place of God. Our gathering place may be in the open air (Acts 16:13, in a schoolroom (Acts 19:9), a private house (Rom. 16:5; 1 Cor. 16:19; Col. 4:15) — and it should be, as far as possible, suitably lighted, heated, and furnished, so that all may be done "decently and in order" — but to adorn it with objects of "art" and man's device, on the plea of making a "beautiful house for God," is worse than ignorance. The place of gathering matters little, the presence of Christ sought and realized there is everything. His promise is — "Where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst" (Matt. 18:20). Christ is the centre, and His Person corresponds to that "place which God hath chosen to put His Name there." "Every place is hallowed ground" where He is in the midst. Realizing this we say, "This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." because as our hearts and thoughts are fixed on Him, we rise by faith and enter "by the blood of Jesus into the holiest", there to worship the Father in Spirit and in truth. Alas! what slackness and weakness there often is, to thus enter into our privileges, but all else is a vain travesty and show.

JERRY DISCOVERS AN ENEMY

Merwyn Paul

Self-revelation is something that is bound to come in every young Christian's life — something that cannot be avoided nor ignored. Jerry (as I shall name him) really had only a most hazy idea of what the preachers were talking about when they addressed the Lord's people on the subject of their enemies, the World, the Flesh and the Devil; so that had you spoken to him about Self-revelation — well, you would not have made much impression. He was what they call "socially-minded"; that is, he liked company, was interested in what people were talking about, doing, and thinking. Thus these matters formed the bulk of his own conversation, as for example: "He said," and, "I said," and, "She said," and, "Did you hear what happened?" or, "What's doing at—?" Since this line of things occupied a large

share of his thoughts, it was responsible for forming his Attitudes toward life in general — as, of course, you would expect.

It was chiefly for this reason that Bible readings, prayer and ministry meetings, often “left him cold”. Not that he didn’t try dutifully to be interested, mind you. (And good singing really was something!) But his principal meeting-enjoyment came from the chatter and laughter that was usual when the saints were dispersing, or from the larger good-times enjoyed between Conference meetings. Such things as the World, the Flesh and the Devil were preachers’ themes rather than of any immediate concern to our young friend. To him they meant:

- You must not go to shows, movies, sports, etc.
- You should not do anything you would be ashamed of.
- When things go wrong, and you don’t know who else to blame for them, well then the offender must be the Devil.

So as I have said, Jerry’s ideas of his three spiritual enemies were pretty vague. Consequently he didn’t bother much about them.

Of course he usually prayed night and morning, read his Bible before he fell asleep, went to all the meetings, wished he could be a Gospel preacher, and all that. Considering everything he felt he was doing all right as a Christian. (He knew lots who were doing worse!)

There wasn’t much conflict in his life so long as he minded his own business. And anyway, he meant to be as happy as he could. (No use looking for trouble.) Get-togethers of the young people were right in his line. After all, only the twice-born have a right to be happy. The World, the Flesh and the Devil seldom shadowed his thoughts.

Yet in spite of all his desires for a happy, peaceful life, it did seem as if there was some sort of conspiracy afoot to make trouble for him. At home it was his older sister. She was far too bossy. It was bad enough to have his parents criticizing him when he was a bit late getting in at nights without having to listen to her! You’d almost think she owned him, or something. He just couldn’t stand it. But this night when he “told her off”, his father rebuked him. It was then Jerry lost his temper and said some nasty things for which he long would be sorry. He apologized next day; but somehow he realized that things would not be quite the same between his father and himself after that. Reflection on these troubles led him to decide that the Devil was the cause of them; and having soothed his conscience in this manner, he decided to forget them as quickly as possible, resolving only that he would be more careful in future to see that his sister should not know what time he got home at night.

Now at the place where he had been working since he left school there was a man whom he did not like. This fellow-workman, being much older than Jerry, often interfered in the boy's work, telling him what, and what not to do, laughing at his mistakes, and often swearing at him, all of which he hotly resented. So it was that when another workman who had suffered similarly, suggested that they play a trick on the old fellow to teach him to mind his own affairs, Jerry consented to the plan. I need not go into details other than to say, quickly that their scheme "back-fired" badly, the foreman caught poor Jerry in the act — and discharged him. Hence it was a very crestfallen and angry young man who had to face the family that evening.

That night he was invited to a bit of a do at one of the Christian's homes — sing-song, eats and some fun. So Jerry went along to relieve his spirits. But some of the boys got rather noisy — Jerry especially — since he sought escape from his depression by swinging his emotional pendulum to the opposite extreme. At last his host rebuked him. Feeling thoroughly beaten down, the lad strode out the door, went home and to bed.

The world suddenly had become a cruel place to our young brother, three hard slams in as many days! Seemed as if the **Lord** must have forsaken him to allow the Devil to treat him thus! Over and over he reviewed the sad story; but it was not until his anger and chagrin had worn off some days later that he began to see that the true cause of his troubles was not Satan, but **HIMSELF!**

—If only **HE** had not paid so much attention to his sister!

—If only **He** had not reviled his father!

—If only **HE** had not listened to the counsel of the ungodly!

—If only **HE** could learn a bit more self-control!

Thus, in such ways, Self-revelation began to come to him who had desired only to be happy. He was finding there was an enemy within his own bosom against which he must contend. His training in the recognition of the Flesh, the Self-life, as a deadly foe against which he must struggle ceaselessly, had started. He was in the process of discovering **HIMSELF** — the traitor within the gates — a process which cannot be avoided nor ignored.

I know nothing so desirable as a deep, deep conviction of sin. This is an indispensable preparation for further communications of grace.

BROKEN THINGS: Psa. 51:17

Methinks that God must love all broken things—
The cage-song born of battle-stricken wings;
The gnarled limbs of oaks upon the hill,
Which braved the winter's tempests, bleak and chill.

That battered ship, clearing the harbour bar,
With storm-strained hull returns; its broken spar
Proof of the conflict; and the tattered sails!
I'm sure that God takes note of such details.

For in His Word He marks the riven net,
The sparrow's fall, the cruel mocking threat
Of angry hosts encamped against His own,
Whose cries of anguish reach His lofty throne.

In wondrous grace He says the bruised reed
Untrampled by the foot of Christ shall be —
This precious Stone, in breaking, crushes not
The contrite heart His loving Father sought.

And so when I return at night and say:
"Father, I've failed, I know I've lost the day;
Missed the high goal which was my spirit's aim,
And brought dishonour on Thy peerless Name;

"Whisper to me Thy love of broken things,
My sorrowing heart with tender chords like strings
Of some sweet harp, O tune unto Thy touch;"
O Lord, draw near and show Thy love to such!

—IDA DAVIDSON

People say, "God is not as particular as you are." God is very particular, very particular indeed, and if we don't think He is, it is because we neither know Him nor His Word.

Our responsibility is to come back to the Word. We have nothing to do with what we see around us in the world.

NOTES ON SCRIPTURAL HYMNS AND THEIR WRITERS

Hector Alves

“What will it be to dwell above,
 And with the Lord of glory reign,
 Since the blest knowledge of his love
 So brightens all this dreary plain?
 No heart can think, no tongue can tell
 What joy 'twill be with Christ to dwell.”

The author of this cheering hymn, Joseph Swain, was born in Birmingham, England, in 1761. His early life showed talent for poetry, and he used it at first in writing lyrics which would please his gay companions with whom he associated in the great city of London, where he had gone to take up residence. But at conversion all was changed, and he began to devote his life and talent to God. Baptized in 1783, he began to preach in 1791 with great earnestness, and a good measure of success. The strain, however, proved too severe for his frail constitution, and he died in his thirty-fifth year, April 6, 1796.

After his conversion he wrote hymns chiefly to give utterance to his new found joy, and would sing them aloud as he went about. Besides the above, there is in *The Believers Hymn Book* —

“O how the thought that I shall know
 Jesus, who suffered here below
 To manifest God's favour
 For me and all the saints I love.
 Both here and with Himself above
 Should my delighted spirit move
 At that sweet word 'for ever'!”

Another of his hymns, not so well known —

“I stand on Zion's mount,
 And view my starry crown;
 No power on earth my hope can shake,
 Nor hell can thrust me down.”

The thing that is needed is to be able to point out, **THUS SAITH THE LORD**. When we get there we are on a rock, an immovable rock, as firm and solid as the very throne of God. Nothing else can keep us in these evil days, for they are becoming increasingly evil, and the enemy, on every hand, is trying to lead away the people of God.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question. Are the fallen angels that we read about in the Word of God the same as the demons that we also read of in the New Testament?

Answer. Fallen angels are not demons, and demons are not fallen angels, these are distinct the one from the other. In 2 Peter 2:4, we read, "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell (Tartarus), and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment," etc. Then in Jude verse 6, "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, He hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." From these Scriptures we learn that fallen angels are not upon the earth, but are "cast down to hell", and "reserved in everlasting chains under darkness." Concerning demons, we find that these are active upon the earth, and also take part in the affairs of men. In 1 Cor. 10, verses 20 and 21, we read, "But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils (margin—demons), and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils (demons). Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils (demons): ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and the table of devils" (demons). We learn from this that the heathen worshipped demons, or evil spirits. In 1 Tim. 4:1 we read, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils (demons, R.V., etc.). So, it is quite clear that there is a great distinction between fallen angels and demons; the former are now at this time, in Tartarus, the lowest hell; while the latter are at the present time, active upon the earth.

—H.A.

Question. When one or two servants of the Lord conduct a series of Gospel meetings in a hall where there is an assembly of Christians gathered unto the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, should they baptize, on their own responsibility, those who professed to be saved through their preaching? Or should they leave this to be done by the brethren in that assembly?

Answer. We assuredly believe it ought to be the latter. Believers' baptism, in the light of the Scriptures, may be an assembly act, although it is not necessarily an assembly act. When an evangelist goes into a new place where there is no assembly of Christians gathered unto the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and God gives some fruit in conversions; his responsibility is to set before these new

converts the truth of believers' baptism. Then, when these see that this is a divine ordinance to be obeyed, the evangelist does well to baptize them upon the profession of their faith in Christ. In Acts 8:36-38, we have an example of Philip doing this in connection with the conversion of the eunuch from Ethiopia. The apostle Paul personally baptized Crispus, who apparently was amongst the first converts when he went to Corinth to preach the gospel (Acts 18:8); and he also baptized Gaius (1 Cor. 1:14). But he makes it plain that he baptized none of the others of the many of the Corinthians who "hearing believed and were baptized". That was left for others to do. It may be that a good number of them were baptized after the assembly had been formed at Corinth. Paul also baptized "the household of Stephanas (1 Cor. 1:16), but they were the firstfruits of his labours in Achaia (1 Cor. 16:15), and so it is not likely there was anyone else there to baptize them. Baptism is connected with the work of the evangelist, and we have both witnessed and performed baptisms hundreds of miles from an established assembly. But, when a work of grace is seen in connection with an assembly, we believe the baptizing of the converts should be an assembly act and the responsibility falls upon the elders in that assembly. The evangelist may teach the converts, following the series of Gospel meetings, but there is a danger of too much eagerness on his part, to get the converts baptized. In these days of easy and light profession, undue haste has left trouble on the hands of those who have a godly care for the assembly, by finding "strange children" amongst them. It is better to leave the new converts in the care of godly shepherds, and when they are satisfied that the life of God is there, time having been given to prove the genuineness of their profession, let one of the elders do the baptizing. There is nothing of an official nature connected with the act; any qualified elder brother may perform the ordinance of baptism, when there is oneness of mind about it. This ought to satisfy the evangelist, and it also may spare the assembly from much grief.—H.A.

Heart subjection to the Word of God is what He values.

* * * *

We have three wonderful men in the Scriptures, Moses, David and Paul. There is one thing common to the three. Moses got the pattern of the TABERNACLE, David the pattern of the TEMPLE, and Paul the pattern of the CHURCH. The Tabernacle was His dwelling place in the wilderness. The Temple was His dwelling place in the land, and now He makes His church His dwelling place. With all our failure, we still have the pattern, Thank God.

SUDBURY, ONT.—S. Simms had a profitable time with souls to Christ.

DESERONTO, ONT.—F. G. Watson commenced meetings on the 11th of March.

OSHAWA, ONT.—The new address of the correspondent is Arnold Mattice, 558 Fernhill Blvd., Oshawa, Ont. J. Govan commenced ministry meetings.

LINDSAY, ONT.—An assembly was commenced on the 12th of February at 73 Lindsay St. South, in happy fellowship with Brock St., Peterboro, and Victoria Rd. Assemblies. Correspondent, Joseph Par-
rington, R.R. 4, Lindsay, Ont. Lord's Days, B. of B. 11 a.m., S.C. 3 p.m. and Gospel at 7.30 p.m. Thursday, prayer and B R. at 8 p.m.

QUEBEC, QUE.—A lady who was saved some weeks ago was baptized. Others are coming out to hear the Good News through her influence. H. McCready.

VALLEYFIELD, QUE.—A young man who has been attending the weekly cottage meetings has confessed Christ and is stirring other R.C.'s to read the Scriptures and listen to the preaching. B. Grainger.

HALIFAX, N.S.—Some were restored and some professed to be saved at the meetings held by A. Ramsay and Bert Joyce. Mrs. John McCracken is somewhat improved though still under treatments in the hospital, and her husband hopes to be free to go to Cambridge for meetings before Easter.

CHARLOTTETOWN, P.E.I.—R. McIlwaine saw the hand of the Lord from the first, blessing continued throughout the meetings, and a number professed to be saved.

LA CROSSE, WIS.—S. Hamilton began with an "Egypt to Canaan" chart and then went on with Gospel meetings. At present brother Jamson is helping.

WEST UNION, IA.—L. Brandt and R. Boyle saw a little blessing. The latter called briefly at Brodhead, Beetown and Pine Hill.

ONTARIO, WIS.—C. Yost and V. Young continue 3 nights weekly.

BRODHEAD, WIS.—S. Mick is preaching with some interest.

FRESNO, AL.—W. Warke has seen a little blessing in the Gospel.

SEATTLE, WASH.—R. Peacock and A. Wilson are preaching the Gospel and faithfully visiting the homes.

BRISTOL, CONN.—C. Patrizio baptized five young people, he spoke in English and brother Rosania in Italian to a large company. More recently brother Patrizio was in Hoboken, N.J., and in Mechanicville, N.Y.

CONFERENCES

CHICAGO, ILL.—The Annual Conference in the Grace Gospel Hall, 9140 State St., Chicago, Ill., will be held, D.V., May 26 and 27, with a prayer meeting on the 25th. Servants of Christ walking in the "old paths" welcomed. Corr. H. N. Williams, 1445 W. 112th Place, Chicago 43, Ill.

WITH CHRIST

TORONTO, ONT.—After a long illness, our brother, George Hall, went home on March 1 in his 78th year. He was saved over 60 years ago and has been in assembly fellowship for fifty years. He bore a fine testimony before nurses and doctors after living a quiet, consistent life as a Christian, through the years. J. Gunn, who as a boy was in brother Hall's Sunday School class, spoke the Word. T. Wilkie and F. G. Watson prayed.

TORONTO, ONT.—Our brother, W. Arnot Porter passed away on Feb. 28 after a heart attack. He was saved about forty-five years ago and gathered out in the Lakeshore assembly. For many years he took a leading part in the Birchcliff assembly. As our brother was principal of a Collegiate he was well known and respected. A large company gathered at the funeral including the Collegiate staff, a former principal, and many of the Lord's people. A. W. Joyce preached the Gospel as well as spoke to the sorrowing and F. G. Watson prayed at the grave.

GALT, ONT.—Our beloved sister, Mrs. Esther Jackson, was called home on Feb. 12 in her 89th year. She was saved over 60 years ago in Portage la Prairie, Man., and had been in the Galt assembly for over 35 years. R. McClurkin faithfully preached the Word at the funeral.

VANCOUVER, B.C.—Our dear sister, Mrs. Annie Smith, aged 88, went home on March 3. She bore her prolonged illness with patient grace and fortitude. She was saved when 16 years of age and was for many years in the Cedar Cottage assembly.

PHILADELPHIA, PA.—A sister in Christ, Mrs. Mary Lombardo, went to be with the Lord aged 72, on Feb. 24. She was saved for twenty years and in fellowship in the Italian assembly. There was a large crowd at the funeral, mostly Roman Catholics. The Lord gave help to C. Patrizio to speak the Word in English and brother Rosania in Italian.

We learned, without particulars, of the homecall of our sister, Ruth Procopio, at the age of twenty-five.

LIVONIA, MICH.—Our brother Louis Ludos went to be with Christ on Jan. 21, aged fifty-six years. He was saved in 1926, in the Italian assembly from its beginning, and will be greatly missed in the assembly and in the home.

CLINTON, ONT.—On Feb. 12, our dear sister, Mrs. Wm. Davidson was suddenly called from earth to glory. She was returning from the Gospel meeting and had just got out of a car to cross to her home when she was struck by another car which was being driven improperly, and was immediately killed. She and her husband were saved fifteen years ago at meetings held by T. G. Wilkie in Grand Bend and was gathered out there. Of late years she has been in happy fellowship in Clinton and went on for God to the end. A large crowd gathered at the funeral and listened well while the Word was solemnly preached by T. G. Wilkie and A. W. Joyce. J. Blackwood and A. T. Stewart shared at the graveside. Her sorrowing husband rose from a sickbed to attend the funeral and has been graciously sustained.

DECKERVILLE, MICH.—Our beloved brother, Watson Decker, was suddenly taken home on Feb. 29 at the age of sixty-eight. He was saved when a young man and has been in fellowship for over forty years. He was a quiet, godly brother who loved the truth and had a good testimony. He was much interested in the completion of the new hall which was first occupied in January and in which the services were held on March 3. J. Govan and N. Crawford spoke the Word at the funeral.

RUTH and TIDINGS



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EDITOR ----- A. W. JOYCE, 26 Munro Blvd., Willowdale, Ont., Canada.
ASSOCIATE EDITORS --- F. G. WATSON, 92 Regal Rd., Toronto, Ont.
G. G. JOHNSTON, 140 Woodycrest Ave., Toronto, Ont.
HECTOR ALVES, 338 W. King Edward Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C.

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TIDINGS

WINNIPEG, MAN.—W. Warke and R. Boyle expected to commence Gospel meetings on April 1.

CHARLTON, ONT.—B. Widdifield is giving help to the assemblies in this district while helping to care for his mother who is 98 years of age.

KIRKLAND LAKE, ONT.—Stanley Simms and Earl Pears had three weeks' meetings and a number professed to be saved.

HUNTSVILLE, ONT.—J. Adams and J. Gray were encouraged by a number confessing Christ as Saviour.

DESERONTO, ONT.—F. G. Watson had two weeks' good, well-attended meetings, using an "Egypt to Canaan" chart.

HENDERSON, ONT.—T. Kember and R. Harris are going on with cottage meetings. Interest is still good after six months of meetings.

TORONTO, ONT.—The Easter conference was a time of blessing. On the East side the meetings were larger than usual and one professed at the close of the Gospel meeting. Various brethren remained and ministered the Word in the assemblies after the conference. The interest and blessing continued to the last in the meetings held by Frank Pearcy and Fred Holder in the Eglinton Ave. E. hall. On April 8th about a dozen were baptized before a packed hall. The meetings in the Broadview hall by J. Blackwood and W. Bousfield closed with a little blessing in the Gospel.

MIMICO, ONT.—Meetings by R. Booth and D. Moffat have been fruitful in the salvation of souls.

FOREST GROVE, ORE.—L. K. McIlwaine and John Frith had four weeks' Gospel meetings with some blessing. Herb Harris, Walter Gustafson and Theodore Williams have also had brief visits.

MONCTON, N.B.—A good conference has been reported with two professing, Harold Paisley of North Ireland continues Gospel meetings with blessing.

ARLINGTON, WASH.—H. Harris had a few Gospel meetings; T. Williams came along and gave help and a few professed to be saved.

McKEESPORT, PA.—Hector Alves had ministry meetings, using the "Tabernacle", which were much appreciated.

LORAIN, OHIO—G. G. Johnston has commenced meetings. A ministry meeting is held the first Lord's Day of each month in Spanish. The English speaking assembly also has a ministry meeting the third Lord's Day of each month, and brethren walking in the "old paths" are welcome to minister the word. Joseph Sherlock made his home here for the past year but is now living in Alpena, Mich., c/o Mr. Herbert Flood.

PETER'S LOOKS AND PETER'S REBUKES*A. W. Joyce*

There are few men in the Scriptures who have interested and attracted God's people as much as Peter. There is something human, real and attractive about "impetuous, warm-hearted Peter". Perhaps we have profited as much in tracing Peter's failures as we have in contemplating his virtues. It is most instructive to notice the Lord's dealings with His beloved servant and His methods of restoring him after his various mistakes and falls.

One of the most important exhortations in the epistle to the Hebrews is suggested by the words in chapter 12, "LOOKING OFF UNTO JESUS". This word was greatly needed by the Jewish believers in the early, strenuous, Apostolic days. It is greatly needed at the present time, as there is so much to distract, dismay and discourage the believers if they look in the wrong direction instead of "Looking off unto Jesus". Peter's blunders, like our own, can usually be traced to looking in the wrong direction.

The Interfering Look (John 21)

The Lord Jesus, in verse 19 had just finished the last step in Peter's restoration after his grievous fall in the palace of the High Priest, when he restored Peter before his brethren. The last word that the Lord had said in this connection was, "Follow Me". In the next verse we are told that "Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following . . . saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do?" or, as the R.V. margin puts it, "And this man, what?" It is never profitable to take our eyes from the Lord to get them on our brethren. John, the disciple in question, was in his right place, he was doing just what the Lord had told Peter to do, "Follow Me" and John was following. It is very evident that Peter's question was out of place for the Lord said, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou Me." Had Peter been looking in the right direction he would have saved himself this rebuke. May we learn from this that one servant cannot direct the path of another who is following the Master. "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to His own Master he standeth or falleth." This emphasizes that it is interference which the Lord will only rebuke, when any man, or committee of men, attempt to direct the movements of a true servant of God. The Lord gives no authority to interfere between the servant and His Master. (It is a different matter altogether if a servant is departing from the Master's Word and a fellow-servant kindly brings the Master's Word before the wanderer — that is a true ministry of love. To fail to do so is to take the attitude of Cain, "Am I my brother's keeper?").

Another reason why one should not transfer the eye from the Master to the servant is, it may lead one astray. We are living in a day of defection, and departure. If certain brethren turn aside from the plain path of separation and reproach should we say "What's the use" and turn aside also? Certainly not. Let us remember the word of the Lord, "What is that to thee? *follow thou Me.*"

The Unbelieving Look (Matthew 14)

The disciples are in a little boat on the Sea of Galilee. "The evening was come" verse 23. It was dark. "The ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary" (verse 24). It was stormy. "Jesus was not with them." They were alone. The darkness, the storm and the loneliness combined to produce circumstances similar to those of God's people in trial during the past two thousand years of our Lord's absence. The Lord appeared walking on the water. Mistaking Him for an apparition the disciples cried out in fear. With what wonderful words the Lord comforted them. "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid." Peter's heart bounded in confidence, "Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come unto Thee on the water. And He said, Come." Peter did what no other mere man before or since has ever done, "He walked on the water." When he started off so well, why did He sink? "He *saw* the wind boisterous." The moment he took his eyes from the Lord and let them scan the storm, he began to sink.

Throughout all that trying experience of darkness, storm and loneliness, One eye had been upon them constantly. We may forget Him, but He assures us, "Thou shalt not be forgotten of Me." We may turn from Him, lose sight of Him and even deny Him, but He never turns from His own, He never loses sight of them. Though we fail, "He abideth faithful, He cannot deny Himself" (2 Tim. 2:13).

Peter walked in faith until He looked away from the Lord Jesus then immediately he began to sink. The Lord heard his cry of need. "Lord, save me," and met his need with outstretched saving hand. but He rebuked his unbelief with "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" Let us not excuse our unbelief for it dishonours God, but let us confess it as sin and turn again to the Lord, "Looking off unto Jesus."

The Sentimental Look (Matt. 16)

Peter had just had a wonderful look at Christ as the Son of the living God (verse 16) revealed to him by the Father in Heaven (verse 17). How very quickly the eye can turn away. In verse 21 the Saviour revealed to them His soon-coming death of suffering and of

His resurrection, but Peter did not like that sight. No doubt with well meant sympathy, he did not want to look at the cross, but rebuked the Lord with "Be it far from Thee, Lord" or "Pity Thyself" or "God have mercy on Thee, this shall never be unto Thee" (verse 22 R.V.). The Lord immediately rebuked Peter (Mk. 8:33) with the stern words "Get thee behind Me, Satan, thou art an offence (stumbling-block) unto Me." The mouthpiece of God in verse 16 of Matt. 16, becomes the mouthpiece of Satan in verse 23! How solemn to reflect how wonderfully our tongues can be used for the glory of God, and how shamefully they may be used to do the work of the devil. How very carefully we should guard our tongues!

One may ask, "Why was Peter so sternly rebuked?" Inadvertently Peter became an instrument of Satan (for the moment) to turn aside the Saviour from the great purpose for which He was sent from Heaven and was born in Bethlehem — to provide eternal redemption for us. May our tongues never be used by Satan as a stumblingblock to sinners on the way to Hell, or as a hindrance to Saints doing the will of God.

The Shamed Look (Luke 22)

Verse 61 of Luke 22 tells us "The Lord turned and looked upon Peter". Peter caught that look, their eyes met and Peter went out and wept bitterly. For over an hour Peter's eyes had been on the enemies of Christ as he stood beside the fire they had kindled. Never had Peter's heart been colder or sadder. He had boasted of his love and loyalty and had failed miserably. Within the space of about an hour Peter had denied the One he loved three times. The rebuke contained in that look of love went deeper into Peter's heart than any spoken rebuke had ever done. 'Twas that look that melted Peter truly, and the bitter tears that followed proved how deeply that silent rebuke had touched him.

While Peter had fallen into the devil's sieve (Luke 22:31), yet his fall had been an open one before the world. The various steps leading to his fall have often been traced, but notice just one of them. "Peter followed afar off." While he was far from the Lord he got near to the world. How much world-bordering we have to deplore and mourn at the present time. What an enemy the world is! May we never allow the thought in our mind, "how near can I get to the world without falling out of the assembly and head-long into the world." The cross stands between us and the world (Gal. 6:14) and the preventative for, and remedy of, worldliness is, "Looking off unto Jesus . . . Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame." How much better to "bear shame for His

Name" than to be ashamed of Jesus now and find ourselves in the day of His glory, "ashamed before Him at His coming."

The Fearful Look (Gal. 2)

One more fall and rebuke is recorded in Galatians 2. This fall more directly affected the assembly. Peter had been used by God in Acts 10 with the "keys of the kingdom" to open the door of faith to the Gentiles. The middle wall of partition between the Jew and the Gentile had been abolished by the Cross. Peter understood this and had had happy fellowship in the assembly and in the home with Gentile believers in Antioch but when Jewish brethren came from Jerusalem he withdrew from the Gentile saints, "fearing them which were of the circumcision" (Gal. 2:12). His influence affected others and the apostle Paul felt it necessary to rebuke Peter to the face for his hypocrisy. Well says the Proverbs, "The fear of man bringeth a snare" (Prov. 29:25). Peter got his eyes on his Jewish brethren and was afraid of them — afraid of losing place and prestige among them. In the rebuke the apostle Paul sought to turn the Apostle Peter from the face of man to the face of the Crucified One Who had died for all, Jew and Gentile, and Who had saved both on the same terms. "The Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me" (Gal 2:20).

It is evident that Peter accepted this rebuke and profited by it. Some years after this incident Peter refers to his fellow apostle as "our beloved brother Paul", connecting his epistles with "the other Scriptures", even though in one of them is recorded Peter's own failure and Paul's rebuke. Peter believed that "faithful are the wounds of a friend." He has here left us an example of how to receive and profit by corrective ministry and discipline.

SIGHT OF OURSELVES AND OF GOD

When God teaches us, there are two astounding visions which He sets before us — the sight of ourselves, and the sight of Himself . . . Oh how humbling is the one, how elevating the other, how overwhelming are they both. Oh the emptiness, and Oh the fulness. If I have all that is in *me* to make and keep me most deeply humble, I have all that is in Christ to fill me with holy joy.

The worse we see ourselves to be, the more glorious does God's free, full, unhindered love appear; and the deeper the heartfelt joy of being eternally the object of it.

How it both breaks one's heart, and also heals it, to look at our conduct as *poor, lost, prodigals*, while we stand beside the prodigal's Father and feel His warm kisses on our cheek, while the hot tears of a Father's love and joy at our recovery fill us to overflowing with mingled grief and joy.

NOTABLE CHARACTERS IN HOLY WRIT
JOB, A PATTERN OF PATIENCE
(Read James 5:10, 11)

G. G. Johnston

It is generally conceded that the book of Job antedates the writings of Moses, and that his experiences may have paralleled the slavery of the children of Israel in Egypt. It is comforting to learn that in the midst of the abounding idolatry of his day, there was one who knew God, as Job did, and walked before Him in holy fear.

Not all of God's children are submitted to such sore trials as was Job, but all true faith is tried and tested. In such circumstances, as in no other way, we learn the end, or purpose, of the Lord, as well as the blessed fact that He is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.

The parent eagle bears its young upon its wings, as it soars far from the nest on a high crag of some mountain peak. Suddenly that parent drops from beneath the eaglet, leaving it screaming, and struggling to keep aloft. But the parent soars nearby, and when the young bird is about exhausted, darts under it again, bearing it high above the rocks upon which it seemed likely to be dashed to death. Thus it learns that the purpose, or end, of the parent is to develop its strength, and in a practical way it learns the pity and tenderness of that parent's heart.

Would Job have learned the heart of God as he did, had he known nothing but prosperity? Could we have known God practically without the trials He has permitted in our lives? Dear tried and tempted brother, or sister, those very trials will prove a real Godsend if received by you as sent for your profit.

"Every trial brings Him nearer:
Peace, peace is mine."

We know that it is from the hand of our heavenly Father, and He will not permit more than His grace will enable us to bear (1 Cor. 10:13). He suits the burden to the back, and fits the back to bear the burden.

There seems to have been little or no sympathy or help for Job in his family. He had seven sons and three daughters, of whom little more is said than that they feasted day after day, and that their father feared that in their pleasure-seeking they should have sinned against God, or even might have cursed Him in their hearts. As for his wife, her attitude toward him and the miseries that came upon him was that he should curse God, give up and die. Do we, in times of trial strengthen or weaken our partners in life? Do we help them to bear up, or do we tempt them to give up? Remember you were

given to each other to strengthen each other's spirits, not to weaken them.

Job had to count on a cunning foe. Satan, because he had become the declared enemy of God, was bent on doing mischief to His true servant, Job. In the centuries since that day, that enemy has acquired skill in his fiendish business as tempter. Let us not forget that he is today as busy as ever, and that he may at any moment pick on any of us, God's children, to demonstrate his evil power. We are no match for him in our own strength, but we can run into our strong tower: we can call upon the Lord to preserve us. "The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it and is safe." (Proverbs 18:10).

When travelling in Italy, one is impressed with the number of towns and cities built upon the summit of steep hills. In most of these places, there is a strong tower. Evidently when the country was ruled in small sections, by feudal lords, they found it easier to defend the narrow approaches to these mountain fortresses, and if the roads into the town were eventually taken by the enemy, they still could run into the round tower. While this is now outdated and of little value except as a relic of the past, our refuge in God is still a very practical thing.

Job had friends who no doubt meant well, but missed the mark in endeavouring to make Job confess that his miseries were the result of some secret sin. Eliphaz appeals to experience, as expressed in the words: "I have seen," (ch. 5:2), but his experience does not enable him to understand Job's experience. Bildad appeals to tradition, saying: "Enquire of the former age" (ch. 8:8), but he is unable to comfort Job in his present affliction. Zophar presents his argument, representing Legality, and says: "Let not iniquity dwell in thy tabernacles. For then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot" (ch. 11:14, 15). He would attempt to judge his friend Job as guilty of misdemeanour.

After all three of these "friends" have had a second round in their word-battle with Job, this man of God asks of them: "How hast thou helped him that is without power?" He seeks to direct their thoughts to the One who "hath the earth upon *nothing*," and says: "Lo, these are parts of His ways." (ch. 26).

After these would-be comforters had exhausted their arguments, a fourth called Elihu speaks. He explains his silence because of his comparative youth — a godly principle to be encouraged — then says: "The inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding." This

may suggest that means that God so frequently uses to reach the hearts of His own; that is, ministry in the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit.

Following the extended message of Elihu, the Lord himself spoke to Job, who then cried: "Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer Thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth." The Lord continued to speak to his heart, until Job is in the dust before Him, and finally exclaims: "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." After passing through this season of so severe trial and temptation, the Lord, having purified his servant in the fire, blessed his latter end more than his beginning. Let us always bear in mind that the Lord's purpose in allowing affliction is our spiritual blessing. Job learned patience, and so shall we. Job learned that the Lord is pitiful and of tender mercy, and so shall we.

TRIALS OF PROSPERITY

Nothing can justify us in neglecting the condition of our own soul. And it is well for us to remember that we are exposed to that danger in prosperity as well as in adversity; yea we may be *more* exposed to it in prosperity than in adversity. Fulness of bread was one of the things that led up to the corruptions of Sodom. There is a tendency to forget God when all is going well. In times of earthly prosperity, if we do not seek special grace for that special trial, we shall be overpowered by the current of worldliness, and perhaps become like them that go down to the pit! Then — strange as it may seem — times of prosperity in the church may be so misused by us as to lead to leanness of soul. When special meetings are going on when souls are being saved and the assembly is increasing, there is a tendency to imagine that there is not so much need for secret prayer and the reading of the Word. But we cannot live upon the enthusiasm of large meetings. We cannot do without our own "portion of meat in due season". We may be so taken up with the blessing that we forget the Blessor, but nothing will take the place of fellowship and communion with the Lord Himself.

O my soul, thou art travelling to take possession of a glorious inheritance among the saints. Wilt thou turn aside to crop every flower? Wilt thou stand still to hear every melodious sound?

* * * *

They that would not eat forbidden fruit must not come near the forbidden tree.

DEVELOPMENTS IN THE BOOK OF THE ACTS
The Persecution of the Saints and the Rejection of Israel
(Continued)

A. McShane, N. Ireland

Throughout the remainder of the Acts, Jerusalem, as the centre of gospel activity, passes out of the picture, and Antioch becomes the new pivot of God's work. The Jews had rejected the gospel in their own land, and, while those scattered amongst the nations would still be given preference in the offer of salvation, the chief operations of the Spirit would henceforth be amongst the Gentiles.

In chapters thirteen and fourteen we are given an account of the first missionary journey of Paul. In the course of it the sufferings of this devoted servant of Christ were so great that he all but lost his life. Indeed the mob on one occasion did think he was dead. He endured much, but from whom? His own people the Jews, who would neither receive the gospel themselves nor allow others to hear it. From city to city they dogged Paul's footsteps, even going so far as to unite with the Gentiles in order to frustrate, if possible, his efforts to reach the lost. We have already seen that the Pharisees and Sadducees, as well as the religious and political elements united, to oppose the work of God, but in these chapters there is a further development in this evil confederacy, for in them honourable and base as well as Jew and Gentile, sink their differences to show an unbroken front against the spread of the gospel. Time has not changed the hearts of men, for to this day even though they cannot agree about anything else, they can agree to fight against God.

Paul's imprisonment at Philippi (ch. 16) is perhaps the solitary occasion in the Acts when persecution was suffered from a purely Gentile source, and even then it is evident that the Centurion acted contrary to Roman law and only learned his mistake when it was too late. The gaoler's conversion and the establishment of one of the best churches of that time, however, more than compensated the apostle for what he suffered in that city.

The Jews in Europe, like those in Asia, were the chief cause of trouble in the cities which Paul visited in that continent. At Thessalonica, Berea, and Corinth they excited the populace and made it almost impossible for him to continue the work in those centres. His visit to Ephesus — the longest and perhaps the most fruitful effort in this great servant's missionary experiences — however, was upset not by the Jews but, as in Philippi, by the Gentiles. The storm arose from the idolatrous worshippers of Diana, but in this case he escaped without harm. A high proportion of the members in the churches

planted in these cities were gentiles, for few of the Jewish people took advantage of their privileged position as those who heard the gospel first.

The closing chapters of Acts are a prolonged account of the sufferings of Paul which resulted from his arrest at Jerusalem. His burning love for his people caused him to return to the city of his fathers with gifts to help the needy saints from their Gentile brethren. Like his Master, he brought nothing but good to his nation, and received nothing but evil from it. Although he carefully avoided everything that might cause opposition, and went as far as possible to meet the Jews in their prejudices (even to this day he is blamed by some for having gone too far), it was all in vain. In the arrest and trial of the Lord on the one hand, and of Paul, on the other, there are some striking parallels. Both were brought before the Sanhedrim: both were smitten upon the mouth; the crowd in both cases cried, "away with him"; both were thrice declared innocent; both were turned over to the Gentile powers; of both it was said that they had "done nothing worthy of death"; both were faced with three chief charges: (a) a political one — speaking against Caesar, (b) a religious one — blasphemy against God, (c) one of sacrilege — profaning the Temple; and both were condemned because the Roman authorities courted the favour of the Jews. In spite of evident weaknesses in his behaviour here and there during this long and terrible ordeal, it must be admitted that throughout it Paul followed closely the path of his Master and became a remarkable example of what grace can enable a man, who has yielded to the will of God, to do.

During the long period in the Nation's history which was now closing, the Jewish people rejected all the messengers God was pleased to send to them. First, John was beheaded. Then followed the crucifixion of Christ, their Messiah. After His resurrection Peter was imprisoned, James was beheaded, Stephen was stoned to death, and now Paul was compelled to appeal to Caesar in order to receive a just trial.

It remains for Luke to tell us how the gospel was treated by the Jews at Rome. Far removed as they were from the zealous citizens of Jerusalem, their turning away from Paul and his message, proved them to be as opposed to Christ as their brethren. This rejection by the Jews of the kingdom appears to end completely their time of probation. From henceforth the Gentiles will stand on equal footing. "Be it known therefore unto you that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it" (Acts 28:28).

While dwelling upon these painful chapters of persecution and rejection, it must be remembered that the work of God was not

frustrated by the opposition of the enemy. The gospel chariot rolled on in triumph even though there were casualties in the army's ranks. Although the enemy's range must have terrified many of the more timid servants of God, Satan gained little by his efforts, yea, in many cases they but opened the way for some to hear the gospel who otherwise would never have been privileged to do so.

Another lesson which we must not fail to learn is that the chief opposers of the work of God are invariably the self-righteous people who are as ignorant of their need and danger as they are unappreciative of the grace of God.

THE LOVE OF MONEY

James Campbell

A prevailing evil among the children of God in our day is worldliness, wanting to gain the present world, or what God calls "covetousness which is idolatry". This desire for gain is eating away the spiritual life of very many of God's people. Business absorbs all their time, and crushes out the desire for prayer and reading of God's Word, and robs the soul of fellowship with God. I have been convinced for years that this love of money, and the many ways devised to obtain it, is one of the greatest evils that exist among the children of God. Some who have been entrusted with this world's goods, do hold what they have as a stewardship for God, and use it in His service, but by far the greater number who have it, think that it entitles them to a place of distinction in the Church, and that they should be recognized as having a position of honour among their fellow-believers because they are possessed of this world's goods. In general it is just the reverse. Unless a Christian is in a right condition of soul, and his life and ways a true testimony for God, he is not fit to take the place of a leader in the Church of God.

Never seek to find out if some forbidden thing is a *sin* or not, and whether it may not in some way be reconciled to conscience. Let it be enough that God has forbidden it.

* * * *

A soul estranged from God will seek diversion in anything, yet find satisfaction in nothing save the Fountain of living waters which he has forsaken.

HELPS AND HINTS ON PRAYER (Part I)

J. A. Gray

The Bible can be truly called a book of prayer. In it we have the names of men and women who prayed, also the prayers they uttered. Let us group together some examples of the same and pass on a few helps and hints for the reader.

A First Prayer

Paul was a man of prayer. Sometimes we see the man in prayer, at other times we get the prayers of the man. In the book of Acts we get the former and in the epistles the latter. God's purpose in giving such recordings of Paul's prayers was not that we should repeat them in the presence of God, but rather that we should learn a simple, reverent, approach to God. These inspired breathings of the apostle, ought to inspire every believer to pray.

Paul's wonderful prayer life had its beginning in Acts 9:11. Here we find Paul in the house of Judas which was in the street called Straight. One would gather that Judas was a happy man as his name means "praise". Living in Straight Street might suggest he was righteous. Surely a good place for a young convert like Paul to make his first prayer as a Christian. He commenced a great life of righteous living by being found in a straight place and with a straight man. This is the meaning of righteousness. Here he learned his first lesson on the righteousness of prayer.

A Fast Prayer

In reading Peter's prayer in Matthew 14, we find it was speedy, simple, sincere, short and saving. It is one of the brief prayers of scripture. Truly it was a fast prayer that got a quick answer. Nehemiah, like Peter, was in a circumstance that demanded quick action (Neh. 2:4). Both had a present need upon their heart. Their words were fast and few. They learned that answers to prayer were not the outcome of lengthy explanations but rather of a burdened supplication. Sinking Peter addresses the Lord in a proper manner when he gave Him the title "Lord". He also expressed his burden when he said "save me". He lost neither time nor words in his prayer.

A Food Prayer

The Christian eats to pray and prays to eat. The food prayer of Matthew 6:11 would suggest this. Feeding on God's Word and prayer are closely connected. The habit of prayer before and after reading God's Word will lead the saint into a precious understanding of God's things. The man in Luke 11:5-10 was wisely exercised about his poverty in the light of the visit of a friend. Prayer brought in three

loaves and he was able to dispense the same in humble hospitality to his guest. His prayer could be called "the food prayer". Some have never learned how to get bread from God's food book. Today we have spiritual poverty and famine as the result. If God's people desire to be saved from such conditions they must learn how to get into the book by prayer and how to retire from the book in prayer. Reading and praying must walk and work together harmoniously. Aimless and prayerless reading of the scriptures leaves the believer in a foodless condition which leads to fainting and falling. God's Word is like the barrel of meal of 1 Kings 17:15-16. We approach it in simplicity of faith and from thence draw forth the precious meal that would nourish and build up the soul. Faithless reading leads to foodless reading.

A Faith Prayer

Faith lives, grows and develops on the Word of God and prayer. In Hebrews 11 we get a full description of faith in action. This is the prayer that is prompted by the Holy Ghost (Jude 20), uttered with the conscious realization of God's Will (James 4:3) and resting on the promises of God's Word. Another has well said, "Faith is dead to doubts, dumb to discouragements, blind to impossibilities and knows nothing but success." Acts 12 gives us the Church in prayer. The prayer of the Church is not described but it is referred to as being fervent, yet it seems the answer was not expected. Note the words of the praying saints to Rhoda (verse 15). God brought Peter out of prison but found it difficult to get him into the prayer meeting. This is an example of unbelief which is one of the major sins in the world and in the Church today. We all need to pray that God will save us from unbelief and increase our simple trust in Himself. The praying heart must learn that faith can remove mountains and mountains can remove faith. Elijah on Mount Carmel is a lovely picture of "the faith prayer" (1 Kings 18:42-46). He prayed, he looked for an answer, and had the sweet consolation of seeing Heaven pour out its rich blessing. Here he learned that prayer is the key used by faith to open the door of heavenly blessing.

If thou wilt not suffer, thou refusest to be crowned.

* * * *

Many choose rather to be great than humble; forgetting that only they who choose to be humble, are truly great.

* * * *

He is poor indeed, who has not the testimony of a good conscience.

* * * *

Revelation, like the Sun, must be seen by its own light.

ISRAEL AND THE CHURCH

Preparation for Worship

Wm. Hoste

This is most important. In the case of Israel, three things were necessary before worship was possible.

- (1) Shelter from judgment by Divine provision—the blood of the Lamb.
- (2) Separation from Egypt by Divine direction—the hand of Moses.
- (3) Full deliverance from their enemies by Divine operation — the salvation of God.

It was only then, the “new song” arose, foretaste of priestly worship. This clearly corresponds in our case to safety by the blood separation from the world, and salvation from the power of sin through death and resurrection; in other words, to the setting free of the sinner from every hostile claim through faith in Christ. Not one note of worship ever goes up to God, until the sin question has been Divinely settled.

Had Israel been obedient, God would have fulfilled His Word—“Ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests” (Exod. 19:6). This purpose will still be realized in a future day of national restoration, as we read — “Ye shall be named the priests of the Lord” (Isa. 61:6). After the sin of the golden calf, one tribe was separated to the service of the tabernacle, and out of that tribe one family was chosen to exercise the priesthood (Num. 18:1).

The ceremonial of their setting apart and consecration, is described in Lev. 8. Space forbids a detailed exposition of this chapter. The first act was significant — a complete bathing of the person of Aaron and his sons in water, corresponding to the “bathing once for all” referred to by our Lord in John 13:10, in “the laver of regeneration” (Tit. 3:5, R.V.). Then followed the clothing of Aaron in his “garments of glory and beauty” and his anointing, and that of the vessels of the tabernacle, typical of the anointing of Christ in virtue of his own intrinsic holiness, apart from blood-shedding. Next, the sons of Aaron were clothed in white linen, reminding us of “the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ . . . upon all them that believe,” and next, we see Aaron and his sons identifying themselves with the sin and burnt offerings and with the ram of consecration — types of different aspects of the sacrificial work of Christ — and the blood applied to their whole being — ear, hand and foot. Then followed their “consecration” or “hands-filling”. That which spake of Christ was placed in their hands and waved

before Jehovah, and then the blood and oil was sprinkled upon Aaron and his sons — the value of the sacrifice applied to the conscience by the Holy Spirit.

The chapter closes with the priests shut in with God for seven days — a complete period — feeding on that which spake to the heart of Jehovah, of the Person and devotedness of Christ. What more blessed preparation for worship could there be? The work of Christ fully apprehended; the blood of Christ applied by the power of the Spirit; hands filled with His person, and hearts feeding on the wondrous person of the Lamb once slain! Every believer is a priest, qualified and called by grace to worship, but the apprehension of that for which he has been apprehended is often alas! but too meagre.

Thus were the priests of Israel set apart once for all to their holy office, but something more was needed if they were to offer acceptable service to God, and that was the cleansing at the laver. This vessel was set up between the door of the holy place and the altar of burnt offering. Aaron and his sons were to wash their hands and feet thereat, when they entered into the tabernacle and when they drew near the altar — “lest they die”. This corresponds to the trying of the believer’s ways by the Word of God, before engaging in priestly service. This washing was not in view of positive known defilement — for that “the water of purification” was provided (see Num. 19). And John 13, corresponds with the laver.

The Lord was about to reveal divine secrets to His own, and lead them into priestly service (John 17), hence the need of the laver. 1 John 1:9 is the answer to the water of purification — “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” So David felt the need of this water, and prays in Psalm 51 — “Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean,” (see also Num. 19:17, 18). Every child has his place at his father’s table, but the father may send away the child with dirty hands to cleanse himself. So every child of God sound in doctrine and walk, is worthy of a place at the Lord’s table; this depends on relationship; but all are not in a fit state to “do it worthily” for this depends on state. And so the word in 1 Cor. 11:28 is — “Let a man examine himself and so let him eat.” The man who does examine himself honestly — trying his ways by the Word of God — will surely be led to self judgment and confession. This is not a question of reception at all, but for those already received.

The interesting ceremonial of Deut. 26, is an illustration of how closely confession precedes the remembrance of the Lord’s great goodness, and consequent worship. “Thou shalt place the basket before the Lord thy God, and worship before the Lord thy God.”

It is not unfitting to remember at the Lord's table, "the pit from which we were digged", but clearly individual self-examination and confession should take place before we come together around the Lord's table. In Hebrews 10, the question of failure does not come in, because the truth taught there is, the perfection of the one sacrifice. Seeing we have "liberty to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus," and "seeing we have a great High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart," true here, not so much in opposition to what is false, as to what is figurative. The "true heart" is a heart formed by the Word of God to take up Divine ground in His presence as opposed to a heart held by human teaching on Jewish ground, "in full assurance of faith, having the heart sprinkled from an evil conscience" — corresponding to the sprinkling of the blood and oil once for all in Lev. 8:30, I believe — and the bodies washed with pure water — corresponding to the initial bathing once for all of Lev. 8:6.

The best preparation for coming together on the Lord's Day is a careful walk on the week days. To partake with enjoyment of the memorials on the Lord's table, there should be "total abstinence" from "every form of evil" (1 Thess. 5:22, R.V.), and a daily feeding on Christ who is the material of all true worship.

Christendom has drifted far from all this. She ignores the priesthood of all believers and sets up a fancy priesthood like Jeroboam, of men in too many cases who are "not of the sons of Levi." She prepares them in her own way, but her way is not God's way, for there is nothing in the New Testament of special priests in the Church of God and consequently nothing as to how such should be prepared.

Shameful dispersions are the just punishments of sinful unions. Simeon and Levi, who had been brethren in iniquity, were divided in Jacob (Gen. 49:5, 7).

* * * *

We learn from Christ that the heavenly graces are all of them compatible with the wear of an earthly body, and the circumstances of an earthly habitation.

* * * *

It is dangerous to speak all the good of a man that is true; but to speak good of a man that is not true, may prove his ruin.

THANKS FOR ALL THE LETTERS!

Mervyn Paul

Yes, thanks for every one of them, and for the cheering, encouraging messages that each one brought! And some gave me permission to quote from theirs, for which I am doubly grateful.

As I write (mid-March) I realize that Easter is exam. time for many young Christians. So I must be especially thankful to those of you who took time out from your studies to write to me . . . and perhaps I shall yet hear from those who were too busy at that time?

Also, my thanks will be not a whit less to all those not-so-young ones who wrote to encourage, suggest, and sometimes to ask for help with their problems. In the will of the Lord I shall hope to reply to you, every one. But may I ask for your patience? Have lost over two weeks through a bout with the 'flu — and the re-gaining of physical strength is slow. Meantime may the Lord remember each of you in your concerns, give you light on your pathway, and keep us all from wavering.

Lying here I have been thinking much of the wondrous fact that we, the twice-born, have been united to the Christ, through the Indwelling Holy Spirit, and so have been brought into immediate relationship with the Living and Eternal God.

—Really staggering to the mind, isn't it?

—But do let us think, and think, and think about it, Beloved . . .

until this tremendous fact begins to challenge our thoughts and our ways, and so to shape our attitudes, desires and actions that the power of this relationship shall begin to "show through on the outside". In the days of Peter and John, you will remember, the enemies of the cross "took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus"; Acts 4:13. The power of the associations of their inner lives was showing through, and it was their possession of "a new nature" that made this possible.

When we got saved we received this "new nature" — something which many believers find very hard to visualize, or to recognize. Sometimes the stating of an old truth in a different way helps to bring a clearer understanding. So, for our present purposes, let me say it this way: *When you got saved your personality, through the Holy Spirit, became possessed of a "spiritual core" . . . a spiritual second nature, which responds only to God, and to the things of God . . . since it was "born of the Spirit".*

—Now do you understand? Be sure to get hold of it before you read any further, won't you?

And to repeat: Your personality, in its possession of this Spirit-begotten "spiritual core", now has something which God can use in two major ways. He can make to shine through it some of those moral glories seen in the Man, Christ Jesus (Gal. 5:22-23); and He can release through it the mighty energies of the Holy Spirit, "according as He will"; 1 Cor. 12:7-11.

This new "spiritual core", as I am calling it just now, *is the only born-again part of you there is*. All the rest of you is just the same old you that used to be before you were saved, and which is called "your old nature". In God's reckoning, it died on the cross when the Lord Jesus was crucified; Rom. 6:6. Then he asks us to reckon as He reckons; Rom. 6:11. So that is why we go in for starving the old dead-to-God nature all we can, and at the same time for feeding the little new one all we can, so that it will grow.

Now it's hard on this old nature of ours to have to keep on being starved and pushed down. The Self dearly loves fun, and frolics, and worldly things. Nobody likes to be called "a square" — just nobody! "Besides," it often is demanded, "what about the all-round development which we are supposed to get so that our personalities will not become stunted, warped, and ill-adjusted to life? What about this angle of our well-being?" So, as I am saying, Self does love to justify itself, to enjoy itself, and have a good time. The very idea of starving it seems unreasonable, ridiculous. It is natural, so absolutely natural, to be a Self-pleaser rather than to be an out-and-out pleaser of the Lord. Yet, let me pause to remark, Self-pleasing is, after all a poor paying proposition.

THERE'S NO FUTURE IN IT!

Now, respecting the all-round development problem, I believe I could write a passable thesis in discussion of the psychological factors involved. But there is no need for it. All I need to say is this: the best adjusted Person Who ever walked amongst men "pleased not Himself" — not ever; Rom. 15:3.

There is something more: all-round development is possible on THREE different levels, not merely one:

(1) That level where we decide that nobody is going to tell us what we are to do, or not to do. We mean, so far as may be possible, to do what we want to do. This is full-fledged Self-pleasing.

(2) That level where we decide that the Spiritual way of life is too difficult — beyond our reach — but we shall try to keep up our "religious" duties as well as we can. This is Self-pleasing with an Apology.

(3) That level where we have yielded ourselves to God, as those

that are alive from the dead (Rom. 6:13); and then, fighting against our natural dis-inclinations all the time, we seek to build up that "spiritual core", which through the Holy Spirit became attached to our personalities when we got saved.

One recent letter, which I have liberty to quote in spots, has this to say: "the rewards of studying the Scripture, praying and living the life are unbelievable — but it's so much easier to drift along and not do much about it but go through the motions" . . . And isn't it the truth!

Yet again, several of my correspondents have outlined in their letters their determined strugglings for their own way, their disappointments, and final yielding to the Lord's will; followed, very definitely, by the fulfilment of Prov. 10:22.

Oh Beloved! The time is short if we are to acquire something of that all-round development which brings us into the current of the purposes and mighty workings of our God. The "Ages to come" are just around the corner! Perhaps it will help to spur "our faint endeavour" if we shall hear in our souls afresh the challenge of the hymn-writer's lines:

"Turn your eyes upon Jesus,
Look full in His wonderful face;
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim
In the light of His glory and grace."

NOTES ON SCRIPTURAL HYMNS AND THEIR WRITERS

Hector Alves

In notes on hymns and their writers we have thus far confined them almost altogether to hymns found in "The Believers' Hymn Book". In some instances very little information can be obtained; this we regret, as many of these hymns indicate the spiritual character of the author. However, we seek to give even the little we can learn of some of the lesser known writers.

"Before the throne of God above
I have a strong, a perfect plea,
A great High Priest, whose name is Love,
Who ever lives and pleads for me."

This hymn, bringing before us the mediatorial work of our great High Priest, was written by Mrs. Charitie Lees Bancroft. She was the daughter of a minister of the gospel, and was born at Merion, County Dublin, Ireland, June 21, 1841.

The above hymn contains a verse which is omitted in The Believers' Hymn Book —

“My name is graven on His hands,
My name is written on His heart:
I know that while in heaven He stands,
No tongue can bid me thence depart.”

Mrs. Bancroft's hymns are well known in some circles; only two of them are found in 'The Believers' Hymn Book. Besides the above, there is another beautiful hymn from her pen —

“O for the robes of whiteness,
O for the tearless eyes;
O for the glorious brightness
Of the unclouded skies!
O for the no more weeping
Within the land of love;
The endless joy of keeping
The bridal feast above.”

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question. We would appreciate some help on 1 Cor. 6:4. There is a difference of opinion here regarding the meaning of the latter part of the verse. “Set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church.”

Answer. You need not be surprised at there being “a difference of opinion” regarding this passage. Some commentators admit they do not understand it. Various interpretations have been given to this statement. The apostle in this section of the Epistle, is drawing attention to the serious practice of the Corinthian saints, in taking their controversies, and matters requiring a decision, before the heathen judges for settlement. A comparison of the Authorized Version and its marginal reading, will show that there are more ways than one of understanding the apostle's words.

From the reading of the King James or Authorized Version, it would appear that the apostle recommends that rather than take their grievances before judges outside the assembly, they should bring them before a tribunal composed of those who are “least esteemed in the church”. That is, even the weakest, the most ignorant, the least competent of your brethren are better fitted to judge than those who are without. Perhaps there is a little irony in his words.

If the Revised Version be adopted, it would appear as if this is an expression of surprise on the part of Paul, rather than a command or recommendation. "Do ye set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church?" Compare verse 1 with verse 4. Verse 1—"Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust (R.V. unrighteous), and not before the saints?" Verse 4. "Do ye set them to judge who are of no account in the church?" The "unrighteous" of verse 1, and "those of no account in the church" of verse 4, might refer to the same class, namely, unbelievers. Unbelievers are of no account in the church; and certainly they have no say in assembly matters.

Some of the various interpretations that have been given to this passage are as follows:

(1) It is a recommendation, or even an apostolic command. There is no need to be outside of the assembly with such matters. Rather than bring your controversies before the judges of the world, submit them to the decision of even the least competent in the church. The weakest brother in the assembly is better fitted than the heathen, to judge your differences.

(2) It is a declaration, rather than a command. "You refer your controversies to judges who are least esteemed in the church." Or least esteemed by the church. That is, these unbelieving judges are held in low estimation by the saints.

(3) Refer your questions or controversial matters to the brethren in the assembly. They may be least esteemed, and looked down upon by the heathen, as weak and foolish. This in the light of 1 Cor. 1:27-28. "But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty," etc.

(4) Reserve greater problems for the consideration of competent brethren; but when it is a question of small matters, "things pertaining to this life," (verse 4) which arise between brethren, those who are less competent, of "no account", are quite able to take care of these things.

The lesson I learn from the context is this. Do not take your assembly troubles, or difficulties and differences between brethren to a civil court, outside of the assembly. These are matters to be settled by brethren in the assembly. These things should not become common knowledge among those who are without. In writing to the church at Philippi, Paul exhorted them, "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation (problems) with fear and trembling." (Phil 2:12).—H.A.

JACKSON, MICH.—L. E. McBain is having ministry meetings on the Book of Revelation.

FREMONT, OHIO—Norman Crawford and J. Lipke have been encouraged in Fremont, Bellevue and Flatrock area. Blessing in the Gospel has been seen in two men professing recently and a regular Sunday School of 30 children has been gathered.

HARTFORD, CONN.—R. Capiello writes of a visit here and of the funeral of a brother in New Haven at which he spoke (name not mentioned), and of brief visits at Springfield, Mass., and Waterbury, Conn.

BRODHEAD, WIS.—S. Mick continues with good meetings. Two have professed. L. Brandt and H. Wahls are holding meetings in a new place in Minn. S. Hamilton had a few meetings in Lake Geneva, is now in Madison and hopes to go on to Black Earth, Wis.

CONFERENCES

DESERONTO, ONT.—The Deseronto and Picton assemblies purpose, D.V., holding their annual conference in the Legion Hall, Deseronto on May 20 and 21, with a prayer meeting May 19 at 7 p.m. Those walking in the old paths and teaching the right ways of the Lord, welcome to minister. Corr. Wm. Root, Box 241, Deseronto, Ont.

SARNIA, ONT.—The annual conference D.V., will commence with a prayer meeting in the Gospel Hall, College and Davis, June 7th at 7.45 p.m., continuing in the Gospel Hall June 8th. Meetings on the 9th and 10th will be in the Hanna Memorial School, south of the London Rd. on Russel St. Ministry will be welcomed from those seeking to maintain the truth of God. Corr. John Kember, 1393 Murphy Rd., Sarnia, Ont.

(Late notice) **ST. CATHARINES, ONT.**—S. S. Teachers' Conference, May 21, 1.30 and 6.30 p.m., Welland Ave. at Henry St.

WINNIPEG, MAN.—The conference will, D.V., be held on June 8, 9, 10 in the West End Hall, 492 Victor St., preceded by a prayer meeting June 7. Corr. S. M. Vanstone, 251 Beverley St., Winnipeg 10, Man.

GARNAVILLO, IA.—The Conference will be held, D.V., June 2 and 3. Prayer meeting in the Gospel Hall, June 1. Meetings Saturday, 10 a.m., 2 and 8 p.m. Lord's Day, 10.30 a.m., 2 and 8 p.m.

FOREST GROVE, ORE.—Conference will be held, D.V., May 11, 12, 13, with a prayer meeting May 10. Corr. Harry H. Goff, Rt. 1, Box 436, Forest Grove, Ore.

GALT, ONT.—Our annual conference D.V., in the Gospel Hall, 30 Cambridge St., June 8, 9, 10. Friday, June 8, prayer meeting 8 p.m. Saturday June 9, 10 a.m., 2.30 and 7 p.m. Lord's Day, 10 a.m., 2.30 and 7 p.m. Circulars sent to assemblies only. Corr. Stephen Fletcher, R.R. 1, Galt, Ont.

MIDLAND, ONT.—The annual conference will be held, D.V., in the Y.M.C.A., on May 19, 20, and in the morning only of the 21st. Prayer meeting Friday evening May 18th.

KENORA, ONT.—The conference will be held, D.V., in the Gospel Hall on June 2 and 3, with a prayer meeting on June 1 at 7.30 p.m. Ministering brethren walking in the "old paths" will be welcome. Corr. E. L. McCammon, R.R. 1, Kenora, Ont.

VICTORIA RD., ONT.—The 69th annual conference will be held, D.V., in the Gospel Hall, Long Point, on June 15, 16 and 17, at 10.30 a.m., 2.30 and 7.30 p.m. with a prayer meeting June 14 at 8 p.m. D.S.T. The Lord's servants seeking to "strengthen the things which remain" will be welcome to minister the Word. Corr. Roger L. Crarey, Box 50, Victoria Rd., Ontario.

WITH CHRIST

VANCOUVER, B.C.—Miss E. Mabel Calderbank passed suddenly into the Lord's presence on Feb. 15. She was in happy fellowship in the Fairview Assembly for thirty-five years. She was a quiet, godly sister who was seldom absent from meeting. She was at the prayer meeting on the evening of her sudden homecall. Bren. A. Wilson and R. Peacock preached the Word at the funeral.

MONTREAL, QUE.—On Feb. 22nd, our beloved sister, Mrs. Joe Cass, went home suddenly in her 52nd year. She was saved about 30 years ago in meetings by Herb Harris and the late J. Silvester. She was in happy fellowship in the assembly, given to hospitality and will be greatly missed. John Campbell conducted the largely attended funeral. F. Holder spoke at the grave.

VANCOUVER, B.C.—Our beloved brother, James Brown, passed into the Lord's presence March 21, aged 81 years. He was a quiet, consistent brother who has been connected with the assemblies for many years. Brother McKinley spoke the Word at the funeral.

PETERBOROUGH, ONT.—Our dear brother, Kenneth Wesley Esson, passed peacefully away after a lengthy illness. He was saved for many years and in fellowship in the Brock St. Assembly. J. H. Blackwood spoke at the funeral words of comfort and preached the Gospel.

MONCTON, N.B.—On Feb. 13, our beloved sister, Mrs. M. A. Martin, widow of the late John Martin, Evangelist went home after a long illness which was borne with patience. She was saved 55 years ago in meetings by brethren Martin and Scott, and has been in happy fellowship in the assembly here. Brethren Albert Ramsay and N. L. McNeil spoke the Word at the funeral.

FOREST GROVE, ORE.—Our sister, Mrs. Jay Raymond went home Jan. 19. She was born in 1876 and born again in 1894, through John 3:16. She was in fellowship in Forest Grove until her homecall. J. Robinson and L. K. McIlwaine spoke at the funeral.

REDWING, ONT.—Our beloved brother, Charles Sworder, went home aged 86. He was saved about 66 years through "Bishop" Baldwin of London, Ont. He later learned the blessed truth of gathering to the Lord's Name through bren. D. McGeachy and J. C. Beattie, and went on for the Lord Whom he loved. J. Gunn preached the Word at the funeral in the Gospel Hall in Collingwood. W. Bousfield spoke at the grave.

ENGLEHART, ONT.—Our dear brother, John Watters, of the Englehart Assembly went to be with Christ on March 6 at 72 years of age. He was saved over 13 years ago when B. Widdifield and Mervyn Paul had a tent here. Soon after he was baptized and received and has gone on as long as he was able to get out to meetings. Brethren S. Simms and E. Pears spoke to saved and unsaved at the funeral.

TORONTO, ONT.—On March 16, our sister in Christ, Mrs. Wm. McCullough, went home to be with the Lord. She was saved early in life and gathered out in Brantford. Until the homecall of her brother, Harland Harper, she assisted her brother in the printing of a Gospel magazine, "Grace and Truth". She married our brother Wm. McCullough in 1924 and went with him in the Lord's work to the Bahamas. For over twenty years they have lived in Toronto in fellowship in Bracondale and Central. W. Pell and R. McCrory took the funeral services.

MALDEN, MASS.—Our beloved sister, Ruth Procopie, passed into the Lord's presence on Feb. 13 at the age of 25. She was saved about 10 years ago and has born a good testimony. Brethren Fite and Carboni gave words of comfort and warning to the large company at the funeral. Brother Pizzulli spoke at the grave.

RUTH and TIDINGS

BEHOLD I HAVE SET BEFORE THEE AN OPEN DOOR

THOU
HAST
A
LITTLE
STRENGTH

AND
HAST
KEPT
MY
WORD

AND HAST NOT DENIED
MY NAME

REV. 3:18

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EDITOR ----- A. W. JOYCE, 26 Munro Blvd., Willowdale, Ont., Canada.
ASSOCIATE EDITORS --- F. G. WATSON, 92 Regal Rd., Toronto, Ont.
G. G. JOHNSTON, 140 Woodycrest Ave., Toronto, Ont.
HECTOR ALVES, 338 W. King Edward Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C.

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SUMMER SUBSCRIPTIONS

We would remind those whose subscriptions come due in June or in the summer to renew as soon as possible. Prompt renewals save us considerable work and will be appreciated by us.

TIDINGS

KITIMAT, B.C.—R. Peacock is visiting this new field with the Gospel from door to door. He hopes also to go to Terrace, B.C., while in this part.

TOGO, SASK.—J. Ronald is labouring in this part. During the winter he visited Mervin, Lashburn and Maidstone, and tried meetings in nearby towns making some interesting contacts.

GLEN EWEN, SASK.—J. Gray is having ministry meetings after a week at Portage. He intends going on to Northern Saskatchewan. A. Wilson and J. Frith are expected for Gospel meetings in Minitonas.

WINNIPEG, MAN.—W. Warke and R. Boyle are preaching the Gospel with interest and some encouragement. One woman confessed to be saved.

PORT ARTHUR, ONT.—G. McKinley had a few ministry meetings. He expects to leave for a visit in Ireland in May.

CHAPMAN VALLEY, ONT.—Earl Pears commenced Gospel meetings, expecting to be joined by S. Simms.

KITCHENER, ONT.—We had a helpful visit from D. Calderhead for two weeks' ministry meetings and an appreciated week end from F. G. Watson. D. Calderhead went on to Owen Sound and was expected also at Eden Grove.

WELLAND, ONT.—G. P. Taylor had some ministry meetings which were an encouragement to the little assembly. They expected a visit from A. Douglas.

STRONGVILLE, ONT.—Donald Armstrong has moved to Barrie and the new correspondent of the Strongville assembly is Arnot Johnston, R.R. 1, Stayner, Ont.

LINDSAY, ONT.—A. W. Joyce visited here seeking to help the little company and had some Gospel meetings. A couple professed to be saved. He expected also to visit Victoria Rd. for some ministry meetings.

VALENS, ONT.—F. G. Watson is having two weeks of ministry to help the little assembly here.

WINDSOR, ONT.—Jas. Clark had 7 weeks' Gospel meetings. The hand of the Lord was seen in the salvation and restoration of a number.

DEMAs

A. W. Joyce

The history of mankind is a profitable study. The Scripture is the greatest history book in the world. In it, we have the origin of the universe, the development, rise and fall of civilizations, the history of races, nations, and the personal history of individual men and women. Some individuals blaze a profitable path for others to follow. Some men shine as a beacon of warning that all who follow may avoid the rocks upon which they or their testimony have perished. Among these latter cases there is a man called Demas. The Scripture writes his history in three extremely short chapters which might be headed:

1. Demas Serving
2. Demas Drifting
3. Demas Gone

DEMAs SERVING

The first brief chapter of Demas' history introduces him (Philemon 24), as a fellow labourer of the apostle Paul, who stood with him in the first trying days of his experience as a prisoner in Rome.

Demas had been in the best of company. He had laboured with Paul along with Marcus, Aristarchus and Lucas. The world has a wise expression, "A man is known by the company he keeps." The Scripture similarly expresses it, "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise" (Prov. 13:20).

Every Christian ought to choose with care his or her companionships. Even among Christians when choosing one to be a close friend, the young Christians will be well advised to choose the company of the spiritual — those who will lift them heavenward and not drag them worldward. However, good company is not a positive assurance of spiritual prosperity unless accompanied by fellowship with God. This is suggested at least by our next chapter in Demas' life.

DEMAs DRIFTING

Every word of Scripture is chosen by design and not by chance. In Col. 4, we have eight brethren associated with Paul in sending greetings. Seven of them are commended in some way, Demas, the eighth, stands out as an exception.

- (a) Tychicus, a beloved brother.
- (b) Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother.
- (c) Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner.
- (d) Marcus, (special instructions follow).
- (e) Justus, one of the fellow workers who comforted Paul.

- (f) Epaphras, a fervent man of prayer and zeal.
- (g) Luke, the beloved physician.
- (h) Demas — No commendation follows. The silence of Scripture may suggest that already Paul could detect signs of defection in Demas.

It would seem in this chapter that Marcus or John Mark, is on the way back into the confidence of the apostle Paul, while Demas seems to be on the way out.

DEMAS GONE

About two years have passed since the writing of chapter two in the history of Paul's fellow-labourer and we come to chapter three. "Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world and is departed unto Thessalonica" (2 Tim. 4:10). Paul, the faithful old warrior of the cross, is lying in a Roman dungeon awaiting martyrdom. Christ fills his heart, his faith and hope are unquenchable but he is very human and longs for the companionship of his brethren. He sends for Timothy and John Mark, for "only Luke is with me." Under these circumstances how keenly Paul felt the desertion of Demas! What is the underlying cause of the breakdown? It is not the case of courage breaking down under pressure. It was LOVE OF THIS PRESENT WORLD. This expression in verse 10 stands in direct contrast to the expression in verse 8, the crown of righteousness promised to "all them that love His appearing". And so Demas is gone as to his testimony for God and steps out of Scripture history into oblivion, with no later mention of his recovery.

Whether we are servants of the Lord giving all our time to the ministry, overseers of God's assemblies, younger men who have helped in the work, or young Christians not long saved, let us solemnly beware lest the love of Christ in our hearts be displaced by love of the world. The world was never more attractive, prosperity never was so universal, the powers of the devil never were more manifest, the coming of the Lord never was so near as at this present time. Many men of God who stand for the Lord and His truth never need sadly to write of us _____ hath forsaken us, having loved this present world.

Nature is content with a *little*, and that which is most natural; Grace with *less*; but Lust with *nothing*.

* * * *

One of the ancient philosophers once said: "When men speak ill of thee, live so that no one will believe them."

DEVELOPMENTS IN THE BOOK OF THE ACTS

Internal Troubles

A. McShane

Ere we conclude these articles on the book of Acts, there is one more avenue of truth which we shall attempt to traverse, namely, that of troubles which arose amongst believers of apostolic times. These matters will not be so pleasant to survey as those already dealt with in previous papers, but we trust our consideration of them will not be without profit. God was pleased to guide His servant Luke to record the failings of His people as faithfully as their virtues, with the end in view, no doubt, that we might benefit from their painful experiences. Like the other subjects which we have considered in this series, we believe it will be found that in the histories of these troubles there is an evident development, not only with regard to their importance, but also with regard to the seriousness of the issues involved.

The first blot on the page of Church history was the sin of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11). After years of experience amongst God's people, together with some knowledge of our own failings, we can have little conception of the shock it must have been to those early saints to find an outbreak of evil in their midst. For the church at Jerusalem, the first local church on earth, yea the church which was filled with the Holy Ghost (ch. 4:31), to discover that two of its members were filled with Satan (ch. 5:3), was as surprising as it was painful. The same enemy who had invaded the fair scenes of Eden's garden had no less success in penetrating God's new sphere of operations — His Church. In both disasters we read a story of deceit, pride, selfishness, lying and death.

The closing part of chapter 4 of Acts is an account of the great sacrifices made by the early believers in order that the poor and distressed might be relieved. Those like Barnabas, who had land, sold it and laid the proceeds at the apostles' feet, and by so doing gained the regard of the saints and the blessing of the Lord. Ananias and Sapphira were ambitious to share these honours without paying the price entailed. Their sin lay not in refusing to sell their possession, nor even in withholding the full price of it, but rather in pretending to be giving all when in fact they were but giving part. Thus the evil was threefold. Firstly, it was hypocrisy, for they pretended to be doing what they were not; secondly, it was covetousness, for they were keeping back for themselves what they could easily have given to the Lord; and thirdly, it was lying, for they acted a lie in concealing the true price. The length of time for enjoyment of their gain

was indeed short, for God swiftly purged His house, and removed the guilty pair by death. Both filled early graves, lost their all in time and their reward in eternity.

This first trouble in the Church bears some resemblance to the first outbreak of sin among the Israelites after they entered Canaan. On both occasions God's people were surrounded by bitter enemies and were specially cast upon God for His help. Both sins were a combination of covetousness and lying, and both were punished by death. Although we may not now witness the same immediate judgment upon sins of this nature, we must not on that account think they are any less hateful in the sight of God.

Three good results, however, followed the burial of Ananias and his wife. Firstly, "great fear came upon all the church"; secondly, "of the rest durst no man join himself to them"; and thirdly, "believers were the more added to the Lord."

Often, as the numbers of God's people increase, so also do their troubles. At any rate this was the case in the early days. Once the disaster we have just considered was over, a new problem arose — a problem which was more serious than the former in that it involved not merely a household, but a great section of Jewish believers. The Grecians, or Greek-speaking Jews, complained of partiality in the distribution of the widows' daily portion (ch. 6:1). For the first time in the Church's history the happy fellowship and oneness of mind which had prevailed amongst the saints, was disturbed, and murmuring and discontentment took their place. What a painful situation confronted the apostles! How unseemly for the party distinctions which divided the Nation to reappear in the Church! Something would have to be done if the joy and peace of the saints were to be restored.

The grace, consideration, and wisdom of the Twelve in handling this delicate situation leave nothing to be desired. Their plan for settling the dispute was as simple as it was effective. Seven men were to be appointed to supervise the distribution and so end any possibility of partiality.

It is important to note that those chosen were all favourable to the Grecian minority as can be seen by their Greek names. Thus the apostles and brethren did not meet the murmurers half-way, but went beyond what could have been lawfully demanded, in order to remove all grounds for complaint.

It must also be emphasized that, although the work of these men was of a material kind, they were not without spiritual qualifications. The meanest task amongst the people of God requires clean hands and spirituality on the part of those engaged in it. If the

deacons were to have the respect of the multitude of the disciples they must have a good testimony, hence they were to be men of "honest report". Their work was of such a nature that a power beyond their own would be needed to sustain them in it, hence they were to be men "full of the Holy Ghost". In bearing with, and listening to, the various complaints from the believers, they would need no ordinary amount of sound judgment, hence they were to be men "full of wisdom". And lastly, the supplies they were to handle were provided by God through His people for the daily needs, so His unflinching care must be trusted by the distributors as well as by the recipients, hence, those appointed were to be men "full of faith".

If we consider the credentials of these seven men we will not be surprised to learn that some of them afterwards became engaged in a more noble work than serving tables. In the following chapters Stephen and Philip became mighty gospel preachers, exemplifying the unchanging principle, that those who do little things well, will soon be entrusted with more important work.

The settling of this serious dispute led, as we should expect, to great blessing in the church, so that the number of the saints was multiplied. It is ever so. God honours His people when they are right with himself and with one another.

LOOK UP

"I don't look back; God knows the fruitless efforts,
The wasted hours, the sinning, the regrets:
I leave them all with Him who blots the record,
And mercifully forgives, and then forgets.

"I don't look forward; God sees all the future,
The road that, short or long, will lead me home,
And He will face with me its every trial,
And bear for me the burdens that may come.

"But I look up — into the face of Jesus,
For there, my heart can rest, my fears are stilled;
And there is joy, and love, and light for darkness,
And perfect peace and every hope fulfilled.

He that would attend to the prosperity of his own soul, must with Jesus retire from the multitude.

THE TESTIMONY OF THE LORD

A. T. Stewart

The testimony of the Lord has been the subject of much discussion in recent years, some contending that the Gospel (alone) is the testimony for God's people today, as the Law was for Israel in a bygone day. Let us look at this in the light of Scripture.

Referring to Israel, we find that the Law on two tables of stone was a testimony. See Exodus 31:18. Did their testimony end there? By no means! The ark was a testimony to Israel (Ex. 40:20-21), that they had broken that holy law and that God was still bearing with them in grace through the intercession of Moses (Ex. 33). Again, when God brought them (Israel) into the land of Canaan they were to be a testimony to the ONE living and true God (Deut. 6:4) in contrast to the many gods of the nations around about them. Then again it was a testimony when Israel went up to Jerusalem to offer their sacrifices and to give thanks — at the place which God had chosen.

Coming now to New Testament times, the Apostle Paul does speak of the Gospel as TESTIMONY—1 Cor. 2:1. It is a testimony:

1. To the power of God (Rom. 1:16).
2. To the work of Christ on the Cross as sufficient to meet all God's holy claims against sin; and save the sinner who believes it (1 Cor. 15:1-5).
3. To the presence of the Holy Spirit in the world to convict men and women of their sin, and make them ready for the Gospel (John 16:8-12). To say, however, that our testimony today is limited to the Gospel, is surely to come far short of God's purpose for us His people.

Some of God's people came out from the sects and systems of men leaving behind us (as in my own case) Christians that would put us to shame by their zeal for the Gospel. Why did we leave these places? We were obedient to the Word of God when we saw that one-man ministry, coupled with sprinkling babies and other unscriptural practices, were not according to the Word of God. The Word of God that brought us out would never take us back in again although some have gone back. We learned that a scripturally gathered company of believers had room for the whole Word of God and room for the Holy Spirit of God to lead and guide, according to 1 Cr. 14.

In 1 Cor. 11 the Lord's supper is spoken of as showing forth the Lord's death (same word as 1 Cor. 2:1); so that apart from the Gospel altogether we proclaim to the world "on what ground we hope to stand, when the Lord shall come with clouds, joined by Heaven's exulting crowds."

Again in 1 Cor. 14, where God's order is carried out the unlearned and the unbeliever, looking on, "fall down and acknowledge that God is in you of a truth" (verses 24-25). Is not this a testimony against the systems of men where the Holy Spirit is set aside, the Lordship of Christ is denied, and ONE MAN set up to monopolize all the gifts (if he has any) besides praying, etc.?

It is true that failure and sin have come in; and it seems as if Satan is determined to blot out any testimony for God there is today. Some (because of the condition of things) would tell us it is an individual testimony — 1 Cor. 11:26 proves otherwise. Others again have turned their back on what they once believed to be God's order, and have lost whatever testimony they once had for God. This is not written in any spirit of controversy, but to try and help those who are younger to go on steadfastly and not to be turned aside or stumbled by what they see others do and at the same time to help and stand by the older ones who are seeking to go on in God's way. (Jeremiah 6:2-16). Many of the younger generation today have not passed through the exercise of soul that the older ones passed through, but if the Word of God gets a good grip of their souls, they won't let these truths go.

Going back to Israel again, we find that when failure and sin come in, God laid the blame at the door of the shepherds and the leaders (Jer. 50:6, Ezek. 34:1-7) for failing to shepherd and feed God's people. The result of this was wickedness and covetousness that spread from the greatest to the least of them (Jer. 6:13). Our only hope is to humble ourselves before God and acknowledge like Daniel that we have sinned (Dan. Ch. 9) and turn to the Lord and He will have mercy upon us. What encouragement we have in the Minor Prophets to do this, as well as in the New Testament! In spite of all the failure and weakness, God stands ready to bless and revive and strengthen His own. May our cry be, Revive me, revive us, revive Thy work, O Lord!

See that thou have love towards all; but not familiarity.

* * * *

He doeth much that loveth much.

* * * *

Do not be overwhelmed by unexpected reverses. Man's disappointments are God's appointments.

* * * *

Be courteous even to the troublesome individual who is always in your way. God sends him to you.

NOTABLE CHARACTERS IN HOLY WRIT SOLOMON, THE WISE

G. G. Johnston

Who of us has not heard the words: "As wise as a Solomon?" In his own writings, particularly in the Proverbs, Solomon exalts wisdom above all else, and encourages youth to seek after it, as for hidden treasure.

There is perhaps nothing so deplorable as ignorance, and the folly which springs from it. It must be recognized, of course, that the first kind of wisdom we must seek is acquaintance with Him who is wisdom personified, our Lord Jesus Christ. Until a person has received Him as personal Saviour, he cannot be considered wise, in the truest sense of the Word. Surely to live without God and to die without hope, when this blessing is for all who will come to Christ as sinners, is to commit folly and madness.

Solomon's attitude toward life, during his youthful days, is surely worthy of emulation by the youth of all ages. He looks out over the sea of life and confesses to God: "I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in." (1 Kings 3:7). Unfortunately, this is not usually the attitude of youth toward life and its problems. Sin has so ruined us as to fill our hearts with conceit and self-sufficiency, born of pride. While, in our hearts, we truly fear the mysterious future, we are slow, even though professing Christians, to admit to ourselves and to the Lord, much less to others more experienced than ourselves, that we cannot go forward alone. What some of us might have avoided had we only more willingly placed our feeble hand in the Lord's, to be guided and holden up by Him! And how much we might have benefitted by seeking the counsel of more experienced brethren and sisters in Christ!

Dear young brethren and young sisters, recognize humbly your weakness and inexperience, and pray much about your path in life. A step in the wrong direction now may seriously affect your whole life. Put yourself in the Lord's hand, and do not refuse His guidance, though the way may seem dark. Far better not to fall, than to have to be picked up from the mire, as in the case of a proud and wilful child. Ours is a tender heavenly Father, but how it must grieve His loving heart when, in our pride and rebellion, we persist in taking our own way! Do not refuse the counsel of other godly people, either. They may be God's instruments to help you.

Solomon "spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five" (1 Kings 4:32). He had largeness of heart also

to include all Israel (v. 29), but one incident in his life, as judge of that great nation, has been preserved in the divine record for our learning.

Two women appear before him, the one carrying an infant. Each of them had borne a son. While they shared living quarters and were sleeping near each other, the one lay upon her babe and smothered it. Discovering that her child was dead, (this woman stealthily rose at midnight, placed the dead child beside the other woman and stole away the living child. Now each claimed the living babe, as they disputed before the king. It was a critical moment, but the king called for a sword, and gave order to divide the living child and give half to each mother. In this the wisdom of Solomon was seen, for the real mother's yearning over her son made her to cry out: "O my lord, give her the living child and in no wise slay it," but the other said, . . . "Divide it." (1 Kings 3:26). At once Solomon, and all present, knew to whom the living child belonged.

Many a living child has been divided to satisfy the heartless self-will of one who cared more to have his own way than he did for that which had received life from God. The case of Diotrephes (3 John 9) comes to mind, who for his love of the pre-eminence among the saints, excluded even the apostle, and cast others out of the church. It is not that the apostle John would have desired that all and sundry, who professed to be Christians, should have been received into the assembly, for his ministry is of the most searching character; but Diotrephes, like the heartless woman, cared little for any other than himself. "Let it die; divide it," was his cry, so long as he had his own way.

We are not ignorant of the fact that some would apply the words of the heartless woman to those who dare to take a definite stand for the truth as to a clear separation from the world and from man-made systems of religion. Those who would return to fraternize with missions and denominations, where the Scriptures are not carried out, raise the cry against the true men of God, as though these latter were the cause of trouble and division of what would otherwise live and thrive. We would refer such to the accusation of Ahab against Elijah: "Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" To whom he answered, "I have not troubled Israel: but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord." (1 Kings 18: 17, 18).

One recalls the words of a faithful man, now at home with the Lord, who said: "When the Lord said, 'Come out,' He meant, 'Come out, and stay out.'"

What pleasure the history of wise king Solomon would give us, had he ended his career as he began it! Alas, it was soon manifest

that he was only a man. Like many another, he turned aside from the Lord in later life and fell into the sin of mingling with the ungodly nations around and copying their ways. Whereas he should have been a living witness to the holy character of the God he professed to serve, he fell into idolatry and its many abominable and sinful practices. The unequal yoke has ever been a snare, and many who might have been great and useful men, have been bound in it to their ruin. Of all the unequal yokes, that of marriage is perhaps the most fatal, for, while others may be abandoned at considerable sacrifice, this yoke must remain through life.

In Solomon, the wise king, we surely learn, among other things, that we need to put our hand in the Lord's at the beginning of our Christian life, and that we need to keep it there. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." (Jer. 10:23).

HELPS AND HINTS ON PRAYER

Part 2

J. A. Gray

The secret place for prayer was recommended by the Lord Jesus in Matthew 6:6. Here the Christian learns how to overcome. Upon entering his closet he has gained the victory over the flesh. The flesh never encourages prayer. Shutting the door would suggest closing out the world, and praying to his Father in secret would be a defeat for the Devil. Every time the believer prays in the Spirit and with the understanding (1 Cor. 14:15), he has gained a great victory.

A Forced Prayer

Prayer is a great force, yet some have to be forced to pray. This was Jacob's experience in Genesis 32:24-32. Here he learned his own impotence and God's Omnipotence. The short and sweet cry, "I will not let Thee go except Thou bless me," was forced out of his soul by God. God was training Jacob to trust Him. Penuel was an important phase of Jacob's school life and a vital page in his school book. There he saw the face of God, felt His touch and heard His voice. It was there his name was changed from Jacob to Israel which means, "Prince of God", one who has power with God and with men. The man who was forced to pray proved to be forceful in prayer in the presence of God. Some who have had the experience of being forced to pray by God, have, by their example of Godly praying, forced other less prayerful Christians to pray more.

A Fight Prayer

Sometimes the Christian has to fight to pray, at other times he has to pray in order to fight. One has well said, "Pray until you want

to pray, pray until you can pray and then pray until your prayer prevails at all times." In Ephesians 6 the warrior is described as one who has put on the armour of God. Now with the "shield of faith" and the "sword of the Spirit" he continues to fight the good fight of faith (1 Timothy 6:12). During the battle he learns to pray the "fight prayer", he also learns the source of power and the secret of victory and of overcoming the enemy. He proves experimentally that prayer is the slender nerve that moves the muscles of Omnipotence. Two examples of praying in the time of battle are found in the Old Testament. In 2 Chronicles 13:14-17 we find the tribe of Judah gains a great victory because they relied upon the God of their fathers. In Exodus 17:8-16, Joshua prevails over Amalek in the valley, with the sword, as Moses prays with uplifted hands on the mountain top.

A Folly Prayer

Sometimes it is wrong to pray. Joshua learned this (Joshua 7:10). He was praying when he ought to have been reaching for sin, the cause of national defeat. In Matthew 6 we have folly in prayer. The hypocrites prayed to be seen and they got what they wanted. Their motive was wrong. Publicity, prominence and pre-eminence are high and lofty desires of the flesh. How good when one is seen in prayer, as was Paul in Acts 9 and Hannah in 1 Samuel 1, and yet does not pray to be seen. This is true Godly motive and exercise. The second folly prayer is that of the heathen in verse 7. Here the mind is not right. How possible to pray many times and use many words and be like this heathen man in prayer. He was a "tongue truster", one who trusted in what he prayed. He had wrong thoughts about prayer. How easy for one to become a self righteous Christian and trust in one's prayers instead of in the God to Whom the prayer is addressed. There is a difference between intellectual prayer and intelligent prayer. The intellectual man may know how to put words together and yet not pray for the right thing, he is ignorant of God's will and ways. The intelligent man has spiritual understanding and knows what to pray for and when to pray.

A Fervent Prayer

Elijah prayed the "boiling pot" prayer (James 5:16, 17). Apollos gave the "boiling pot" ministry (Acts 18:25). Both men were hot, the warmth of God's power was in them. This is a cold day. Many, like Peter, feel the coldness and are found at the world's fire (Luke 22:55). Others rejoice in the heart warming ministry of Christ as the two on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:32). This revival of warmth in the heart will lead to warmth in praying and preaching. Here again the voice of experience speaks and says, we need to pray

for warmth and we need warmth to pray. Cold Christians and cold places go together. Living in a cold place with cold people who hold cold principles and make cold prayers will bring the soul into a "deep freeze" condition. Coldness to the Saviour will lead to coldness to the saint and also to the sinner. How one needs to pray for the "fire ministry" of John 21. When the Lord Himself is allowed to minister, He can truly warm up with "the fire" and build up with "the food". This was the blessed experience of the cold and hungry disciples.

ISRAEL AND THE CHURCH THE CHARACTER OF WORSHIP

Wm. Hoste

We will now consider the difference between the Aaronic worship of the past and that of the "holy priesthood" of the present dispensation. In former dispensations, Christian worship was, of course, impossible, for "the way into the Holiest was not yet made manifest" even had there been a Christian to enter in, which there was not. But we find many instances of spiritual worship among Old Testament saints. What could be more real than the worship of Eliezer? (Gen. 24:26, 52), the head bowed in adoration, the heart welling up in blessing to God! Or that of Moses, when Jehovah "made all His goodness pass before him?" (Exod. 34:8). So too with many of the Psalms, which though not rising to the full height of Christian experience, go far beyond the experience of many Christians. But this is individual dealing with God, rather than that collective priestly worship, with which we are now dealing.

The priests of Israel were set apart "to minister to Jehovah" (Exod. 28:1), "to offer both gifts and sacrifices" (Heb. 5:1), "to burn incense before the Lord" (1 Chron. 23:13). The two things ordained in Exodus 29 and 30, immediately after the consecration of the priests, are significant: they are the continual burnt-offering on the brazen altar and the continual burning of incense on the golden altar. The priests had other duties to perform, but their priestly worship seems to have been more particularly connected with these two altars. From Exodus 29 and Leviticus 8, we learn, that four things were placed on the brazen altar. (1) The burnt offerings—type of Christ as the willing Victim offering Himself "without spot to God," and ever reminding Jehovah of that perfect Sacrifice. (2) The meal offering, which always went with the burnt offering, in its due proportion, with the oil and all the frankincense upon it, "even the memorial of it unto the Lord" (Lev. 6:15), telling of the **perfect human life of Christ** in the power of the Spirit, with all its even consistency under every possible test. (3) A drink offering of

wine, poured over the burnt offering (Exod. 29:40), the out-pouring of that life in entire devotion and consuming zeal for the glory of God (John 2:17; see also Phil. 2:17). (4) The fat of the peace-offering, the Lord's portion (Lev. 3:16) speaking of the hidden excellencies of Christ only to be fully known and appreciated by Jehovah Himself. The service of the golden altar (Exod. 30:1) consisted in the perpetual burning of incense morning and evening, renewed at the same time as the burnt offering. This incense was unique, compounded of equal parts of four spices — stacte, onycha, galvanum, and frankincense, "tempered together, pure and holy," speaking of the preciousness of Christ — His every act and word a sweet savour unto God. Four, being the earthly number, these spices may set forth the different aspects of His Person as recorded in the four Gospels.

We may notice then the following points as to the worship of Israel. It was (1) RITUALISTIC, consisting of divinely ordained rites and manual acts; (2) SYMBOLICAL — the foretaste of a spiritual reality; (3) FORMALISTIC — consisting not only of outward acts, but of such, continually repeated, in a fixed order and at a fixed time; (4) INARTICULATE — As far as we know, not a word was spoken in the tabernacle. Singing and playing of instruments belonged to Levitical, not to priestly service. Dumbness did not exclude from priestly functions, as we see from the case of Zechariah, who though struck dumb, was still able to "fulfil the days of his ministry" (Luke 1:20).

The worship of Christendom is, generally speaking, after the Jewish model. If not inarticulate, it is either in a foreign tongue, or often, for other reasons, unintelligible. If not symbolical of anything Divine, it is at least ritualistic, consisting of outward rites—masses, eucharists, incense, stereotyped services, liturgical forms of man's invention and composition, which, while drugging the conscience, practically quench the Spirit and bring the worshippers within the scope of Jehovah's solemn words—"In vain do they worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Even where there is more simplicity and intelligence, Officialism and Ministerialism, like Pharaoh's lean kine, have well nigh devoured the common priesthood of all believers, and worship in spirit and in truth has given place to preaching and teaching. In most unexpected places, too, where the present guidance of the Spirit is most insisted on, a tendency to formalism is often found.

They are fools who act only on the advice of others; and they are otherwise who think they have no need to be advised.

PERPLEXITY IN JUNE

Mervyn Paul

June, regarded as the Month of Brides, is also the time of perplexity, and secret tears, for the oft brides' maids, as well as for their many sisters who, thus far, have been compelled to sit alone. In obedience to the will of their Lord they have shunned the company of unsaved young men. So it is that not a few of these obedient ones will wonder, with many misgivings, at the Lord's dealings with them in that He seems to be doing nothing to find for them a mate. They know within themselves, so keenly, that only in marriage will it be possible for them to fulfil their divinely-implanted instincts and natural abilities for wifehood and motherhood. (But there are so many girls in the Assemblies, and so very few young men!) Hence they will be watching wistfully as others of their friends get their chance, gain their opportunity for "fulfilment".

For some of these dear young women there will be a sense of disappointment that really hurts, accompanied, perhaps, by a sharply-felt resentment at the way things have turned out. "What has she got that I haven't?" they will ask; while others will retire into a gloomy hopelessness; or, it may be, will begin a spiritually-reckless experimenting by dating unsaved boy friends.

Some there will be, also (married folks as well as unmarried) who will marvel that the brethren (in many cases) don't do something to correct those young men who will court a girl's friendship for a time, then will drop her to take up with someone else. To these lads it means so little, since their outlook is so different from that of young women. They are eager "to play for fun"; for marriage to lots of men is something that catches up with them, rather than a goal to be attained. (My little sisters, did you know that?) They do not know that most young women think only of "playing for keeps," and that toying with a girl's affections (for which she was not designed by God) can be disastrous.

So it is likely, as I have said, that there will be a measure of perplexity in the minds of many of my younger sisters . . . an asking why the Lord seemingly should ignore the specialized needs He, Himself, created . . . a wonderment that He Who can do everything should fail to regard the lot of His Scripture-hedged hand-maidens. This riddle can become a serious thing, causing dear ones to be so confused about their circumstances that they begin to feel disappointed in their Lord. And as Peter proved, such disappointment can result in questioning, doubting, and eventual denial. It is for this reason, then, that I write these lines to counsel the Lord's unclaimed ones. And please believe me, my sisters, when I say that you have my deepest sympathy.

The "reason why" is not a mystery laid in the inscrutable vagaries of Fate! For is it not true that we all have some ideas respecting the courses we should like our lives to take? And is it not true, also, since God has built it into them, most girls see only marriage as the proper outlet for their desires and abilities . . . while young men (as potential providers) dream of making successes of themselves in their man's world field of endeavour? Likewise, is it not a fact that often both are "doomed" to disappointment? . . . doubtless in heavenly lovingkindness. True enough, "the lot is cast into the lap"; but the very-far-better fact is that "the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord"; (Prov. 16:33). Wise, and certain of true happiness, are those young people who early learn to depend on Him to do all the disposing!

If you were older you would realize with a clarity that is not yet possible that many young women are not fitted for proper motherhood, even as plenty of would-be "big shots" are suited only to labour for other people. If these things be so, then surely our ideas of what we want to be, and of what God ought to make possible for us, are as apt to be very wrong as they are to be a little bit right, are they not? (From early childhood my one ambition was to become an artist.) As a young man I *hated* carpentry and preaching. But in the disposing of the lot which had been cast into my lap, the Lord completely blocked my art studies and forced me, bit by bit, one after the other, into the two very things I so much disliked. Today I know that, "He doeth all things WELL.")

Come then, my sisters, and let us reason together. For if God has been allowing all your dreams to fade away you might suppose:

- that He doesn't care . . . which, of course, is false;
- that He is punishing you . . . which isn't likely;
- that He is correcting you . . . which is possible;
- that He has something much more suitable for you in mind . . . which is almost surely the case.

A number of my young friends have lost the man whom they had believed to be the Lord's choice for them . . . were heart-broken and rebellious . . . finally achieved a quiet submission to His will . . . waited for some time . . . then came a "happy ending". Were I able to assure all of you who may be waiting, too, that such a glad day would yet be yours — even if delayed until after you were forty — I should be most pleased to do so. But let us face the fact, my sisters, that not all of the hand-maids of the Lord find marriage to be His choice for them. He leaves them free to render a more *unhindered* devotion to the Lord Jesus; 1 Cor. 7:32. And perhaps for them wedded life would have proved a tragedy, even as it has for

many Christians who, at the first, were happily married. (For *personalities change with the passing years*. Couples who were ardent lovers in their twenties may be nasty scappers in their thirties!)

My space runs out; but let me conclude by saying that there is a solution to your perplexities, as well as to the entire problem-field relating to love, courtship, marriage, and life-as-it-has-to-be-lived afterwards. It is for us definitely, deliberately, to put our lives, and all the details, into the Lord's hands for direction and management; Prov. 3:5-6. And having done so, resolutely to refuse to take any step apart from His recognized direction; Isa. 55:8-9; Psa. 32:8-9; 31:23. In such a course the language of our hearts at all times is, "Not my will . . . but thine be done."

—That's the solution, my sisters. But the sad part concerning this happiest of all solutions is that most of us are scared even to think of trying it . . . until after we have bungled things ourselves!

—Mark 4:40.

PRAYER OUT OF PLACE

Prayer is a wonderful privilege, but it may surprise some to be told that there are times and circumstances when prayer is out of place. In Exodus 14:15, "The Lord said unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto Me? speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward." This was a time, not for prayer but for faith, obedience and action. In Joshua 7:6-10, we have Joshua praying to the Lord upon his face and God's word to him was, "Get thee up; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face?" There was sin in the camp and the time had come for the exposure and judgment of that sin.

Perhaps the reader of these lines has not the assurance of salvation and has been earnestly praying for it. Spurgeon tells of an incident in dealing with such a case.

"An anxious enquirer to whom I had plainly put the great Gospel command, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved,' constantly baffled my attempts to lead her out of self to Christ. At last she cried out, 'Pray for me! pray for me!' She seemed greatly shocked when I replied, 'I will do nothing of the kind. I have prayed for you before; but if you refuse to believe the Word of the Lord, I do not see what I can pray for. The Lord bids you believe His Son, and if you will not do so, but persist in making God a liar, you will perish, and you richly deserve it.' This brought her to her bearings. She begged me again to tell her the way of salvation; she quietly received it as a little child, her frame quivered, her face brightened, and she cried, 'Sir, I can believe, I do believe, and I am saved. Thank you for refusing to comfort me in my unbelief.' Then she said softly,

‘Will you not pray for me now?’ Assuredly I did, and we rejoiced together that we could offer the prayer of faith.”

“He that believeth on the Son HATH everlasting life” (John 3:36). “These things have I written unto you that believe on the Name of the Son of God; that ye may KNOW that ye HAVE eternal life”, (1 John 5:13).

Here we have the Lord performing some of the work of Him that sent Him. The virtue of saliva in remedying eye troubles dates back before the days of our Lord on earth; the use of clay in connection with eye disorders is mentioned in ancient history. However, we are not told why our Lord used this method. He could have simply touched the man’s eyes, or merely spoken the word, and he would have been made whole. It is quite within the scope of Scripture to say that the clay is a type of humanity, for man was made of the dust of the earth. Spittle denotes abasement and humiliation. The clay and the spittle might suggest our Lord’s humanity and the great degree of abasement to which He was subjected. It was through His humanity and His shameful death on the cross that salvation was brought to us. Then the Lord gave this blind man a test as to his faith. “Go wash in the pool of Siloam.” I suppose the man had to get someone to lead him there. Siloam means “Sent.” No other water, no other pool would do. He simply had to do what the Lord told him. The Lord made the clay and did the anointing; that was His work; the man must go and wash in Siloam; that was his responsibility. So with Naaman in 2 Kings chapter 5; he must dip in Jordan seven times. Faith often humbles one, but it brings its results.—H. A.

We have heard of a child who said her prayers, and then added, “Good-bye, God; we are all going to Saratoga, and father and mother won’t go to meeting, or pray any more till we come back again.” We fear that many who go to the seaside, or other holiday resorts, give God the go-by in much the same manner.

* * * *

An aged Christian, lying on his death-bed in a state of such extreme weakness that he was often entirely unconscious of all around him, was asked the cause of his perfect peace. He replied, “When I am able I think of Jesus; and when I am unable to think of Him, I know He is thinking of me.”

* * * *

Many choose rather to be great than to be humble; forgetting that only they who choose to be humble, are truly great.

NOTES ON SCRIPTURAL HYMNS AND THEIR WRITERS

Hector Alves

"Have ye counted the cost,
 Have ye counted the cost,
 Ye warriors of the cross?
 Are ye fixed in heart for your Master's sake
 To suffer all earthly loss?
 Can ye bear the scoff of the worldly-wise
 As ye pass by pleasure's bower,
 To watch with your Lord on the mountain-top,
 Through the dreary midnight hour?"

Many volumes of poems for children bear the name of Jane Elizabeth Leeson, but of the lady herself, we can discover no particulars whatever. She also made a number of meritorious translations from the German, and these are in common use both in America and Britain. It is a pity that we know so little about some whose writings and hymns indicate a most spiritual character, whose hymns are rich in scriptural truths and sentiment. This hymn, from her pen, would stir up anyone to seek to "endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." (2 Tim. 2:3)

"Ye may count the cost, ye may count the cost
 Of all Egyptia's treasure!
 But the riches of Christ ye cannot count;
 His love ye cannot measure."

.
 "Now I have found a Friend,
 Jesus is mine;
 His love shall never end,
 Jesus is mine;
 Though earthly joys decrease,
 Though human friendship cease,
 Now I have lasting peace,
 Jesus is mine.

These verses were written as a poem and privately printed in 1852, by the author, Henry Joy McCracken Hope. He was born near Belfast, Ireland, in 1809. Few details regarding his personal history can be obtained, beyond the fact that he was a bookbinder. His death occurred at Dunadry, Co. Down, Jan. 19, 1872; but his words live on—

“Father! Thy Name I bless,
Jesus is mine;
Thine was the sovereign grace,
Praise shall be Thine:
Spirit of holiness,
Sealing the Father’s grace,
He made my soul embrace
Jesus as mine.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question. Will you please explain in the magazine the meaning of John chapter 9, verses 4, 5, 6, and 7.

Answer. Verses 4 and 5. “I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day: the night cometh when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the World.” It seems clear that the “day” refers to the time when our Lord was working here on earth; and the “night” refers to the time following that, when He would have gone back to heaven. “The night cometh when no man can work.” We are now in the night; the Light came, and the Light was put out. There is a hymn, “Work for the night is coming;” etc., but that is not right. The night is here now, this present time is the world’s night. While our Lord was here on earth, He was the light of the world, and He did the works of Him that sent Him; but the world put out that light. What the world needs now is the rising Sun. (Malachi 4:2). This does not mean that we are to sit down and do nothing. What the Lord meant was that nothing could be done for the world, or for Israel as a nation. But in the meantime we are to “shine as lights in the world; holding forth the Word of life.” (Phil. 2; 15. 16). When the city turns on the street lights at night, that is not in order to bring on the day again; the night has to run its course; the light is there to light the traveller on his way. We cannot work to bring on the day, but during the night we are to shine as lights in the world. Soon the Sun of Righteousness will arise with healing in His wings.

Verses 6 and 7. “And when He had thus spoken, He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, and said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.”

Question. What is the meaning of the last clause of 1 Cor. 11:10? "Because of the angels."

Answer. Angels here, I believe, should be looked upon in the ordinary sense of the word; heavenly beings. I do not think they refer to messengers of the church, bishops, or elders, etc., as some would suggest. Scripture frequently refers to the relation in which angels stand to this present world. It is said of our Lord that He was "seen of angels" (1 Tim. 3:16). In writing to the saints at Corinth Paul tells them that the apostles were "made a spectacle to angels" (1 Cor. 4:9). From these portions we learn that in some way angels are looking on, they are spectators of what is taking place on the earth. We can well understand that they would be interested in the becoming and godly order of things in the assemblies of God's people. Angels no doubt witnessed the fall of man in the garden. As the result of that, the woman is to carry a token of an authority to which she submits. So, from this expression, "Because of the angels," we may learn that God's desire is that while the angels may not see His order being carried out in the world, He wants them to see it being carried out in the church. In 1 Timothy 5:21, we read, "I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things."—H. A.

FAITHFUL ABRAHAM

It was FAITH — simple, calm, dignified trust in the bidding of God, — which led him from his paternal plains to the wild glens of distant Canaan. It was *faith* which reared altar upon altar wherever his tent was pitched. It was *faith* that girded on his armour against the confederate kings, and crowned him with victory. It was *faith* which dictated the unselfish proposals to Lot, in the partition of the land. *Faith* sent him to wrestle in prayer for the doomed cities of the plain. *Faith* enabled him to master the struggling emotions in his heart of hearts, in the hour when that grace culminated in its grandest triumph on the Mount of Sacrifice. Except in one solitary instance, his faith ever forbade any mercenary calculations, — any debate between duty and expediency — between natural affection and divine obedience. He had but one thought, and that was to obey his God, —making his own will coincident with the Divine. He lived for this. It was enshrined in his soul, and sanctified and interpenetrated his whole being. God was to him food and raiment, home and country, Father and Friend—his All in All.

QUEBEC, QUE.—James Smith has moved and expects to work in the Gospel with Harry McCreedy. His new address is 1186 Rue St. Cyrille W., Apt. 1, Quebec, Que.

MONTREAL, QUE.—The ministry of H. Paisley, North Ireland, in the Maritimes was much appreciated and he saw fruit in the salvation of souls. He commenced Gospel meetings in Montreal on May 6.

CLEMENTSVILLE, N.S.—D. Petherick had a few nights and visited also at Port Bickerton, before beginning meetings in Rockley School on May 6.

J. McCracken and R. McIlwaine returned from meetings in Portland, Maine, and sowed the seed in various places in that needy State.

ONTARIO, WIS.—O. Smith and P. Elliott are preaching in the basement of the new hall with blessing, and helping in the completion of the building.

MECHANICVILLE, N.Y.—Frank Pizzulli is having meetings here.

EVERETT, PENN.—S. Mick is preaching the Gospel.

BLACK EARTH, WIS.—S. Hamilton had four weeks for saved and unsaved; he is now in Pinehill.

MANCHESTER, CONN.—J. H. Blackwood asks prayer for a series of Gospel meetings he is beginning here.

McKEESPORT, PA.—The conference was felt to be a real time of blessing to the saints. It was the largest so far, with about twenty-five assemblies represented. A. T. Stewart and J. Govan remained for ministry meetings.

LONACONING, MD.—George Graham (recently from Scotland) saw some blessing during six weeks of Gospel meetings. He also had two weeks of ministry in Grahamtown and expects to commence in the Gospel in Cumberland, Md.

CAMDEN, N.J.—C. Fite had two weeks using the "Egypt to Canaan" chart. The meetings were appreciated and helpful to young and old.

LORAIN, OHIO—G. G. Johnston had fifteen days' ministry and Gospel in the Spanish assembly using the "Tabernacle". Interest among the believers was good and one young man professed. Brother Johnston also ministered to the English speaking assembly. The Spanish brethren hope shortly to commence open-air meetings in the Spanish quarter of the city.

NORTH IRELAND

A. McShane and A. Bergsma of Vancouver, B.C., are having good meetings near Lurgan. Quite a few have professed to be saved.

CONFERENCES

PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE, MAN.—The annual Conference will be held, D.V., June 15, 16 and 17, with a prayer meeting June 14 at 7.30 p.m. Corr. S. Rey, Royal Rd. S., Portage la Prairie, Man.

GLEN EWEN, SASK.—The Conference will be, D.V., June 29, 30 and July 1, with a prayer meeting on June 28. Corr. Roy Mcfarlane, Glen Ewen, Sask.

TAYLORSIDE, SASK.—The annual Conference will be held, D.V., July 7, 8 and 9, with a prayer meeting July 6 at 7.30 p.m. All meetings on M.S. time. Corr. C. Paul, Box 655, Melfort, Sask.

PUGWASH JCT., NOVA SCOTIA—We purpose, D.V., holding our annual Conference on June 30, July 1 and 2, preceded by a prayer meeting on June 29. Corr. M. C. MacLeod, Pugwash Jct., Nova Scotia.

EARLTON-CHARLTON, ONT.—The Earlton-Charlton Conference will be held, D.V., in both halls at the same time June 30, July 1 and 2, preceded by a prayer meeting June 29 at 8 p.m., with usual order of meetings. Servants of the Lord walking in the "old paths" will be welcome. No circulars. Corrs., Norman Ferguson, Earlton, Ont., Reynolds Pratt, Charlton, Ont.

EDEN GROVE, ONT.—God willing, we have our Conference, Lord's Day, June 17, preceded by a prayer meeting, June 16 at 8 p.m. Lord's Day, 10.30 a.m., 2.30 and 7.30 p.m. Servants of the Lord walking and teaching the old paths welcome. S. Purdy, Cargill, Ont.

EAST AURORA, N.Y.—The annual Conference, D.V., will be held in the Gospel Hall, corner Boies and Emery Rds., June 30 and July 1, with prayer meeting June 29. The Lord's servants walking in and teaching scriptural ways welcomed. Those coming from a distance please write the corr., Chas. Boies, West Falls, N.Y.

WITH CHRIST

(Delayed Notice) **ORILLIA, ONT.**—Our sister, Mrs. Norman H. Clark, went home on Nov. 25, 1955, to be with the One Whom she loved. The funeral was taken by George Wilson.

NORTH VANCOUVER, B.C.—Our sister, Mrs. McLeod, passed away peacefully on April 4 in her 70th year. She was among the first to meet with the Lord's people when the assembly commenced many years ago. Bren. Peacock and Williams preached the Gospel faithfully at the funeral.

INDIANA, PA.—Our beloved sister, Mrs. Margaret E. Stewart went to be with Christ suddenly on April 22. She was saved in Indiana and in fellowship since 1939 and will be greatly missed. Bren. D. L. Roy and G. Baldwin spoke the Word at the funeral home and at the grave.

MUSCODA, WIS.—Wm. Studnicka, the correspondent of the Blue River assembly went home at the age of 55 on April 12. He was saved in the first effort in the Gospel in Blue River by S. Mick and others. The funeral was very large and was held in the City Hall. Bren. G. Smith and P. Elliott preached the Word and C. Yost at the grave. A young man was deeply convicted at the funeral and later professed at meetings by Smith and Elliott.

KIRKLAND LAKE, ONT.—Our dear sister, Mrs. Wilbur Rodgers, after a heart attack passed into the Lord's presence April 7 in her 49th year. She was saved in 1922 and among the first to gather when the assembly in Charlton was formed in 1923. Later, she and her husband were in the Kirkland Lake Assembly from its beginning and went on well for the Lord to the end. The hall could not accommodate the crowd at the funeral where the Word was preached by B. Widdifield and S. Simms, and V. Davy at the graveside.

KANSAS CITY, KANSAS.—Our brother and servant of the Lord, E. F. Washington passed into the presence of the Lord on April 21 aged 64 years. He was saved in 1922 in St. Louis, Mo., where he became active in preaching the Gospel and was instrumental in gathering the West End Gospel hall assembly. In 1932 he came to Kansas City, Kan., where he lived till his homecall. He was used of the Lord both in the Gospel and ministry to the saints. He was especially exercised about the ministry of separation and his last words to some that were near were, "Walk in the old paths and stay there." The funeral services were shared by local brethren from Mo., Iowa, Neb., and Wis.

OSHAWA, ONT.—Our beloved sister, Mrs. Irene Mattice went to be with the Lord on April 30 after nearly two years of illness. She was born in Vancouver, B.C., on Jan. 3, 1911, and was saved in Niagara Falls, Ont., in meetings held by L. McBain and A. Klabunda. She and her husband moved to Oshawa in March 1931 where she was in fellowship till her homecall. She will be greatly missed by the Lord's people and His servants, many of whom enjoyed her whole-hearted hospitality. She had a special interest and care for young Christians. The very large company who gathered at the funeral testified to the esteem in which she was held. Bren. F. G. Watson and A. W. Joyce took the funeral services.

TRUTH and TIDINGS

BEHOLD I HAVE SET BEFORE THEE AN OPEN DOOR

THOU
HAST
A
LITTLE
STRENGTH

AND
HAST
KEPT
MY
WORD

AND HAST NOT DENIED
MY NAME

Rev. 3:18

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EDITOR ----- A. W. JOYCE, 26 Munro Blvd., Willowdale, Ont., Canada.
ASSOCIATE EDITORS --- F. G. WATSON, 92 Regal Rd., Toronto, Ont.
G. G. JOHNSTON, 140 Woodycrest Ave., Toronto, Ont.
HECTOR ALVES, 338 W. King Edward Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C.

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SUMMER SUBSCRIPTIONS

Unless otherwise notified, we will continue to send the magazine to those whose subscription expired in June until notice of expiry is sent in the fall. The extra work of sending notices will be avoided if our subscribers will renew this month. Your co-operation will be appreciated.

We have on hand a number of the past issues of 1956 (except January), which we will be glad to send to any new subscribers along with twelve future months, as long as the supply lasts. Please state when ordering if you wish the back numbers.

BOUND VOLUMES

Our supply of bound volumes for 1955 was exhausted early in the year so we have had a few more made up. The price post-paid is still \$2.50 to any part.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

VANCOUVER, B.C.—From June 10th until further notice, the Cedar Cottage Assembly will be meeting in the Carleton Gospel Hall, 45th Ave. and Tyne St., temporarily. A new hall is being erected on Victoria Road, a short distance from the Cedar Cottage district, where the assembly first met in 1909.

CHILE, S.A.—The new address of brother Richard Hanna is, Casilla 778, Concepcion, Chile.

TORONTO, ONT.—The temporary address of brother Ed. Doherty (Cuba) is 245 Eastwood Ave., Toronto, Ont.

TIDINGS

VANCOUVER, B.C.—All day meetings were held on June 3 in the old Cedar Cottage hall, for the last time. A large company gathered from the neighbouring assemblies and Hector Alves gave a history of the assembly from its inception. As previously mentioned the assembly will meet in the Carleton Gospel Hall until the new Hall is completed. Brother J. W. Dennis writes, "Hector Alves has been with us ministering

EDITORIAL

In the month of May 1948, we issued the first sample of TRUTH AND TIDINGS, and in July of the same year began the first regular monthly magazine. With this present issue, we begin, therefore, the ninth year of publication.

It is very fresh in our memories the "fear and trembling" with which we began and we are conscious of much imperfection still in the magazine. We do feel, however, that God has been gracious in granting help through the years thus giving TRUTH AND TIDINGS an ever-widening acceptance among the assemblies of His people and individual Christians. The many letters received from time to time from Canada, the United States and far off lands, expressing the help received through its pages, have been a very great encouragement to us to continue this service for the Lord and His people.

We would appreciate very much the continued prayers of God's people for this effort to "Feed the flock of God." We would also be glad if those who have been helped by it would introduce the magazine to their friends.

We are thankful to be able to say that each year since 1948 has shown an increase in circulation over the previous year.

We have endeavoured to give variety of ministry to "edification, exhortation and comfort!" To this end we have included articles from servants of the Lord of a bye-gone day. Valued help in ministry has been received from brethren in North Ireland such as Mr. A. McShane in the present articles, and Mr. W. Bunting in the past. Our aged brother Mr. Franklin Ferguson has sent us timely articles from New Zealand. Among our regular contributors, Mr. M. Paul's articles for young Christians have been much appreciated, as well as those from our Associate editors.

In spite of successive increases in cost of paper and printing in the last eight years, we have so far been able to keep the subscription rate at one dollar, although further cost increases would necessitate raising the rates.

The Lord strengthen the hearts of His people through the good word of promise and exhortation, "Behold, I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown" (Rev. 3:11).

We have heard of a child who said her prayers, and then added, "Good-bye, God; we are all going to Saratoga, and father and mother went go to meeting, or pray any more till we come back again." We fear that many who go to the seaside, or other holiday resorts, give God the go-by in much the same manner.

NOTABLE CHARACTERS IN HOLY WRIT ISAIAH, AND HIS GOSPEL

G. G. Johnston

God has had His witnesses in the earth at all times. To be favoured by God as His messenger is surely an honour, though few are given a special call, as was Isaiah.

Before he was properly fitted to humbly perform such sacred duties, as those of a prophet of God, Isaiah had to see something of the "plague of his own heart". (1 Kings 8:38). In the early chapters of his prophecy he utters stinging words of reproof against Israel for her rebellion and idolatry. In the fifth chapter, he pronounces six woes upon that nation, no doubt all fully justified, but the seventh woe he pronounces against himself (chap. 6:5), as he sees himself in the presence of the Lord of Hosts. It was then that Isaiah heard the call of the Lord: "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" and answered, from lips purified and made tender by contact with the coal of fire from off the altar of sacrifice: "Here am I, send me."

No doubt we find represented in this experience some features of God's dealings with a sinner and his cleansing through faith in the sacrifice of Calvary, before he can be used in any degree in the service of God. But, have we not more than that? How necessary that those who desire to serve the Lord should first learn "the end of all flesh" (Gen. 6:13), not only as it is found in others, but as it is in themselves. This would wither their pride, and give them a greater tenderness in their words and dealings with others. And the more we continue in the presence of the Lord, the better we shall all be prepared for His holy service. It is those who get a vision of God himself who are fitted to speak of Him. Those who see the verities of eternity while dwelling in His presence are alone able to speak with due tenderness and pathos of these matters.

How often we all have been guilty of speaking truths which we do not duly feel in our own soul, because we have not considered them in God's sanctuary!

Among the many messages which this good prophet of the Lord delivered to his people we find much reference to Christ, His birth, His life, His death, His millennial glory, etc., etc.

How important to hold fast to these precious truths, so clearly emphasized throughout the Word of God! When many are scoffing at the virgin birth, and saying that it is but a myth, may we be found glorying in the fact that our blessed Lord bore nothing of the taint of Adam's sin. He was that promised "seed of the woman", Immanuel --God with us--the Godman. He became man that He might die, but he was ever and eternally God.

Of His life, this prophet said: "He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root (tender shoot) out of a dry ground." What a constant delight the Father had in the life of that Holy One, who did always those things that pleased Him!

Regarding the death of Christ, though he wrote his prophecy some seven hundred years before Christ, yet he gives the reason for His rejection: "There is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men." And because He claimed to be the Son of God, they "did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted." As to the mode of His death, he says: "He was wounded, bruised, chastized," and all this that "with His stripes we might be healed." (Read Isaiah, chap. 53). In verse seven, he mentions His silence before His tormentors, and in verse nine the fact that they would have buried His body in a common grave with the wicked, but He was with the rich in His death (in Joseph's new tomb.) The results of His travail and subsequent glory are included in that precious "Gospel according to Isaiah".

The glory of His millennial reign is clearly revealed in chapter eleven, where righteous judgment and equity will replace the woefully unjust reign of the leaders of nations, when "they shall not hurt nor destroy," and peace and joy shall prevail under His direction.

In spite of the godly influence of Isaiah the man of God, Israel's condition grew worse and worse, until when our blessed Lord himself appeared upon the scene they heeded not His voice either, and to end His faithful protests against their sin, they hurried Him to the cross of shame, thus fulfilling the unheeded prophecy of Isaiah, the man of the vision.

Without exception, all past dispensations have ended in failure, with only a small remnant continuing faithful to the end. The present period, the Church's testimony, is prophesied to end in failure also. Shall we, by God's grace, be found among the perhaps very small remnant of faithful ones when He comes and this Church period ends?

An aged Christian, lying on his death-bed in a state of such extreme weakness that he was often entirely unconscious of all around him, was asked the cause of his perfect peace. He replied, "When I am able I think of Jesus; and when I am unable to think of Him, I know He is thinking of me."

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There are many portions of Scripture which we do not understand at the time; yet they are quite clear to us afterwards in the hour of trial. We are quick learners in the day of visitation.

DEVELOPMENTS IN THE BOOK OF THE ACTS INTERNAL TROUBLES

A. McShane

Before concluding our remarks on this second trouble in the early church, it might be helpful to point out some of the more important lessons which it no doubt teaches — lessons which, if kept in mind by those who have to deal with matters of a similar nature, would help them reach an equally successful arrangement.

One of the first of these undoubtedly is, that the same type of troubles abroad in the world are liable to creep into the assembly. Had there been no division between the Grecians and the Hebrews before conversion, there would have been no grounds for the quarrel that afterwards arose. Another lesson to be learned from this incident is that murmuring amongst Christians is a serious evil, and every effort ought to be made to remove the cause of it. Israel's murmuring in the wilderness brought down the judgment of God, and no complaining assembly will have His blessing. To try to ignore it, or carry on as though it did not exist, cannot result in the upbuilding of any company wherein it has appeared. A third and last lesson which we might suggest is that when no truth is at stake, we ought to yield as far as possible to those who complain about our actions. Abraham's willingness to give first choice to Lot (Gen. 13), and the action of the apostles in this case are two examples which, if followed, would end many an unpleasant situation in the Lord's assemblies.

We have already seen that the first trouble in the Acts concerned a man and his wife and that the second problem concerned a section of Jewish believers. Now we are about to look at a yet more serious trouble, one which involved the two peoples of which the Church was composed. Not only so, but while the two earlier matters were confined to the Jerusalem assembly, this one affected all the existing churches. Yes, the trouble of chapter 15, over circumcising Gentile converts, was no petty quarrel, but an obvious development beyond anything previously experienced amongst the saints. Indeed, we have little idea of how much depended upon a settlement being reached between Jewish and Gentile believers on this great issue. Had the conference ended in failure, the early saints would have been divided into two opposing camps. Such a condition of things would have been a practical denial of all that God has revealed of His purposes for His people in this dispensation. However, the threatened disaster was averted and when the storm was over the bonds of fellowship between the churches, far from being snapped, were stronger than ever.

We must bear in mind that it was God Who had made the clear distinction between His earthly people Israel, and their Gentile neigh-

hours: first, He gave them the covenant of circumcision and secondly, He made them the custodians of His law. The question which now confronted the apostles was whether the reception of the gospel destroyed these barriers, or whether the Gentiles who believed should enter the fellowship of the church through the Jewish door. The fanatical part of the Jerusalem church insisted that all Gentile believers must be circumcised ere they could share their fellowship. Not only did they themselves refuse to discard the grave clothes of the dead system of Judaism, but they would go further and press all Gentile converts to don the same legal garb. Others were equally clear that no such yoke should be put upon those whom the Lord had set free.

So important was the crisis that Paul and Barnabas were sent from Antioch to Jerusalem to meet the apostles and see what could be done to end the contentions. A private meeting of apostles and elders was arranged, at which the solemn issues were discussed at some length. This conference is by far the most important one recorded by Luke in this book. Few but the leaders engaged in this matter, realized the burden which weighed upon their hearts, and certainly few others appreciated as they did the deliverance their agreement procured. Oneness of mind is not usually difficult to reach when spiritual men are together, and so it was on this occasion. The Lord gave guidance for the emergency.

Peter's experiences both at Samaria and Caesarea had taught him some little of what God was pleased to do amongst the Gentiles. His report of the lessons learned was followed by an account from Paul and Barnabas — a more glorious story — telling also of what they had witnessed of power and blessing in the gospel amongst the heathen. These messages were so convincing that the most ardent supporters of legalism had little more to say. It remained for James to sum up the judgment of the company by referring to suitable Scriptures. Agreement having been reached in private, the multitude was then informed, and a letter declaring the verdict of the apostles was sent to the churches of Asia. It is little wonder that we read of great joy at Antioch. Had they known the words of our hymn: "Free from the law, oh happy condition!" they could have sung them with no ordinary sense of appreciation. It was indeed a great day for the churches. They had settled the most vital problem of their time and ended what would otherwise have been the cause of continual and widespread trouble.

It was no less a red-letter day in Paul's life. His wise handling of this most delicate situation must have raised him high in the esteem of both the Antioch and Jerusalem assemblies.

HELPS AND HINTS ON PRAYER**Part 3***J. A. Gray*

The hour of prayer was a recognized period in the life of Daniel (Daniel 6:10). He prayed three times daily. Peter, in the Acts, had this godly habit also. He set aside "hours" to pray. In Acts 3 he was seen going up to the Temple at the ninth hour and in Acts 10 he is praying on the house top at the sixth hour.... Here we have the "habit" and "hour" of prayer.... These men, with others, planned to pray and prayed before making plans. They were not strangers to the presence of God and the presence of God was not strange to them. When we begin to enjoy the good habit of prayer, then very hour becomes an hour to pray. This does not mean that the saint will pray for one hour at a time, but no hour will pass without praying. This is bringing God into everything and keeping Him out of nothing.

A Fruitful Prayer

God answers prayer. This was proved by Hannah, Daniel, Nehemiah and others. Jabez, in 1 Chron. 4:9, 10, is a lovely example of a man getting an answer to prayer. See his honourable standing among his brethren and the simple sincere prayer he made! Mary and Martha, in John 11, learned, that delay is not denial in the prayer life. The period of delay was a test for faith. God has to teach His people that while He is working in a wise way to answer prayer, they must wait in a wise way till the answer comes. How good when God is working and we are waiting. Answers to prayer do not come in our time but in God's time, neither in our way but in God's way. Faith wisely allows God to plan the way and patiently waits the time. This is submission to the will of God. Elijah, on Mount Carmel, prayed seven times (1 Kings 18:42:46). God wisely withheld the answer until the seventh petition was made. The prophet learned the art of patience as he continued instant in prayer. Abraham failed to make his seventh petition, note his six lovely petitions on righteousness in Genesis 18:23-33.

A Fatal Prayer

The last prayer of Samson resulted in the loss of his own life and the lives of many others (Judges 16:38-30). It was fatal. In Daniel's day the law was against prayer (Daniel 6:10-12). His prayer put him among the lions. The man who was not afraid to pray was made fearless through prayer. It would seem he had a good time among the lions. Courage and fearlessness is born through prayer. Today, "the law", encourages men to pray, what a contrast to Daniel's

day. Daniel stopped to pray but did not stop praying. God is delighted when men stop to pray and the Devil is delighted when men stop praying. Daniel learned that "God writes with a pen that never blots, speaks with a tongue that never slips and acts with a hand that never fails."

A Fragrant Prayer

The book of Luke opens with the Priest at the altar of incense. Prayer is answered and Zacharias is promised a son (Luke 1:8-25). This teaches us the full results of prayer. What God gets and what man gets. The former received the sweet incense of devotion and the latter the blessing of faith in prayer. In Revelation 5:8, we get the same principle. The prayers of saints are seen as preserved in the golden vials. They are a sweet smelling savour to God. This is God's portion from every true and righteous prayer and one of the many sweet smelling things that can leave earth and reach heaven. It can be said that the greatest prayers, although simple and perhaps feeble, are delightful to God and a blessing to the one who prays as well as being a blessing to the one prayed for. God becomes a receiver and then becomes a bestower.

A Final Prayer

Prayer is for earth and not for heaven. The prayer life of saints will end. The final prayer on earth is important, it is the perfection of the prayer life, such would be incomplete without it. In Acts 7:60, Stephen prays his final prayer. See the circumstances under which he prays and how he prays like his Master. Paul, in 2 Timothy 4, refers to his friends and foes and while dying the death of a martyr, prays like his Master (verse 16). This is the last recorded act of Paul in prayer. Prayer unfolds the spirituality and character of a man. Stephen and Paul revealed by their prayers that they were good Godly, gracious, God glorifying men who lived a life of simple dependence upon God. There is another sense in which we can consider a last prayer. Paul, in 2 Cor. 12:7-10, prays his third and final prayer about his thorn in the flesh. He learned it was time to stop and while God did not remove the thorn He gave the grace to bear it. This was an unexpected answer to which Paul had to submit. God grants wisdom to know when to pray, what to pray for and when to stop praying.

Oh, child of God, keep no company with any one with whom you cannot kneel at the throne of grace, and speak freely about your blessed Master.

A LITTLE CHILD SHALL LEAD THEM

A. W. J.

He was a loving father, but he was not saved. Over in Scotland where he lived he had been in soul trouble for some time and could get no rest from the burden of his sin. The Spirit of God was dealing with him, but somehow he did not know how he could KNOW that he was saved, and that he could be assured that the burden of sins was removed.

One day the father was left to look after the little girl while his wife went on a visit. The little daughter said, "Daddy, we are going to play school. I will be the teacher and you will be my class," so the lesson began. It was not long before the girl ran out of material, so she said, "Now, Daddy, we are going to play at Sunday School. I am going to say a piece, and, if you repeat it correctly, I will give you full marks." She began, "Say this after me, 'Just as I am,'" the troubled father began, "Just as I am," "Without one plea," said the little girl, "Without one plea," repeated the burdened father, and so it went on,

"But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidst me come to Thee,"

but when they reached the last line,

"O, Lamb of God, I come,"

the father stopped and could get no farther. "Come on," encouraged the little teacher, "Say the last line and I will give you full marks, "O, Lamb of God, I come." But a big lump rose in the father's throat, and he said, "I can't say it." The little girl persisted, "It's easy to say 'O Lamb of God, I come.'"

They were interrupted by a knock on the door. The father unlocked the front door and his wife entered. Glancing at her husband, she noticed his agitation and asked, "What is the matter?" "You cannot help me," was the reply, and with his heart bursting with stifled emotions, he went back to his daughter's bedroom. He got down on his knees at her bed, and, looking by faith to the Saviour of sinners Who died to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, he exclaimed, "O, Lamb of God, I come."

If you long, like the father in the incident, to know your sins are forgiven, you too may come now to the One Who has never refused a repentant sinner. His invitation still goes forth, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest."

(Matt. 11:28). Do not doubt your welcome for the Saviour says, "Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37).

"He found me with a burden,
And He lifted it from me.
He found me bound and fettered,
From sin He set me free.
He found me in the darkness,
And He made the light to shine.
Can you wonder why I love Him
This wondrous Friend of mine?"

GATHERED IN HIS NAME

Franklin Ferguson

Why do we meet as we do? is a question frequently asked. It needs an answer, not only for the benefit of the young believers continually being added to our assemblies, but for the sake of older ones who need putting in remembrance. And possibly this paper may come into the hands of some of the Lord's redeemed ones who as yet are not gathered to His Name in the full Scriptural sense. To such we commend the Scriptures before us, and express to them the desire that they may learn and obey that which will be of much blessing to them.

It is not to the beginning of last century we turn, when the Lord led a number of His people to meet together as Christians, owning no name or gathering centre save "Jesus only;" but we turn to the Word itself, to which they also turned. They saw revealed therein the precious truth of Christ the Centre for all the children of God, and this did not start a century ago — it was God's way in the times of the apostles.

To those who look upon the broken and divided state of the Church — the flock for which the Good Shepherd died — it surely looks a pitiful sight, and makes Christians' hearts sad. Because there has been, and is, great failure — and even among those who have honestly sought to go by the Word — it is no reason for us to despair and for every man to stand alone and do just what is right in his own eyes. No, until the Lord comes, the duty of all believers is to endeavour to do His revealed will, however others may fail, and however few or despised their number may be. There is a Divine

pattern given, and happy are they who go according to it, though their effort be very feeble and misjudged by others.

The thought of chief importance for all believers is, *the worthiness of Christ*. The four and twenty elders whom the Apostle John saw sitting round about the throne, all fell down before the Lamb, saying, "Thou art worthy;" and the innumerable multitude of angels say with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb;" and every creature joins in ascribing to Him "blessing and honour and glory and power" (Rev. 5.) In Matt. 6:10 we read, "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven," and it is the Father's will "that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father" (John 5:23). To Him has been given "a Name which is above every name" (Phil. 2:9; and upon the Mount of Transfiguration the voice from heaven said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matt. 17:5).

In Gen. 49:10, a reference is made to Shiloh coming (which is Christ), and these notable words are added for our instruction, "Unto Him shall the gathering of the people be." In Psalm 50:5 we read, "Gather My saints together unto Me; those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice." Also, there is that other verse (Matt. 18:20) with which we all are so familiar — and truly it is one of the most blessed — "For where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them."

To every disciple who loves this Name, there is something exceedingly precious in the words, "Thy Name is as ointment poured forth" (Song of Sol. 1:3). His Name is Himself. And what a fulness there is in that Name!

COMMUNION AND SERVICE

Whenever a saint affects to do more in the kingdom *without*, than he enjoys of the sanctuary *within*; in other words, when his service for God exceeds the measure of his communion *with* God, there is unreality. It may appear in a variety of ways, but it is the energy of nature, that is of the flesh, which is no value in the sight of God, but is a positive hindrance to all that is of God, and also it is in opposition to what is the work of the Spirit. Here, as elsewhere, "the flesh lusteth (warreth) against the Spirit," and by its very activity is a hinderer of the Spirit's work.

Some *must* preach, teach and work who seldom find time for a quiet waiting hour in the presence of their Master, either to examine

their own spiritual condition, or to get the needful instructions from Him as to what He wants them to do, and where and how they are to do it. It is the lack of thus being in the presence of God, and coming forth from that presence with the savour thereof in the soul, that makes so much of the preaching and teaching of our time pointless and fruitless. It is easy enough to sing —

“O, the pure delight of a single hour,
Which before Thy throne I spend.”

But when in reality did you last spend an hour — a literal hour of sixty minutes — there?

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY IN SPAIN

G. G. Johnston

Information has reached us from an absolutely trustworthy source in regard to the so-called religious liberty in Spain. While cunning priests and some unprincipled statesmen would endeavour to make the leaders of the United States and other lands believe that Spain boasts of religious liberty, as do other countries, the fact remains that no less than thirty-two buildings and smaller places of meeting belonging to one group of Christians, today are closed by government order. Some of these smaller congregations have, thus far, been able to gather in private dwellings, but not without the fear of being reported, fined, or worse.

Gradually all liberty of publication is being withdrawn. Petitions for permission to print anything, even for the help of evangelical churches, are systematically ignored (not even acknowledged); then when, in desperation, anything is printed without permission, fines are imposed, the work confiscated and the printing stopped. Foreigners involved in such *disregard for the law* are liable to be expelled from the country.

In no case must any chapel, or meeting place, bear a notice board, or means of identification whatsoever. Anyone daring to speak privately to another regarding the faith of Jesus Christ, give anyone a tract, or pamphlet, portion of Holy Scripture, or anything of the sort not published under the auspices of the Roman Catholic Church, is guilty of propaganda, and subject to a heavy fine.

Anyone who has in infancy, or later, been baptized into the Roman faith can never be considered as separated from it. Therefore, unless able to obtain a release from the bishop of his district, he

cannot be married by the civil courts, or by a Protestant minister. This has caused great distress.

Not only do the priests rule in civil matters, the army is also under their heel. Young soldiers, on joining up, are, of course, called upon to take the oath of allegiance. Included in this function, in Spain, is a mass in which the host is elevated, and at which moment every soldier is bound to bare his head and fall to his knees before this god of flour. Because some God-fearing young men have refused to participate in this idolatrous act, they have been sorely abused physically, and put in prison. Two have been condemned to two full years of confinement, and another is likely to follow. All pleas in their favour have been ignored in spite of the fact that their commanders affirm that otherwise their behaviour has been exemplary.

Not more than twenty persons are allowed to meet in a private home, yet if they were to buy or build a more convenient meeting place, there is little likelihood that they would be granted a permit to use it.

ISRAEL AND THE CHURCH

The Character of Worship

Wm. Hoste

Was Christian worship ever intended to be after the Jewish pattern? Our Lord's words respond, "They that worship Him, must worship Him *in spirit and in truth*" (John 4:24). There are four distinctions drawn in this passage — (1) between the future and the present. "The hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father" (verse 21). (2) Between the Divinely-sanctioned and intelligent worship at Jerusalem, and the man-invented, ignorant worship on Mount Gerizim. "Ye worship ye know not what, we know that we worship" (verse 2). (3) Between the material and symbolical temple worship and spiritual and true worship even then begun, and soon to be the rule of every true worshipper. "The hour is coming, and now is (see for this same expression chap. 5:25 and 16:32), when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth."

There was even then in Israel, outside the official priestly system, a little circle to whom the Father had been revealed and who worshipped Him in spirit and in truth. This could not be strictly speaking priestly worship, but the worship of relationship — of the children to the Father — for two contrasted systems, the heavenly and the earthly, could hardly be divinely recognized on the earth at the same time. (4) Between phases of worship both true today, the worship of the Father and the worship of God, which last, I judge, is essentially

priestly worship. "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth" (verse 24). "In spirit" is in contrast with the material worship of Israel's priests, which appealed to the senses. "In truth" is in distinction, as has been noticed once before, not with the false but with the figurative worship of the Jewish cult.

These words show the radical and important difference between Church worship and that of the Aaronic priesthood. Theirs was ritualistic; ours is spiritual, "spiritual sacrifices well pleasing to God by Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 2:5). Theirs was symbolical; ours is real.

What then is Worship? It is neither preaching, nor praying, nor talking about worship, nor even, in its highest expression, merely giving thanks for blessings, but the overflow of the heart to God for what He is as revealed in Christ. "The cup of salvation" speaks of blessing received; "My cup runneth over," of worship rendered. The test of a worship meeting is not "What did I get?" but "What did God get?" Sponges are not the same as springs. A sponge easily absorbs, but what is absorbed is easily lost. Verdure is never seen growing round a sponge, but a spring fertilizes its environment. The spring is always giving out, because it is always taking in from a hidden source. "The water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Worship never rises higher than its source. If it is of man, it pleases man and only man. To rise to God, it must be of God. Mary sitting at the feet of Jesus listening to His Word, was secreting worship, destined to well up later to Him, at the feast in Bethany. To worship God better, we must know Christ better, for He is the substance of all true worship. Christ as the One who perfectly glorified the Father, and fully met the claims of God on the Cross. Christ as the whole burnt offering to God, and as the centre of His counsels. Christ as the revelation of the heart of God. Christ in His spotless Manhood and in His hidden perfections. Christ in His entire devotedness and in the fragrance of His person. This One "we have" as a "High Priest over the house of God." It is needful that "He should have something to offer." "By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually . . . But to do good and to communicate forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased" (Heb. 13:15, 16).

Many choose rather to be great than to be humble; forgetting that only they who choose to be humble, are truly great.

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Often take counsel in temptation; and do not deal roughly with him that is tempted.

MEMBERSHIP IN AN ORGANIZATION

Mervyn Paul

A number of my young friends are concerned about their relationships with various types of organizations — Trades Unions, in particular. Some have been saved since they accepted the union's yoke. Some belong but do not take any part in union affairs, paying only their dues. Others are confronted with joining or losing their jobs . . . jobs for which they may have had years of training, and where there are no prospects of employment in any other field — a very frightening possibility, indeed!

Now right at the start we had better admit to ourselves that labour unions must be given a great deal of credit for the vastly improved working conditions in industry today. Some Christians who have not had any experience of working in industrial plants are reluctant to admit that they have any value whatever, seeing them only as the troublesome cause of a constantly rising cost-of-living index. Nevertheless that there is a great mass of evidence in their favour respecting the gaining of better working conditions, as well as more equitable rates of pay, cannot be denied.

The principle of collection bargaining (plow through, my young friends, won't you?) is a modern device intended to equalize the power of those who are employed to that of the employers; while the right to strike, basically, acknowledges a person's inherent privilege of choosing for himself whether or not he shall labour for another. Picketing is a one-sided method of compulsion not so fully established as a just procedure, especially when violence is used; and any possible interest the public may have in a strike has not yet been considered, save when national welfare is at stake.

As intelligent Christians it is not our business to dispute these things. Moreover, as those yielded to God, we have nothing to do with such matters. The principle of Separation, so fully set forth in 2 Cor. 6:11 - 7:1, when it is obeyed, sets us clean outside of them altogether . . . And here let me interject the remark that a person may be considered a member of a company organization and yet be nothing more than an employee — something that is not at all the same as being yoked, through a binding membership, in an alliance in an organization. In the first case the employee is **IN** it, but not **OF** it. In the second he is both **IN** it, and **OF** it.

And something more: in view of the principle of Separation it is important that young Christians should understand the reason for it very, very clearly. Indeed, their Christian parents need to understand it, also, lest they urge their children to train for, or to seek after, positions which will invite immediate conflict — or compromise

— when the young people start out on their careers. And that reason can be stated quite simply. It is that **GOD DESIRES TO HAVE HIS CHILDREN ENTIRELY UNDER HIS CONTROL**. See Jer. 2:1-2, 1 Cor. 6:20; 7:22-23; 2 Cor. 5:15; 1 Pet. 4:2.

This was His intention when He created Adam and Eve, and for a time it was fulfilled. But when Mother Eve allowed herself to be brought under an outside influence the complete dependence-on-God relationship was shattered. Then ceaseless sin became the inevitable consequence, and Redemption a necessity. For your redemption, and mine, was intended to bring us back into such a relationship, where the subjecting of the Second Man Adam to His Father's will (John 5:30, 6:38) becomes our example.

But, oh dear young Christians, do not allow yourselves to slump back into a hopeless that's-too-high-for-me attitude! The "path of the just" is no sudden achievement. Rather is it "as the dawning light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day:" Prov. 4:18 R.V. **ITS GROWTH GETS A PROPER START WHEN WE ADOPT A PROPER ATTITUDE TOWARDS GOD: Matt. 12:47-50; John 7:17; Phil. 2:13**. For when that attitude becomes a *daily-renewed one* (2 Cor. 4:16) of, "Not my will, but thine be done" (Luke 22:42) then many of our attitudes towards earth's problems will be settled. And surely — in spite of our weakness and our endless failures — such a fixed purpose is bound to be the objective of the twice-born! Only our sincerity and the depth of our desire will decide how much it is to be uppermost in our thoughts. After that our faith in Himself and His Word will govern how far we shall go in obeying Him.

Now if it be true that God desires to have His children entirely under His control, then we must realize that if we bind ourselves to follow the direction of any organization that may require us to act contrary to God's revealed will (even in a "church" fellowship, or a society for promotion of the Gospel then **THAT MUCH OF OUR LIVES IS TAKEN OUT OF HIS CONTROL**).

In a general sense you will find that it isn't of any use to try to explain such matters as your Separation, or the Mark of the Beast, to unsaved agitators. See 1 Cor. 2:14; Matt. 7:6. In my own experience, when under the fire of labour unions, I found it best to say, simply "I am saved. I belong to the Lord, bag and baggage. I believe it to be His will that I shall not join an organization of any kind — not even of a church" . . . to say that, and nothing more . . . and to stick to it. Such an answer leaves no loop-hole for argument — a very helpful thing for a young Christian who may not be too skilful with the Bible.

It is well also (even with life insurance agents) to admit freely all their benefit arguments, since our stand for God-control of our lives cannot be influenced by the prospect of material benefits: Matt. 6:31-34. His will for us is all that matters . . . But don't expect an unsaved person to understand that! To them it will seem to be rank fanaticism.

That going in for full acknowledgment of this principle usually wrecks havoc with our own plans for our lives certainly is true. We are to have no plans for our lives except whatever the Lord has planned, and are to rely on Him for its full development, walking as, and where, He directs. But for some who have been saved late in life, whose whole working experience has been under union control, and who have no prospect for employment in other lines, the problem is one of faith . . . of how far, and at what cost, a person may be willing to depend on the faithfulness of God. Often the decision is made to continue as a member, but to take no part in union affairs, paying only the required dues. And some of my young friends have taken that position.

For these dear ones I dare not legislate. Even as your faith is of no service to me, so you cannot walk by mine. John may have sufficient faith to follow His Lord into the high priest's palace. But for Peter it may result in a temptation to denial. But this I can say with assurance: I have known some men — *men with families* — who refused the labour union's unequal yoke, in a trembling faith. *They lost their trades* as well as their chance to continue in work. And it's pretty hard to look into the face of one's wife, one's dependent little children, and know that one's former providing power is gone—gone for good! But this also I can say: the God Who caused it to be written, "them that honour Me, I will honour" (1 Sam. 2:30) did not fail them. *After they had stepped out in obedience and faith*, they found He had other provisions made for them . . . and I think I may have the right to say so, for I was one of them.

As there is no rest without labour, so there is no victory without conflict.

ERRATA—We regret very much the printer's error in last month's issue on pages 117 and 119. The article "Prayer out of place" should have ended with (1 John 5:13) near the top of page 117. The following long paragraph should have followed at the close of page 119 of "Questions and Answers".

THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

Hark! 'tis the trump of God
Sounds through the realms abroad,
Time is no more.
Horror invests the skies;
Graves burst, and myriads rise;
Nature in agonies,
Yields up her store.

Quick reels the bursting earth,
Rocked by a storm of wrath,
Hurled from her sphere;
Heart-rending thunders roll
Demons tormented howl,
Great God! support my soul,
Yielding to fear.

High on a flaming throne
Rides the eternal Son,
Sovereign august!
Worlds from His presence fly,
Shrink at His majesty;
Stars dashed across the sky,
Awfully burst.

O my approving God!
Washed in the precious blood,
Bold I advance;
Fearless we range along,
Join the triumphant throng,
Shout an ecstatic song
Through the expanse.

Written by Richard Kempenfelt, admiral in the British navy and an associate of Whitfield and the Wesleys. He was lost at sea when his ship the "Royal George" sank off Spithead, England.

NOTES ON SCRIPTURAL HYMNS AND THEIR WRITERS

Hector Alves

"Thou hidden love of God, whose height,
Whose depth unfathomed, no man knows,
I see from far Thy beauteous light,
And inly sigh for Thy repose:
My heart is pained, nor can it be
At rest till it find rest in Thee."

We have already published an article on this great hymn, and made mention of the author of it, Gerhard Tersteegen, a man of sterling worth. But it is only fair and proper that we should also make mention of the good man who translated this hymn into the English language, John Wesley. His brother, Charles Wesley, was an original hymn writer, his works numbering many hundreds, but John Wesley was a great translator, especially of German hymns.

The following is told regarding the above hymn. 'Oliver Wendell Holmes and Ralph Waldo Emerson were once discussing the merits of various hymns. Holmes declared that most hymns were only 'cabinet work', not really poetic, but he added that there was one supreme hymn, and began to quote the above words and the one which follows it —

"Is there a thing beneath the sun
That strives with Thee my heart to share?
O tear it thence, and reign alone
The Lord of every motion there!
Then shall my heart from earth be free,
When it has found repose in Thee."

'I know; I know,' repeated Emerson, 'that is the supreme hymn.' It was an extravagant claim, but Holmes and Emerson should be good authorities on the literary merits of any hymn.

John Wesley was a severe critic of hymns. He strongly disapproved of weak sentimentality, and of phrases which he deemed too familiar to be addressed to the Deity. He did not hesitate, when editing a collection of hymns, to alter those which contained such expressions. His brother's hymns were not exempt; in one well known hymn, the expression "My dear Redeemer's praise," was changed to "My great Redeemer's praise." These alterations were not made because Wesley's heart was cold, but because he had a high sense of the reverence with which man should approach God.

Wesley also had very positive opinions concerning the tunes put to hymns, and we today would do well to be exercised about the same. Many tunes are being taken from the world's songs and put to spiritual hymns, some of which are most unbecoming to the occasion of our gathering together. "Let all things be done decently and in order." (1 Cor. 14:40). John Wesley also laid down some rules for singing in public:

- (1) Sing no anthems.
- (2) Do not suffer the people to sing too slowly as this tends to formality.
- (3) Exhort everyone, both men and women in the congregation, to sing.

On the day before his death he was heard to sing Isaac Watt's hymn —

“I'll praise my Maker while I've breath,
And when my voice is lost in death
Praise shall employ my nobler powers;
My days of praise shall ne'er be past
While life, and thought, and being last,
Or immortality endures.”

These words seem literally to describe his death. Every little while he broke out into some song of praise, even when his strength was hardly adequate to the strain. His last words were the joyous shout, twice repeated, “The best of all is, God is with us.” That closed the life which for more than half a century had been spent in active evangelism. During that time he had travelled 250,000 miles, and preached 40,000 times.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question. When it is necessary to rent a larger building for Conference Meetings, and the meeting on Lord's Day morning to break bread is held in the large rented hall, instead of in the Gospel Hall, as the custom is, would that be the same as setting up the table temporarily somewhere? For instance, at a Summer Camp; or at some seaside place where a group are on a vacation. Some tell us there is no difference.

Answer. We believe there is a difference. There is no similarity whatever; these cases bear no comparison. In the first place, the word “group” is not a good word to use in this connection. We find in the New Testament the word “church” and the word “assembly”. These denote a gathered out company; not a group of people who might mutually consent to meet somewhere. One of the privileges of an assembly of God's people, gathered together unto the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, is to remember Him in the breaking of the bread and the drinking of the cup. There can be no “breaking of bread” apart from a “church” or gathered out company. The “apostles' doctrine forms “the fellowship”, and “breaking the bread” is one of the privileges of that fellowship. (See Acts 2:41-42 R.V.) In Matt. 18:20 we read, “For where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them.” This verse has been translated by Mr. Thomas Newberry (Editor of the Newberry Bible) as follows; “Where two or three are, having been and being

gathered together unto My Name, there am I in the midst of them." We believe that is the meaning of the statement. The place is associated with the Name. Location means nothing. If a Gospel Hall was burned to the ground during the week, it would be quite within the scope of New Testament teaching, for the church to "gather together to break bread" in some convenient place nearby.—H. A.

Question. In Isaiah, chapter 9, verse 6, we read, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given." What is the difference between the "child born" and the "son given"? Or is there any difference?

Answer. There is a very important difference between these two expressions, and one which we do well to note carefully. The child is said to be born; the Son is not born, but given. The One referred to here was already the Son of God from all eternity. In Matt. 1:23 we read, "Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us." Here we have the "child born" as viewed in Isaiah (chapter 9 verse 6). His name was to be called Emmanuel, meaning, God with us. The child was born, but God gave His eternal Son, to Israel, and to the world. H.A.

Question. Who are "the dead" spoken of in John 5, verse 25? "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." Has this anything to do with what we read in verses 28 and 29?

Answer. In verses 28 and 29 of this chapter, we have a picture of resurrections yet future. "The resurrection of life" will take place at the rapture of the church; this is also called "the first resurrection." The "resurrection of damnation" will take place more than a thousand years later. You will notice in verse 25, the words "now is"; referring to this present time. The "dead" in this verse, refers to those who are spiritually dead; who do not have a spark of divine life in them. In Ephesians, chapter 2, verse 1, they are said to be "dead in trespasses and sins." This is a universal condition. In Romans, chapter 5, verse 12, we read, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Through the "voice of the Son of God," and by means of the gospel, those who are in that state of spiritual death, "hear" and "live". Saul of Tarsus had this experience on the Damascus road, when he actually heard the audible voice of the risen Son of God. None actually hear that voice now, but "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." (Rom. 10:17). They that hear and believe, "pass out of death into life." (John 5:24). H. A.

on the Tabernacle. Meetings were well attended and were profitable, practical and much appreciated."

TAYLORSIDE, SASK.—J. Gray had good ministry meetings here and in Prince Albert and has gone on to Maidstone. After a trying time for eleven weeks, C. H. Willoughby has improved in health and is able to get to the occasional meeting.

CHAPMAN VALLEY, ONT.—Stanley Simms and Earl Pears have seen a good interest and a number have professed to be saved. Because of the interest they did not stop to go to any of the conferences. (This is commendable).

HUNTSVILLE, ONT.—B. Widdifield enjoyed visiting the young Christians around here, but has returned to Charlton.

KENORA, ONT.—After a good conference, G. G. Johnston remained for some meetings. A. Douglas went on to Portage la Prairie, Man.

MONTREAL, QUE.—Harold Paisley of North Ireland gave us three weeks of exceptionally well attended meetings with blessing to saint and sinner. Two professed. He went on to Toronto and had ministry meetings in Pape Ave. and Eglinton E. halls which were very well attended and appreciated.

QUEBEC, QUE.—N. Gratton gave help here and visited with J. Smith.

VALLEYFIELD, QUE.—B. Grainger continues with regular cottage meetings here and at Farnham, helped recently by N. Gratton.

ROLLET, QUE.—Going from here to Montreal, via Mont Laurier, V. Davy passed through country parts encouraging isolated saints and visiting unsaved who had received a free N.T. by mail.

CRAPAUD, P.E.I.—The conference was the largest, and some thought one of the best. Two professed to be saved. A. W. Joyce had some Gospel meetings with an excellent interest. Bert Joyce and Robert McIlwaine continued the meetings. Albert Ramsay went to Dundas, N.B., after the conference. D. Petherick got the use of a school-house at Roslin, N.S. and has been joined by John McCracken. There is a good interest.

The Assembly meeting in the Addison Road Hall, Cleveland, Ohio, have disposed of their hall and after July the 1st the meetings will be held in the Masonic Auditorium, Euclid Ave. and 36th St. Sunday. Breaking of Bread 10 a.m.; Gospel, 7.30 p.m.; Prayer Meeting, Wednesday, 7.45 p.m. Correspondent, J. H. Smith, 3141 Warrington Rd., Shaker Heights, Ohio. No conference this year.

DANBURY, CONN.—Frank Puzzulli is holding cottage meetings seeking to help the little assembly and reach the unsaved.

LORAIN, OHIO.—The English and Spanish assemblies have purchased a used bus for use with the Sunday Schools. They have about 180 in both schools.

FREMONT, OHIO.—N. Crawford and J. Lipke continue in this district with some encouragement among old and young.

GARNAVILLO, IA.—The conference was large and good. In the Gospel meetings which began before the conference and continued after, L. E. McBain and H. McCready saw a little blessing and look for more souls to Christ.

ONTARIO, WIS.—O. Smith and P. Elliott have been encouraged with souls won for the Saviour.

VENEZUELA

"I returned home on May 28th after over a month in Aragua, with Cirilio Chavez. Had three weeks' meetings in a new place — a suburb of Maracay. They built a new hall there and we opened it with chart meetings which were well attended with some fruit. On the 12th, five were baptized in the new hall, and on Lord's Day the 13th we formed the assembly with 28 in fellowship. We had a good representation from Valencia, Puerto Cabello and Caracas and some 94 broke bread. This is a "hive-off" from the mother assembly which still had 90 there on the Lord's Day. This now makes 50 assemblies formed since we came here 46 years ago and we thank God and take courage, D.V., Sr. Chaves and I leave on the 5th for Valera, the new assembly in Los Andes, then we go on to Cabimas and Maracaibo. We hear there is now liberty to preach in La Villa del Rosario in Perija as the monks have had to clear out and go nearer Columbia as there are practically no Indians where they are. If this is so it will be good as there are now 8 baptized Christians there and some more are waiting but no open meetings are allowed." Wm. Williams.

FRANCE

W. E. Taylor asks for prayer for God's blessing on the Bibles distributed to Roman Catholics who have asked for them — over 2,000 in the last two years.

CONFERENCES

STRAFFORDVILLE, ONT.—Our Annual Conference will be held, D.V., in the Gospel Hall (one mile south of the village) on June 30 at 2.30 and 7.30 p.m., July 1 at 10.30 a.m., 2.30 and 7.30 p.m. Corr. Geo. Adlington, Straffordville, Ont.

WITH CHRIST

STEUBENVILLE, OHIO.—Our brother, Ray Anidon, went home on May 17 at the age of 78. He suffered patiently for 14 years. He was saved over forty years and in the assembly most of that time. A. Klabunda and G. Baldwin spoke at the funeral.

FROSTBURG, MD.—On May 26 our beloved sister, Mrs. Jennie Evans, passed into the presence of the Lord. She was a long but very patient sufferer. She was saved at meetings held by the late G. Duncan in 1932 and in fellowship in the Frostburg assembly. Words of comfort to the saved and warning to the unsaved were spoken by R. Rennie.

NIAGARA FALLS, ONT.—Our dear aged brother, Robert Clelland, passed into the Lord's presence on May 20. C. Pinches and G. Wilson spoke at the undertakers, and R. J. Hartley helped at the grave. He was 92 years of age, 71 years saved and 43 years in Niagara Falls, Ont.

TRUTH and TIDINGS



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EDITOR ----- A. W. JOYCE, 26 Munro Blvd., Willowdale, Ont., Canada.
ASSOCIATE EDITORS --- F. G. WATSON, 92 Regal Rd., Toronto, Ont.
G. G. JOHNSTON, 140 Woodycrest Ave., Toronto, Ont.
HECTOR ALVES, 338 W. King Edward Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C.

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TO SUMMER SUBSCRIBERS

Have you renewed your subscription? Sometimes in the rush of vacation preparations this is inadvertently overlooked. If your subscription is due we will appreciate your prompt renewal though, in the meantime, we will continue to send your magazine unless otherwise instructed. In the October issue an expiry slip will be inserted, but this entails considerable extra work. Please co-operate.

TIDINGS

CALGARY, ALTA.—Westhill - Hurst Gospel Hall. "We had John Gray here for several nights, also A. Douglas for about two weeks and Harold Paisley gave us one night on his way to Vancouver. The ministry was good with nothing to please the flesh or tickle the ear, but that which would reach the conscience. A few strangers have been coming in and we are encouraged in this new district. G. McCullough."

G. G. Johnston writes of good conferences at Winnipeg, Portage and Pine Creek, though at the last place attendance was hindered by heavy rains and bad roads. He expected to go on to Taylorside and Mervin. O. Smith and P. Elliott went to Winnipeg from Portage and then back to Iowa. A. Wilson and J. Frith returned to the west coast.

Reports have been received of good conferences in Sarnia, Eden Grove and Victoria Rd. The Charlton-Earlton conference was a time of blessing. At the former place the attendance was the largest they have had. J. Clark went to Arnstein for some meetings. C. Patrizio went on to Port Arthur for work among the Italians and may go on to Winnipeg and the west coast as the Lord may lead. S. Simms left for home and purposes joining Earl Pears in work in the Dunchurch district for the summer. A. W. Joyce and Ed Doherty (Cuba) had well-attended meetings after the conference in Earlton and Charlton.

ENGLEHART, ONT.—A. W. Joyce commenced meetings July 8th using the "Egypt to Canaan" chart.

HENDERSON, ONT.—R. Harris and T. Kember expect to spend the summer with the Gospel in this neighborhood.

TORONTO, ONT.—Fred Holder and Frank Pearcey have been preaching the Gospel under canvas in the eastern outskirts of the city with some blessing in the Gospel.

THE CENTURIONS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

A. W. Joyce

It is most striking to notice the comments of the Word of God upon the Centurions who have been introduced into the pages of Scripture history. In almost every reference there is something about the Centurions which draws out one's admiration — the more so when admirable qualities are discovered where they would be least expected. What a contrast these military Roman officers were to the four Herods who reigned during the days of our Lord's sojourn on earth and in the days of the apostles. The first Herod, among many other crimes, murdered the babes of Bethlehem, the second beheaded John the Baptist, the third slew James with the sword and the fourth rejected the apostle Paul's testimony in Acts 26. The High Priests, Caiaphas and Annas, the religious rulers of the Jews, were consistent in their implacable hatred of the Lord Jesus and His people.

As the name indicates, a Centurion was a commander usually of one hundred men in the armies of Rome, which was then the mistress of the world. We have many incidents recorded involving various Centurions with the Lord and His apostles. We might begin with

The Confessing or Believing Centurion

It would seem that the great army of those who have been saved by grace since the Saviour died upon the Cross is headed by the very Centurion who superintended the crucifixion of the Lord of glory. What a triumph! Likely many things spoke powerfully to the heart and conscience of this Roman officer. He watched the unresisting submission of this Man to the soldiers who stripped Him of all his outer garments and nailed His hands and feet to the cross (Psalm 22:16). He heard His prayer, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 22:34). He noted the Lord's tender care of His sorrowing mother as He committed her to the care of the apostle John. He would hear the taunts of the thieves (Matt. 27:44). With wonder he would notice the change in the case of one of them when in repentance the plea for mercy came, "Lord, remember me," to be answered by the Saviour's words of forgiveness and assurance.

But there are two things in particular which are mentioned in the Scriptures which convinced the Centurion of the deity of the Saviour. "When the Centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and these things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God" (Matt. 27:54). The awesome darkness of three hours duration, the earthquake and the rending rocks, struck fear into their hearts, convincing them that they were participants in a scene of unparalleled importance, affecting both the Creation and the Creator.

The second thing is related in Mark 15:39, "The Centurion which stood over against Him, saw that He so cried out, and gave up the ghost." The death of crucifixion is a long, slow, lingering one, and death ensues finally when all strength is gone. The loud cry, "It is finished" and "Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit," convinced the Roman that this was not the death of a crucified criminal but the dismissal of the Spirit by a mighty Conqueror. He had power to lay down His life, and when the work of propitiation was done, He dismissed His Spirit.

All this caused the Centurion to burst forth in the sublime confession, "Truly this man was the Son of God." What a stinging rebuke to the High Priests and leaders of Israel! They had said, "Thou blasphemest," when He said, "I am the Son of God" (John 10:36). In this confession the Centurion acknowledged Christ's deity, and in Luke 33:47, he acknowledged the perfect character of the Son of Man when he said, "Certainly this was a righteous Man." Well might we cry at the contemplation of such a triumph, "Hallelujah, what a Saviour!" May we ask all who read these lines, have you seen by faith the Saviour, dying for you a sinner, that you might be saved? Have you exclaimed in adoration, "Truly this Man was the Son of God?" or, like Thomas, "My Lord and my God!"

The Courteous Centurion

When Paul felt constrained to appeal to Caesar, he was committed, along with other prisoners, to be sent to Rome under the charge of Julius, a Centurion of the Augustan cohort (Acts 27:1, R.V.). When the ship made a port of call at Sidon, "Julius courteously entreated Paul, and gave him liberty to go unto his friends to refresh himself." The rigours of a prisoner's journey to Rome must have been greatly mitigated by the courtesy of the Centurion. A little later Julius turned down the advice of Paul against continuing the journey at that season (Acts 27:11). Naturally the soldier would think, I may trust Paul with liberties on the journey because of his character, but after all, surely the ship captain knows more about the sea than an inexperienced landsman. Before the ill-fated voyage ends in shipwreck, Paul's moral greatness thrust him into leadership in a time of danger and crisis. When the storm threatened death at any moment, with quiet confidence in God, Paul encouraged all on board. When He gave advice the next time, verse 31, the Centurion and the soldiers were glad to take it for the preservation of the ship. On the third occasion, Paul gave wise counsel in regard to taking nourishment and "gave thanks to God in the presence of them all." For the sake of Paul, the Centurion refuses the counsel of his own soldiers to kill the prisoners, lest they escape. The experience on the Island

of Melita (Malta), and the closing days of the journey to Rome, must have made a deep impression on the courteous Centurion. We have good grounds to hope that the consistent testimony of the apostle Paul resulted in the conversion of Julius. If so, every courteous act, after his conversion, will be rewarded by and by.

One of the exhortations of Peter's epistle is, "Love as brethren, be pitiful, *be courteous*" (1 Peter 3:8). Peter had learned some good lessons since he impulsively cut off a man's ear in the garden of Gethsemane, in defence of the Saviour. How often since then has a lack of Christian courtesy cut off the ears of sinners, and closed their minds against the Gospel. How often, also, the truth of God has suffered, because, in endeavouring to be faithful in our dealings with God's people, we have forgotten to be courteous, and thus have weakened the very stand we intended to strengthen.

There are several other occasions when Paul came in contact with Centurions. In Acts 22:25, he used his Roman citizenship to prevent his being unlawfully tortured, appealing to the Centurion in charge. In Acts 33:17 he reported a conspiracy which had been made to assassinate him and in Acts 24:23 Felix, the governor committed Paul to a Centurion to be guarded. Paul did not let opportunities slip to witness for Christ, so there were many Roman officers who will forever remember their association with Paul, whether for weal or for woe. There are two other outstanding Centurions of the New Testament which we must reserve for another paper.

EIGHT THINGS THAT TEND TO POVERTY, OR HOW TO BECOME A POOR MAN

Keeping what we should give—Prov. 11:24.

Refusing what we should receive—Prov. 13:18.

Talking when we should be silent—Prov. 14:23.

Love of sleep, when we should be awake and doing."

—Prov. 20:13

Oppressing the poor and giving to the rich—Prov. 22:16.

Drunkenness, drowsiness and gluttony—Prov. 23:21.

Following after vain persons (or pursuits)—Prov. 28:19.

Hastening to be rich—Prov. 28:22.

* * * *

It is vain to stand up and plead innocence before Him Whose omniscient eye can see the blackest flesh under the whitest feathers; and the foulest heart under the fairest act.

NOTABLE CHARACTERS IN HOLY WRIT JEREMIAH, THE WEeping PROPHEt

G. G. Johnston

In all ages of man's history, God has called and sent forth men specially fitted by Him to act as His witnesses. Some of these periods were exceedingly dark and difficult: none more so, perhaps, than the last days of Judah's existence as a nation, before almost all were carried into captivity in Babylon.

It would seem that Jeremiah was a comparatively young man when he made his first appearance as a prophet to Judah in the thirteenth year of the reign of good Josiah. God had graciously given a time of blessed revival under this king; nevertheless, because of the bloody and wicked deeds of Manasseh, who before him had filled Jerusalem with idols and caused its streets to run with innocent blood, God refused to spare the nation. They must go into captivity to learn in Babylon the hatefulness of the sin of idolatry. When, after seventy years of bitter captivity a remnant came up from Babylon, they had been so cured of that sin that, however great their other sins may be, they cannot be accused, until the present day, of being an idolatrous people.

In the first chapter of his prophecy, we learn something of how God prepared His servant for so weighty a task as that of reproofing a perverse, headstrong nation. When God revealed His purpose to Jeremiah, saying: "I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations," we hear the answer: "Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child." The grace to be little in one's own eyes is surely an essential fitness for God's service, and a haughty spirit ill becomes any who profess to serve our Lord Jesus.

Twice in this chapter the Lord exhorted Jeremiah not to be afraid of their faces, because He was with him. "The fear of man bringeth a snare," (Proverbs 29:25), and many of us have been caught in it, when, because of timidity we have failed to witness for our Lord before the ungodly, or held back the faithful word of warning, or of counsel, lest we should offend. This should not be interpreted to mean that any lack of subjection or respect to parents, to older persons, to constituted authority, or to others who merit our respect, should be counted a virtue. The Word of God most emphatically enjoins such respect, but that fear of the face of man, whoever he be, that makes us refrain from doing, or saying, what we know God would have us do, or say, is to be deplored. Nor should it be considered a virtue to speak out because we feel annoyed and have a desire to give

vent to those feelings. That is usually an evidence of the lack of self-control, which the grace of God would teach us to exercise.

Possibly the best cure for the slavish fear of man is to learn a deep measure of the fear of God. This is not that sort of fear which possessed us before we were at peace with God. We were then afraid of God. The fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom (Prov. 9:10) is rather a fear to grieve Him, born of love to Him. How often when the fear of man has taken hold of us, we have felt that we have grieved the Lord, because His Spirit was urging us to do the thing. And when we have sought grace to fulfil our duty, we have also found that the man (or the woman) we feared was, instead, thankful to us.

In spite of the fact that the Lord had promised to be with Jeremiah, and was with him, this did not mean exemption from trial, opposition and even imprisonment. As he foretold faithfully the approaching captivity of Israel, the numbers of his enemies increased and their fury grew apace. His call to the nation to repent of their many sins only resulted in the bitterest hatred, and finally God's faithful prophet was put into a dungeon, and his feet were fastened in cruel stocks.

God can, and does, make use of varied means to accomplish His purposes. When there seemed not to be a man in all Israel who feared the Lord, respected His word or felt for the misery of His faithful prophet, an Ethiopian, Ebed-melech, a servant in the king's court, pled for his life and was allowed by the king to draw him up out of his filthy dungeon. Then he was allowed to remain in the court of the king's house until Jerusalem was taken and the city was broken up.

God's care of His true servant is also seen in the charge given by the king of Babylon concerning him: "Take him, and look well to him, and do him no harm: but do unto him even as he shall say unto thee." (Jer. 39:12). While these words may seem suitable to give to a bride upon her wedding day, they are, properly, a token of God's care of those who serve Him faithfully, not fearing the face of man.

Whatever other good may have been done by Jeremiah's testimony, at least it seems to have resulted in the conversion of the king's colored servant, Ebed, as would seem evident from the latter part of chapter thirty-nine. May we not each ask himself today: "Who has come to know the Lord through my testimony?"

DEVELOPMENTS IN THE BOOK OF THE ACTS INTERNAL TROUBLES

A. McShane

The enemy had now failed in his first three attacks from within. Neither deceit, discontent, nor division had succeeded in harming the Church. We are about to look, however, at a more painful incident — one which we could truthfully call the black spot of the Acts, for the sad story of Paul and Barnabas parting company (ch. 15:36-41) has no parallel throughout its pages.

The church at Antioch had been steadied and established in the truth through the letter from Jerusalem and through the ministry of Paul and Barnabas. This being so, Paul began to consider the needs and dangers of other infant churches, and became exercised about revisiting them. Naturally, he desired his fellow-labourer, Barnabas, to accompany him in these journeys, but at this juncture an unexpected difficulty arose. Barnabas was determined that Mark should be allowed to go with them, and Paul was equally emphatic that he should not. Determination may be an essential quality for success in the service of God, and none will doubt that these two warriors were characterized by it. However, in this case in which two strong wills were opposed and neither would yield, it was a disadvantage rather than a blessing. The contention was sharp and when it ended the two brethren parted company. It is not easy deciding who was the more at fault, but one thing is certain, both could not have been right. The incident is all the more sad because it happened so soon after the singular victory won by these brethren when a more vital cause was at stake, whereas, on this occasion, for either to yield would not have violated any Scriptural principle, nor would it have divided the church at Antioch or the churches about to be visited.

The background of this dispute must also be considered, if we are to view it in its true perspective. In Gal. 2 we learn that Peter had visited Antioch shortly before this, and that during his stay there, Barnabas, through his bad example, had been turned aside. This breakdown of Barnabas must have somewhat humbled him in the eyes of his brethren. Likewise, Paul's stand and boldness in rebuking Peter on that occasion must have been no less exalting to him. It was then we suggest that the first seeds of division between these two brethren were sown. How could Paul yield to Barnabas when he had so recently and so successfully resisted one of the chiefest apostles; and how also could Barnabas bear being let down a second time before the Antioch assembly? Alas, the weed of pride can quickly show its ugly head even in the choicest of saints.

Another feature must be considered in viewing this case. It is that of human relationships — a feature which more than any other perhaps, has influenced the decisions of the Lord's people in matters of this kind. Mark was the nephew of Barnabas. It was therefore natural that they should desire to be yoked together in the work of God. It would appear that Barnabas, having faltered somewhat himself, was now sympathetic toward his failing nephew, and thought that now after he had learned his lesson, he should be given a second chance. On the other hand, Paul had vivid memories of the desertion of their servant, and that at a time when he was sorely needed. How unfair then, Paul probably thought, that one who had found the road too rough and had returned home on that account, should be allowed to travel the same way again, now that it had been smoothed somewhat by the presence of churches. To say the least, such a weakling as Mark would be a poor example to the young converts, some of whom, no doubt, also remembered his defection.

We must not forget, however, that Barnabas was the senior worker. It was he who had introduced Paul, not only to the assemblies, but also to the work. Was it not he too who had first perceived the usefulness of this "chosen vessel"? It was therefore not unfitting that Paul for this time should yield to his more experienced brother notwithstanding the shortcomings of Mark. Would it not have been better to bear with Mark, than to part with Barnabas? Further, if Mark acted as he did on the first journey, a short time would rid them of him; and if not, his services would be most useful. But no such compromise was apparently considered. Instead, the two servants of God who had so loyally laboured together, who had suffered together, who had reported the Lord's doings together, who had prayed and wept, toiled and sweated together, parted company never to be yokefellows in the work of God again. How could they be united in service and divided at heart? What a strange sight and what a poor example for the comparatively young church at Antioch to witness the two missionaries, who under God had made their assembly what it was, go their several ways, one with Mark, the other with Silas! If ever tears were fitting it was then, and if ever two men left an assembly sad and grieved, they were Paul and Barnabas. Was there no one to arbitrate? could no one be found to give timely advice or help to avert the disaster? Apparently not, otherwise the result might have been different. Perhaps Paul has somewhat similar circumstances in mind, when later in his life, he wrote asking his yokefellow to help Euodias and Syntyche to settle their differences (Phil. 4:2-3).

Had Barnabas exercised patience and waited, he would have seen an end to his difficulties with Paul as regards Mark, for confi-

dence was restored in due course. Paul also proved to be no less sensible than his fellow-worker in acknowledging recovery when it took place, although perhaps, on this occasion, he was less quick to detect it. How beautiful are his words to Timothy, "Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry." (2 Tim. 4:11).

It seems to be implied in the closing words of verse 40 ("being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God") that the saints at Antioch, who must have been acquainted with the details of the dispute, were more favourable toward Paul and Silas than they were toward Barnabas and Mark, for of the latter brethren no such phrase appears in verse 39 where we are told of their departure to Cyprus. Throughout the remainder of the Acts Barnabas drops out of the picture, whereas the work of Paul is followed closely to its close. However, too much stress must not be laid on this fact, as the same is also true of Peter and others.

It remains for us now to gather up these weighty lessons that may be learned from this, the saddest of all the troubles in the Acts. The first of these is, that victories are often followed by defeats. The second is, that human relations should not be allowed to influence our judgments. A third is, that when no Scriptural principle is involved or truth at stake, it is often all the more difficult to get brethren to settle their differences. A fourth is, that when two servants of God fall out, fellowship between them is seldom the same again. And a fifth is, that a little patience and yieldingness might avert much that is painful and unseemly. May the Lord write these lessons upon our hearts so that when differences of this nature crop up amongst us — and we all know they constantly do we may have grace to wait upon God and thus overcome all that is of the flesh and self.

He is a rotten professor who says in his heart, "Why may I not be drunk as well as Noah, and commit adultery as well as David?" Did you ever hear of any who put out their eyes, because others were smitten with blindness? Or of any who cut off their legs because others went on crutches. But if you have sinned as David and Noah did, you should mourn as they did. Their acts are not for our imitation, but for our warning. They are not land-marks to direct travellers, but sea-marks to warn mariners. If a man find a piece of gold covered with dust, will he preserve the dirt and throw away the gold?

* * * *

Ignorant worldlings look upon gain as their greatest godliness, and not on godliness as their greatest gain. But a golden plaster is a poor application for a wounded conscience.

THE ASSEMBLY LIFE OF BELIEVERS

Its Privileges and Responsibilities

J. Ritchie

The receiving or welcoming of a believer to the fellowship of saints, although in itself a joyful act, is not to be regarded as a light matter, or hurried through with little thought or care. The following wise and sober words of another regarding it are well worth remembering.

“The receiving of a believer into the fellowship of an assembly, whether it be one newly converted, or one from a sect, is no trivial matter; for first, it affects the whole assembly and therefore ought not to be the act of an individual; secondly, it is not an act that can be done today and cancelled in a week. Once received into fellowship, there is no power to separate such an one until such sin has been committed as warrants their being put away upon Scriptural grounds. Thirdly it carries with it not merely the privilege of breaking bread, but all the privileges connected with “the coming in and going out” (Acts 9:28) among the believers. If this were understood, brethren would no longer take upon themselves the responsibility as individuals of bringing others to the breaking of bread; on the contrary they would gladly seek the help of those who care for the flock, so that each believer might be introduced in a godly and Scriptural way and at once be received with confidence by the whole assembly.” (J. B. C.)

In the case of one newly converted, nothing beyond clear evidence of conversion with a desire to learn and do the will of the Lord would be required to ensure his hearty reception. In days of much empty profession, time for godly discernment and care may be necessary, or if personally unknown, the testimony of one like Barnabas, in whom the Lord's people have confidence. He was able to testify how Paul had (1) “seen the Lord in the way”, and (2) “preached boldly at Damascus in the Name of Jesus” (Acts 9:26-28) — in other words, of his conversion and his practice. The evangelist — naturally a sanguine man in estimating the reality of those who profess to be converted under his ministry — ought not to hasten the reception of his converts. He should leave this to others having fuller opportunity of knowing their ways, and less likely to be partial, while on the other hand they ought not to be oversuspicious or dilatory and so leave the young believer to be picked up by, or drift into, one of the world's religious denominations. When one is received, he should then be lovingly cared for “taught the way of God more perfectly” (Acts 18:26). There is ample scope for such Priscilla and Aquila service amongst young believers, and evidently fewer to share it as the years go by.

With one who has been in a sect, greater care is needed, First, regarding his conversion. Many who have not been born of God, are in full membership of "the churches", and while a profession of being converted may be required in others, the standard is generally low, that any who can give a clear statement of evangelical doctrine may pass, without much difficulty. Then, as most of the denominations now regard fundamental error with complacency and permit it to be taught in their pulpits, it may be necessary to inquire whether the applicant is personally sound in the faith, otherwise he may bring in such error as will corrupt and mislead others. As there must be some cause why he is leaving the denomination of his choice, it is only reasonable that he should be asked what this is, otherwise you may give refuge to one who is a troubler, or has had a quarrel, or cannot get his way, or may be fleeing from such discipline as exists in the place where he has been. All this may require time, which no right-minded person will grudge. It leaves room for God to manifest what may not be apparent at first sight, and to give others the opportunity of satisfying themselves that the applicant is a true believer and desires to walk according to the Word. All this is rudely set aside by those who claim and use the liberty of bringing in their personal friends, or any whom they think fit, frequently with only a very casual acquaintance of their faith or practice, and without the least consideration of the convictions of others. The result is that in many companies where such practices have become the rule, they do not know "the number of the names together" (Acts 1:15). They do not make any attempt to exercise that godly care and rule enjoined in such Scriptures as 1 Thess. 5:12-14; 1 Pet. 5:2, or to exercise such discipline on those who require it as is commanded in 1 Cor. 5.

Whatever time may be necessary to give a hearty welcome to one seeking to "join himself to" (Act 9:26) a company of believers, such delay is not rejection. It does not warrant the oft-used but utterly inapplicable term of "exclusion". It is not a "barrier to fellowship", for as may be easily ascertained by any who have the wish to do so, it is in assemblies where such care is exercised, that the larger number of believers are to be found "continuing steadfastly" in the ways of the Lord. Where the practice prevails of any who take the Christian name coming casually to "break bread" and then disappearing nobody knows where, or has the least interest to inquire, this is not Scriptural Assembly fellowship. However attractive to some the theory may be that there is no assembly responsibility other than that which belongs to all who are born again, there is not even one of its most ardent advocates but has to recognize and act in the most practical way on the truth of "assembly fellowship", in simple, mundane things. For example, when money is required to pay the hall rent and

to meet the current expenses for which they are mutually responsible, do they then appeal to the "church universal", or to "all believers who form the church, in that place, but do not all come," to meet their liabilities? No chain is stronger than its weakest link, and here manifestly the "church universal", theory — which is the only aspect of the church some see, or will allow others to own — fails, for a church that never assembles cannot be held liable in local affairs, nor would any ordinary house owner accept it as a tenant, to be held liable for his yearly rent.

IMPRACTICAL AND SENTIMENTAL TEACHING

Young Christians are in danger of being spoiled by the *sentimental*. There is a teaching abroad which is nauseous in the extreme. Women, as being more susceptible of tender feeling, and young converts, who are mainly characterized by the emotional, are chiefly the victims of the sentimental and impractical teaching referred to. It is pleasant to recline comfortably in a drawing room and be conducted through Solomon's gardens and vineyards by a highly imaginative mind — one who can interpret the meaning of every fruit and flower and perfume. One feels so good for the moment — so self satisfied! Honey and wine are flowing in every direction! There is precious teaching in the Song of Solomon as in all other parts of the Sacred Volume. But teaching with fibre and muscle is needed. Teaching with backbone in it. Life is earnest and real. We need strength for weakness, and power to battle with daily difficulty. We fear the kind of teaching which leads to indolence and enervates the spiritual powers.

Two Christians who were invited to help in Gospel work one Lord's day evening, declined on the plea that they had holier and higher occupation. How hateful this assumed spirituality must be to the blessed Master, while He sees thousands of the lost sinking into Hell every hour. The believer is both a priest and a servant. He worships *within* and serves *without*. A vigorous and healthy type of Christianity, as exhibited in Peter, Paul and John, cannot be produced by the mawkish and impractical kind of teaching which leaves you full of feeling, but selfish and strengthless. Take heed — one and all — *how* and *what* you hear.

* * * *

If the second birth has no place IN you, the second death will assuredly have power OVER you.

ANSWER HIM NOT

Wm. Williams

"But they held their peace, and answered him not a word: for the king's commandment was, saying, Answer him not," (Isa. 36:21). This was very good advice which Hezekiah gave to his people when Rabshakeh ridiculed and blasphemed the living God. What a blessing it would be to all of us if we could remember the little word; "Answer him not." The flesh can always retort, answer, speak back, but it takes grace to keep quiet and refuse to answer. How different it would have been with Eve, if she had heeded the injunction, "Answer him not." Never discuss with the devil. Let him have the "sword of the Spirit" — "it is written" and just rest there.

How much better it would have been for David when they told him Nabal's words, to "answer him not". But David said to his men, "Gird ye on every man his sword" (1 Sam. 25:13). David could leave his life and cares with the Lord and He delivered him from Saul; but he could not trust the Lord to avenge him of a Nabal, a fool. He would fight the churl with the carnal sword. Here is where we too fail. We hear something detrimental to our character and testimony, something which some brother or sister has said. We wish to gird on the sword and clear ourselves. Augustine used to say, "Lord save us from the vice of self justification!"

It had been good for Moses to have listened to this word when the people said, "Is it a small thing that thou hast brought us up out of a land that floweth with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness, except thou make thyself altogether a prince over us?" (Num. 16:13). Moses was very wroth, and with a good reason, but even so "the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God". He was provoked and lost his temper and spoke unadvisedly with his lips. He was the meekest man in all the earth. But he broke down on his strong point, "Answer him not".

Paul stands before Ananias to be judged. He was innocent and when the Jewish dignitary told those who stood by to smite him on the mouth, he simply could not stand it. He let go. "God shall smite thee thou whitened wall." (Acts 23:3). But he was wrong. He had to take it back. He retracted. How much better to have obeyed the inner voice, "Answer him not."

"And he went into the judgment hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But *Jesus gave him no answer.*" (John 19:9). Here the Lord fulfilled Isa. 52:7, "He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth . . . So he openeth not his mouth." Here the Lord's silence speaks volumes. His silence is better than "words of gold in pictures of silver". In the unguarded moment may the Spirit of God bring to our mind, "Answer him not".

THE PLACE OF SINGING IN THE PURPOSE OF GOD

Harold S. Paisley, North Ireland

Singing has a remarkable place in the will of God in all ages, past, present and also in the future. There is a world of song around us but Divinely inspired songs were sung before the world began and will be continued when all of earth is past.

The World's Songs

These are described in Psalm 69:12 as the song of the drunkard and in Ecc. 7:5 the song of fools. In our unsaved days such songs were often on our lips but now redeemed by precious blood, sweeter words engage our tongues, for He hath put a New Song in our mouth even praise unto our God. Unlike the passing songs of earth which are new today and forgotten tomorrow this song is old, yet ever new. Thus the songs of the world hold no further appeal to us who have learned Redemption.

God Given Songs

These are described in Psalm 137:3 as the songs of Zion and in Eph. 5:19 as Spiritual Songs. Our thoughts in this paper are confined to these and as can be seen they cover a wide range of truth and embrace many subjects.

Early Songs

In Job 38:7 the Holy Spirit records singing in an undateable period "When the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy." The first mention of singing in the Bible is in Gen. 31:27 being the words of Laban to Jacob, however the first recorded song for our meditation is in Ex. 15. What an echo of praise ascended on the banks of the Red Sea, when Moses and Israel sang unto the Lord who triumphed gloriously. It is significant to mark that the last song recorded in the Bible embraces this first song and links with it the Song of the Lamb as overcomers stand upon the Sea of Glass having the harps of God (Rev. 15:3).

Many other early songs are worthy of mention. There is the remarkable song of Deborah and Barak in Jud. 5, full of touching eloquence and giving praise to God for the deliverance but also revealing the carelessness of some in the day of need, and giving commendation to others who jeopardized their lives in the high places of the field. In Ezra 3:11 there is singing at the laying of the foundations of the Temple while in the hour of the slaughter of Goliath of

Gath women sang in honour of the Victor. All these are full of instruction to the Lord's people. Men of God sang in O.T. times; David, the man, after God's own heart, was the sweet psalmist of Israel, and Solomon's songs were 1,005 while Job caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.

Singing in New Testament Times

When the Lord's Supper was instituted by the Lord Jesus in the night of His betrayal "they sung a hymn and went out". It is wonderful to consider that He Himself sang in that hour when the darkness of Calvary was so near. His voice soon to be heard crying "Eloi Eloi Sabacthani" was lifted up in song: truly a song that many waters could not quench. The same One who sang then (Matt. 26:30) sings now as Leader of the praise in which we His brethren join (Heb. 2:12).

Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises unto God in the jail at Philippi, and those God given songs in the night (Job 35:10) were followed by wonderful results in the conversion of the keeper of the prison and all his house.

Singing in Assembly Testimony

In Eph. 5:19 and Col. 3:16 assemblies are exhorted to the use of "psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in our hearts unto the Lord, as filled by the Spirit and the Word of Christ dwelling in us richly.

Some of the popular hymns being sung today alas are far from the Word of Christ and the unscriptural language used and the doctrines suggested are not suitable for assembly use. There are many others which are old but ever new and will live forever in our hearts. Some of the Psalms can be used even today, while many of them are for another dispensation. Psa. 23 and Psa. 40 have been sung all down the age and are rightly included in our hymnbooks.

Hymns are meditative in character and are specially in use when gathered to remember the Lord, thus leading out our hearts in worship and in adoration. Exercise is needed that appropriate songs may be given out on such precious occasions.

Spiritual Songs seem to strike a triumphant note and would include songs of the Gospel used at home, or in the open-air witness, or in indoor efforts in the Gospel. God has blessed many of these good old gospel songs and it cannot be said that the increasing number of new ones are as exalting to the Person of Christ or as plain in their words of truth and soberness.

One other thing might be pointed out and that is that in vain can any precept or example be found for the modern solo singing in connection with any N.T. Assembly.

Future Songs

Restored Israel will sing as a nation when the Redeemed of the Lord will return to Zion with singing (Isa. 51:11).

Also before the Lamb in yonder regions of joy with scenes of sadness all behind, singing will have an eternal place:

“And they sung the new song saying, ‘Thou art worthy’” (Rev. 5:9). Until we join in that everlasting song may the words of the late Thomas Kelly be true of all His Own,

“Our song then forever should be
Of the Shepherd who gave Himself thus
No subjects so glorious as He
No theme so affecting to us.

“We’ll sing of such subjects alone
None other our tongues shall employ
Till fully His love becomes known
In yonder bright regions of joy.

ONE THING

One thing lacking.—Conversion (Mark 10:21).

One thing I know. Assurance (John 9:25).

One thing needful. The listening ear (Luke 10:42).

One thing I do. Progress (Phil. 3:13).

One thing have I desired. Communion (Psalm 27:4).

One thing of which we should not be ignorant. The Lord’s return (2 Peter 3:8).

Not one thing hath failed. God’s promises (Josh. 23:14).

If God’s to-day be too soon for thy repentance, thy tomorrow may be too late for His acceptance. Mercy’s clock does not always strike at our back.

A covetous man is fretful because he has not as much as he desires, but a gracious man is thankful because he has more than he deserves.

HANDICAPS IN CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

Mervyn Paul

The suggestion that the home-life of young married couples can provide a feeding-place for "little foxes" (S. of S. 2:15) may startle some of my young friends . . . a queer subject to bring up when all is love and happiness! Moreover, as you read on, likely you will think I have picked on some strange examples. So let me hasten to explain that *accumulating evidences of damage* in this basic sphere of Christian walk and testimony are the reason for what follows. Almost surely you will not have heard such matters discussed in ministry to the Lord's people. But read about them; then judge for yourself whether or not fruit-bearing in the home (with its attendant influence in the Assembly) could be injured by them — or by others like them . . . For who knows but that our powerlessness in testimony may have its origins in our home-life?

—"Well, I guess I am of the romantic type. I just love romance! Without it life wouldn't be worth living. And since we've been married it has just been wonderful" . . . "Romantic type": well now, if that is true, what a pity! Of course I know that many go through a romantic stage in early adult life — something like the period when little ones reach up to grasp the moon. Until recently I should not have thought it profitable even to mention such a subject. But lately I have been forced to recognize that **ROMANTICS CAN BE A BASIS FOR FOLLY**, since it may mar a home-life by taking over the position of first place that belongs only to the Lord. Especially is this possible when young people consider it a virtue to be thus minded. Having first developed their taste for this form of emotionalism by reading stories of that type, coupled with a string of false ideas of love and marriage based on fiction, they go on to dream dreams about their "ideal", and so to give *the purposes of God for their lives* such a wholly minor place in their reckonings . . . well, to say it in their own language, all He is asked to do **IS TO GIVE THEM WHAT THEY WANT!!!** Think of the new homes that are being set up right now based on the plea, "Oh make our dreams come true"! And how it challenges the mind to try to conceive what Spiritual power and blessing might ensue were we to be founding all this new homelife on the Garden prayer, instead — "Not my will, but Thine, be done."

Of course I may not write of confidential matters. But I can tell you of a certain Christian couple, newly married, highly intelligent, but with their Christian testimony blighted by romantic notions. Of course they have each other, and their ideals — and an old car. Otherwise, as twice-born ones, they are "magnificently unprepared for

the long littleness of Life." Beyond doubt they have made a bold bid for instruction in God's School, where one of their earliest lessons will be that life-as-it-must-be-lived bears little resemblance to life-as-we-imagined-it-would-be. Their home-life has gotten off to a poor start since their romanticism has earned them a poor testimony. It seems as if it might be many years before there is a full-recovery — if the Lord be not come.

Another serious handicap to us — single or married — is to be "ego-centric". This somewhat uncommon term just means to live a life that centres around myself, my interests, my advantage — making me self-centred, self-ish. One unhappy feature of this defect (that *speaks so loudly* to the unsaved!) is that the victim may not know he has it. If he shares his possessions, it is with an inward pang. With reference to OTHERS, the attitude generally is an expectation that THEY should consider MY happiness, do things for ME. Difficulties and sorrows of OTHERS receive scant sympathy, because such things disturb ME. Little effort is expended to help OTHERS, for all my time and energies are needed to attend to the wants and wishes of ME . . . Anyway, what is there in it for ME? . . . How utterly contrary such attitudes are to the examples given in Matt. 20:28 and 1 Cor. 9:19, as well as Phil. 1:20-21! How these verses shame us!

In married life the self-centered young husband is forever making demands on his wife — demands that may be unreasonable, hard to satisfy, and that may end in friction, or open quarrelling. Occasionally, a man who develops a feeling of inferiority in the world of men will compensate his loss of self-importance by assuming an exaggerated role as head of the house . . . the ego-centric wife (bolstered by a set of personal standards re what she is going to have, and what she won't stand for) demands attention to, and full husband-willingness to carry out, her decisions. How could the Lordship of Christ be operative under home conditions like these? If a partner gives in to the dominant one, the meekness shown is likely to be regarded as deplorable weakness. Thus the "boss" of the house adds a tinge of contempt to his, her, other sins. Any hope that a family may be raised to the glory of God under such circumstances will be rather slim. Nevertheless, if an unduly subjected wife can learn to pray down grace from heaven (Heb. 4:16) to enable her to keep on bearing with the unbearable (Heb. 11:27b; 12:2) her gracious example may make it possible for her children to be raised for the Lord. And for every effort made to act thus, for His sake, doubtless she will receive a worthy reward in a coming day. May the Lord dry the tears, and encourage the hearts, of any such sister. However, I note these things only to help us *to learn to recognize self-centredness in ourselves*, rather

than to enable us to see it in other people: 1 Cor. 11:31; Matt. 7:3.

A determination TO HAVE THINGS NOW is a most dangerous spiritual handicap in the lives of some young couples . . . made possible by a careless disregard of the Lord's mind and the modern down-payment system — and snare. To buy an article on the instalment plan, *and to leave it in the store until it is paid for*, may be commendable. But all the arguments in the world that "everybody does it" will not settle accounts with the Lord for filling one's home with un-paid-for furnishings, for plunging far ahead of His leading (Psa. 106:13b) as well as piling up debt: Rom. 13:8. More often than not *the desire to have more* (covetousness: Luke 12:15) is the lure that leads us into this trap.

Finally, let me say that one more hindrance to home felicity and spiritual tone is the all too common error of one partner setting out to re-model the other. Any number of women, when they marry, have an "ideal" back in their minds to which they expect to conform their husbands! True it is that adjustment to each other is a necessity. *But some Christian marriages are entering upon dark days*, because flesh ranged against flesh means conflict. Beware, my sisters! There is no counsel in the Word to support such schemes. Instead, we have the divine instructions of Eph. 5:21-33; Col. 3:17-18; etc.

Now as I have said, an accumulation of actual damage-evidences is responsible for these remarks. They are submitted to our readers in the hope that some may hear therein the instructing voice of the Good Shepherd — and hearing, may be helped to glorify still further the Lord Who bought them: Prov. 22:3.

Riches have made many good men worse, but they never made any bad man better.

* * * *

If a sinner dies soon, it does but haste his torment; and if he lives long, it does but heighten his torment. The longer God is in raising His hand, the heavier will be the blow when it falls.

* * * *

Sinners do not perish because of their disease, but because of their physician. Disregarding the Great Physician they think to cure themselves and this leaves them incurable. Good works are so indigent, that no man can be saved by them; and yet so excellent, that no man can go to Heaven without them.

NOTES ON SCRIPTURAL HYMNS AND THEIR WRITERS

Hector Alves

“Rise, my soul! thy God directs thee;
Stranger hands no more impede;
Pass thou on; His hand protects thee,
Strength that has the captive freed.”

Brief reference has already been made in these pages to John Nelson Darby, but we here add a few more “notes” regarding this remarkable man. “J. N. D.” is better known as a writer of books, and by his translation of the Holy Scriptures, than as a hymn writer. Although his hymns are few, they are of a superior quality.

As a young man, Mr. Darby was admitted to the Irish Bar, and it was his father’s intention that he continue in that profession. However, there was a deep work wrought in his soul by the Holy Spirit, and he turned to give his life to the ministry of the Word and the service of the Lord. At the age of twenty-six Mr. Darby was ordained as an Anglican clergyman, and was appointed to the parish of Wicklaw, Ireland. He became distinguished for his self-denying and untiring devotion to pastoral work among the Irish poor. He lived himself in a peasant’s cottage on the bog.

God had a greater and more difficult work for His devoted servant to perform. A fall from his horse laid him aside for more than three months, and during that time, through careful study of the Holy Scriptures, some hitherto unseen truths were revealed to his soul. Among these were —

- (1) The perfect acceptance of the believer in Christ before God.
- (2) Not churches, but the one church as the body of Christ.
- (3) The Holy Spirit now dwelling in the church, and uniting it to Christ in glory.
- (4) The return of the Lord to take His people to be with Himself in glory.

This marked a new epoch in the life of J. N. Darby, and it characterized all of his ministry from that time forward. Through the providence of God he became intimately acquainted with some well known and able brethren; among them were J. G. Bellett, Lord Congleton, Edward Cronin, and others. These men had left the denominations, and already had begun to gather together in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ alone. With these Mr. Darby soon cast in his lot, and became the source of strength and encouragement to the little companies which at that time were beginning to gather together in various parts of Britain.

Mr. Darby's vigorous activity, and forceful exposition of the truths he had learned brought him in contact, and often into conflict, with leading men in many places. At Oxford he opposed the skeptical Francis William Newman, and John Henry Newman who afterwards turned to Romanism. There he also was in contact with W. E. Gladstone who later became Premier of Britain. Mr. Gladstone was too much influenced by J. H. Newman to follow the teaching of Mr. Darby. At that time the acquaintance of G. V. Wigram was made, and resulted in close association and fellowship. Space does not permit to give account of the labours of this ardent exponent of the Word. His labours took him to France, Switzerland, and Germany, where many assemblies were formed, and good-sized companies gathered unto the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. With the help of learned men, translations of the Scriptures were made from the Hebrew and Greek, into French, German, and English; the latter being accounted one of the most accurate translations into our language.

The above hymn, amongst Mr. Darby's earliest, was written while meditating upon the wilderness experience of the Christian. In 1845, he wrote —

"O Lord, Thy love's unbounded!
So sweet, so full, so free!
My soul is all transported,
Whene'er I think on Thee."

Perhaps the best known, and the most popular of Darby's hymns is —

"This world is a wilderness wide," etc.

Conflicting stories are told regarding the circumstances which led to the writing of this remarkable hymn. One is, that it was written while resting by the wayside, after a long and tiring walk on one occasion in the West Indies. Another is, that it was written during a period of despondency, after having been refused by Lady Powerscourt, his proposal of marriage. She declined, as she felt that such a step might be a hindrance to his good work for the Lord. Perhaps the true account of the writing of this hymn is that it was composed while the writer was sitting looking over the beautiful Lake Killarney, one of the magnificent scenes of nature; and so Darby wrote —

"This world is a wilderness wide,
I have nothing to seek or to choose;
I've no thought in the waste to abide;
I have nought to regret nor to lose."

In 1881 Darby wrote his hymn, "And shall we see Thy face?" and the next year, April 29th, he was taken to see the face of the One whom he had served so faithfully.

NEWFOUNDLAND—Herb Harris has been able to secure a motor-boat suitable for working the coasts of Newfoundland and Labrador where there are hundreds of fishing villages. Most of these can only be reached by water. He expects, along with George Campbell, Bert Joyce, and likely other brethren, to visit these villages with Gospel tracts and open air work, following up contacts where there is encouragement. Pray for this pioneer effort.

AUGUSTA, MAINE.—An excellent conference was reported. After the conference, brother Jas. McCullough left for Madison, Maine, and, while there, suffered a heart attack and is now in the hospital in Skowhegan, Maine, where he will be for at least two weeks, with a period of rest following. Pray for our brother who for many years has faithfully preached the Word to saint and sinner. He had intended joining his son in tent work in Hudson, N.H., a new field.

EAST BOSTON, MASS.—A one day meeting was held with good ministry by bren. Pizzulli and Rosania along with local brethren. Pray for our brother, J. F. Pearson, who is slowly recovering from a recent illness.

GARNAVILLO, IOWA.—L. E. McBain and Harry McCready had six and a half weeks of Gospel meetings and a number professed to be saved. Brother McBain hopes to give help in tent work with Norman Crawford and J. Lipke who are pitching twelve miles east of Fremont, Ohio.

FRESNO, CAL.—Hector Alves had about two weeks meetings, ministering the Word to the Lord's people. He is now preaching the Word in Long Beach.

McKEESPORT, PA.—George Graham had two weeks' ministry on the Philippians which were enjoyed. Frank Carboni is expected in July.

CHILI, S. AMERICA

Wm. McBride has secured a hall in Curico where they had the tent a year ago and is starting meetings.

R. Hannah has a Gospel meeting each Lord's Day in his own house and also visits Lota, twenty-five miles from Concepcion with the Gospel message.

CUBA

David Adams had 14 weeks in a portable hall in a new district of Pinar del Rio and has seen the Hand of the Lord in a number professing to be saved. Pray for the press work which brother Adams has resumed in the absence of E. Doherty. It is planned to print over one million tracts this year which will be distributed throughout Cuba, South America and even among Spanish speaking people in U.S.A. Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Reid arrived from Vancouver in May and are now in Pinar studying the language.

Vernon Markle writes from Holguin, Cuba: "Next Lord's Day, God willing, we are to have a small conference because of a baptism. We expect to baptize about ten, among them our own two eldest. Most of these have been saved over two years. We have been having Bible readings with them ever since and they have gone on well. Their baptism has been delayed chiefly because of their own extreme shyness."

CHANGES OF ADDRESS

CHICO, CAL.—The assembly which formerly met at 118 W. 12th St., has now moved into the new Gospel Hall at 2045 Magnolia Ave.

The address of Andrew J. Cotton, correspondent for the 85th St. Assembly, Chicago, has been changed and is now, 8616 Wolcott Ave., Chicago 20, Ill.

CONFERENCES

ORILLIA, ONT.—The conference will be held, D.V., with a prayer meeting Sept. 1 at 7.30 p.m., Sept. 2 at 10.30 p.m. and 7 p.m. Sept 3 at 10 a.m., 2.30 and 7 p.m. Servants of the Lord walking in the right ways of the Lord are welcome. Cecil R. Clark, R.R. 4, Orillia, Ont.

OSHAWA, ONT.—There will be no conference in Oshawa this year on account of the building of an extension of the Gospel Hall. It is expected when the building is completed to have a day of special meetings.

CLEVELAND, OHIO.—As mentioned in our last issue, there will be no conference this year as the assembly is meeting for the time being in temporary quarters.

HUNTSVILLE, ONT.—Conference, D.V., Sept. 8, 9, 10, with a prayer meeting on the 7th at 7.30, 8th and 9th at 10 a.m., and 2.30 and 7.30 p.m. 10th at 10 a.m. 2.30 and 7 p.m. The Lord's servants teaching and practising the old paths welcome. Corr. Geo. Cottrill, R.R. 2, Huntsville, Ont.

ARLINGTON, WASH.—The usual conference will be held here (D.V.) Sept. 1st, 2nd and 3rd with the usual arrangements. The Lord's servants teaching, and walking in, the old paths will be welcome. A. Colburn.

LA CROSSE, WIS.—Our annual conference will be held, D.V., Sept. 1 and 2 with a prayer meeting Aug. 31. Corr. L. Uglum, 316 S. Sixth St., La Crosse, Wis.

HITESVILLE, IA.—The Annual Conference will be held, D.V., Sept. 15 and 16 with a prayer meeting Sept. 14 at 8 p.m. Corr. Geo. L. Frey, Aplington, Ia.

SAULT STE. MARIE—The joint annual conference of the two Soo's will be held, D.V., in the Technical School, Soo, Ont., as follows: Sept. 1st, 2nd, and 3rd, Saturday: Praise and Ministry of the Word, 2.30 and 7.30 p.m.; Lord's Day: Remembering the Lord, 10.30 a.m.; Sunday School, 1.30 p.m.; Ministry of the Word, 2.30 p.m.; Gospel Meetings, 7.30 p.m.; Monday: Ministry of the Word, 10.30 and 2.30; Gospel Meeting, 7.30. Preceded by Prayer Meeting in the Gospel Hall, Friday evening, Aug. 31st. Visitors will be freely entertained. Corr. R. H. Davis, 652 Bay St., Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario.

WITH CHRIST

STRATFORD, ONT.—Our dear sister, Mrs. J. Wray went home to be with the One Whom she loved, at the age of 71 years. She was saved thirty-four years ago and gathered to the Name of the Lord and was a lover of the Word and truth of God.

LOS ANGELES, CAL.—Our beloved brother, Norman MacLeod went home to be with the Lord on June 11 at the age of 78. He came to these parts from Ontario, Canada, where he was saved over 50 years ago. He has since been identified with those gathered unto His Name in West Jefferson assembly. He was a faithful and consistent brother.

Our beloved brother Herbert W. Cotton, passed into the presence of the Lord on June 28th aged 66. Saved as a young man in Liverpool, England, he was in fellowship in the assembly now at 86th and Bishop Sts. for 44 years. Always active in the assembly he loved the place where His honour dwelleth. The funeral was large and taken by Herbert Dobson assisted by Bren. Bradshaw, Gould and Pollard. Remember his wife who suffered a stroke two years ago and still suffers from it.

TRUTH and TIDINGS

BEHOLD I HAVE SET BEFORE THEE AN OPEN DOOR

THOU
HAST
A
LITTLE
STRENGTH

AND
HAST
KEPT
MY
WORD

AND HAST NOT DENIED
MY NAME

Rev. 3:18

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EDITOR ----- A. W. JOYCE, 26 Munro Blvd., Willowdale, Ont., Canada.
ASSOCIATE EDITORS --- F. G. WATSON, 92 Regal Rd., Toronto, Ont.
G. G. JOHNSTON, 140 Woodycrest Ave., Toronto, Ont.
HECTOR ALVES, 338 W. King Edward Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C.

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NEW ADDRESSES

DETROIT, MICH.—Many of our subscribers also take WORDS IN SEASON. Please note the new address of the Editor to whom all correspondence relative to WORDS IN SEASON should be addressed. William H. Ferguson, R. E. D. 2, Williamston, Mich., U.S.A.

NORTH VANCOUVER, B.C.—After many years as correspondent of the North Vancouver assembly, brother J. W. Dennis has to relinquish this service on account of ill-health. The new correspondent is, Mr. J. H. Turvey, 1131 Cloverly, North Vancouver, B.C.

CHICAGO, ILL.—The new address of brother Herbert Dobson is, 9431 Springfield Ave., Evergreen Park, Ill.

TIDINGS

VANCOUVER, B.C.—The meetings in Woodland Drive Hall by Harold Paisley were well attended with some blessing in the Gospel. He expected to have meetings in South Main, Fairview and Carleton halls, before coming east for Gospel meetings in Pape Avenue, Toronto, in late September.

MERVIN, SASK.—The Mervin-Louisville Conference was a time of blessing and cheer to the saints. The Word was ministered by C. H. Willoughby, F. Hunter, G. G. Johnston, T. Williams and J. H. Gray. Brother Gray remained for a week. One professed. The conference at Taylorside was also good. A. Wilson and J. Ronald are preaching the Gospel at Togo with interest and R. Boyle at Belmont. G. G. Johnston visited Louisville and expected to be at Calgary, Alta., by August 12th. F. Hunter returned to Manchester, Ia., calling at Glen Ewen and Portage.

CALGARY, ALTA.—C. Patrizio had two weeks in Port Arthur, a visit at Winnipeg and then went on to Calgary, intending visiting among the Italians and having meetings in the hall. He purposes, D.V., to hold Italian meetings in Vancouver at 696 Semlin Drive.

HUNTSVILLE, ONT.—Eleven were baptized recently. Besides the regular Gospel meeting here, the brethren carry on weekly Gospel meetings in Bracebridge and Deer Lake.

ARDEN, ONT.—R. Harris and T. Kember pitched a tent two miles west of Harlowe village, commencing on July 8th. Some unsaved are attending, and there is interest in children's meetings.

WELLAND, ONT.—The saints were cheered recently by a week of ministry meetings by A. T. Stewart. Our brother also had helpful meetings in Chatham, Merlin and St. Thomas.

ENGLEHART, ONT.—The interest and attendance in meetings by A. W. Joyce was very encouraging with a full hall nightly and some blessing in the Gospel.

TORONTO, ONT.—In the meetings east of the city where F. Holder and F. Pearcey were preaching there was some encouragement in the

CENTURIONS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT THE CAESAREAN CENTURION

A. W. Joyce

Cornelius, the Caesarean Centurion of the Italian cohort, was a remarkable man who was brought before us at a turning point in the spread of the Gospel. The command had been given to preach the Gospel to the Jew first and then to the Gentile. The keys of the kingdom of God were committed to Peter as recorded in Matt. 16. Peter used the keys to open the door of faith to the Jew, when three thousand souls were saved (Acts 2). In Acts 10, Peter again was the chosen vessel to open the door of faith to the Gentiles.

Previous to the meeting of Peter and Cornelius, it is evident that this Centurion was an earnest, sincere, seeker after God. Verse 2 of Acts 10 describes him as being devout, God-fearing, alms-giving, prayer-saying and as one who was even visited by an angel. It has been pointed out that this was a traditional period, and this is true. But he was not saved, as we learn from Acts 11:14. Hypothetical questions have been raised about his spiritual condition at that time. What if he had died prior to Peter's visit? Such questions lead us into the realm of speculation and are therefore not to edification. We believe that when God is dealing with a person by His Spirit He will not leave him till the work is done, or until that person continues to wilfully resist or neglect the Spirit's striving. "If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the doctrine," said the Lord in John 7:17, R.V.

Peter had to receive a special revelation from God before his Jewish scruples about associating himself with a Gentile (Acts 10:28) were overcome. He wisely took six brethren with him as witnesses. How many difficulties and contentions might be avoided if brethren would always act in fellowship with others, even when they are convinced in their own minds (as Peter was) that they have the guidance of God?

Cornelius and his company were vessels prepared by God to hear and receive His Word. What an influence Cornelius must have had on his kinsfolk and near friends! How open and unprejudiced this company was! see verse 33. The burden of Peter's message was—

1. God is no respecter of persons.
2. Christ died, rose again and appeared unto chosen witnesses.
3. In keeping with all the Old Testament prophets Peter said, "Whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins.

Cornelius and his company believed the message, for the Holy Spirit fell on all them which heard the Word" (Acts 10:44). Peter referred to this in Chapter 11, verses 15-17 as the baptism of the Spirit, similar to what had happened "at the beginning" (Acts 2).

There are some who claim to-day, that, since the baptism in the Spirit is all-important, it does not matter very much whether or not one is baptized in water. In entire contrast to this reasoning, Peter points to the reception of the Spirit as one of the reasons why they *should* be baptized in water (verse 47), "and he commanded them to be baptized in the Name of the Lord."

In Chapter 11, the apostle Peter defended his going to the Gentiles. Now we recognize his wisdom in taking with him the six witnesses in this most important first visit to a Gentile home (verse 12). Thus we see how the movement of the Spirit in turning to the Gentiles, begins with the conversion of a Roman Centurion.

THE OUTSTANDING CENTURION

In Luke, chapter 7, we have the last Centurion under consideration. We are not exaggerating in terming this man the outstanding Centurion of the Bible in every sense for — 1. His outstanding love. How unusual it was for a Roman military leader to love his servant to such an extent as to seek the despised Galilean peasant, (as our Lord was regarded by many), on his servant's behalf.

2. His outstanding testimony. Doubtless there was not another Centurion in all Palestine of whom the elders of the Jews would earnestly say "he was worthy for whom He should do this: for he loveth our nation, and himself built us our synagogue" (Luke 7: 3-5 R.V.). 3. His outstanding humility, The very man of whom others said "he is worthy" said of himself "I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof: wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto Thee." This language is the more wonderful, coming as it did from the lips of a Roman Centurion whose proud Roman race held the Jews in contempt.

4. His outstanding intelligence: 'I *also* am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.' He recognized the power of the Lord over disease and death, yet he seemed also to understand that the Lord was a "man under authority". What a wonderfully clear understanding of the One Who was God and Man in One Person. Truly He was the perfect Servant while here below, doing always those things that pleased the Father.

5. His outstanding Faith. "Say the Word," said the Centurion, "and my servant shall be healed." There seemed to be no trace of doubt in the mind of this Roman that if the Saviour chose to speak the healing word all would be well with his servant. "When Jesus heard these things, He marvelled at him . . . and said unto the people . . . I say unto you, I have not found *so great faith*, no, not in Israel."

What a rebuke this is to our frequent unbelief! What a rebuke also to our insubjection. We profess to be servants of the Lord, yet the unquestioned, instant obedience of which the Centurion spoke is so often lacking in us the people of God. When the Lord says, "COME," do we immediately obey? "COME out from among them, and be ye separate," from every unequal yoke. When we hear His Word, "GO forth unto Him," do we respond and gladly bear reproach for His Name's sake? When He says "DO this, in remembrance of Me," do we gather according to His blessed Word to remember Him in the breaking of bread? Have we heard him say, "COME ye after Me, and I will make you to become fishers of men" (Mark 1:17)? Have we obeyed this call? When the Lord's Word says, "DO all to the glory of God", do we order our lives according to this? When He says, "GO ye unto all the world and preach the gospel" do we obey the command and go with the glorious Gospel message? When the Master calls to discipleship, "COME after Me, take up the cross, follow Me," what is our response? To all of this, do we, like the Centurion, acknowledge the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ in our lives?

A BOOKLET WELL WORTH READING

A booklet has recently been published entitled, "RABBI, WHERE DWELLEST THOU? OR HOW WE FOUND THE NAMELESS PLACE," by Mr. Wm. Williams of Venezuela. This little book of forty pages deals with his conversion, early experiences, mistakes and the ways of God in leading our brother "Outside the camp". It tells of early service for the Lord while learning God's ways in the assembly, and the exercise which led to the field and a lifetime of service in Venezuela.

Written in a very interesting way, this booklet will make a valuable addition to the larger books previously written, "IT CAN BE DONE" and "THE DAWN OF A NEW DAY IN VENEZUELA." To those who have not yet read these books, "RABBI, WHERE DWELLEST THOU?" will make an interesting and profitable introduction to the author and his writings.

Copies may be had, or information regarding prices, etc., from Miss B. Johnston, 215 St. Marie St., Collingwood, Ontario.

Would'st thou do some great thing that man can see? Seek rather to be faithful in the little things that none but God can see; and from the desert the Lord may call thee to be His witness before many — if He sees you have grace to bear it.

NOTABLE CHARACTERS IN HOLY WRIT EZEKIEL, THE REPROVER

G. G. Johnston

As in the case of Isaiah, God gave this man an awe-inspiring vision before sending him to serve as His prophet among the captives of Israel in Babylon. Ready subjection to the will of their Creator, on the part of those beings which he saw, was no doubt an object lesson to Ezekiel. "Whither the spirit was to go they went." They must exercise no will of their own, and no obstacle must hinder their progress. And, though God told Ezekiel before he went (and he soon learned the same by experience) that Israel was a rebellious nation, the Lord prepared and strengthened him to faithfully deliver his message. "All my words that I shall speak unto thee receive in thine heart . . . and speak unto them." (Ch. 3:10, 11).

This is surely a voice today to all those who would desire to be God's messengers. The first essential is that the truth should be received into the heart. It is easy to have only received it into the head. But if it reaches the heart it will affect the ways, and will become a part of the person, so as to govern all his doings.

God's way with sinful man has always been to "kill and make alive, to bring down to the grave, and bring up," (1 Sam. 2:6), and the ministry of Ezekiel was primarily a message of reproof, with a view to Israel's repentance and return to God. They are referred to the grace of God in setting His love upon them at all, knowing how they would turn out, then to His mighty workings in delivering them out of the bondage of Egypt. In the same way, God reminds the Ephesians: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast." (Eph. 2:8, 9). In a similar way he would remind us of His mercy to us in the past, while seeking to reach our consciences today regarding our sin and departure.

In delivering the children of Israel out of Egypt, the Lord called upon everyone to "cast away the abominations (idols) of his eyes" (Ezek. 20:7), but it was soon evident that they had not done this, and that their course from that day had been a downward one, a course of rebellion, until God had them carried away to Babylonian captivity. But, why did God work for them such deliverances throughout the intervening centuries? Why did He show them such patience, knowing, as He did, how they would end? One answer to this is found in chapter twenty. "I wrought for My Name's sake, that it should not be polluted among the heathen, in whose sight I brought them out." God's dealings with rebellious Israel have been an object lesson for all the nations even until the present day.

Man's sin and rebellion have caused all the various periods, or

dispensations, of God's dealings with him to end in failure. Each succeeding epoch has progressed in a steady downgrade. Tested, as he has been, by God in several distinct ways, man has proven himself incapable, in himself, of rising; instead, he has steadily weakened and become more degraded and sinful. Vain boastings are contradicted by stubborn facts, and this downgrade will continue until, with the Man of Sin at their head, men shall defy the armies of God Almighty, only to be swept away by the besom of destruction. But what of the Church? Is not the Christian Church becoming greater and grander than ever, as it advances toward a glorious future? Some think so, as also some think regarding the world with its marvellous discoveries and prosperity. But apostolic prophecies concerning the Church coincide with those relative to Israel, and, as the Church's history is unfolded, the development is manifestly in accord with the prophecies long since announced, concerning the "latter days" of the Church's testimony on earth. Departure, self-will, pride, refusal of sound doctrine, loving to hear smooth things, and many such evidences of a carnal state are predicted.

But, why mention such depressing things? Because, as in Israel, there is a reward today for the faithful remnant. The truly exercised soul will find that there are still those who are anxious to walk with God and to serve Him. There are the young in faith who require instruction, and without making any boast of fidelity to the Lord, let us seek in all humility to go on to please and serve Him.

Perhaps the departure of the glory of the Lord from Israel, as seen in vision by Ezekiel, is the most pathetic part of his inspired prophecy. God's patience is marked by the stages of that departure. First, it rose from the church, upon which it rested, to the threshold of the house. There it paused, while certain things happened which seemed to indicate the reluctance of the Lord to leave them. But now the glory leaves the threshold of the door and stands over the cherubim. These lift up their wings and bear that symbol of the presence of God to rest upon the mountain on the east side of the city, from whence it disappeared altogether. That historic Mount of Olives will once more be lit up with the glory of the Lord when the rejected One returns to set foot upon it at His descent to establish His glorious reign upon earth for one thousand years. Such will be the exhibition of His power then that He will cause the great mountain to part asunder beneath His feet, (Zech. 14:4. The surface of the land will thus be changed, altering the watercourses and bringing fruitfulness to large areas which hitherto had been desert. (Isa. 35:1).

Ezekiel's reproving ministry was aimed at recovery, and God-sent ministry today has for its purpose the recovery of a remnant that shall seek humbly to glorify God in an ever darkening day.

"IF JESUS CAME TO YOUR HOUSE"

- If Jesus came to your house to spend a day or two—
If He came unexpectedly, I wonder what you'd do—?
- Oh! I know you'd give your nicest room to such an honored guest,
And all the food you'd serve Him would be the very best—
- And you would keep assuring Him you're glad to have Him there,
That serving Him in your home is joy beyond compare—
- But when you saw Him coming would you meet Him at the door?
With arms out-stretched in welcome to your Heavenly Visitor—
- Or would you have to change your clothes before you let Him in—
Or hide some magazines and put the Bible where they'd been?
- Would you turn off the radio and hope He hadn't heard —
And wish you hadn't uttered that last, loud nasty word?
- Would you hide your worldly music and put some Hymn books out—
Could you let Jesus right in or would you rush about?
- And I wonder if the Saviour spent a day or two with you —
Would you go right on doing the things you always do?
- Would you go right on saying the things you always say?
Would life for you continue as it does from day to day—
- Would your family conversation keep up its usual pace—
Would you find it hard each meal to say a table grace?
- Would you sing the songs you always sing and read the books you read,
And let Him know on which the things your mind and spirit feed—
- Would you take Jesus everywhere you planned to go—
Or would you maybe change your plans for just a day or so?
- Would you be glad to have Him meet your closest friends,
Or would you hope they'd stay away until His visit ends?
- Would you be glad to have Him stay forever on and on—
Or would you sigh with great relief when He at last was gone?
- It might be interesting to know the things that you would do—
If Jesus came in person to spend some time with you.

CROSS BEARING

Hector Alves

The subject of cross bearing is one that seems to be little understood by many. The writer, like many others, used to think that the cross which the believer is called upon to bear, or to take up, is the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Reading the Revised Version of Luke 14, verse 27, makes it clear that is not so, "Whosoever doth not bear his OWN cross, and come after Me, cannot be my disciple." Concerning the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, we sing, "He bore it all alone." That was His cross, and His alone; the Christian has "his own cross" to bear.

Then again, some have the idea that life's inconveniences, annoyances, and disappointments, are the crosses they are called upon to bear. I shall recall once in a Christian's home, the subject of cross bearing came up. A number of young people were present, and we were having a profitable discussion, with the Word of God in our hands. I asked one young sister in the Lord, the question, "What is the cross you are called upon to take up?" Her immediate reply was, "My cross is my bad temper." Ah no; the Christian's cross is neither a bad temper, nor sickness, nor headache, nor toothache. The unsaved are all more or less afflicted with these things, and often bear them with far more patience and contentment than do the children of God.

CROSS BEARING IS A VOLUNTARY THING

The Christian may or may not take up his or her cross, just as he or she pleases. It can be avoided, it can be declined or refused, it can be gradually let go. Sickness, disaster, or calamity of any kind, often have to be borne, whether we like it or not. These do not come of our own free will. The Christian's cross is a voluntary thing. In Luke 9:23 we read, "If an man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me." Notice the words "if", and "let", and "take up." He may choose to avoid his cross; he need not take it up against his will. Some say, "This is my cross, and I have to bear it." That is not so. But when we get to the place where we see it is what God would have us to do, then we voluntarily take up the cross, or better, our cross.

CROSS BEARING IS IN THE PATH OF OBEDIENCE

The true disciple takes up the cross; the backslider in heart and ways takes up no cross. There is a price to pay; cross bearing costs something. The bearer of his own cross will find a weight on his shoulders. The child of God finds his cross only in one path, that is the

path of obedience to the Word of God, the path of separation. When he chooses to walk in any other path, he will find no cross to take up. The path along which the cross is borne is not found in Prov. 16:25—“There is a way that seemeth right unto a man.” No cross bearers are found on that road. But to the one who says, “Lord, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest,” (Luke 9:57) there will be crosses, and perhaps not a few. But, while the path of obedience is a path of cross bearing, it is also a path of fellowship with God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. The Scottish hymn writer has well penned the words —

“Ye’ll niver hae a cross tae bear,
But He’ll tak the heavy end.”

And more; “Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”

CROSS BEARING IS A DAILY EXPERIENCE

“If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.” (Luke 9:23). We will never get beyond cross bearing as long as we are in the body. The veteran of half a century or more in Christ, takes up his own cross, as does the babe of a few weeks in the faith. We hear of “the victorious life”, and “full surrender”, and “over Jordan”, etc. Whatever these experiences may mean, there is no getting beyond cross bearing. If one is to be found in that path “which no fowl knoweth”, the path of obedience to the Word of God, the path that is well pleasing to our Lord Jesus Christ, then there must be the ‘taking up his cross daily’. The apostle Paul said, “I die daily,” that is, he took up his cross every day, and to the end of the journey. The expression, “I die daily”, brings us to our last point —

CROSS BEARING SPELLS DEATH

Cross bearing in the New Testament is connected with death. Our Lord “became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” (Phil. 2:8). That was His cross. Our cross perhaps spelled death to tobacco, to the theatre, to the card game, to the unequal yoke; to many habits and indulgences which were pleasing to the flesh, but displeasing to the Lord. “Why call ye Me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?”

Let us take up our cross daily, and follow Him.

A bad cause is not bettered by fleshly argument; and a good cause needs no such help.

FRIENDSHIPS

Harold Paisley

Friendship is a necessary element for a happy existence here. The Lord God said at the beginning "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him" (Gn. 2:18). Worldly friendships which were enjoyed before conversion to God can no longer be continued in by the exercised soul. The Word of God read and meditated upon day and night will separate from the counsel of the ungodly, the way of sinners, and the seat of the scornful (Psalm 1:1-2). The question arising in the heart of the newborn soul will be "with whom can I be friendly?" Friendship formed in the Christian pathway will be for Spiritual profit or spiritual loss, therefore great care should be exercised in the choice of friends. The Word of God gives clear directions concerning some with whom no friendship should be made. "Make no friendship with an angry man, and with a furious man thou shalt not go, lest thou learn his ways and get a snare to thy soul" (Prov. 22:24, 25). "A companion of fools shall suffer evil" (Prov. 13:20). The influences of wrong companions are clearly outlined in these verses. In contrast, how precious it is to be "a companion of all them that fear Thee, and of them that keep Thy precepts" (Psalm 119:63, for he that walketh with wise men shall be influenced to wisdom, see Prov. 13:20).

In the following Scriptures it is profitable to mark a number of friendships.

The Sinners' Friend . . . Luke 7:34

The Lord Jesus Christ is truly "a friend of publicans and sinners," What a wonderful phrase! "A friend loveth at all times" (Prov. 17:17). Under all conditions and circumstances His love to sinners was displayed. His friendship caused Him to shed His precious Blood, He became friendless (Psa. 88:18) on the Cross that we might have a Friend closer than all others (Prov. 18:24). It is well to be able to say of the 'Sinners Friend' "He is altogether lovely. This is my Beloved and this is my Friend," Song of Sol. 5:16. In a soon coming day we shall see Him Face to Face and speak with Him as a man speaketh unto his friend;

"Then with our Saviour, Master, Friend
The glad eternity we'll spend
And celebrate His grace."

Till then may we be faithful to our Friend, remembering His words "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you" (John 15:14).

The Friend of God . . . James 2:23

This is a wonderful description of Abraham. None other in God's

Word ever bore such a distinctive title. The three occurrences are worthy of note (11 Chron. 20:7; Isa. 41:8, James 2:23). The failures of God's Friend are recorded for our instruction, and are fitting proof of the inspiration of God's Biography, in contrast to man's idea of biography, where virtues only are reported.

The call of Abram to separation from social, domestic and family relationship (Gen. 12:1-3) to a life of dependence upon God comes with equal force to all who would have the privilege of friendship with God. After delaying full obedience to the call until his father Terah died, Abram went out, not knowing whither he went. In the path of obedience trials are sure to abound and if, in a day of famine, the friend of God went down into Egypt to sojourn there, how careful we should be to keep ourselves unspotted from the world and to maintain complete separation from Egypt and its ways. The solemn lesson of "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap" is seen in Abram's going down to Egypt. There Hagar was obtained as an handmaid to Sarai and the results of his sojourn in Egypt can be traced in Israel. There too it is not unlikely that Lot's desire for the well-watered Sodom was first formed for Sodom was like the land of Egypt (Gen. 13:10). These are heart searching lessons teaching us that in any going down into Egypt we ourselves may be restored but others may be influenced by us for evil and may never be recovered,—"none of us liveth to himself" (Rom. 14:7).

Is it not also solemn to read of Abram's recovery in Gen. 13:1-4? Here we have the first mention of riches in the Bible and it is connected with the Friend of God coming out of Egypt, rich in cattle in silver and in gold. But much precious time was lost and he must return to the place where his tent was at the beginning. Many are occupied with obtaining the cattle, silver and gold of Egypt still, and precious time for laying up treasures in Heaven is being lost. How fully Abram afterward pleased the Lord is a valuable study by all those who desire to be Friends of God.

The Friend of the World . . . James 4:14

The friend of the world cannot be the friend of God but rather is the enemy of God. Such a friendship will bring disaster upon the child of God. The path of absolute separation from any unequal yoke with the world is the only path of blessing. In 2 Cor. 6:14-18 there is a plain warning against five distinct unequal yokes, in the five questions asked. A different word for fellowship is used. "What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness?" The word righteousness suggests commerce. Many who fear the religious and social yoke with sinners seem to have no exercise concerning the launching of business propositions involving one purse with the unsaved. The political, social,

marriage and religious yokes also suggested in this portion, cannot be continued in long without loss both in this life and in the new life to come. The call today is "Come out from among them and be ye separate," may the answer be "Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp" (Heb. 13:13).

Unsaved Friends . . . Mark 5:19

All of us have unsaved friends, our kinsfolk and acquaintances. What should our attitude be to them? It is the midnight hour and many can say "a friend of mine is out of the way" and lost in sin. We can shew our friends what great things God hath done for us by our lives, and we can tell the same friends the gospel with our lips. It is also our privilege to pray for our friends as did Job and be exercised as was Paul (Rom. 9:1-3). Paul had kinsmen who were in Christ before him (Rom. 16:7). How we value friends who were in Christ before us and lived, prayed, and worked for our conversion. May we in turn be exercised for others. Cornelius arranged for his friends and kinsmen to hear words whereby they might be saved (Acts 10:24, and what results in conversions followed! May the question of Queen Esther burn its way into our souls 'How can I endure to see the destruction of my kindred'?

THE ASSEMBLY AND THE WORLD

The Assembly must be in the world; but the world should not be in the Assembly. A ship is in the sea, but if the sea gets into the ship it becomes water-logged, and if this advances beyond a certain point the ship will founder. The Assembly is in the world in order that it may be a blessing to the world, but its ability to be a blessing is in proportion to its unworldliness.

A prelate of high rank was showing a visitor over St. Peters in Rome. As they beheld the glittering ornaments, gold, silver, precious stones, etc., the prelate said, "You see, we cannot say with St. Peter, 'Silver and gold have I none.'" "Neither can you say with St. Peter, 'In the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk,'" was the unexpected response.

How true it is that worldliness and spiritual power cannot go together. Oh! for an unworldly spirit in every Christian and in every Assembly.

If we have not the spirit of supplication and thanksgiving let us begin with the spirit of confession.

THE LORD IS MY STAY

This is a designation of our Lord which should give us great peace. We love to view Him as our Shepherd, Redeemer, Mediator, etc., but to know Him as our STAY, reveals a side of His character which is very precious, especially to those who realize their extreme weakness and are pressed by overwhelming odds against them. Thus it was with David as Psalm 18:18 indicates. Note the circumstances in which this Psalm was written. It was in the day that the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of King Saul and he said, "I will love the Lord my Strength. The Lord is my Rock, and my Fortress, and my Deliverer; my God, my Strength, in Whom I will trust." Here he has a strength outside of himself that has made him more than conqueror and His strength was his STAY. Thus he bursts forth in a tribute of praise as he realizes the greatness of His deliverer using twelve different Names or Titles to ascribe the All-sufficiency of His Lord as a Stay. One has written of this Psalm, "The poetry is very fine, the images bold, the expressions lofty and every word significant, but the piety far exceeds the poetry."

The key verses, I think, of Psalm 18 are the sixteenth to the twentieth. "He sent from above, He took me, He drew me out of many waters. He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them which hate me: for they were too strong for me. They prevented me in the day of my calamity: but the Lord was my STAY. He brought me forth also into a large place, He delivered me, because He delighted in me". We too can say the same words, for He sent His beloved Son from above. He took me, He drew me out of many waters, i.e., Judgment, as typified by the Red Sea; Death, as typified by the river Jordan; the ungodly, as represented in Rev. 17:15; and from Tribulation, see Isaiah 43:2. We have been delivered from our strong enemy, Satan. And from them that hate us — The World. John 15:19. The three-fold enemy, the World, the flesh and the Devil are too strong for us, they seek to hinder and overwhelm us, but we are delivered for the Lord is our STAY.

WHAT IS A STAY? A stay is a means of support, a buttress, a means of strength. A stay resists and overcomes the pressure that causes strains and stresses in a structure, which it is too weak in itself to withstand. A steam boiler needs the angle and gusset stays to prevent the ends from bulging under heavy pressure.

A Stay in any place is to prevent collapse. We never discover the value and strength of a Stay till mighty forces are pressed against it. And when we see the weak structure to which it is attached remaining strong and immoveable then we realize how indispensable the Stay is. What the Stay is to a structure so our God is to His people.

We could not overcome the evil and powerful forces opposing us but for our Stay who is greater in us than he which is in the world. Our Stay is so irresistible, so strong, that we though weak are rendered steadfast and unmoveable always abounding in the work of the Lord.

Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are fully blest;
Finding, as He promised, perfect peace and rest.
Hidden in the hollow of His blessed hand,
Never foe can follow, never traiter stand;
Not a surge of worry, not a shade of care,
Not a blast of hurry moves the spirit there.

The apostle Paul experienced the Lord was his Stay in a full measure so that he could gladly glory in his infirmities that the power of Christ might rest upon him. He could say "When I am weak, then am I strong," realizing the blessedness of the Lord's statement so beautifully translated by Knox, "My grace is enough for thee; my strength finds its full scope in thy weakness." Isn't that what the Stay does? Paul writes to the Philippians on the same line, Weymouth's translation, "I have strength for anything through the help of Him who gives me power" (Phil. 4:13).

We bless and praise the Lord who is as our Stay. "He stayeth His rough wind in the day of the east wind" (Isa. 28:8). If the east wind is all that we can bear then He in His grace will not permit another to overwhelm us or as 1 Cor. 10:13 puts it, "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it." When there are opposing elements troubling us like the the stormy sea then He says, "Hitherto shalt thou come and no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed (Job 38:11). Again "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is STAYED on thee (Isa. 26:3).

"Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of His servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light, let him trust in the Name of the Lord, and STAY upon his God" (Isa. 50:10). A STAY is intended to be a permanent and indispensable attachment. If we really know His name we shall know he is the ALL-SUFFICIENT ONE, the El-Shaddai, and we shall realize that "God is able to make all grace abound toward us; that we always having all-sufficiency in all things may abound to every good work" (2 Cor. 9:8). Thus we shall never want to be detached from Him, knowing that like the STAY He will keep us strengthened, stablished, and secure.

"As He is so are we in this world". As He is a STAY so may we be in some measure. Thus we read that Aaron and Hur STAYED

up the hands of Moses, so that the people of God might prevail over their enemy. We also may stay up the hands of intercession on behalf of those fighting in the front line in foreign lands so that victory may be assured.

Christians who live separated godly lives and are sound in doctrine, continuing steadfastly in the apostles doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers, become a Stay to those who are in danger of being blown about by every wind of doctrine.

The Assembly should have the character of a STAY, (1 Tim. 3:14-15). "These things write I unto thee hoping to come unto thee shortly; but if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how men ought to behave themselves in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and Stay of the truth (R.V.). The Assembly should be firm and steadfast in loyalty to the Lord and to His Word, not yielding to anything that would mean a departure from the Scriptural principles of gathering to His Name.

LET US LEARN OF HIM, AND THEN USE WHAT WE HAVE

"Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus" (Acts 4:12). The well known evangelist, Dwight L. Moody, had only a meagre education and his English was not always the best. One night he addressed a large group of Oxford University students. At the close one young man approached him and said haughtily; "Sir, you have no business to be speaking in this auditorium, you made a dozen errors in English tonight." Mr. Moody looked at the young man with a steady eye and replied: "Young men, I am using all the English I know to the glory of God. Are you doing the same?"

SUFFERING FOR CHRIST'S SAKE

Long ago, when threatened with dire punishments, Chrysostom made the following noble reply:

Should the Empress determine to banish me, let her banish me: "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof." If she will cast me into the sea, let her cast me into the sea; I will remember Jonah. If she will throw me into a burning fiery furnace, the three children were there before me. If she will cast me to the wild beasts, I will remember that Daniel was in the den of lions. If she will condemn me to be stoned, I shall be an associate of Stephen, the proto-martyr. If she will have me beheaded, the Baptist submitted to the same punishment. If she will take away my substance, "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked I shall return" (Job 1:21).

YOU MAY HAVE HIS JUDGMENT

Mervyn Paul

Now my young friends, I hope you will forgive me for writing on a theme that will have a much wider field in view than your interests, alone. For it is intended to be suggestive all the way from writing exam papers to the many kinds of daily problems not specifically dealt with in the Word, whether of young people, or of older folk. Nevertheless, the initial prompting for these lines came from a 'teen ager's letter received some time ago. And there are also some present reasons. Hence I am hopeful that you will be sufficiently interested to keep on reading.

In Job 35:14 we read concerning the invisible God: ". . . Judgment (*the giving of decisions, or verdicts*) is before Him; therefore trust thou in Him" . . . Isa. 26:8. And in that previous text, Psa. 25:9, we are promised, "the meek will He guide in judgment . . ."

Unfortunately most Christians think that this verse means that God will guide *their* judgment, just as they suppose that Jas. 1:5 is a promise to supply plenty of *human* wisdom to enable them to get by . . . forgetful that "the wisdom which is from above" (3:17) is heavenly in character and content.

Oh no, Beloved! Rather is it that God's decisions and His vastly superior wisdom are TO REPLACE our own sin-blighted judgment and wisdom. See David's prayer for Solomon (Psa. 72:1). If only we can get this truth firmly settled in our minds it will reveal to us blessed possibilities open, only, to the twice-born (Psa. 119:175).

Save as it is based on the Word, our judgment, at the best, always is faulty. Always there are too many factors which are hidden to our minds. Even when all details are known, we can do no more than estimate what the results will be from any action we may take. Hence not only are we prone to making mistakes in judgment, but our errors sometimes turn out to be major blunders. Thus it has been in my own story, at any rate.

This human weakness is recognized in the world of responsible business men, also. If it were not so, why does a large fraternal organization continue to ask in its ads., "Do You Laugh Your Greatest Powers Away?" followed by advice to join them and learn how to heed and harness our hunches? Books are being written (*and hungrily devoured by some Christians*) dealing with the sub-conscious mind, giving advice on how to use its experience-impression contents in solving our problems.

Now I do not write to challenge these teachings, simply because there is a basic element of truth in such metaphysical techniques. But, having some knowledge of these matters, I do desire to "cry aloud"

that for the child of the Living God there is "a more excellent way". "Judgment — infallible judgment — is before Him; *therefore trust thou in Him*". Unhappily, all too few of His people know how to avail themselves of this better way.

Without launching into a discussion of the sub-conscious mind (which I nearly did!) let me stress that *Man never will discover* any personality deeps for which God's Word has not made allowance. In Psalm 119:11 the writer says, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee." In these simple terms he suggests all the essential features of mental storage, and recall, that any ordinary Christian ever can use to advantage. These are:

—He has a "heart" . . . the core of his being.

—It is capable of the storage of impressions.

—He can store it with God's Word . . . His "sayings".

—These can be recalled to guide and guard His daily life.

Now please do not dismiss these reflections as being commonplace. For if you have not learned how to gain the judgment of your God concerning your personal problems it is clear that you have not yet realized the very great importance of the storage space your mind possesses — apart altogether from a good memory, or a bad one. But when you remember that it is in the realm of the mind that the Holy Spirit operates, chiefly, you should see that there may be possibilities here which have been overlooked.

In order that the mind-storehouse may become fruitful in the solving of our problems, let me note 4 requirements:

1. A Christian has no greater need (Job 23:12) than that his mind should be "filled to the brim" with the living Word of His God. For only to the extent that it is so filled will the holy Spirit be able to teach, or to lead him as He would desire. Compare John 14:26, 16:13. Since He is sovereign, we dare not say He cannot use other means, if He should choose to do so. But I am inclined to think that if we had our sub-conscious minds sufficiently charged with Bible principles, teachings and promises it would be rare that He should use other means. But if He cannot lead us by His Word, may it not be because we "know" so little of it?

2. However, He surely will make use of any little we may have hidden in our hearts. Therefore the second factor will be to do as did Hezekiah — "spread before the Lord" the details of the problem, 2 Kings 19:14-19.

To do this, since our conscious minds are so faulty, I find it good to write down on paper an outline of the problem (including those of my correspondents). Only in this way am I able to get a clear

picture before my mind of the matters for which I seek the judgment (decisions, or verdicts) of the Lord.

—At the top of your paper write the problem.

—Below this, outline the details of it.

—At the bottom, note any Scriptures that have come before you.

A. This done, go to your knees and tell it all out before the Lord in prayer. *Banish, completely, any ideas you may have as to what His answer will be!* Hezekiah's answer came through a prophet. But we have the completed canon of Scripture, and the Holy Spirit to teach us all things, **AND TO BRING TO OUR REMEMBRANCE His Word** out of the storage of our hearts, or to call our attention to something as we shall be reading the Bible.

Sometimes the verdict of His Word comes to us while we quiet ourselves before the Lord. At others, we may have to wait a while — nothing in storage — Like Elijah's servant, we may need to "go again seven times." But in recent years it has been rare that He has kept me tarrying for long. (cf. the principle: Heb. 2:3).

4. Finally, "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it" John 2:5. Do not allow yourself to bring the counsel of His Word before the bar of your own judgment! But if you are in any doubt about it, you are warranted to seek from Himself the "two or three witnesses" from His Word (2 Cor. 13:1b).

And so, once more, I am urging you dear young people **TO FILL YOUR MINDS WITH THE WORD** so that the Holy Spirit will have material on which to work. The sheep are to follow their Shepherd by hearing His voice . . . through the application of His Word to them by the Holy Spirit. And surely to follow Him in everyday affairs for which their may be no specific directions in the Bible, is quite as necessary as for acts of obedience laid down therein. The leading of the Spirit cannot be supposed to by-pass this large area of our lives. But "the proof of the pudding is in the eating of it." If you really would rather have the judgment of the Lord than your own, then may I ask that before you drop these suggestions you give them a serious trial?

However, should you feel you must square His decisions, His verdicts, with your own "common sense", or if you expect to measure the benefits obtained by the world's standards, there will be little use in your seeking His counsel. Isa. 55:8-9, and Rom. 8:13-14, make it very clear that such a system won't work.

NOTES ON SCRIPTURAL HYMNS AND THEIR WRITERS

Hector Alves

Since August 1948 we have sought monthly to give brief notes on the hymns and their writers, found in "The Believers' Hymn Book". Some of the hymns in the book are of unknown authorship. In some cases, the author's name are known, but little of importance is known about them. We have given, from information to hand, what we thought to be profitable and interesting. We have been encouraged to continue with these "Notes" by letters received from time to time from the readers of these volumes. So, with this issue, we begin with hymns and their writers found in "The Gospel Hymn Book" (published in Vancouver, B.C.), a book with which most of our readers are familiar.

"Almost persuaded" now to believe,
 "Almost persuaded" Christ to receive,
 Seems now some soul to say? —
 Go, Spirit, go Thy way,
 Some more convenient day
 On Thee I'll call.

The name of P. P. Bliss is found frequently in almost every gospel hymn book. The author of this hymn of solemn warning and entreaty, was born at Rome, Penna., July 9, 1838. He was named Phillip Bliss, and from this unusual spelling he changed it to Philip P. Bliss. Mr. Bliss was among the first to write what might be termed evangelistic gospel hymns; departing from the more formal style of hymn then in use. The precedent which he set was soon followed by many other writers, giving us an excellent collection and variety of hymns suitable for gospel meetings. Bliss was saved at the age of twelve, and baptized at Cherry Flats, Penna. At the age of twenty-six he went to Chicago, and ten years later became associated with D. L. Moody. This happy and fruitful yoke in the work of the gospel lasted little over two years. Mr. Bliss met a tragic death in a railroad accident at Ashtabula, Ohio, Dec. 28, 1876, at the age of 38 years.

The words of the above hymn were "born" after Mr. Bliss had listened to an address by a preacher named Brundage. In closing his address, Mr. Brundage, having in mind the words of King Agrippa to the apostle Paul, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian," (Acts 26:28) said, "He who is almost persuaded is almost saved, but to be almost saved is to be entirely lost." Mr. Bliss was very much impressed with that statement, and immediately began to work on the words of this hymn, which has proved to be one of his best short hymns, and perhaps the most solemn of his many gospel hymns.

Numerous touching incidents could be told in connection with the singing of this hymn, after the preaching from the text with which it is intimately connected. We give here three of them

“While engaged in evangelistic work in western Pennsylvania,” writes one man, “I had preached from the words of king Agrippa, ‘Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.’ Then it occurred to me to give out the hymn, ‘Almost persuaded, now to believe.’ Many were moved to tears; among them was the Principal of the High School, who could not resist the appeal through the words of the hymn. He and several others were not almost, but altogether persuaded that very night.”

A man in Clapton, London, England, wrote to Ira D. Sankey as follows; “It was Sunday night, Nov. 18, 1883, when I heard you sing ‘Almost Persuaded,’ in the Priory Hall, Islington, London, and God used that hymn in drawing me to the feet of Jesus. I was afraid to trust myself in His hands for fear of man. For six weeks that hymn was singing in my ears, till I accepted the invitation. I came, and am now rejoicing in the Lord, my Saviour. How often, with tears of joy and love, have I thought of these meetings, and of you and dear Mr. Moody, who showed me where there was real joy and happiness.”

But some of the incidents related, are not so cheering. Said a young man to a preacher one night, after listening to an address from the same text; “I intend to become a Christian some time, but not now. Don’t trouble yourself about me. I’ll attend to it in good time.” A few weeks after that, the man was injured in a saw-mill, and as he lay dying, the preacher was called to his side. He found him in despair, saying; “Leave me alone. At your meeting I was almost persuaded, but I would not yield, and now it is too late. Oh, get my wife, my sisters, and my brothers to seek God, and do it now, but leave me alone, for I am lost.” Within an hour he passed away, with these words on his lips, “I am lost, I am lost, just because I would not yield when I was almost persuaded.”

(More about P. P. Bliss and his hymns later on, D.V.)

We can never be said to have outlived our usefulness, unless we have outlived our spirituality.

* * * *

He that hath the testimony of a good conscience hath no need to wax vehement in making his own innocency appear.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question. What did Paul mean in Philippians 3, verse 11, when he said, "If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead?" Does that mean we have to attain unto something in order to be raised from the dead? I thought every believer was going to be raised.

Answer. In the Newberry Bible, margin, this is rendered "out resurrection of the dead." We have in this section of the Philippian Epistle, the apostle's aim and ambition, verses 8 to 14. The attainment here is not the physical resurrection of the believer, from among the dead. That is not a matter of attainment, but of definite promise and fact; the body of every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ will be raised from among the dead at the rapture of the church (1 Thess. 4:16-17). "The resurrection of the dead" (from the dead R.V.) to which the apostle desired to attain, refers to identification with Christ in His resurrection, in this present life. Paul wished to live in the power of a resurrected life, above the dead things of the world around him. An ideal or standard which we ought all to seek to attain in our daily walk. H. A.

Question. Would you please give a definition of the expression we so often hear, "saving faith"? Is it according to the Word of God to so speak?

Answer. This term or expression is not found in the Scriptures, but it would appear to be quite scriptural. It is probably taken from the words of our Lord to the woman in the house of Simon the pharisee. "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." (Luke 7:50). Or to the blind man in Luke 18:42, "Receive thy sight, thy faith hath saved thee." From these incidents we understand the Lord meant that faith was the channel that brought deliverance to them from both their affliction and from sin's penalty. To us, faith in Christ is the God-ordained principle that delivers the sinner from the penalty of sin, saves his soul, and unites him to Christ as Saviour. The sinner exercises faith but it is the Lord who saves. James differentiates between living faith and dead faith (James 2:17). Faith that saves is the former, producing works as the proof. Dead faith merely assents to a truth, believes things as a fact, but does not save the soul. In Hebrews 10:39 we read of "them that believe to the saving of the soul."—H.A.

Feeble obedience, rather than feeble faith, is the cause of many of our failures. Obedience is the chief soil in which faith flourishes.

* * * *

Surrender to Christ is the only true liberty.

Gospel. The tent was burned down although it was felt that this was the work of mischievous children rather than opposition. There was a good interest in the children's work. F. Pearcey went to Manitoulin Island with R. Booth for Gospel meetings. Brother Neil Thompson from Australia had some meetings which were appreciated. He is en route to Venezuela to serve the Lord there. Brother Norris of North Ireland has had appreciated visits.

SUSSEX, N.B.—J. Blackwood and T. Wilkie have been preaching under canvas in this new place but expected to close as they found it hard to get the unsaved out.

PUGWASH JUNCTION, N.S.—After the conference, O. L. MacLeod followed with meetings with a good interest manifested.

LOUISBURG, N.S.—A. Aiken had some Gospel meetings then went to Glace Bay where there is some interest.

NINEVEH, N.S.—John McCracken and D. Petherick are having a good interest and some young people have professed to be saved.

BEDEQUE, P.E.I.—Albert Ramsay and R. McIlwaine are having very good attendance in tent work in this neighbourhood. They have been packed out on Sunday nights with a number listening outside.

DETROIT, MICH.—George Graham (recently from Scotland) had good, profitable ministry meetings for two weeks in the West Chicago Blvd. Hall.

SPARTA, WIS.—Paul Elliott pitched a tent here and was joined by brother Jamison.

MADISON—C. Yost and E. McCullough were in tent work.

WILMAR, MINN.—O. Smith and L. DeBuhr are preaching the Gospel under canvas with some blessing.

GARNAVILLO, IOWA.—C. Fite ministered the Word to the Lord's people using the "Egypt to Canaan" chart. L. H. Brandt and H. Wahls are being encouraged in a tent.

ST. CHARLES, ILL.—Herbert Dobson, helped by J. Clarquist, is in tent work in this new field, about fifty miles west of Chicago. There is some interest.

DANBURY, CONN.—F. Pizzulli is preaching the Gospel in a tent, and from door to door.

BELLINGHAM, WASH.—Wm. Warke is preaching the Gospel in a suburb south of this city.

LOS ANGELES, CAL.—Hector Alves is ministering the Word from the Tabernacle in the West Jefferson Hall.

LORAIN, OHIO.—E. Doherty (Cuba) had a week of good meetings with the Spanish assembly in Lorain. One young man professed.

LYNXVILLE, WIS.—S. Mick and S. Hamilton are being encouraged. One professed. There was a happy time at Blue River when six young men and two young women were baptized in the Wisconsin River. There was a good hearing.

CONFERENCES

ORILLIA, ONT.—As mentioned in last month's issue the conference will be Sept. 2 and 3, with three meetings daily.

ARNSTEIN, ONT.—The Conference will be held, D.V., commencing with a prayer meeting on Sept. 13 at 7.30 p.m., continuing on Sept. 14, 15, and 16. The Lord's servants walking in the old paths will be welcome to minister the Word. Corr. Emil Culin, Arnstein.

ST. THOMAS, ONT.—The Conference will be held at Canadian Thanksgiving, D.V., Oct. 7 and 8 in the Arthur Voaden School, Flora St. Prayer meeting will be in the Gospel Hall, 3½ Erie St., Oct. 6 at 7.30 p.m. The "Breaking of bread" will be at 10 a.m. The Lord's servants walking in the old paths and teaching the same will be welcome to minister the Word. Corr. Frank H. Woods, 94 Manitoba St., St. Thomas, Ont.

CLEMENTSVALE, N.S.—The Conference will be D.V., on Sept. 2 and 3 with a prayer meeting on the 1st. Men of God speaking in the Holy Spirit will be welcome (2 Peter 1:21).

AKRON, OHIO.—We purpose having a Conference here on week end of Labor Day, D.V. Prayer meeting Aug. 31st at 7.30 p.m., Saturday, Sept. 1st at 2.30 and 7.30 p.m., and the usual three meetings on Lord's Day. We will appreciate hearing from those who purpose coming. Those walking in the old paths and practising the same will be welcome to minister the Word. Corr. J. Bercaw, 928 Bisson Ave., Akron, 7, Ohio.

LONGPORT, N.J.—The Conference will be held, D.V., Sept. 22 and 23 with a prayer meeting Sept. 21. Meetings will be in the Gospel Hall Auditorium, 29th and Atlantic Ave., Longport, N.J. Corr. Wm. Moon, 5 S. 29th St., Longport, N.J.

VANCOUVER, B.C.—Owing to the Cedar Cottage assembly having vacated their old hall, and a new hall being under construction at present, the brethren have decided to cancel their annual Thanksgiving Conference for this year.

LORAIN, OHIO.—The English speaking assembly will have their Conference at Thanksgiving season. Details next month. The Spanish believers are looking forward to their 4th conference on Sept. 1, 2, and 3, trusting the Lord to meet the need.

HUNTSVILLE, ONT.—The correct dates of the conference mentioned in last month's issue should be, Sept. 7, 8 and 9.

WITH CHRIST

COLLINGWOOD, ONT.—Our dear brother, Arthur Johnston, went home to be with Christ after some months of illness which was patiently borne. He was saved over fifty years ago and for many years has been a pillar in the assembly. He was a lover of the Gospel and of the truth of God and will be greatly missed in the assembly. He had been in business for many years and was well known and respected as was evidenced by the large company of saved and unsaved who gathered at the funeral. Wm. Bousfield and A. W. Joyce preached the Word in the Hall and F. G. Watson at the grave.

GLENCOE, MICH.—On July 22, following an emergency operation, our beloved brother Duncan McGeachy passed into the presence of the Lord at the ripe age of 91 years. He was saved over 60 years ago and in fellowship, and was a quiet, consistent brother, whose judgment will be missed in the assembly. He was the brother of the Lord's servant, Donald McGeachy. The funeral service which was largely attended was taken by J. Goven.

FOREST, ONT.—Mrs. M. Beattie went to be with the Lord on July 19 in her 88th year. She was saved 70 years ago and has been in the assembly ever since. F. G. Watson preached the Gospel at the burial.

WATERBURY, CONN.—Our brother, Marciano Stango, went to be with Christ on July 4. He was saved 42 years ago through Dr. Cameron and Dr. Martin and was used in the commencement of the Italian assembly in Waterbury. F. Pizzulli and Luigi Rosania spoke at the funeral services.

REDLANDS, CAL.—Our esteemed brother in the Lord, Theodore A. Argleben, departed to be with Christ on July 8. He was born in 1882, and born again near Dearborn, Mich., at the age of 16. He moved to California, and for the past 28 years has been in fellowship in Redlands, where he took a leading part. He was a quiet man who loved the truth. Brethren Harold Kessler and Hector Alves preached the Word at the funeral.

TORONTO, ONT.—Our sister, Miss Bertha Gardhouse, went home July 30th, after a long illness. She was saved in Bolton about 60 years ago gathered out and has been in fellowship in Brock Ave. Assembly for many years.

YORKTON, SASK.—Our dear brother, Mr. Frank Martin went to be with Christ on August 2, aged 74. He was saved when about 21 and in fellowship since 1920. His home, in which the assembly gathers, was always open to the saints. He will be much missed. J. Ronald and A. Wilson spoke at the funeral.

TRUTH and TIDINGS



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EDITOR ----- A. W. JOYCE, 26 Munro Blvd., Willowdale, Ont., Canada.
ASSOCIATE EDITORS --- F. G. WATSON, 92 Regal Rd., Toronto, Ont.
G. G. JOHNSTON, 140 Woodycrest Ave., Toronto, Ont.
HECTOR ALVES, 338 W. King Edward Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C.

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EXPIRY NOTICES

Those whose subscriptions have expired this summer will receive an expiry notice with their magazine this month. Please send in your renewal immediately so that you will not miss the next issue. If you have renewed recently, please ignore the notice. If you have renewed some time ago, please notify us.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

The new address of the correspondent of the Waterbury assembly is, Mr. William Batterton, R. F. D. 2, Greystone Rd., Terryville, Conn., U.S.A.

TIDINGS

VANCOUVER, B.C.—G. G. Johnston had profitable ministry meetings in various halls after a visit to Westbank. He expects to return shortly making some visits on the way.

CALGARY, ALTA.—Brother McCullough writes of appreciated visits by C. Patrizio and G. G. Johnston. The latter had two weeks on the Tabernacle.

ARBORFIELD, SASK.—J. Gray had helpful visits here and in Taylorside, one professed. At Belmont one professed during a visit by R. Boyle, J. Ronald and A. Wilson had some interest in Togo.

DESERONTO, ONT.—G. P. Taylor is keeping fairly well again. He had a good Lord's Day at Peterborough.

HENDERSON, ONT.—R. Harris and T. Kember had a tent pitched some miles from here at Harlow, and have had encouragement and blessing in the Gospel. They expected to have a baptism on Sept. 9.

MANITOULIN ISLAND.—F. Pearcey and R. Booth saw some blessing in the Gospel. They hoped to return for further meetings in Manitowaning.

OTTAWA, ONT.—Brother C. Fleming of North Ireland, with his family, has located in Kemptville, Ont., near Ottawa.

VALLEYFIELD, QUE.—About 50 gathered for the baptism of a young French couple in the St. Lawrence river and heard the Word. A. Grainger goes on with cottage meetings.

GIRARDVILLE, QUE.—The conference was well attended and encouraging. N. Gratton had meetings, also in the new mining town of Sheboogamo.

BEDEQUE, P.E.I.—Several professed in tent work by A. Ramsay and R. McIlwaine.

PENNIAC, N.B.—George Heidman and Wallace Cudmore are having a good interest in Gospel meetings.

HOW THOU OUGHTEST TO BEHAVE THYSELF

A. W. Joyce

The Apostle Paul wanted Timothy to be intelligent in regard to behaviour in the Assembly, and then to instruct others by his teaching and example. He wrote therefore, "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:15). The Revised Version changes the reading to "How men ought to behave themselves."

The Christian's BEHAVIOUR in the Assembly, in the home, in the world and in private is of the greatest importance. The behaviour will determine if one is a help or a hindrance in the Assembly, whether one is leading the family to Heaven or to Hell, or, if the children are all saved, whether one is leading them in the right ways of the Lord or in the ways of the world. The behaviour will decide whether one is a testimony or a stumblingblock before the ungodly, and whether we shall gain or lose an eternal reward. Thus our behaviour will affect others for all time, and ourselves for all eternity.

Before looking at good behaviour, let us notice things we ought to avoid.

Unseemly Behaviour

In 1 Corinthians 13:4-5, the apostle wrote "Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself *UNSEEMLY*, seeketh not her own."

The Corinthians certainly needed this word for they had been behaving themselves very unseemly. How unseemly was their indifference to moral evil in God's Assembly. How unseemly were their actions in going to law with their brethren. How unseemly their turning from the Lord Who had bought them with His precious blood, and from Paul, their spiritual father, to following men and splitting up into parties. How unseemly had been the behaviour of the women in cutting their hair (1 Cor. 11:6) and in failing to cover their heads in the Assembly thus manifesting their insubjection. "Doth not even nature itself teach you?" asked the Apostle.

Let us who are brethren ask ourselves, "Is my behaviour unseemly?" Let those who are sisters ask themselves, "Is my behaviour in keeping with my profession of subjection to Christ as Lord?"

Disorderly Behaviour

"Now we command you, brethren, in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us" (2 Thes. 3:6). The Thessalonian Assembly was a good one, but there were some whose disorderly behaviour gave the apostle much

concern. They were neglecting their daily occupations and were not walking honestly before them that were without (1 Thes. 4:12). Obedience to the "tradition" or teaching of the apostle would have corrected this abuse. Subjection in the world to-day is almost a thing of the past and lawlessness is rampant. The spirit of insubjection is creeping in, and in some cases is flooding in, to the Assemblies of God, — insubjection to the Word of God and to godly oversight and rule. May it never be recorded in Heaven against us, "He, or she, behaved disorderly." And may we not be found in friendly company with those from whom the Word enjoins us to "withdraw" ourselves.

Inconsistent Behaviour

Sometimes a child of God gets away from God and acts in a way wholly inconsistent with the usual tenor of his life. An example of this is seen in the life of David. David was "a man after God's own heart," but the best of men when away from God can contradict their usual behaviour. Moses, the meekest man in all the earth lost his temper. David was a courageous man, a noble man, a kingly man. In a dark day in his life, through discouragement, "David arose and fled that day for fear of Saul and went to Achish the King of Gath" (1 Samuel 21). The women of Israel, in their unwise comparison in their song of triumph, "Saul hath slain his thousands and David his ten thousands", had already brought David's life into jeopardy by Saul's envy. Again, this ill-advised song arises to threaten the life of David and he was "sore afraid". David "*changed his behaviour before them and feigned himself mad, . . . scabbled on the doors of the gate, and let his spittle fall down upon his beard.*" What caused such behaviour, so out of keeping with all of David's past life? It was "the fear of man that bringeth a snare." What a downfall for the man who had often caused the Philistines to tremble, now playing the madman and the fool! Let us not be too hasty to condemn. All that is necessary to make any of us behave inconsistently is just to get away from God. Well might we cry, "Preserve me, O God!" The real David is seen in his restoration in the touching language of Psalm 34, which was written in connection with this sad incident in the life of a noble man. "The poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles." He attributes his deliverance to God's care and not to his own craft, to the protection of the angel of the Lord and not to his clever plot. The Psalm ends with, "none of them that trust in Him shall be desolate."

Consistent Behaviour

In contrast to what has gone before, the Word of God would teach consistent behaviour in the Assembly of God, in keeping with the holy character of the Lord Who is in the midst. Our behaviour should be *reverent*. Lightness, lateness, frivolity and insubjection to the Word

are, of course, entirely inconsistent with the House of God. . . . the Church of the living God. It has often been remarked that in some of the denominations of men there is a reverence, (even though it may be outward and formal), which is, alas, often lacking in assemblies of God. These things ought not so to be. If at all possible, we should be in our places on time at assembly meetings. We should take our places quietly. We should avoid looking and staring about at every new entrant into the building, especially when gathered to remember the Lord's death.

Two exhortations in 1 Cor. 14 should be heeded.

(1) "Let all things be done unto edifying" (verse 26).

(2) "Let all things be done decently and in order" (verse 40).

If our behaviour during the seven days of the week is in keeping with the House of God, we will be a holy and a humble people, and thus exemplify in our lives some of the features of our Lord Jesus Christ, unto Whom we are gathered.

Having briefly noted some things in regard to the Assembly, let us notice now behaviour in the *HOME*.

Wise Behaviour

"I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way. O when wilt Thou come unto me? I will walk *within my house* with a perfect heart. I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes" (Psalm 101:2-3). If we have before noticed David away from God, certainly we have David here when he is right with God. David desired to display wisdom and perfection as he walked in his own house; a high standard indeed!

What wisdom from God is required in the Christian home in our day! Wisdom to train and guide youthful minds, wisdom to keep from the children the things which are harmful, and wisdom to use the rod of correction when necessary. In the world and in the school, all too soon, the child will hear and see things which are defiling. He will learn to his surprise that some of his teachers will make light of, or even scoff at, Bible truths which he had been taught at home to believe and reverence. Wise behaviour of exercised parents will go a long way towards overcoming the evil influences by which he is surrounded.

The other word David used is "perfect". When this word is applied to the child of God, whether in the Old Testament or in the New, the thought is not of absolute perfection or sinlessness. This is seen in the absolute sense in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in no other. The word perfect in the New Testament usually signifies full growth or maturity in godliness. In the Old Testament it suggests integrity, truth, uprightness. David desired that he might walk in his house so as to show these virtues, and so should we. How

quickly the sharp eyes of even little children can detect insincerity. Could we say like David, "I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes?" Could we truthfully say this if, for instance, in our homes we set a television before them?

Humble and Submissive Behaviour

In Psalm 131, we have David in the presence of the Lord. "Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty . . . Surely I have behaved and quietened myself as a child that is weaned of his mother." David had learned to accept disappointment and to humble and submit himself to the will of God. Surely this is Christ-like behaviour. He said, "Take my yoke upon you and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart." This is becoming behaviour indeed in the presence of God.

GRACE TO SAY NOTHING

Generally speaking, it requires more grace to hold one's tongue than to speak. In the assembly there are times when the silence of worship is broken by the brother who cannot wait on God, and it is evident to all except himself that it is only his flesh that must be active and not the leading of the Spirit. We heard it once said to a brother — "What you need is *grace to say nothing*."

In every-day work also, how many of the Lord's people get into trouble with their tongues. Some unconverted fellow-workman gives a cut of some kind, perhaps it may be because you own the Name of Christ, and in a moment you give him a little cut back again. Thus strife begins and perhaps the testimony is lost. How simple everything becomes when we bear these things patiently? If a fleshly cut rouses the flesh in us, it shows that we have not been keeping the flesh in the place of death. It is truly a bad symptom when the flesh in us responds readily to the flesh without. Let us mortify the deeds of the body, remembering the words of David, "I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me" (Psalm 39:1). We shall also find need of the bridle when in the company of the people of God, and thus we shall "sin not with our lips".

* * * *

ERRATA—Printer's errors require the following corrections. In the first page of September, the thirteenth line, "traditional period" should have read, "transitional period". On page 165, the 28th line, for "church" read "cherub".

NOTABLE CHARACTERS IN HOLY WRIT DANIEL, THE BRAVE

G. G. Johnston

Which of us who has been reared in a Christian atmosphere but remembers some of the bedtime stories told him by his loving parents, as the shades of night were falling? The thrill experienced, as our childish minds followed while the victory of David over Goliath, or the scene in Eden, the murder of Abel, the flood, the building of Babel, and such historic events were explained, continues with us to this day. God's way of teaching these important facts of history is by "word picture", and when told in language understood by the tots they are not only entertained, but their minds are fortified against the infidel theories they will later meet during their school period. The story of Daniel is one of the most popular with small children.

Christian parents should not leave to the Sunday School teacher alone, the task of instructing their children in these important events of scripture, while they themselves tell them fairy tales, full of folly, superstition and falsehood. If the Word of Christ is dwelling in us richly (Col. 3:16), it will surely pour out of our lips into the ears of our children. Try it, brother, with that little boy, or girl, of yours. Tell it in simple words. Act it, when you can, to help them visualize the things. Imitate the growls of the lions, as they circled Daniel, trying to open their mouths to eat him, but could not because God had closed them. This will not only make them think of Daniel's brave stand for God, but of the greatness of the God who could, and did, close the mouths of those ferocious animals.

The prophecy of Daniel was not given to impress us with the characteristics of that noble man, but to reveal God's "plan of the ages," as revealed to and recorded by him, yet much may be learned of God, and His ways with men, from the history of Daniel and his companions.

The Food of Babylon

Testings of various kinds came upon the four Hebrew youths who were distinguished from the others for their faithfulness to the commandments of God. Of the others (Daniel 1:6), nothing is said. Could it be that they fell before the temptation and therefore disappeared from history? Let us remember that no lasting gain is ever made by yielding to temptation. God honoured the brave four who refused the food of the Babylonians, because they were obeying His word. Likely it included the flesh of animals which were unclean, according to Levitical law.

The Magics of Babylon

When King Nebuchadnezzar's dream left him, he demanded of his wise men and magicians that they should recall to him the dream

and give the interpretation thereof, or die. But this was a test too great for magicians. This required the power of God. And Daniel and his companions, who were in touch with the living God, once more proved the benefit of knowing Him. Like all true men of God, they resorted to prayer and supplication, and were heard. This miracle saved their own lives and those of all the wise men of Babylon. Nor did they take any of the honour for this, but attributed their wisdom to the God whom they served.

The Idolatry of Babylon

The godly example of one person can greatly effect others. It would seem that Daniel may have been away on some business in connection with his position of state, when Nebuchadnezzar, in his greed for the admiration of others, reared an enormous image of himself and called upon all his subjects present to fall down and worship it. Without Daniel's presence to inspire them, his three companions stood firm and bowed not, though the burning, fiery furnace was evidently within sight. Is our testimony such as would inspire others with purpose to stand in opposition to the worship of Babylon today? Man-made worship is on every hand of us today. Are we going to take the course of least resistance, and go with the current of popular opinion, or will we dare to take the path we know is God's path for us?

The Prayers of Babylon

The pride of men has often worked their downfall, and that of others with them. Darius, the Medes, now King of Babylon, made a foolish decree, at the instigation of certain princes who were jealous of the position occupied by Daniel, the Jew. The plotted decree demanded that any one who should ask a petition of any except the king during thirty days, should be cast into the den of lions. Evidently these beasts were kept for the destruction of such as displeased the monarch, and had never been known to fail in accomplishing their task.

With many then, as today, their religion was a matter of convenience, rather than of conviction, and flattery of those who ruled was universal. Daniel was a praying man, and while he was undoubtedly faithful in his duties, as a servant, he refused to discontinue his well-established habit of praying three times a day to the God of heaven.

Evidently Daniel's enemies lurked beneath the open window of his home. As they expected, they found him praying, not to the king with flattering words, as they would have done, but to the unseen, living God. His accusation and trial were soon over, and he was hurried to the den, to be devoured by the hungry beasts. But, lo,

the morning light finds Daniel in health, in spite of their hunger, for his God (and ours) is the God who hears and answers prayer.

Have you never been intimidated by circumstances less exacting than this into leaving off prayer, until some more convenient time and place? "Them that honour Me I will honour" (1 Sam. 2:30). Not only was Daniel advanced in his employment because of his faithfulness to God, but, what was greater, the Lord revealed to him His holy will, God's prophetic outline of future events from that day until the "cutting off of Messiah"; the uprising of the antichrist; his covenant with Israel (once again a nation and able to make a covenant); his renunciation of that covenant in the midst of the week of years; then the destruction of that false Christ and his abomination (idol) upon the glorious appearing of God's Christ to reign, were all revealed to Daniel. All teachers of Bible prophecy have based their convictions upon what is made known in the Book of Daniel. The clock of prophecy was stopped with Israel's rejection of their Messiah, but today they once more are a nation, able to form a covenant, and the Church is nearing completion. When the church is called from earth that clock will start anew.

WE PREACH NOT OURSELVES

"We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord," said the Apostles. The world, as well as the saints, very soon see when one is preaching himself. "Why," they say, "that man talks mostly about himself and what he has come through, and what he has done." In a word, he is preaching *himself*. A little experience by the way may be very helpful, as most will readily admit, but it is *Christ lifted up* that draws the people to Himself. What we should do is *exalt Christ*. Let sinners be told what He has passed through, let Him be *exalted and extolled and be very high* (Isa. 52:13), and we need not doubt the Spirit will draw sinners to Christ.

We must not expect to get compliments for trying to live near to God. We shall often be laughed at and looked upon with coldness, but we must not be affected by that. We must remember that Christ was hated in the world, and if we so live that we stir up no opposition at all from the world, how can the Spirit of Christ be in us?

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"A man need not be an architect to live in a house" so a man need not understand all the Bible to be saved.

* * * *

Pride is a flower that grows in the devil's garden.

ISRAEL'S BENEDICTION

F. G. Watson

In Num. 6:22-27, we have what might be called Israel's benediction. One cannot read it with out longing that it might be our own happy experience, and that of the assembly of which we form a part, to enjoy it.

This portion marks off the first six chapters of Numbers as a definite section of the book. There are some portions that need to be studied carefully sentence by sentence and word by word. There are others that are better considered chapter by chapter. . . . And this portion of Numbers seems to lend itself rather to the latter method.

In 1 Cor. 10:11 we learn that "All these things happened unto them for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition". So we are right in seeking some spiritual lesson from every detail.

The camp of Israel is a beautiful picture of a scripturally gathered Assembly of the present dispensation. In these six chapters we get six things that, if attended to, will bring us into a condition so that the blessings of the last few verses of Chapter 6 may be our happy portion.

God has Redeemed Israel that they might be a peculiar people unto Himself. He kept them at Sinai from the third month of their history as His people, till the end of that year learning His way for them and in that time God gave them particular instruction, as to everything. On the first day of the second year they reared up the tabernacle made after God's instructions, and all was ready for the worship to start after God's order. Then the book of Leviticus comes in between the rearing of the tabernacle and the order of the camp and in it God gave them instruction as to the order of their service. In Numbers all is ready for the worship to start.

The first thing they had to do was to declare their pedigree, verse 18, that is they had to prove that they really belonged to Israel. So the first thing necessary before one can be received into a scripturally gathered assembly is they should be able to tell how, when and where they were saved, that is, "to give a reason of the hope that is in them." Some may not be too clear because of lack of teaching and others who can talk freely may be able to give a good story and yet not be really saved, so this requires spiritual discernment on the part of elder brethren. But those in responsibility should be satisfied that the applicant for fellowship is really saved. We will never get to that degree of spirituality that we will not make mistakes but it is better to err on the side of grace than severity and God will give wisdom as needed if we wait on Him.

In chapter two, each tribe in Israel was allotted a definite place in the camp by God and each kept their place without any jealousy

or friction. So each one in God's assembly should seek to find the place they are fitted of God to fill and seek to fill it for God. The camp was divided into four sections under four different standards, three tribes under each standard. The scripture does not tell us what was on these various standards but Jewish tradition says the standard of the tribe of Judah had on it a lion ("The lion of the tribe of Judah"), the standard of Reuben had on it a man; that of Ephraim had an ox and that of Dan had an eagle. These four figures are similar to the four faces of Ezck. 1:10 and Rev. 4:7. These would speak to us of the four gospels in which we have a four-fold view of Christ as King of Israel (The Lion); Mark, Christ the perfect servant answering to the Ox; Luke, as the Son of Man answering to the figure of a man; and the eagle on the ensign of Dan, Christ as the Son of God as John brings Him before us. The eagle can soar so high as to be out of view yet has keen sight and can see a small object on the earth. In the four we have Christ in the midst of His people and His people gathered unto Himself.

In Chapter 3, we have the Levites numbered in connection with *the Priesthood* from a month old and upward, which would surely remind us that we become priests as soon as we are saved. We learn from 1 Peter 2, that the same people that are addressed as new born babes, are told that they are priests to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. The sacrifices we offer are "the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name." Another sacrifice is the giving of our substance of which we read, "With such sacrifices God is well pleased." (Heb. 13:15-16).

In Numbers 4, we have the Levites numbered *for service* from thirty to fifty years old. This would suggest that God wants the best of our lives and not the dregs. They were divided into three sections. The Kohathites, the Gershonites and the Merarites and these three divisions would speak to us of the three gifts still with the church. The Apostles and Prophets are in the foundation so we have now only the evangelist, pastor and teacher remaining with us for the perfecting of the saints and the work of the ministry (Eph. 4:11).

We can identify them by the work allotted to each. They are mentioned here in the order of the taking down of the Tabernacle, but we will look at them in the order of the erecting of it, for every time it was put up it pictured the planting of a new assembly gathered to the name of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the pattern.

First of all the Merarites came along bearing the silver sockets which they laid down on the sands of the desert. This would speak of the evangelist going into a new place and preaching the gospel. Then they stood the boards upon the sockets, each board having two

tenons or hands by which they were secured to the sockets. This would speak of sinners laying hold by faith on the value of Christ's death for them and thus they are put on redemption ground. Then the bars were put in place that bound them all together and thus they had the beginning of new dwelling place for God.

The Gershonites then came along and put the various curtains on the boards to protect them from the elements — rain, wind, the scorching rays of the sun, etc. This speaks of the work of the pastor that is so necessary for the blessing and preservation of the young in Christ. Alas how often this is neglected to the detriment of the work!

The Kohathites then came along bearing the furniture of the sanctuary, the Ark, the Table of shewbread, the golden Altar, and the Candlestick, placed them in order, and all was ready for the worship of Jehovah again. This would tell us of the work of the teacher who instructs the new born soul in the Godly order necessary for God's presence in the midst of His people.

In Chapter 5:1-3 we have the command to use discipline in the camp, "in the Midst whereof I dwell", and they are commanded to put three different persons out of the camp because of their unfitness for the holy presence of God. The leper would speak of moral evil such as we read of in 1 Cor. 5. He that "hath and issue" would speak of doctrinal evil such as we have in 1 Tim. 1:20, and defined for us in 2 Tim. 2:17-18. One cannot hold evil doctrine without it issuing from them. Lastly, we have "one defiled by the dead". That would speak of a case such as we have in Matt. 18:15-17. A small matter that did not need to become serious but by adding stubbornness and rebellion to the sin, it becomes serious, for "rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry." (1 Sam. 15:23). These three unfit characters had to be put outside the camp so that the conscious presence of God could be realized.

In Chapter 6, we have the Nazarite brought before us with all the helpful teaching, reminding us that if we are going to continue to be conscious of God's presence in our midst as an assembly of God we must maintain a distinct separation from the world in every form, social, political, commercial, fraternal and RELIGIOUS, for God will not identify Himself with evil or sin.

If we attend to these six things we can count on the blessings of Chapter 6:22-27 being ours. "And the Lord spake unto Moses saying, "Speak unto Aaron and unto his sons saying, On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them, the Lord bless thee, and keep thee; the Lord make His face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up His countenance upon thee; and give thee peace, and they shall put My Name upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them. May this be our happy experience.

HOW A MURDERER WAS SAVED

L. E. McBain

During the summer of 1955, while Brother Norman Crawford and I were conducting tent meetings in Fremont, Ohio, I accompanied Mr. Harry Hyde, a Christian business man, on a visit to the county jail which was his regular service each week. It was here I met Samuel Tannyhill who was awaiting trial for the crime of murder. He had been in trouble with the law since he was eleven years old and now at twenty-six he was a murderer!

As he talked with us through the bars of his cell, I felt drawn to him. He had been given a testament by my friend on a previous occasion and he began to ask some very intelligent questions, revealing the fact that he was searching the scriptures. As we left the jail I remarked that I would not be surprised if he got saved, and this came about a few months later.

After his trial and subsequent sentence to death in the electric chair in the Ohio State Penitentiary, he was taken to that institution and put in death row. After reaching that dismal cell, he found Christ as his Saviour and a letter to some friends was published in the Fremont paper as follows:

"I prayed much, but my prayers never got out of my cell. I asked for help but hung on to the world with both hands. For three days there was no more miserable soul on earth than I was. I prayed and cried and prayed again but only became the more miserable. On November 4th, 1955, I made one more try to reach God, who could give me peace of mind. I got on my knees and truly confessed every sin I could think of and cast myself on God's mercy and it was then I fully understood the love of God in giving His Son for me. That night I slept soundly for the first time in many days and next morning I testified to my fellow prisoners that Jesus had saved me. I was overheard by a guard who told me that he was saved too, and he encouraged me to continue testifying for Christ. I am in a cell in death row, but I am more free here than I ever was in the streets. I have no fear of death for it is but a step closer to Jesus."

After his conversion, he wrote to his lawyer, who had been appointed by the court, and told him he was saved and he did not desire him to appeal his case for he was guilty and was resigned to his fate. Three judges ruled that he could not dismiss his lawyer because the court had appointed him. Extracts from two letters written to his lawyer reveal some exercise and growth in grace. These also appeared in the Fremont paper and are as follows:

"I trust this letter will serve notice to you and the court that of this date your services as my attorney are no longer needed. My life I give to God and by so doing I give up the world completely. All my

life I have searched for but one thing, peace of mind. This I have found in Christ Jesus. At long last, under the shadow of death, I have found what I could not find in my twenty-six years in Satan's service. God's Holy Son has made an offer to all and I am happy and thankful to say I am among such.

My Lord and Saviour tells me in His Word Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth. I can't be among this number by fighting for right or wrong in my case. God knows what happened and he heard every word in the courtroom. I know if God wants me to live He will put it on some one's heart to open a way. My job is not to ask man for help, or do what I think best. My work is very simple and it is to trust God with all my heart and ask His will to be done. From then on, He runs the show and you can be as sure as your law books He will have His way. By reading God's word, it is plain to see that many men took something they couldn't give back. Cain took a life because of jealousy, Moses because of pity, David because of lust, and Paul because of hatred. Did any of these people have a good case to carry to court? I think not! I am no different than these men in God's sight and we must all come to Christ for forgiveness."

A letter appeared in many American papers which Tannyhill wrote to a former pal who also awaited execution in West Virginia, in which he said, "I am one fellow who knows how you feel, for I too await my turn to die for the crime of murder, and am in cell number three in Ohio State Prison in Columbus, Ohio. I see by the newspaper that you were born in 1929 and so was I and since we share the same fate I am wondering if you have found Jesus as your Saviour? We have been bad men but now all we have is a number and a date to die, but it isn't how we started life or lived it that counts, for the main thing is how are we ending it?"

At the time of writing, Samuel Tannyhill has been given a stay of execution which was scheduled for August 4th, and it may please God to permit him to live to be a testimony for Christ in the prison. May all who visit prisons and hospitals and give out tracts be encouraged to keep at it for the scripture says "cast thy bread upon the waters for thou shalt find it after many days" (Ecc. 11:1), and may the unsaved reader realize that the grace of God is extended to all sinners and that there is no difference in regard to man's guilt before God as well as no difference in the grace of God extended to all men. Rom. 3:22, 23; Rom. 10:12, 13.

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We should beware of "little sins", there is a Latin proverb which says, "We perish by permitted things."

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Who swims in sin shall sink in sorrow.

WHEN WE FEEL LIKE GIVING UP

Mervyn Paul

Nearly every Christian feels that way at times. Still *we must not even think* of giving up the struggle to follow our Lord! Life-time is Training-time for Reigning-time, you know: Luke 19:11-27; 2 Tim. 2:12. Of course, to many of my young friends, Life seems terribly hard. But after all, we Christians do not expect to be "carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease". The Lord Jesus said: "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever will lose his life for My sake, the same shall save it"; Luke 9:24. Nevertheless, to ever so many of us, to be asked to be willing, by His grace, to sacrifice *our* dreams . . . *our* plans . . . *our* ideas . . . of what we want . . . *our* ambitions . . . *our* fierce desires to be independent and to live our lives in *our own* way . . . to let go every hindrance to the acceptance of God's plan for our lives, seems too much altogether. Yet we must admit that Gal. 6:8 really is true. And the Rich Young Ruler lost out because he clung to his own ideas of financial security: Mark 10:24.

— Oh, certainly, it isn't "natural" — even for Christians — to feel like that. The Self that is in us expects, demands, that we shall be "natural" in every way. And to be asked to deny all these "natural" inclinations — well, we know it to be necessary respecting things immoral, dishonest, or of evil report — but that is quite far enough for the Flesh to be willing to go. In addition, Reason (or, is it?) reminds us that, after all, we are only human, and can't be expected to speak, act, and live as if we were perfect. Thus it comes to pass that, having quieted our consciences in this manner, we comfortably go on just as before. (We hadn't intended to do anything else, any way). But then, one day, we bump into the startling truth of 1 John 2:6: "He that saith he abideth in Him *ought himself also so to walk even as He walked*" . . . and there it is — so plain! And the trouble is there just isn't any way of talking around it. It means exactly what it says.

Right away after that, so often, there comes the reaction, "IT'S HOPELESS! I never can live up to that! And I don't believe any Christian ever does, either . . . What about yourself, Mr. Paul? You are always preaching at us, but how well do *you* manage in walking as the Lord Jesus walked?"

Well now, supposing I were to tell you that I was getting along splendidly (which would not be true) would it help you, do you think?

Or if I told you that I'm having a daily battle to aim at it (which would be true) would that help you, do you suppose? Would not my confession be likely to encourage you to argue, "Well, if he finds it hard even to aim at such a walk, what can he expect of young Chris-

tians like us?" Or, it may be, you might say, "If he finds it hard there's no use in my hoping to attain to it. I might just as well give up."

Oh no. Beloved! Not one of us, young or old, *ever must give up!* What I seek to "put over" in this article is that we have to keep on fighting down ourselves, every day, every hour, in order to walk as He walked — in our measure. And for this struggle *we can be, must be*, effectively prepared by constant RENEWAL (2 Cor. 4:16) through the Word. Many Christians do not even pretend to equip themselves for the fray. Honour bright, now, is it not true our usual "preparation" consists of:—

—*Hoping* things may go better today than on bad days;

—*Praying* that we shall not have trouble today;

—*Deciding* to try to avoid all of it that we can?

Queer, isn't it, that a hopeful optimism, plus a reliance on meeting troubles, or temptations, as best we can whenever they may arise, should be about all the preparation for conflict that most of us ever think of having? This attitude seems somewhat similar to that of old-time Chinese soldiers who, we are told, sometimes marched to battle praying loudly, but armed only with fans!

—**THE WORLD** — with its allurements, its pleas to be one with it; to live, dress, think, talk and act like its own;

—**THE FLESH** — with its self-will, pride, ambitions, resentments, bad temper, fear of being considered different, or queer, its envyings, jealousies, evil-speakings, slangy talk, desires to have more (covetousness), spitefulness, sulky, irritable, or frivolous moods, its laziness or bossy-ness, and readiness to nurse a grudge, or hurt feeling and self-pity;

—**THE DEVIL** — so expert at making snares appear to be harmless little affairs, at framing excuses that really sound like valid reasons, at lulling consciences troubled about sins; who never helps us to read our Bibles, to pray, or to do good — but either will blister us for our failures, or else urge their unimportance lest we should try to mend our ways; who frightens us unreasonably when we even think of leaving all the choices with the Lord; who so savours everything belonging to sin-spoiled mankind (Matt. 16:23) that he does all he can to keep our minds occupied with what **PEOPLE** are saying, or doing: in order to shut out of our interest, so far as possible, the things of God; and who so often visits us in the guise of an Angel bringing us Light;

—These enemies we are likely to meet, in differing forms every day we live! Then "how shall we do in the swelling of Jordan?" Note 1 Chron. 12:15.

Let us be certain in our minds that not only shall we need to pray for the faith which will produce a courage like that of David's men, but we need the whole armour of God, also. No doubt you have listened to addresses on Eph. 6:10-18 — perhaps a number of times. But tell me this: Did they do you any particular good? For example, do you really believe the first eight words of verse 12? It tells us flatly that it is not other people who cause us our troubles.

—What would you say to that?

I won't try to discuss the protective armour, but let me make one suggestion re the Sword of the Spirit — the Word of God. It is that you **TEACH YOURSELF** to say over, and over, and over (until they grip your being and quicken your spirit) such "quick and powerful" words as the following:

Luke 9:62: When you feel like quitting.

Matt. 11:26: When tempted to kick about your circumstances.

Philemon 25: When you are getting indignant, or angry.

Psa. 23:1: When you are worried. Also Psa. 138:8a.

Psa. 56:3: When you are afraid. Also, Psa. 27:1.

Rom. 8:28: When you feel discouraged, or "let down".

Phil. 4:13: When tempted to hide behind "I can't."

Lam. 3:26: When tired of waiting for God to act. Also Isa. 49:23b.

Heb. 13:5b: When feeling lonely.

Matt. 11:6: When He does not seem to heed your prayers.

These are but a few of many short passages of Scripture — easily memorized — which, if repeated over and over many times (a minor form of Meditation) will be proved to be Weapons for Overcoming charged with Holy Spirit power. They also supply strength in the battles to REPLACE the very bad habit of giving in to "our nature" (flesh) with the good habit of giving in to the Lord. Others are learning to make use of the energy-imparting Word . . . why not you? — But don't waste time arguing about this suggestion. And don't just read these verses. Make a note of them on a blank page in your Bible. Learn them by heart. Then you will have something stored away upon which the Spirit can draw whenever you are assailed . . . and give up — NEVER!

There is a Dutch proverb which says, "Money lost, nothing lost; courage lost, much lost; honour lost, more lost; soul lost, all lost."

"HE GETS WELL PAID FOR IT"*A. T. Stewart*

Such were the words of a scoffer at an open-air gospel meeting, as an aged servant of Christ stood forth to proclaim the glorious gospel without money and without price. The preacher upon hearing this said to the crowd, "That's right! I'll get well paid for it now and also at the judgment seat of Christ." As God's people we can take the words of the scoffer and say of all our service, whether it be for saint or sinner, "We will get well paid for it."

When the gospel is proclaimed, publicly or from house to house, apostolic fashion (Acts 20:20), we serve the Lord Christ. What a dignity this puts upon our service! Then when sinners receive the gospel and get saved we share His joy (Luke 15:6). On the other hand, when they refuse the message, as many of them do, we are still unto God a sweet savour of Christ (2 Cor. 2:15).

Carrying the thought of reward still further, we will get well paid for any service we render to God's people. The Good Samaritan as he is called in Luke 10 promised the innkeeper he would repay him when he returned for looking after the man that was wounded and half-dead on the Jericho road.

The Apostle Peter in 1 Peter 1:1-5 exhorts the elders to feed the flock of God and not to lord it over God's heritage. What a work this is! What wisdom, patience and grace is needed to shepherd and strengthen and guard the flock and to seek out those who have strayed away. A special reward awaits all such service. "And when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." (1 Peter 5:4). This is something the preachers won't get and yet with some, preaching seems to be the sum total of all service, judging by their desire to be at it. Timothy seems to have graduated to be a shepherd, as the Apostle Paul speaks of him serving in the gospel with him (Phil. 2:22).

Hospitality surely is a field for the sisters especially, as well as the brethren. In Matthew 25:35 the Lord says, 'I was a stranger and ye took me in,' . . . 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me' (Verse 40). This refers no doubt to a coming day, when that godly remnant of Jews will be persecuted under the Anti-Christ. Still the principle applies today as well as that coming day. He will richly reward all who shew kindness to His people.

In our suffering for Christ, we have the promise of a great recompense of reward (Hebrews 10:35). The Apostle sees the danger of the Hebrew Christians casting away their confidence, after being perse-

cuted for Christ. So today we need patience or endurance to suffer reproach for the name of Christ.

Brethren, we serve a good Master. His promise is "Behold I come quickly and my reward is with me" (Rev. 22:12). Nothing will be forgotten in that day! "And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward" (Matt. 10:42).

FLESHLY ARGUMENT

Let us beware of losing time and ruffling our own spirits by ungracious discussions with the world or with fellow-believers. "Foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they gender strifes" (2 Tim. 2:23). Beware of arguing with the cold, calculating, worldly man, who so enjoys to trap the young believer with some kind of carnal reasoning. Whenever you begin to fight the world with the world's weapons, you need not be surprised if you suffer loss in the encounter.

You may find many who profess to be born again who fight with carnal weapons. They delight in argument. If they fall in with a young believer they give him a thrust about something and try to disturb him with some foolish question. Avoid such people. Be thankful for all who seek to help you with a "Thus saith the Lord." It was written of Christ, "He shall not strive." "As He is, so are we."

It will help us in interpreting the experience of Job to see that it came, not to Job alone, but to every man greatly used of God. The circumstances differ but the essence is the same — God is realized, self-strength is turned into helplessness, new power and blessing are given. Joshua fell at the feet of the Man with the drawn sword (Josh. 5:13-15); Isaiah must cry, "Woe is me" (Isa. 6:5-8), to be cleansed and recommissioned; Jeremiah must learn that he "cannot speak" before the Lord will touch his mouth (Jer. 1:6-10; Ezekiel, prostrated by the glory, must fall on his face in the collapse of self before the Spirit can fill him and Jehovah can say, "I send thee" (Ezek. 2:1-10); Daniel must say, "I saw . . . and my comeliness was turned in me unto corruption" (Dan. 10:5-12). Even John, the beloved, before the vision of the glorified Christ must fall "at His feet as one dead" before the "right hand" can be laid upon him, and he can hear the "fear not".

LEARNING THE TRUTH FROM GOD

There is a new generation arising and coming into prominence in many assemblies of God's people, who have come into the position they occupy more by force of example than by conviction from the personal examination of the Word. They have inherited rather than "bought" the truth, which many of their fathers fought to win and suffered to retain. The tendency is for such to hold what they do with a feeble, half-hearted grasp, and in the hour of testing they let it slip or forsake it.

Nothing is really a blessing or a power to the soul, save that which is learned from God, and held in the firm conviction that it is God's truth, which can never be changed. Let it be our business to "search" (John 5:39) and "examine" (Acts 17:11) the Word of God, and thus learn the truth for ourselves. Then it will become a power in the heart and an unction in the life and ministry. It will not be something to barter or trifle with, or to change with every passing wind of doctrine. It will stand firm in the soul, and faith will ever hold it fast in communion with its Divine Author.

"His truth at all times firmly stood,
And shall from age to age endure."

NOTES ON SCRIPTURAL HYMNS AND THEIR WRITERS

Hector Alves

(P. P. Bliss, continued. Part 2)

"Free from the law, oh, happy condition!
Jesus hath bled, and there is remission,
Cursed by the law, and bruised by the Fall!
Christ hath redeemed us once for all."

"What shall I give my husband for a Christmas present?" asked Mrs. P. P. Bliss of a friend, just before the holiday season, in 1871. At the suggestion of the friend, she presented her husband with a bound volume of "Things New and Old" edited by C. H. Mackintosh. From reading in this book an article on the believers' deliverance by the death of Christ from the curse of the law, and his own death with Christ setting him entirely free from the Law's domain, (Romans 7 and 8, and Hebrews 10), Bliss saw the blessedness of the Christian's position in relation to God. To give expression to the joy of his heart at this deliverance, he sat down and wrote this hymn.

Another popular gospel hymn from this writer's abundantly productive pen is —

"'Tis the promise of God
Full salvation to give,
Unto all who on Jesus,
His Son, will believe."

In compiling his book, *Gospel Songs*, in 1874, Mr. Bliss desired to publish in it the well known hymn, "Hallelujah! Thine the glory", because of its popularity at that time. He was refused this permission by the owners of the copyright, and so to supply the want, he wrote —

"Hallelujah! 'tis done," etc.

both the words and the tune. Hundreds of souls have been led to Christ through the singing of this hymn; we could relate some whom we have seen and known. So the church has reason to rejoice over that refusal.

"Whosoever heareth! shout, shout the sound!
Send the blessed tidings all the world around!
Spread the joyful news wherever man is found:
Whosoever will may come."

During the winter of 1869-70 Henry Moorehouse, a young man from England, known as 'The Boy Preacher', offered to preach for D. L. Moody in his Hall in Chicago. Mr. Moody, although by no means anxious that he should do so, thinking him too young for preaching, finally consented. The result was that the place became packed with people for seven nights in succession, so great was the attractiveness of Moorehouse's preaching. On each of the seven nights he took the same text, John 3:16, and preached on the same subject, the love of God for the sinner. Moody said that these addresses altered in many respects his own style of preaching, and they also deeply impressed P. P. Bliss who was present. As an outcome of what he had heard from Moorehouse from that verse, he wrote— "Whosoever will may come." And whenever Bliss sang this hymn, he always put the emphasis on the word "WHOSOEVER".

"Repeat the story o'er and o'er,
Of grace so full and free;
I love to hear it more and more,
Since grace has rescued me."

The words of this hymn were suggested to Mr. Bliss when reading notes of his friend and sometime fellow-labourer in the gospel, James Brookes of St. Louis. Mr. Brookes had written on the visit of the queen of Sheba to king Solomon, and remarked on her words, "Behold the half was not told me!" Mr. Bliss then wrote the hymn, the chorus of which runs,

"The half was never told,
Of grace divine, so wonderful," etc.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Note: It is a pleasure to receive helpful and edifying questions, and we welcome all such, whether they be for the unfolding of some portion of the Scriptures, or relative to some assembly problem. Foolish and unedifying questions are a waste of time and postage stamps. For over eight years we have endeavoured to answer every question received, either through these columns, or else to the questioner direct by mail. Send all questions to Hector Alves, and please include name and address.

Question. What ought the assembly to do with a young sister who is in fellowship, who marries an unsaved man when she is well aware that he is not a child of God? Ought any action to be taken? Don't you think the brethren should read her out of the assembly?

Answer. Yes, some action ought to be taken, but there is no scriptural authority for excommunicating such a person. The first action is for a spiritual and well taught brother to bring before this sister who is contemplating such a marriage, the wrong of keeping company with an unsaved man, and the unscripturalness of the unequal yoke. This is plainly taught in 2 Cor. 6:14 to 7:1, as well as in other portions of the New Testament. Also, the matter ought to call for the prayers of all in the assembly, to the end that the sister in question might see the error of her ways, and break off keeping company with the unsaved man. If the course is still persisted in, and the sister shows no inclination of submitting to the Word of God, then she ought to be warned of the consequences. The disciplinary action to be taken is to be of an internal nature, but not excommunication from the assembly. If this sister has been teaching a class of children in the Sunday School, that should be taken from her, as she is not fit for this service. Those who have been showing real fellowship with her ought in turn to show reserve, thus manifesting their disapproval of her ways. The exhortation is, "that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother (this includes sisters as well) that walketh disorderly" (2 Thess. 3:6), that the erring one may feel and realize their wrong doing, and that they "may be ashamed" (verse 14), also that others may fear (1 Tim. 5:20). When the marriage has taken place, the sister is then in God's hands. As a Father He may chastise His erring child; and He may also come in, overrule in grace, and save the unsaved husband. But the erring sister is sure to suffer loss, both now, and at the Judgment Seat of Christ. We have known of excommunication being carried out in such cases, but that is without scriptural authority. Such extreme action usually results in the erring saint being driven away altogether and for all time, and produces discord in the assembly.—H.A.

BADDECK, N.S.—A. Aiken helped by B. Carmichael are preaching the Gospel.

WEST DALHOUSIE, N.S.—J. McCracken and D. Petherick are trying to get an opening for meetings here. Mrs. J. McCracken who has been laid aside for a long time is improving in health.

NEWFOUNDLAND—In the boat which Herb Harris obtained for this purpose, the first trip has been made over the north shore of Newfoundland and the coast of Labrador. About 1,000 miles of coastline was covered and at least two meetings were held daily at each of the fishing villages which were visited and as high as four meetings in the day. Some definite blessing was seen in the Gospel and the brethren felt that the work was well worth while. Accompanying Herb Harris for the greater part of the time were Douglas Howard, Bert Joyce and George Campbell. Don Moffat, who was with them at the early part of the trip, took sick and had to return.

U.S.A.

FREMONT, OHIO—Continuing the work in this district, N. Crawford and J. Lipke had a tent pitched 3 miles from Bellevue. They were much encouraged by a good number professing to be saved.

SEATTLE, WASH.—W. Warke had a most profitable week of ministry here after preaching the Gospel near Bellingham. G. G. Johnston and J. Frith were expected for a visit after the Arlington conference.

HITESVILLE, IOWA.—O. Smith and Harold Paisley of N. Ireland have been having large meetings with some blessing in the Gospel. Brother Paisley expects to start meetings in Pape Ave., Toronto, on Sept. 23rd with A. W. Joyce.

ARLINGTON, WASH.—"The conference was one of the largest and best for some years. We enjoyed having H. Paisley with us a week before the conference. A. S. Colburn."

Good reports have come in of well attended conferences in La Crosse, Wis.; Akron, Ohio; Orillia, Ont.; Sault Ste. Marie, Ont., and Michigan, and in Huntsville, Ont.

LA CROSSE, WIS.—The conference was good and the largest for years. 75 requests for prayer were read for the unsaved and for the sick.

WILMAR, MINN.—O. Smith and L. DeBuhr were encouraged in tent work by the salvation of some souls. Similar blessing was seen in the tent at Sparta, Wis., where brethren Jamison and Elliot were in tent work. There is some interest in meetings by L. Brandt and H. Wahls in Ostrander, Minn. S. Hamilton and S. Mick had a good spell at Lynxville where two professed and interest continues. A. T. Stewart had 3 meetings at Blue River after the La Crosse conference. There was some interest in Madison where C. Yost was in tent work.

JAPAN—An interesting letter has been received from our brother Jim Currie (1412 Higashi 1 Chome, Magome Machi, Ota Ku, Tokyo, Japan), which lack of space forbids giving in detail. He and his family returned four months ago to Japan. At first they felt like moving out of Tokyo, but felt led back to Fuchu, where he had previously laboured and saw a hall built in 1954. They were encouraged by seeing the assembly going on in the right ways of the Lord. Fuchu is a city of 50,000 people. Since returning he took three weeks in the north visiting four of the assemblies. At Aomori he visited the nearby leprosarium where there are 45 lepers who are professing Christians. It was a touching sight to see these dear souls, many of them terribly disfigured, hardly able to enunciate properly, singing praises and giving thanks to God. Brother Currie expected to commence Gospel meetings in a tent in Fuchu on August 5th and desired prayer for this new effort.

CONFERENCES

WATERBURY, CONN.—We expect, D.V., to have our annual Convention on Oct. 28 and 29 in the Gospel Hall, Spencer and Phoenix Aves., Waterbury, with the usual order of meetings. Corr. m. Batterton, R.F.D. 2, Greystone Rd., Terryville, Conn. (Note new address).

MANCHESTER, IOWA.—The Conference will be held, D.V., October 6 and 7 with a prayer meeting on Oct. 5th. Accommodations as usual. Corr. Dan Lubben, 505 E. Butler St., Manchester, Ia.

DETROIT, MICH.—The annual Conference will be, D.V., Nov. 17 and 18 at 10 a.m., and 2.30 and 7.30 p.m., preceded by a prayer meeting Nov. 16 at 7.30 p.m. All meetings will be in the Gospel Hall, 7345 West Chicago Blvd., (corner of Prairie) Detroit, Mich. Corr. Alexander Stewart, 9950 Pierson, Detroit 28, Mich., U.S.A.

CLINTON, ONT.—The Conference will be held, D.V., on October 14 in the Joseph St. Gospel Hall with a prayer meeting at 8 p.m. on Oct. 13. Lord's Day at 10.30 a.m. and 2.30 and 7 p.m. Basket lunch will be served in the hall. Those walking in the old paths welcome to minister. Corr. Sam McDonald, Box 329, Clinton, Ont.

CREEMORE, ONT.—The Creemore-Strongville Conference will be D.V., on Oct. 7 and 8 at 10.30 a.m., 2.30 and 7.30 p.m. in the Municipal Building on Main St., with a prayer meeting at 7.30 p.m. Oct. 6 in the Gospel Hall Corr. H. J. Clark, Box 136, New Lowell, Ont.

WITH CHRIST

DECKERVILLE, MICH.—Our sister, Mrs. Thomas Hooper, went home on August 11 at the age of 73. Saved in 1910, in fellowship with the Assembly here for many years, she lived a quiet, godly life. L. E. McBain spoke to the many gathered at the funeral.

ABBOTSFORD, B.C.—Our dear sister, Mrs. Margaret Anderson, went suddenly to be with the Lord on June 17 in her 78th year. She was saved 57 years ago at meetings held by Mr. J. Money Penny in N. Dakota and has been in fellowship in the Abbotsford Assembly since its beginning in 1918, maintaining a good testimony to the end.

TORONTO, ONT.—Mrs. Christina Dickson Hewitt was called home suddenly on July 16, aged 74. She was saved in 1901 in a school-house while her brother, J. T. Dickson was preaching. She was in happy fellowship in Adam St., Belfast, and for the last 35 years in the Junction Assembly in Toronto. Mr. R. McCrory gave a timely message to the large company at the funeral, helped by Mr. Norris of N. Ireland.

PETERSBURG, Va.—Mrs. Annie Donaldson passed into the presence of the Lord at the age of 76 in N. Syracuse, N.Y., after a lingering illness. She was saved in 1905 as her brother-in-law, Mr. J. T. Dickson read to her from the epistle to the Romans. She lived a godly consistent life. A. W. Dewhurst and her nephew, Joseph Dickson spoke at the funeral.

WAUBAUSHENE, ONT.—Our brother, Lambert A. Hill went to be with Christ, Sept. 1, aged 68 years. He was saved 56 years ago and went on steadily and was a real help in the assembly. The funeral which was large was held in Orillia. The Gospel was preached by F. G. Watson and G. Jones at the funeral.

NORTH VANCOUVER, B.C.—Our dear brother Daniel Syme was called suddenly on Aug. 28 while on a visit from Scotland. He was saved 50 years ago and in happy fellowship in the home assemblies.

LAKESHORE, ONT.—Our dear brother, Henry Hodgson, died on Aug. 19 at the age of 85 years. He was saved in 1894, and for 61 years has gone on with a steady course, standing for the truth of God. He was born on the farm across the road from where he lived and died. His homecall is a great loss to the assembly where his wise counsel has been a help for many years. The funeral was attended by about 400 people and the Word was faithfully spoken by F. G. Watson, helped by A. T. Stewart and H. Dobson.

GLENCOE, MICH.—On August the 11th, at the age of 93, our sister, Mrs. Mary McDonald, passed into the Lord's presence just three weeks after her brother, Duncan McGeachy. She was saved at an early age and in happy fellowship for over 70 years, and given to hospitality. The funeral, which was large, was taken by J. Govan and A. T. Stewart.

RUTH and TIDINGS

BEHOLD I HAVE SET BEFORE THEE AN OPEN DOOR

AND
HAST
KEPT
MY
WORD

AND HAST NOT DENIED
MY NAME

Rev. 3:18

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EDITOR ----- A. W. JOYCE, 26 Munro Blvd., Willowdale, Ont., Canada.
ASSOCIATE EDITORS --- F. G. WATSON, 92 Regal Rd., Toronto, Ont.
G. G. JOHNSTON, 140 Woodycrest Ave., Toronto, Ont.
HECTOR ALVES, 338 W. King Edward Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C.

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CHANGES OF ADDRESS

The new address of Mr. A. Douglas is 27 Battlefield Dr., Stoney Creek, Ont.

The address of the correspondent of the Port Arthur assembly is now Mr. L. Coldridge, 510 Tupper St., Port Arthur, Ont.

The new correspondent of the Birchcliff Assembly is Mr. Percy Hamah, 144 Brooklawn Ave., Toronto 13, Ont.

TIDINGS

VANCOUVER, B.C.—Brethren Peacock and A. Bergsma are preaching in the Gilbert Rd. Hall in Lu Lu Island.

MERVIN, SASK.—C. H. Willoughby is improving somewhat after a serious operation and has been giving help in Mervin and Louisville.

PRINCE ALBERT, SASK.—J. Ronald and A. Wilson are faithfully preaching the Gospel.

KENORA, ONT.—R. Boyle is preaching the Word here.

PORT ARTHUR, ONT. — G. G. Johnston visited on his way East. At present Jim Hutchinsohn (North Ireland) is ministering the Word. He and G. Reager had some good Gospel meetings in Sault Ste. Marie when some young people professed to be saved.

CALLANDER, ONT.—R. Booth is preaching the Gospel with some encouragement in this new place.

DUNCHURCH, ONT.—S. Simms and Earl Pears expected to sow the seed in this district. B. Widdifield returned to the Charlton district to help in the care of his aged mother and to give help also to the assemblies in this part.

RAVENSWOOD, ONT.—F. G. Watson is giving appreciated help in the ministry of the Word in the Lakeshore assembly.

BARRIE, ONT.—J. Clark and J. Adams expected to start Gospel meetings.

TORONTO, ONT.—Harold Paisley (North Ireland) and A. W. Joyce are being encouraged in the Pape Ave. Hall with large attendances rightly and some souls professing to be saved.

PENIAC, N.B.—G. Heidman and W. Cudmore saw a good interest in a school-house and some professed to be saved. The latter has gone for Gospel Meetings to Port Bickerton.

DALHOUSIE WEST—John McCracken and D. Petherick continue with two or three nights per week, trusting that souls will be delivered in spite of the opposition.

JOYFULNESS

A. W. Joyce

A joyless Christian is a contradiction of Christianity. When people are saved, it is by means of the glad tidings of the Gospel. Everything connected with the Gospel (except its rejection) is connected with joy. Out of the unspeakable sorrows and sufferings of the Cross of Calvary, the Lord Jesus rose from the dead and God made Him "full of joy with His countenance". All Heaven rejoiced at His ascension to welcome the rising Conqueror after the battle of Calvary as we may learn from Psalm 24, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in. Who is this King of Glory? The Lord strong and mighty, The Lord mighty in battle."

When the sinner believes "the joyful news of sins forgiven, of Hell subdued, of peace with Heaven," that saved sinner rejoices with a joy hitherto unknown in all his past experience. At the same time all Heaven is stirred as the Shepherd cries, "Rejoice with Me; for I have found My sheep which was lost" (Luke 15:6). The Father says, "It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad" (Luke 15:32). The angels rejoice, for we read in the same chapter (verse 10), "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." The people of God rejoice at the Salvation of souls, see Acts 15:3. The person who cannot rejoice in the salvation of sinners is either away from God, or is not saved at all. A happy Christian, radiating the joy of the Lord is the best advertisement for the Gospel.

A remarkable Old Testament illustration of what a Christian should be is found in the birth and blessing of Asher, and the tribe of which he was the progenitor. At the birth of Asher he brought great joy to the heart of his mother. The Scripture records at his birth, "And Leah said, Happy am I, for the daughters will call me blessed; and she called his name Asher" (Gen. 30:13). In this verse a play is made upon the word *happy*. "Happy am I, for the daughters will call me happy (R.V.); and she called his name Asher" or happiness.

Some 300 years later, Moses, ere he died, blessed the children of Israel. Though Asher is the last of the tribes to be mentioned, the blessing of Asher is one of the best of all the twelve. There are five parts to this wonderful blessing.

1. "Let Asher be blessed with children."
2. "Let him be acceptable to his brethren."
3. "Let him dip his foot in oil."
4. "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass."
5. "As thy days, so shall thy strength be."

Who are the spiritual Ashers or happy men and women to-day? They are those

(1) Whose sins have been forgiven. "Blessed (or happy) is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered" (Psalm 32:1). Indeed, New Testament revelation goes further because of accomplished redemption and sees the believer "Justified from all things," or cleared of every charge as if they had never sinned at all.

(2) They are those Christians who are enjoying communion with the Father and the Son.

Are we among these? If so we may also enjoy in a spiritual sense all the blessings of Asher which we have enumerated.

Fruitfulness

The first of the blessings was fruitfulness. "Let Asher be blessed with children." Something is missing in the life of every Christian who has not won at least one soul to Christ. Every Christian could be, and should be, a soul winner. The whole world would be stirred if every Christian on earth won a single soul for the Saviour in the remaining months of this year. How can I become a soulwinner? one may ask.

DESIRE IT SUFFICIENTLY, AND THEN GO IN FOR IT.

If you desire it, you will pray that God will make you one. You will search the Word of God that you may get the wisdom and the tools to go in for it. You will associate with spiritual Christians who are themselves soul winners. You will deny yourself, (for it does take self denial) and then you will get to work. If you do this you will not need to wait for the reward in a future day, (though that will be sure), but "God will pay you on the spot".

Fellowship

The second blessing was fellowship. "Let him be acceptable to his brethren." The true Asher will not be a "lone eagle" but will seek for and appreciate the fellowship of his brethren in the assembly of which he forms a part. The greatest men of the Old Testament and the New were men who longed for fellowship. Moses and Aaron, Elijah and Elisha, Paul and Barnabus, Paul and Silas, Paul and Timothy are examples of this. On one occasion Paul wrote, "I had no rest in my spirit because I found not Titus my brother" (2 Cor. 2:13). Even our blessed Lord longed for the fellowship of His own people and felt so keenly the desertion of the disciples. The Asher-like man will not be a "hedge-hog" he will not be a continual fault-finder, he will seek to foster and not to strain the bands of Christian friendship.

He will not be quick to give offence, nor quick to take offence, but he will be quick to forgive.

· SPIRITUAL WALK

“Let him dip his foot in oil.” We all know that oil is one of the outstanding types of the Holy Spirit of God. The believer’s walk down here before men and before God is most important. Gal. 5:25 says, “If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.” This means that our walk down here should be regulated and governed by the Spirit of God. The guidance of the Spirit is always in keeping with the Word of God and the example of the Lord Jesus when here upon earth. The Psalmist prayed, “Order my steps according to Thy Word” (Psalm 119:133). Peter tells us that Christ has left us an example that “we should follow His steps” (1 Peter 2:21). Connected with this we have next

Fitness for the Journey

“Thy shoes shall be iron and brass.” There was no “wear-out” to the provision that God made for His people through all their journeys. “Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years” (Deut. 8:4).

“Though thy way be long and dreary,
Eagle strength He’ll still renew;
Garments fresh and foot unwearied
Tell how God hath brought thee through.”

Let us go forth on our journey with our “feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace” (Eph. 6:15), being assured that God will provide for every exigency of our wilderness journey until the sand of the desert is exchanged for the glory and presence of God.

Strength for the Journey

The final promise is, ‘As thy days, so shall thy strength be.’ How often this promise has been a tower of strength to the people of God down through the generations. Mr. Newberry puts it, “as thy days, so shall thy sufficiency be.” The Revised Version translates it, “so shall thy rest be.” The pilgrim has proved all three thoughts to be true; throughout all the days God has given, day by day, strength for the journey, sufficiency to meet every rising need, and rest and refreshment to the weary traveller.

Well might Moses break forth in conclusion into the happy song of triumph, “Happy art thou, O Israel; Who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord” (Deut. 33:29). May the joy of the Lord be our strength — ‘Happy people, happy people, happy though despised and poor.’”

A PLANT OF RENOWN

Wm. Williams

“For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground,” Isa. 53:2. This is a prophetic utterance regarding the Lord’s first advent. How that blessed one grew up before his God no one knows. On the one hand it is written of him: “I am afflicted and ready to die from my youth up.” Ps. 88:15. Again on the other hand it is said of him: “And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.” Luke 2:52. In all those silent years we are sure that there was perfect harmony in that dual nature. The Romanists have a tradition that when he was a child he made little mud birds like the other boys but with this difference, he could throw them in the air and they would fly away! They also relate that as he worked in the carpenter’s shop and by mistake cut a piece of wood too short he could take it by the two ends and draw it out to the required length! But the Bible negates all these silly and puerile legends. In John 2:11 we read—“This *beginning* of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee.”

We know that, although veiled in flesh, he was “upholding all things by the Word of his power,” yet he never manifested that stupendous omnipotence until he was about thirty years of age. Were he a mere man he would have undoubtedly shown his prowess to an admiring humanity. But he held back, biding his Father’s time. His first miracle was wrought in the creatures and in harmony with the divine institution of marriage.

“And I will raise up for them a PLANT of RENOWN.” Ezek. 34:29. This is a glorious promise on the part of Jehovah to a people of a stiff neck and a rebellious heart. When we read through the Bible we do not pass over Ezekiel. Many of the Lord’s people never read Ezekiel as they say that there are too many wheels in it for them to understand! But it is part of God’s Word written for our learning. Amidst all the imprecations against the rebellious nation for their sin, impudence and idolatry, Jehovah makes from time to time a rift in the dark cloud of judgment and the glorious light shines through. Such is the passage we have cited. I will raise up for them a Plant of Renown. God did raise Him up; but they rejected and crucified Him. But he is coming again to free his earthly people from the sorrow and shame which has been heaped upon them” until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.” What will the Jews say and think when they see THE PLANT OF RENOWN? Joseph revealing himself to his brethren is a type of this. There was mutual weeping. There were tears of sorrow and tears of joy, (“They also that pierced Him

and all the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him." Rev. 1:7). Remember that the Plant of Renown is for Israel and not for the Church.

You will notice that all the figures of Christ the Messiah refer to the earth — "a root out of a dry ground" — "a plant of renown" and so on. We may think of Him as such surely, but for His Church the figures are heavenly and not connected with the earth. For example He is "the root and offspring of David" to Israel but "the bright and morning Star" to the Church. Let the Church then look up, away from the earth. Let us look not for signs and wonders which so thrill the "prophecy mongers" but for our blessed Lord —

"We wait to see the Morning Star appearing in glory bright.
This blessed hope illumines with beams most cheering
The hours of night."

NIGHT THOUGHTS

Through the tangle of the forset
Will the Lord our pathway clear,
If we follow in His footsteps,
Without wavering, without fear.

Or 'mid dark and surging waters
Will be heard His word of "Peace";
Then the winds and angry billows,
From their noisy strife will cease.

Though the night be lone and weary,
Yet 'the Morning" will arise,
With its many shades of beauty,
To illuminate the skies.

Let us follow daily, hourly,
In the footprints of our Guide,
May each trouble draw us nearer,
Nearer to His wounded side.

Till the long and rugged journey,
Of the wilderness is o'er,
And we join the "Hallelujah"
On the everlasting shore.

—A. W. P. STRONG

NOTABLE CHARACTERS IN HOLY WRIT
HOSEA HIS CALL TO ISRAEL

G. G. Johnston

This prophet heads the list of several minor prophets raised up by God, not only to prophesy (some to Israel and some to Judah), but also to leave us an inspired record of those prophecies. The meaning of the name Hosea is "deliverance", or "salvation", and in spite of his dark word picture of the spiritual and moral conditions existing in Israel, yet there is a note in his writings of hope for recovery.

It has been said that our God is "the God of recovery". Despite the prolonged backsliding of Israel, turning from the loving God to the idols of the heathen and to their abominable customs, yet He says through His prophet: "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely." And He invites them, saying: "Take with you words, and turn to the Lord: say unto Him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously." (chap. 14:1-14). Before this could take place with Israel, there had to be a period of deep spiritual exercise. Their fallow ground had to be broken up, the thorns had to be rooted out. And until they were conscious of their sin, and willing to forsake it, He threatened to hide His face, and permit affliction to drive them to seek after Him, humbly acknowledging their offense.

At different times in Israel's history there had been a degree of humbling and a return, in part, to the Lord, but it had been only partial and fleeting, as expressed in the words: "Your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away." (ch. 6:4).

Idolatry was everywhere in evidence. Idols were installed in every prominent place, and such was Israel's adherence to these abominations, that God said: "Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone" (ch. 4:17). Until they had tasted the bitterness of departure from the Lord, He would have to leave them to their own devices. In fact, no full measure of recovery could take place until they had been "many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice and without an image (a pillar), and without an ephod, and without teraphim." (ch. 3:4). This remarkable prophecy has been and is being fulfilled before the eyes of all who care to see it, a proof of God's displeasure over their rejection of Him in Hosea's day, and a prophecy of God's dealings with the whole nation, for their rejection of His beloved Son.

Before this prophecy closes, we have plain indication that there will be a return of a remnant of this people to their God. Once again God will work in their hearts, as stated in chapter 14:4, saying, "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him." And as for that people, Ephraim shall

say: "What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard Him and observed Him." (ch. 14:8). Repentant and subdued, a godly remnant shall return to the Lord, after the Church has been "caught up". (1 Thess. 4:17). These shall feel the full weight of that "Great Tribulation" which the Antichrist shall inflame against them, and the Lord will cut it short by coming in judgment upon that wicked one. God will surely once again take up a remnant of His people Israel (Rom. 9:27). The privileged Gentile will be set aside. As for Israel, He says "God is able to graff them in again." (Rom. 11:23). The present is the special "Day of Grace" to the nations. Their opportunity is being despised in great measure, and is nearing its end.

What may we, God's children of today, learn from this prophecy? Surely it was written for our learning, as was all of the Old Testament. Has not Israel's departure been our departure? Their hearts grew cold toward the One who had redeemed them and brought them out of the bondage of Egypt, that they might be a people for Himself. They soon forgot His mercy and were unthankful. Then they began to copy the nations around them, first in customs, then in worship. This downgrade soon dragged them into drunkenness, immorality, deceit and evil of all kinds.

Our Lord's complaint to the highly privileged church of Ephesus was: "Thou hast left thy first love" (Rev. 2:4). The drift toward clerisy, evil doctrine and total rejection of the Lord and His Word, as seen in the other churches of Asia, was the natural consequence of the defect seen in Ephesus.

From time to time, since the day of those early churches in Asia, there have been times of revival in soul and return to the truth, but each time of recovery has been followed by a falling away. A recovery of truth, following the Reformation, brought into existence a great many assemblies of saints all over the world, which were free of clerisy and its attendant evils. The testimony of these groups, some of them very small at first, was so convincingly of God, that many souls were saved, and following the same simple pattern or the Word of God, were added to the number, or started other assemblies after the same pattern.

Are we not forced to admit the tendency to departure? First, we must note the departure in heart. Then we see the tendency to copy the ways of worldly religions around us. A studied effort is made to be like them. The aim to make our message to the world a pleasing one is in evidence. Schools are inaugurated to prepare an educated clergy. Buildings are erected that ape the architecture of worldly religious edifices, nor is there a conscience regarding the unnecessary use of means to effect this adorning. What may the Lord not have to use to bring us back to "the simplicity that is in Christ?" Or, is there

no hope of this avalanche being stopped? Godly men have interceded with God and pled with their brethren seemingly in vain. When our Lord comes, shall He find faith on the earth?

Yet, may we not now take to ourselves words and return unto the Lord. Let us say not: "THEY have sinned," nor "YOU have sinned," but "WE have sinned." If we do, we can be assured of mercy and grace from our God.

SOME CREATURES IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE LORD

Harold S. Paisley

Frequently in the Word of God men and nations are likened to beasts but what a contrast to the creatures in association with the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ in the days of His flesh.

In Psalm 22, for instance, the heads of Israel around the cross with Satan behind their activity, are described in verse 12 as strong bulls, in Verse 13 as a lion and in verse 16 as dogs, whereas the suffering Saviour is a Worm, verse 6. Significant too, is the fact that the inspired title of the Psalm is Aijeleth Shahar which is "The hind of the morning". The inscription suggests a new day introduced after the night season and the beautiful oriental thought of a gentle hind merging to freedom, delivered from the power of the dog. Thus saints can sing —

" 'Tis past the dark and dreary night, and Lord we hail Thee now,
Our morning star without a cloud of sorrow on Thy brow."

In Luke 13:32, the Lord calls the crafty Herod "that fox" while in the same chapter He Himself is the protecting hen.

World Empires are described in Daniel 7, and four ferocious beasts set forth their power and might; the lion with eagles wings (Babylon). The bear (Persia), the leopard (Greece) and the beast, dreadful and terrible with iron teeth, (Rome).

Even today, nations choose as their emblems the greater and more cruel beasts: as the bear (Russia), and the eagle (U.S.A.), the lion (Britain), the leopard (Belgium), and so on.

In turning to the scriptures how wonderful to consider the meek, docile and gentle creatures connected with the earthly pathway of God's Beloved Son. As we behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord, may we be changed into the same image as by the Spirit of the Lord and so worldly men will take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus.

The Lamb . . . John 1:29

This animal everywhere is found pointing to the Lamb of God. Typified (Gen. 4), Prophesied (Gen. 22), Slain (Ex. 12), Personi-

fied (Isa. 53), Identified (John 1), Preached (Acts 8), Magnified (Rev. 5), Angry (Rev. 6) and Glorified (Rev. 22).

There are two outstanding thoughts in the lamb: submission and sacrifice. In the Lord Jesus we see perfect submission to the will of God. "He is brought as a Lamb to the slaughter," God's righteous claims must be met and thus the baptism of untold wrath must be passed through by His only Son. There was no other way and Christ was steadfast in His submission even unto the death of the cross. The will of God for Him, meant buffeting, shame, and contradiction from sinners, yet when He was reviled, He reviled not again; when He suffered He threatened not, but committed His cause to Him that judgeth righteously. God's answer to all this is the glory and honour which now is the portion of the Lamb upon the Throne. The sacrifice of Calvary tells out the love of God and the mighty cost of our redemption when the dying Lamb of God bare our sins and shed His precious Blood.

What a voice has all this to us who have tasted of redeeming grace! The young believer will be anxious to submit to the pathway marked out for all the sons of God in the unerring Guide Book, the Word of God. "What wilt thou have me to do?" is the question of submission to a new Master and Lord. Thank God the path is plain, and as only one is to be found, none need be in any difficulty. The first step is baptism, not in the judgment of God which was our due but in the symbol water, speaking to our souls of death's dark waters which were passed through by God's submissive Lamb. Believer's baptism is the answer of a good conscience toward God (1 Peter 3:19), the confession of discipleship to man (Acts 2:41), and the likeness of death and resurrection (Romans 6). He who will submit to the Word of God will not lightly esteem the command or change the order of the book: Conversion, Baptism, Reception to the assembly testimony, Continuance in the apostles' doctrine, breaking of bread and prayers.

For this path of submission a sacrifice must be paid, but as we consider Him we realize that we have not yet resisted unto blood (Heb. 12:3, 4). Those who pay dearly for the truth are not likely to sell it for a mere trifle. There is no sacrifice of ours down here, but in return a rich reward will be given to the faithful, and even now many are proving the words of David in Psalm 19, "In keeping of them is great reward."

(To Be Continued)

IMPATIENCE UNDER God's corrections only shows our need of the discipline with which He is pleased to visit us.

A SCRIPTURAL LIST OF ASSEMBLY MEETINGS

E. Tipson

In Matt. 18:20 we read the words of our Lord when He said, "*For where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst.*" The words "*gathered together*" represent one word in the Greek (*sunagō*) and that word when used in connection with the Church in the New Testament gives us a complete list of seven different kinds of meetings that every assembly ought to have. The word is also used of other gatherings, such as Herod gathering together the chief priests and scribes in Matt. 2:4, etc., but the word as used only in connection with the Church gives the following list:—

(1) **THE PRAYER MEETING**, Acts 4:31, "And when they had prayed the place was shaken where they were *assembled together.*" Here the word is translated "assembled together." It is surely very significant that the first meeting of the Church where this word is used is a prayer-meeting, especially as nowadays, if attendances signify anything, the prayer-meeting is generally looked upon as the *least important* in the Church. We should remember that Matt. 18:20 was spoken in connection with prayer.

Two things should be noted of this meeting: First, that the word used for prayer (and there are several), is the word used of the Lord praying in Gethsemane, which in Heb. 5:7 is described as "When He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears." Second, it was prayer that shook the building and was accompanied by the filling of the Holy Spirit. Do we know anything of such prayer-meetings today? Only when the Church realizes again the important place of the prayer-meeting amongst the other church meetings, will there be a reviving amongst us.

(2) **THE TEACHING MEETING OR BIBLE ADDRESS**, Acts 11:26, "They *assembled* themselves *with* the Church and taught much people." This is also a very important meeting. Often, alas, it is badly attended and thus the people lack instruction in the things of God, not because there is no provision for such instruction, or a lack of teachers, but because they do not assemble at that meeting, not realizing perhaps the importance of being instructed in the things of God,

What was the teaching in New Testament days?

DOCTRINE—Jesus and the resurrection, Acts 4, 2. The Word of the Lord, Acts 15:35; 18:11.

PRACTICE—To do whatsoever Christ commanded them, Matt. 28:20.

Elders who watch for souls and have the care of the ministry should see that regular and consistent ministry on the doctrines of Scripture is supplied to the believers.

But doctrine is not all. There should be a balance in teaching as the Lord commanded His disciples before He left them, "Teaching them to observe (i.e. to *do*), whatsoever I have commanded you." Practice as well as precept.

(3) THE MISSIONARY MEETING, Acts 14:27, "And when they were come and had *gathered* the Church *together*, they rehearsed all that God had done with them." Note that missionary meetings are not a modern innovation. They were amongst the first of the Church's gatherings. Note also the purpose of the meetings — not to tell of what the missionary has done and thus glorify him, but what the Lord had done. See how much the first missionaries needed to learn this lesson.

In Luke 9:10, we are told that the apostles returned and they told Him of all that *they* had done. See also Luke 10:17: "When the 70 returned with joy, they said, 'Lord, even the devils are subject unto us.'" They did add, "through Thy name," but there was the exaltation of what they were and had done; and so the Lord had to rebuke them with the picture of Satan falling — surely a hint that they were also in for a fall, if they persisted in rejoicing in that kind of thing. To these He immediately gave, by illustration, the right attitude to take, as we see in verse 21. "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit and said, 'I thank Thee, O Father.'" What a difference!

(4) THE ELDERS' MEETINGS, Acts 15:6, "And the apostles and elders *came together* to consider of this matter." This was a matter which had caused 'no small dissension and disputation,' and the elders had a meeting to consider it, at which there was also much discussion. It was a question of wrong doctrine being taught to the believers, and had all the elements of a serious division in the Church. Yet see how wisely it was handled. Firstly, on the way down to the meeting the brethren did not spread the disaffection, but rather held missionary meetings (see vv. 3, 4 and 12), to fasten the people's minds on what God was doing in the spread of the gospel, rather than the disputed things. Secondly, see where they turn for their final authority on questions — the Word of God. It was what God had done, what the Lord Jesus had done, and what the Holy Spirit had done, that was the final word with them.

We may note, of course, that this was not a meeting of local elders strictly; nor indeed of elders only. It was the apostles as well as the elders that came together, and these not from one particular locality. It nevertheless establishes as a precedent the fact that it was regarded as wise for elders to come together in their care and concern for the teaching and spiritual welfare of the saints. And further, an

apostle, because he was an apostle, did not cease to be an elder. (See 1 Pet. 5:1).

Elders' meetings are very necessary to the welfare of the Church. Remember, elders watch for your souls. And happy is the assembly that has wise and godly elders. The state of a meeting can usually be determined by the kind of elders found there. But they need your prayers, and probably most when you disagree with them. Let the elders realize their tremendous responsibility and the others their responsibility to pray for them, instead of criticizing them.

(5) **THE BIBLE READING MEETING**, Acts 15:30. "When they had *gathered* the multitude *together*, they delivered the epistle, which when they had read, they rejoiced for the consolation (or exhortation, see margin)." The same word for reading is used in Acts 8, where the Ethiopian and Philip had a Bible Reading together on the 53rd chapter of Isaiah. How profitable that was!

Why is it that so many Bible Readings are unprofitable? That is the only word that adequately describes some. And why is it that they have fallen so much into disfavor and decay? Is it not that often brethren come together to consider a portion of the Word of God without ever having spent five minutes beforehand studying that portion; and so, when they come together no one has a single profitable thought to give to the rest of the assembly? If you get several godly brethren, who have prayerfully and carefully studied the same portion of the Word before coming to the meeting, you may rest assured that you will get a really profitable Bible Reading, and the Saints will go home, as the Saints in *The Acts* went home, rejoicing.

(6) **THE BREAKING OF BREAD MEETING**, Acts 20:7, "When the disciples *came together* to break bread." When? On the first day of the week. This is proof positive that the Christians did not keep the Jewish Sabbath; for these travellers were there (Troas) for seven days (v. 6) and thus were there on the Jewish Sabbath, the day before; but they did not break bread on that day, but the first day of the week.

What a precious meeting this is, acknowledged and enjoyed more than any other meeting by the majority of believers (if the attendance is any guide!). And yet, here a word of caution is needed. If it is considered by some that this meeting is so important that it is all that is necessary for one's soul, and they become what are called "once a week" believers, then let them consider that God by His Holy Spirit, did not put this meeting *first* on the list He gave us, and let it be remembered that He gave all the others as equally necessary. Thus, if the others are neglected, however precious this one may be, it is not sufficient for the growth of the soul, nor for the up-building of the Church.

(7) THE DISCIPLINE MEETING, 1 Cor. 5:4, "In the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are *gathered together*, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan . . ." Here is the saddest meeting of all. Is there not the suggestion here that this should be a *special* meeting for the purpose? I think the practice of just "reading out" a person at the end of a Morning Meeting, and then *forgetting the person*, is quite wrong. If the assembly got down to earnest and tearful prayer for the dear one, who has fallen by the way, that he or she may be restored, how often would it result in the erring one being brought back into happy fellowship with the assembly again.

Remember that the Church of Ephesus was known for its exact correctness as to doctrine, and how *they could not bear them which were evil*, yet they themselves were in a loveless condition and ready to be set aside by God as far as their testimony was concerned.

May God help each one of us to make use of all these meetings that God has ordained for the blessing and welfare and growth of His people, and I am sure there will be a more healthy state amongst us.

(Slightly abridged)

—*Precious Seed*

INFIDELITY IN THE FACE OF DEATH

Infidelity has been proved to be a much better companion in the days of health and prosperity than it is in the days of sickness and adversity. As far as the Christian is concerned, it is much better to know and trust Christ as Saviour and Lord at all times, in life in all its vicissitudes, in death or in eternity.

What a cold comfortless theory is infidelity in the hour of sorrow. Two people start down the "valley of the shadow of death." The one has rested his all on the value of the blood of Christ, once shed for sinners upon the cross of Calvary. Triumphantly, he can look up to the great Shepherd of the sheep and cry, "Thou art with me, Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me." The other has to tread the last steps, all alone. He peers into the darkness with fearful forebodings of the future. "Now," cried one dying infidel, "for the leap in the dark."

Years ago, in the United States, infidelity found an active champion in the well-known, talented, Colonel —, who made an open profession of his disbelief in Christianity. A daughter of the Colonel's, to whom he was very much attached, became very ill. During the progress of her illness, the medical Doctor was dining with the Colonel. After dinner, they adjourned to the library where the Colonel introduced some infidel publication to the Doctor's notice.

Just then, a servant came to announce that an alarming change had taken place in the sick daughter. They hastened to the room. As the father approached the bed the dying girl took his hand and said, 'Father, I feel that my end is drawing near; tell me, I entreat you, am I to believe what you have taught me, or what I have learned from my mother?' Her mother, who was a sincere Christian, had spared no opportunity to bring the Gospel of Christ before the mind of her daughter.

Her father paused a moment, he fixed his eyes upon his dying child, his countenance changed, his frame seemed to be convulsed to its very centre. The struggle was too great, the conflict between the pride of human reason and the swelling of parental affection in the heart was more than he could bear, and even over his stubborn will the truth prevailed. With quivering lips, that could scarcely give utterance to the words, he said, "Believe, my child, what your mother has taught you."

"He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life" (John 3:36).

"Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come" (1 Tm. 4:8).

YOUR TOP INTEREST IS . . .

Mervyn Paul

Can you name it without hesitation? In the 'teen ages, interests often are unsettled. First, one will have the top spot in one's thinking, then a new one will arise to push the earlier one down below. Usually, however, by the time the late 'teens have been reached, and "Fool's Hill" (which all must conquer!) have been passed, young people begin to move on out into the more settled levels of the beginner's stage of adult life. So do not be perplexed, my 'teener friends, if you should find yourselves "halting between two opinions" respecting what your chief interest may turn out, eventually, to be.

For the sake of our little talk this time let us consider the following briefly noted groups of common interests:

- (1) *Academic*: Books, School, College, or other study courses.
- (2) *Technical*: Learning trades, or other skills, experimental or Scientific doings, Art, Music, Writing.
- (3) *Social*: Home affairs, Entertainment, T.V., "Do's". Novel Reading? Boy-meets-girl, Good times together, Courtship, Being in love.
- (4) *Motor Activity*: Some form of work, Hobbies, Sports, Recreation, "Horse-play", Cars, and going places.
- (5) *Humorous*: Telling yarns, or jokes, Smart slang or snappy retorts, "Being funny", or "acting crazy" — keeping them all laugh-

ing. Now, since we all know that everybody desires to out-shine his fellows in some one thing, let me suggest that you get a pencil and underline the interest, or interests, that appeal most to you . . . not those you think you ought to be interested in, but only those you really feel keenest about. Then, if there are more than one, go over them and decide which item has the top-most place in your thoughts — your interest.

Finally, if you then will make a comparison between your keenness for that top interest, and this final group:

- (6) *Spiritual*: the Word of God, prayer, and general interest in the things of God . . . (but not including your service for Him — which can be a satisfying activity outlet, in itself, and apart from much fellowship with God) . . . Your comparison will give you an insight into the measure of the worth-while-ness of your present way of living; because most of such interests as those of the first five groups either are passing things, or vary from time to time. Indeed, a few years from now, should the Lord leave us here that long, you are likely to find it hard to believe that they ever seemed of such great importance to you! For even the hot fires of a boy's ambition, or the intensities of being do not, *cannot*, last very long, you know . . . or, did you know? Dis-illusionment commonly follows in the wake of the interests and dreams of late adolescence and early adult life. The time is bound to come when, as you review your once flaming pursuits, you will feel you definitely "missed the mark" — even as I did, myself.

What then . . . do I seek to dampen your ardour, or to put old heads on your shoulders? . . . I surely hope not! But since the getting clear of encumbering interests is a painful process, and the breaking of habits of thinking and acting formed in these years is difficult, let me make a simple suggestion. It is that, even now as you are reading this article, you will pause and listen intently for a certain "still, small voice" . . . the voice of One Who (in human terms) was Himself a young Man . . . "Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me:" Matt. 11:29.

* * * *

"It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth," we learn from Lam. 3:27; while the contrasting details of Eccles. 11:9 are a record of "Youth's Revolt" — fruitless revolt! — against the wearing of any yoke contrary to its own inclinations, impulses and insufficient judgment. Perhaps somewhere above this low level, yet much below that of our Master's call to us, we shall locate the plane of our own Christian walk after we have made notes of our chief interests. And perhaps, (Oh may it be so!) there may be aroused

once more within us all a longing to be, truly, "All for Jesus! — all my being's ransomed powers."

—"But, Mr. Paul, I don't seem to be that way. I guess it's the way I was born, or brought up, or something. But I can't seem to want to be much different than I am. Yes, I've prayed lots about it, but it doesn't seem to do any good. I know I'm not like what I ought to be; but I am what I am, and I can't help it — nobody can!"

Hmmm. Sounds quite hopeless, doesn't it? Yet surely it cannot be hopeless, else of what value are all the exhortations in the Word — such as 2 Cor. 5:14-15, for example? There we read, "For the love of Christ constraineth us . . ."

Without going further, let us notice the implications of that word "*constraineth*." It means (in the original) "to be held together" — or compressed . . . compressed into the single channel of living described in the next verse as living, not unto themselves, but "unto Him which died for them and rose again."

Did you ever see men digging in a sewer trench? Their entire field of activity is bounded by the trench walls. There is not much room to "cultivate wide interests" in such narrow confines! Their type of working exactly pictures for us ONE CHANNEL LIVING — the very idea behind the thought, "constrained by love . . . to live unto Him" — a single channel of living which we soon discover, however, to be as wide as the interests of the living God! To use the metaphors of Ezek. 47:1-5, the waters may seem but ankle depth at the start, but straight ahead lie waters which cannot be passed over — "waters to swim in."

But why do we find it such a hard matter to get started, and to work up an interest in, this love-constraining form of living?

These verses declare that the death of all for whom Christ died is counted as having taken place when He died on the cross, this truth reminds us at once of Rom. 6; *And there, in verse 13, we discover the main factor in our failure to be constrained by the love of Christ into one-channel living. It is the failure to have yielded ourselves unto God. No wonder our interest wanes!*

Now let me emphasize that the definite act of yielding oneself to God stands (as we professed in our baptism) as the starting point of a proper progress in the things of God. (That the Holy Spirit intends us to understand that it is a definite, single act of yielding of which He is speaking is indicated by the aorist tense in the following clauses: *Yield yourselves unto God*; so *now yield* your members, vs. 13, 19; *present* your bodies, Rom. 12:1; first *gave* their own selves to the Lord, 2 Cor. 8:5. Grammarians tell us the aorist indicates 'a

completed action": see Green's Grammar, or the Newberry Bible).

But does the going to our knees to hand over, definitely, to the Lord "all we are and have" bring about some wonderful new "second blessing"? No, it does not! All that happens is the establishing within us of a NEW ATTITUDE TOWARDS OUR GOD. But it is this that *makes it possible* for Him to begin to work in us more fully "to will and to do of His good pleasure": Phil. 2:13. Then, each morning, we shall need to give it the *daily* support of *daily renewal*, in order that we shall faint not: 2 Cor. 4:16.

So you see your case is not hopeless after all, my discouraged young friends! Let us be in a hurry to obey Rom. 6:13, and so to rid ourselves of the old, hindering, self-pleasing attitude which denies that we died with Christ and rose again to walk in newness of life. Then His love-constraining one-channel living—*unto Himself*—will become our top interest.

NOTES ON SCRIPTURAL HYMNS AND THEIR WRITERS

(P. P. Bliss continued — Part 3)

Hector Alves

"I am so glad that our Father in heaven
Tells of His love in the Book He has given;
Wonderful things in the Bible I see —
This is the dearest, that Jesus loves me."

Mr. P. P. Bliss probably wrote more gospel hymns that are held in high esteem by the church today, than any other American, with the single exception of Fanny J. Crosby. He belonged to a family that had very little of this world's goods. They lived for a time in a log house, and moved a good deal, so that Philip had very little schooling. However, his father taught him the Word of God by his singing, praying, and Bible reading, and every day his mother gave him lessons. Early in his boyhood he showed a passion for music, and would sing and play on rude instruments that he had made himself. He was ten years old when he heard a piano for the first time as he was passing a house, and the poor, barefoot boy was so fascinated that he dared to enter the house and stand at the parlor door. The young lady who was playing the piano stopped when she saw him. "O lady, play some more," said the boy; but far from being moved by his evident appreciation of the music, the young woman answered him rudely, "Get out of here with your great feet." At the age of eleven young Bliss set out from his father's house to work on a farm, with his few belongings tied up in a handkerchief. He went to school

when he could. In 1850, when he was twelve years of age, gospel meetings were being held in the schoolhouse nearby, and although he always loved to hear of the Saviour, it was at this time that he was converted to God. In 1864 he wrote his first hymn.

"I think it was in June, 1870, that 'Jesus loves even me' was written, writes Major Whittle. Mr. and Mrs. Bliss were at that time guests in my home in Chicago. One morning Mrs. Bliss came down to breakfast and said as she entered the room: 'Last night Mr. Bliss had a hymn given to him that I think is going to live, and be one of the best he has ever written. I have been singing it all morning, and I cannot get it out of my mind.' She then sang it over to us." The idea that Bliss had in mind in writing this hymn, was to bring out the fact that the peace and comfort of a Christian are not founded so much upon his love to Christ as upon Christ's love to him. Mr. Bliss said that the hymn was suggested to him by hearing the chorus of the hymn, "Oh, how I love Jesus" repeated very frequently in a meeting which he had attended. After joining in the chorus a number of times, the thought came to him, "Have I not been singing enough about my poor love for Jesus, and shall I not rather sing of His great love for me?" Under the impulse of this thought he went home and composed this, one of his most popular children's hymns.

Major Whittle also relates, "A young woman went to a meeting in England, where she heard Ira D. Sankey sing, 'I am so glad that Jesus loves me.' While the hymn was being sung, she began to feel for the first time in her life, that she really was a sinner. All her sins came up in an array before her, and so numerous and great did they appear, that she imagined in her heart 'Jesus cannot love me; He cannot love such a sinner as I.' She went home in a state of extreme mental anguish and did not sleep that night. Every opportunity to obtain more light was eagerly seized, and she saw in God's open Word that it was for sinners that Christ died, and for none others. When she realized this she began to sing, 'I am so glad that Jesus loves me, — Jesus loves even me.'" Many others similar incidents could be related, but space will not permit.

"I will sing of my Redeemer,
And His wondrous love to me;
On the cruel cross He suffered,
From the curse to set me free."

This is believed to have been one of the last, if not the last of his Gospel hymns. It was shortly after he wrote this beautiful hymn that Mr. Bliss, along with his wife, was on one of his evangelistic tours, and both of them were killed in the great railroad disaster at Ashtabula,

Ohio, Dec. 29th, 1876. The train was precipitated down a ravine sixty feet deep by the collapse of a bridge. The cars caught fire, and one hundred of the passengers were killed. It is said that Mr. Bliss could have saved himself, but he perished trying to rescue his wife from the burning coach. The death of Mr. and Mrs. Bliss under circumstances so tragic, was a deep sorrow to Christians all over the world. He and his wife were loved wherever they went, and his hymns were sung everywhere, and still are.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question. Would it be in accordance with the Scriptures to baptize a young girl who professes to be saved, but is keeping company with an unsaved young man?

Answer. We do not think so. In fact the one is a contradiction of the other. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers . . . what part hath he that believeth with an unbeliever?" (2 Cor. 6:14, 15, R.V.) Baptism by immersion, and coming up out of the water, set forth in type the believer's death, burial, and resurrection with Christ. The act is a confession of the believer's identification with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection. "Buried with Him by baptism into death." (Rom. 6:4) "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above . . . for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." (Col. 3:1, 3). When a saved girl chooses to keep company with an unsaved young man, she is denying this. In God's reckoning, every believer has been crucified with Christ. (See Gal. 2:20). And the apostle Paul declares, "the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." (Gal. 6:14). The necessity of an evidence of this by one's daily walk, is enjoined upon all who would seek baptism. It is an act of obedience on the believer's part, but it is also an act by which he or she acknowledges the claims of Christ as Lord. In Acts 2:41 we find it was those who gladly received the Word that were baptized. In Acts 8:12, "When they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." The sacredness and solemnity of this ordinance ought to prevent anyone looking lightly upon it. —H.A.

Question. During my forty years in the assemblies of God's people, gathered to the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, I have seen first an increase in the spiritual tone of the assemblies; then, alas, during the past ten or twelve years there has been a decline, and a lack of

practical godliness. Can you suggest any reason for this declension?

Answer. We feel the same way about things, and at times have sought to find the cause. We suggest the following:

1. Professions are too easily made, and conversion to God is being made cheap, to to speak.
2. Light and superficial ministry from the platform, and a great lack of teaching the young, and instructing them in church truth.
3. Neglect in daily reading of the Word, and private prayer.
4. Absence of shepherd care, and visiting by the pastors in the assemblies.
5. Little exercise about service for the Lord, on the part of the young men in the assembly.
6. Prosperity, and the rush and bustle of the present time.
7. The church is losing sight of the blessed hope of the coming of the Lord.—H.A.

Covet not that which thou mayest not have.

* * * *

We can least bear correction when we most need it.

* * * *

A great artist made it a rule never to look at a badly done picture, as he had found by experience that, whenever he did so, his pencil had a tendency to reproduce the bad work. Apply this to bad books and bad company. Let us look "off unto Jesus" and we shall have God's perfect standard before the mind's eye.

* * * *

Whatever our circumstances it is never necessary to disobey God.

* * * *

The more we exercise self-judgment, the more we will discern the flesh in ourselves, and the less it will be seen by others.

* * * *

Do not waste time in showing that God's Word is consistent with the highest reason. We are not called upon to apologize for the Gospel, but to proclaim it.

FREETOWN, P.E.I.—A. Ramsay and R. Mellwaine are following up the work in Freetown where God has wrought and souls have been saved for His glory.

SEATTLE, WASH.—C. Patrizio paid us an appreciated visit, ministering the Word to profit. He went on to Tacoma and Forest Grove.

ARLINGTON, WASH.—Hector Alves had good ministry meetings. He purposed to commence meetings in Seattle on the 21st of October.

CLYDE, OHIO—L. McBain, J. Lipke and N. Crawford have rejoiced to see God working in the formation of a new assembly. On Sept. 30 they met together with 25 local believers to remember the Lord for the first time, and others are expected to be added. About 100 were at the Gospel meeting in the evening. The assembly meets at present in the G.A.R. Hall on E. Buckeye St., Lord's Days at 10 a.m. for the breaking of bread, S.S. at 11.15 a.m. and the Gospel at 7.30 p.m. Prayer meeting and Bible study on Fridays at 7.30 p.m. in Bellevue, Ohio. Nineteen men and women were baptized in a local pond on Sept. 23 and four more the following week. (This shows what can still be accomplished when God is in it and when brethren are willing to labour on patiently).

MANCHESTER, CONN.—The assembly was encouraged by the ministry of O.L. Macleod in a passing visit.

BAY CITY, MICH.—J. Govan had some meetings here and in Saginaw and expected to start meetings in the Partington Ave. Hall in Windsor, Ont., with an Egypt to Canaan chart.

OTHER LANDS

In a recent letter our brother, John McCann, states that he has moved to Porto Alegre. His new address is, Caixa Postal 2766, Porto Alegre, Rio Grande Do Sul, Brazil. He writes, 'At the moment I am with our brother Wilson in meetings. This is our 5th week. Good numbers have been gathered in most nights to hear the Gospel which seems to be strange news for them, though a good many of those coming are Protestants.'

CASILLA 778, CONCEPCION, CHILE.—"The work here in this new area goes along slowly but steadily and we have much for which to be grateful. There are several interested people attending the meetings, and this is an encouragement . . . Recently we have had some men attend the meetings who are employees of the University. They are interested in getting to know the Bible better, as they say, but we tell them that the first step is to get to know the One of whom the Bible speaks. A Professor of the University, who brought these men along, is also attending. He was saved while in the U.S. about two years ago but has had no Christian fellowship since. He got me to order eight Bibles to distribute them among his friends. In Lota we were encouraged last Saturday night with the largest attendance so far. It will take time before we see a work done there but there are some anxious to be saved." Dick Hanna.

And from SPAIN, brother G. G. Johnston received the following letter from Eurique Auglada of Malaga, which he has translated.

"Dear brother in Christ: In this field the Word does not return unto Him void. Recently five have professed and we had a wedding with 300 present. We were allowed the use of the Spanish Evangelical Church building. A soul was plucked from condemnation a few hours prior to

leaving this world and the testimony left in the family is already bearing fruit. But among those joys, Satan refuses to leave us alone. After Sept. 1, the agent for the apartment in which I live, forbids me to hold more meetings in my home, all because of pressure put upon him by the Protestant sect which occupies the auditorium in this same building. The purchase of a building is impossible because of the prices asked and rents are beyond our means. Besides, no one would rent to us upon learning the purpose for which we wished it. None of the Christians in fellowship has a home large enough to accommodate us. Pray then, dear brethren, because of our situation."

VENEZUELA, S.A.—Brother Wm. Williams writes of the safe arrival of Dr. Thomson of Australia. J. Turkington and he met the boat at La Guaira, 150 miles from Puerto Camello. Brother Thomson is a dentist and it is expected will be a real help in the work of the Lord. Brother Williams and brother Saword had a good month's meetings in San Esteban with blessing. The former is now looking after the building of a new hall in La Sorpresa.

CONFERENCES

EAST BOSTON, MASS.—The 4th annual conference will be held, D.V., in the Gospel Hall, 35 Putnam St., East Boston, on Dec. 1 and 2. There will be the usual order of meetings. The Breaking of Bread will be at 10 a.m. The prayer meeting on November 30 will be at 8 p.m. Those who know and love the truth are welcome to minister the Word.

MONTREAL, QUE.—We purpose, D.V., having our annual Conference at the New Year season. Prayer meeting on Dec. 29 in the Gospel Hall, 821 Ogilvy Ave. Lord's Day, Monday and Tuesday in the Town Hall, Mount Royal. Communications to W. E. Reid, 1425 Depatie St., St. Laurent, Montreal. (Note new address of the correspondent).

LORAIN, OHIO.—The Thanksgiving Conference will commence with a prayer meeting Nov. 23 at 7.30 p.m., Nov. 24 at 2.30 and 7.30 p.m. Lord's Day, B. of B. at 9.15, S.S. and Bible class at 11.15 a.m., ministry at 2.30 p.m. and the Gospel at 7.30 p.m. No meetings on Thanksgiving Day this year.

BRYN MAWR, PA.—Please note the change this year in our annual Conference, which commences D.V., with a prayer meeting in the Gospel Hall on Nov. 23 and continuing over Saturday and Lord's Day the 24 and 25, in the auditorium of the Bryn Mawr Fire House at 10.30 a.m. and 2.30 and 7.30 p.m.

WITH CHRIST

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.—Mrs. Eva M. Holmes (mother of Ray Traxler) passed away quietly on August 15 in her 87th year. She had been in South Highland Gospel Hall Assembly about 20 years. W. Ismay of Phoenix gave a good word at the funeral.

SAGINAW, MICH.—Our sister, Mrs. Ann Ferman, passed into the presence of the Lord Sept. 20, following a period of much suffering and a prolonged illness. She was saved for over 62 years and received into fellowship in Saginaw. John Govan spoke the Word at the funeral.

DETROIT, MICH.—Our brother, Angus Kerr Ferguson, was called rather suddenly after a heart attack, on Sept. 14. Of late he was in fellowship with the Redford Assembly. He was saved in Scotland a number of years ago. The funeral services were taken by John Govan.

RUTH and TIDINGS



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DECEMBER, 1956

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EDITOR ----- A. W. JOYCE, 26 Munro Blvd., Willowdale, Ont., Canada.
ASSOCIATE EDITORS --- F. G. WATSON, 92 Regal Rd., Toronto, Ont.
G. G. JOHNSTON, 140 Woodycrest Ave., Toronto, Ont.
HECTOR ALVES, 338 W. King Edward Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C.

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WINTER SUBSCRIPTIONS

As we send out the last issue of 1956, we would remind all our readers whose subscriptions fall due at the end of the year of the importance of renewing promptly. This is our busiest time of all the year and late subscriptions add to our labour, which of course is freely given as service for the Lord and His people. Your co-operation will be greatly appreciated and will thus make unnecessary the mailing of individual reminders of expiration.

BOUND VOLUMES

We purpose, as in the past, to prepare a limited number of bound volumes of 1956 with a handy index of subjects. A postal order for \$2.50 will send one of these attractively bound volumes to any address, post free. Last year our supply ran out with orders still coming in for the 1955 volume. We had some more made up and have a few left for any who desire them, until the supply is exhausted.

TIDINGS

One of the most appreciated features of the magazine is "Tidings". Many say that this is the first part that they read. But this is also at times the most criticized part, by some. There is good work done for God that is not reported because no report is sent to us. There are at times reports published which, if we were acquainted with all the facts, might be altered or not published at all, but these cases are exceptional. We seek reports from reliable sources, and then, of course are dependent upon those who send them in. The appearance of names of brethren who are preaching does not mean recognition of them as full time workers. Sometimes the Lord's servants receive valued help from local brethren in a series of meetings. But we do our best to supply reliable information to the Lord's people of work going on for God in the assemblies and in new places. We are sure that God will not overlook unreported work done for His glory, in a coming day.

VANCOUVER, B.C.—R. Peacock and A. Bergsma are being encouraged in the Gilbert Rd. Hall, Lulu Island, a few miles from Vancouver. A number of outsiders have professed to be saved. The Sunday School work there is also encouraging. J. Hutchison has been ministering the Word in various halls with fairly good attendance. One professed at the Carleton Hall.

PRINCE ALBERT, SASK.—J. Ronald and A. Wilson had a spell of Gospel meetings and then went on to Nipawin in an Orange Hall.

GREAT REWARDS

A. W. Joyce

In the Word of God there are many and varied rewards promised to God's people to wean them from earthly things and to attach them to heavenly things. These rewards should be powerful incentives to the believer to go in for manifesting *real* Christianity. What is real Christianity? One has defined it, "Christianity boiled down consists in giving up one world for the sake of another."

The incentive of reward can be connected with the purest of motives, as illustrated in the Lord Jesus Himself, Who, "for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb. 12:2). From the many rewards promised in the Scriptures, let us notice only those which are spoken of as GREAT REWARDS. No reader of this magazine will likely ever be looked upon by the world as a great man or woman, yet it is within the reach of any child of God to have a GREAT REWARD for the ages of eternity. No doubt every service rendered through love to Christ and according to His Word will receive a reward in a coming day but a GREAT REWARD is not promised for service, but for

Refusing the Offers of the World

"After these things the Word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield and thy *exceeding great reward*." (Gen. 15:1). The first three words of the chapter plainly indicate that the great reward is connected with what had just been recorded in the previous chapter. In chapter 14, Lot begins to reap the result of his disastrous choice when he turns his back upon his uncle Abram and upon the path of separation and chooses the company of the men of Sodom. In the battle of the four kings against the five, Lot is taken prisoner. Abram, hearing of his plight, nobly comes to his rescue, defeats the confederate kings, rescues Lot and recovers all the stolen goods which had been looted from Sodom.

The Lord, anticipating the temptation which Abram is about to meet, sends Melchizedek to strengthen His servant and to give to him a fuller revelation of the "most High God, possessor of heaven and earth" (Gen. 14:19). In Melchizedek we have the outstanding Old Testament type of the Person and ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ now as the Great High Priest of His people. As a result of this strengthening ministry Abram is fortified and ready to meet the tempting offers of the King of Sodom. "Give me the persons (Heb. souls) and take the goods to thyself," says the king of Sodom. "And Abram said . . . I have lift up my hand unto the Lord, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth, that I will not take from

a thread even to a shoe-latchet, and that I will not take anything that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich" (Gen. 14:21-23). This godly, decided refusal of any of the king of Sodom's rewards so pleased God that "after these things" the Lord said I am "thy exceeding great reward."

Alas, how many to-day have lost spiritual strength and will lose the great reward by world-bordering or by accepting some of the goods of this Sodom world! How many once promising young men have exchanged "the souls" that they might have won for the Lord for temporal prosperity in the world! How many young sisters have forfeited a great reward forever by laying their shorn tresses at the feet of the world, instead of laying their long hair at the feet of their Saviour and Lord! How many will regret in a coming day discarding the "ornament of a meek and quiet spirit" and putting on the forbidden ornaments of the world or masculine attire! Moses was another man who turned his back on the world's pleasure, treasure and honour, but what a great reward will be his!

A great reward is offered for

Obedience to the Lord's Commandments

Psalm 19 has been well called "a pocket edition of the 119th Psalm." Like the much longer Psalm the 19th brings before us, "The law of the Lord . . . the testimony of the Lord . . . the statutes of the Lord . . . the judgments of the Lord", verses 7-19. Then in verse 11 we read, "Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is GREAT REWARD." Obedience to the commandments of the Lord brings even in this life the great reward of a good conscience. It preserves from the host of evil consequences which always accompanies the path of disobedience to God and His Word. Simple, whole-hearted obedience of the child here below brings delight to the heart of the Father above and will result in a great reward at the judgment seat of Christ.

Some of the commandments of the Lord, though they "are not grievous", are nevertheless unpopular even among many professing Christians. Has the reader been baptized by immersion as a believer since conversion's day? Baptism is a commandment of the Lord. Are we in any unequal yoke, fraternal, social, business, religious, political? Are you toying with the thought of marriage to an unconverted partner? The plain commandment of the Lord forbids all this. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." Do you take a sectarian name or do you fraternize with unscriptural systems of the religious world? The Word of God forbids you to do this. Do you gather only unto the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ (Matt. 18:20),

the New Testament commands you to do this. Do you, in the fellowship of a scriptural assembly, remember the Lord's death each first day of the week, in the "breaking of bread"? The Lord commanded, "This do for a remembrance of Me." Do you love the people of God? Do you shew a forgiving spirit to those who injure you? We are commanded to do both these things. "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another" (John 13:34). These are a few of the commandments of the Lord, which, if obeyed, will bring a great reward.

None of us like suffering, but there is much encouragement to the sufferer to know that there will be a great reward for

Suffering For Righteousness' and for Christ's Sake

"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven" (Matt. 5:10-12). There are two forms of suffering here for which God promises a great reward; (1) for righteousness' sake, (2) for Christ's sake. John the Baptist is an illustration of the former, when he suffered martyrdom for his faithful rebuke to Herod and Herodias for their sinful alliance. Joseph suffered in prison for righteousness' sake when he refused the sinful overtures of his master's wife. However it may not be the suffering of imprisonment or martyrdom that is involved to-day, and yet it might be real suffering for righteousness' sake. Many a man has lost earthly hopes of advancement because he would not violate his conscience and do an unrighteous act. Refusal to tell lies for an employer, to put over a "shady" deal, to misrepresent a product has sometimes cost a Christian a good position.

Christian men and women for Christ's sake and the Gospel's have suffered the loss of home and its comforts, earthly prospects and temporal prosperity. Is the sacrifice worth while? "Rejoice and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven."

There is no *GIVING* in the "far country", not even of husks. Satan sells all and dearly. Men's souls are the price. You must buy everything. The world's principle is, nothing for nothing.

* * * *

Some, like Peter, try to warm their hands at the world's fire and end by burning their conscience.

* * * *

The love of God — not any loveliness in the sinner — accounts for the extravagant liberality of his reception in Christ.

NOTABLE CHARACTERS IN HOLY WRIT MINOR PROPHETS

G. G. Johnston

Following the prophecy of Hosea, of whom we wrote last month, we find no less than eleven prophets sent to God's earthly people. In the case of six of these, we are informed of the time of their prophecy by reference to kings or governors then in power. Of the others, Obadiah's message is a prophecy concerning the downfall and destruction of Edom, the descendants of Esau, and the final victory of Jacob. This destruction will result from the perpetual feud between these two elements, so manifest today in the Arab's hatred of the Jew.

The cause of this overthrow is referred to in the words of chapter 1:10: "For thy violence against thy brother Jacob shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off forever." They had shared with the heathen in bringing down their brother Juda, had rejoiced with them over the destruction of Jerusalem, had shared in the spoils of the land, and had even intercepted those who did escape and delivered them up to their tormentors. Now they are foretold that it shall be done unto them likewise.

In this way we may learn a most solemn principle of the Lord's dealings with men, repeatedly mentioned in the Scriptures for our warning and instruction: that is, "Be not deceived: God is not mocked: whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." (Gal. 6:7). To hold a grudge against another and then to rejoice over his downfall is wicked exceedingly, and merits punishment.

In the wonderful little prophecy of Joel we find something of God's dealings with His earthly people. A fearful drought has hit the "land of delights" and much of its beauty and fruitfulness has been destroyed. Then a plague of locusts has covered everything, darkened the sun and devoured all remaining vegetation. These are followed by a plague of worms, until the land appears to have been burned with fire. There are no animals left for sacrifice.

At this juncture the prophet calls for a blowing of the trumpet, calling the people to a fast of repentance and weeping, assuring them that to such God will be gracious and send the early and the latter rains. With such inspiring words as: "My people never shall be ashamed," (2:26), he seeks to recover them from their despair.

As is the case in other prophecies of Scripture, there is in view an early partial fulfilment of God's promise, with a further and more complete fulfilment still future. The outpouring of God's Spirit promised in chapter 2:28, as following the terrible dearth, would seem to suggest the wonderful advent of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pente-

cost, after the darkness and spiritual drought of the days of the minor prophets and the four hundred silent years before the coming of Christ. In his wonderful address in Acts 2, Peter claims that what was happening before their eyes was a fulfilment of the prophecy of Joel, though it is clear that again it lacks fulfilment in part, as when "the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come."

That great and terrible day of the Lord is described in the third chapter as a judgment our Lord will execute upon the nations assembled in the great valley of Jehoshaphat.

These nations had been permitted of God to take His disobedient earthly people into captivity, to enslave them, to destroy them, and to part their land among themselves. Then, why should He punish them for doing it? Because they did it not to serve the Lord, but out of the wicked enmity of their hearts toward all that was of God. Once again the sun and the moon shall be darkened, not with locusts, but with the dark clouds of war. God's earthly people, restored to the land, would seem an easy pray for such hordes.

But, "The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter His voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake." He who created the atom will not require man-made atomic bombs to destroy His enemies.

"Then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more." For long centuries the Holy City has been trodden under foot of the Gentiles, but when our Lord is manifest in glory, with His Church by His side, He will destroy all opposition and set up His kingdom in righteousness. This event is nearing: how much nearer is the rapture of the Church! "What manner of persons ought we to be!"

INCENTIVES TO OBEDIENCE

In every true child of God there is a desire to know His will in order to do it, and to "Walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing." To this there are three incentives. The first and highest is Love; the lowest is Fear; the intermediate is Reward. By love and reward the Blessed Master was actuated, but of fear He knew nothing. To obey from fear of chastisement is better than to disobey; and it is lawful to have respect to reward, but to love is the highest motive as it is also its true spring. "I love the Father," said the Son, "and as He gave commandment, even so I do."

By catching at the Devil's bait, you will receive the Devil's hook. The wages of sin is death.

WORSHIP

Worship is not preaching, though that is the thought in the minds of many in Christendom who may be real Christians. No matter how scriptural may be the ministry, it is not worship. It is true that the presentation of truth may *lead* to worship. But in preaching — if indeed it is God's truth that is delivered — the servant comes with a message from God to those who listen; in worship, saints are led into the presence of God to present adoration and praise. The two things are therefore of an entirely and essentially different character.

Worship is not prayer. The suppliant is not a worshipper. If I go to the King with a petition, I am presented before him in that character; but if I am admitted into his presence to render homage, I am no longer a petitioner. So when I unite with others in prayer and intercession, we are before God as those who are seeking special blessings; but when we bow before Him in worship, *we give rather than receive*; we are before Him asking nothing, but with full hearts overflowing in adoration at His feet.

Thanksgiving is very intimately connected with, if not the essence of, worship. Thanksgiving is the consequence of blessings received, whether in providence or in redemption. In pouring out our thanks, we may be led to reflect upon the character and attributes of the God Who thus delights to surround us with the tokens of His love and care; and consequently thanksgiving passes over into worship.

But in worship — considered in and by itself — we lose sight of ourselves and our blessings, and are occupied with what God is in Himself, and what He is for us as revealed in Christ. Led by the Holy Spirit, we rise above ourselves, and contemplate the Lord in all His varied attributes and glories (for while “no man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, Who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him” John 1:18). Overwhelmed by the display of His holiness, majesty, love, mercy and grace, we cannot but bow at His feet, as we render, in and through our Lord Jesus Christ, the homage of our hearts.

The death of Christ is the foundation of all Christian worship, for it is by the efficacy of His precious blood that we are qualified to enter into the presence of God. His death is the revelation to us of all that God is in His majesty, holiness, truth, grace and love, and it is through the contemplation of that wondrous sacrifice in our hearts, wrought upon by the Spirit of God that we are led out in adoration and praise. Thus worship is connected in a very special way with the Lord's Table, because it is when we are gathered around it, that we shew the Lord's death till He come. One has said, “It is

impossible to separate true spiritual worship and communion from the perfect offering of Christ to God. The amount our worship separates itself from its efficacy, and the consciousness of that infinite acceptance of Jesus before the Father, it becomes carnal, and either a form or delight of the flesh."

GOD OVER ALL

Back of all that foes have plotted, all that friends of God have planned,
Human schemes, or work of demons, moves a higher, hidden Hand.
Man's horizon is but finite, present mysteries ensnare;
Wrongs in vain seek an Avenger, right is tempted to despair.

But in God's eternal future, the exact and full reward
Will reveal the even balance, in the judgments of the Lord.
Through the mystic fabric, woven on the great Historic loom,
Runs one golden thread of purpose, not a tangled skein of doom.

Warp and woof, are heaven's making, all the pattern good and wise;
On the earth side, strange, perplexing, perfect to celestial eyes.
Nothing too minute to enter into God's complete design,
Perfecting the forms and colours, in the outline so Divine.

Nothing happens accidental, all that men ascribe to "chance",
Choice of God has first determined; nothing can evade His glance.
E'en the wrath of man unconscious, serves one all-controlling Will.
Man proposes: God disposes, all things His designs fulfil.

This, the goal of all the ages;
Hither, highways, byways tend;
So, despite all foes and factions,
God, proved Victor in the end.

"Who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will"

—Eph. 1:21.

Election looks at the place from which we are taken.

Predestination looks at the place to which we are going.

Of His people, God says, "I knew you before the world was."

Of the wicked, God says, "I never knew you — not I knew you and you fell away.

SOME CREATURES IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE LORD
PART 2*Harold S. Paisley***The Dove — John 1:32**

On this occasion at Jordan, God the Son is marked out as the Well Beloved Son of the Father and the Spirit descending from Heaven like a Dove abode upon Him. The first mention of the Dove reminds us of the fact that it could not find a resting place in a scene which was under the judgment of God (Gen. 8). Here is one upon Whom the dove can rest. "There only can the Spirit trace a perfect life below." There was no rest for the Lord Jesus Christ until His glorious purpose was completed, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head." Truly our Heavenly Boaz would not rest until He had finished the work He came to do. The dove too is gentle, easily hurt and harmless, thus the sensitiveness and gentleness of our Lord can be easily seen. "A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench."

The saved of the Lord are pilgrims here; we have no continuing city and in this place which is soon to be burned up, we must not rest but be wide awake to our responsibility to serve and to wait for our soon coming Lord.

The Lord said, "I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves, be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves" (Matt. 10:16). Paul urges the saints at Philippi to "do all things without murmurings and disputings: that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; holding forth the Word of life". (Phil. 2:14, 15, 16). Surely in such a condition of things none would ever seek to find a resting place. May we have our lights burning, and as harmless doves wait for the end of our service here and then we shall rest forever.

The Worm — Psalm 22:6

No more insignificant and lowly creature can be found, yet how wondrous was the humiliation of the glorious Lord to cry, "I am a worm, and no man: a reproach of men and despised." In the estimation of proud men, he was but a worm to be trodden down and bruised, only an insignificant figure of reproach and scorn. Those who side with Him today will be the object still of reproach and because of the fewness of their numbers and the insignificance of their outward appearance, will be trodden underfoot by the proud of the earth. Babylon glories today in power and display and influence, but

“outside the camp, bearing His reproach” are those who have by Divine Grace learned the preciousness of His promise “Where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them” (Matt. 18:20).

The Hen — Luke 13:34

There are two thoughts here; the first, Love, and the second, Protection. The tender love of a mother hen for her chicks is well known. The story of a prairie fire which once swept across hundreds of miles of Canada, illustrates the enduring love of the hen. When the fire had passed, a man surveying the damage came across the charred lump of what proved to be the remains of a hen, when he kicked the blackened carcass from beneath that burned breast, out came the little chicks alive. The Lord describes Himself as a Hen gathering her brood under her wings, what a touching picture! In John 11:5, we see His love for each individual; Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. Yes, each one is loved individually and in all our affairs, He is personally interested. In Eph. 5:25, it is collective love; He loved the Church, while in John 13:1 we see His love continues right on to the end. “All other love may measured be, but not Thy dying love to me.”

Not only is there love in the Hen, but also Protection is seen. A hen will do all she can to shelter her brood. How happy to realize that we are safe for all Eternity in His Hand — John 10:28. When surrounded by that cruel throng in Gethsemane, about to be taken away to be mocked and put to death upon the tree, He turned to the band and said, “If ye seek me, let these go their way.” Now upon the Father’s Throne, His love is unchanged and He is able to save to the end, all that come unto God by Him.

One of the proofs of Divine life is a love for all the family of God, “We know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren” (1 John 3:14). How ready we should be to prove our love by serving and exhorting and teaching one another, and we should be ready also to lay down our lives for the brethren (1 John 3:16).

May these features of our Perfect Example be more in evidence in us till we shall be perfectly conformed to his likeness. The words of Sir Edward Denny are the outburst of a soul desiring more likeness to Christ.

“One with Thyself, may every one,
 In us Thy brethren, see
 That gentleness and grace that spring
 From union, Lord, with Thee.

THE SUPPER OF REMEMBRANCE

Franklin Ferguson

On the very night in which our Lord was betrayed He instituted the Supper of Remembrance, for the observance of His disciples; for those then present, and for them that should after believe on Him, till He comes again.

The wish of our beloved Lord was that we should remember Him in His agony and blood-like sweat in the garden of Gethsemane; in the contradiction of sinners in Pilate's judgment hall; and in the awful death of the Cross, when His soul was made an offering for sin (Isa. 53:10), and all the waves and billows of God's wrath went over Him (Psa. 42:7).

In the chosen emblems of bread and wine — bread for His body, wine for His blood — we see the spotless Lamb of God crucified and slain. As we reverently eat and drink of the emblems, we show or proclaim, that death which stands alone in its significance for time and for eternity, to be much observed of all the people of God.

How beautifully expressive and how simple is this Divine ordinance. A room, a table, seats, a loaf, a cup. An entire absence of ritual, display, officiating priest, ordained minister, or presiding elder. Simply the Lord and His redeemed people assembled: "Where two or three are gathered together in (or unto) My name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20).

Each saint is one of the "holy priesthood", entitled to "offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 2:5); the sacrifice of "praise, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to (or, confessing) His name" (Heb. 13:15). Worshipers, worshipping "in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). The presence of the Lord, to faith, as "ointment poured forth," ravishing our souls; our worship as "spikenard sending forth the smell thereof" (S. of S. 1:3, 12), delighting the heart of God as a sweet savour of His beloved Son.

Nothing this side of Heaven can equal the Supper of Remembrance, and no other experience on earth can so bring Christ Himself before us in "the breadth, and length, and depth, and height of His love" (Eph. 3:18, 19). Nothing else can so fully show us the infinite love of God in not sparing His own Son (Rom. 8:32); the great price at which redemption was purchased; the complete acceptance of us all in the Beloved, and our wonderful privilege as a "holy" and "royal" priesthood.

How often when He has brought us into the banqueting house have we sat down under His shadow with great delight, and His fruit has been sweet to our taste! (S. of S. 2:3, 4). How often has it been experienced, as of old, "Then were the disciples glad when they saw

the Lord" (John 20:20). Happy foretaste of that fair morn when no longer as "through a glass darkly," but "face to face" we shall gaze upon our Beloved, and behold His pierced hands and feet, and hear His sweet voice, saying, "Peace be unto you."

A WORD TO MOTHERS

By One of Themselves

Mothers! it may be that some of you are in need of a word of comfort and encouragement concerning the daily reading of God's Word in your family circle. Your husband may not always be at home to conduct it, and you find little sympathy or help from others, who might be expected to give it. Yet you feel it deeply inwrought, that this way of *acknowledging God* in the home circle must be maintained at all cost. You may have endeavoured to carry this out as God would have it, for a considerable time, but you find it most difficult to get the family to come together; in fact there seems to be time for everything but for collectively reading the Word of God and acknowledging Him as the Guardian and Guide of the home. Now your hands are ready to fall down. But take heart again; you must not yield in this matter; the honour of God and the eternal interests of your household are involved. Think of the triumph that the enemy of God and His Word will have if you relax or surrender to him. Your hold on your children, and your power to bring them up in a godly way will be in a manner lost, if you surrender this sacred trust. As one has said, "a family without the daily acknowledgment of God and the reading of His Word, is like walls without a roof."

We have the Divine promise, "Them that honour Me, *I will honour.*" Take hold of this promise, make it afresh your own, and you will soon have to put "P" for "proved" over against the text.

Our young folks may soon be called away from under the parental roof, to meet the cold world and all its temptations; let the Divine Word be instilled into them before they go. Then, if called to a home of their own, they will carry the force of your example with them.

I heard a son telling the other day, of his godly mother's practice. He said, she used to have the reading with her children as the father was unsaved. The Lord called her to Himself, and the first Lord's day after she was with Christ, breakfast over, the father in a sadly, solemn manner said, "Bring the Book." In memory of his faithful wife's example, he continued the reading with them, and not long after, he was brought to the knowledge of the Lord.

God will be no man's debtor. If we make it our highest aim to honour Him and magnify His Word, giving it the place He claims for it in the *heart* and the *home* (Deut. vi. 6-81), He will not fail to bless us, and make us a blessing.

—J.L.R.

FORGIVENESS AND CLEANSING

Forgiveness is sweet; but what would forgiveness be without *cleansing*? "If we (believers) confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). Many are content with the forgiveness, while they are very little concerned about the cleansing. But the two things go together; and wherever there is real confession, there will be real forgiveness, and as real *cleansing from unrighteousness*. If I am not much concerned about the cleansing, it shows that I am not much concerned about the sin in which I have been overtaken. We cannot attach too much importance to the cleansing. The evil principle itself must be judged, else we will go and do the same thing again. And not only is this needed with some particular besetting sin; there must be a cleansing from *all* unrighteousness. Sins are to be found in gangs. We question if you ever find only one particular sin lording it over a man. One sin may have a chief place; but there are many others indulged in at the same time, although they have a subordinate place. Let ours be a godly concern, that *no* sin is having dominion over us; and when confession is made, let us make sure that none of the *dregs* are left. Rest not short of being cleansed from all unrighteousness.

"I AM BUT A LITTLE CHILD"

This world has but little use for a man who says this. The spirit of the world is the opposite of that of a little child. The truly child-like spirit which Christ commends and with which God is pleased is conscious of its own weakness, and has confidence in the strength of others — in the Father's love and care. Conscious weakness and confidence in God are two precious possessions which are linked up with the character of the little child. The great need of the child of God is summed up in these two expressions. To be conscious of our own weakness does away with a host of evils which assail the believer. When are we really strong? Paul tells us, "When I am weak, then am I strong."

This, then, is the true secret of strength. It is to be in our own eyes what we are in God's eyes, to see ourselves in some measure as He sees us, taking the creature place — the place of a sinful creature saved by grace. Sin has taken man out of his true place, has made him independent of God, and has deceived him into imagining that he is strong. This condition is ripening men for the attempt to measure their strength against that of the Lord Jesus Christ.

* * * *

God can let nothing pass; He can forgive all, and cleanse from all, but He can let nothing pass.

GODLINESS IN THE FAMILY

A. Leishman

A Godly family circle is always a sphere of fruitfulness for God, and the nursery from which God has taken those whom He has used for His own special service. True, God's grace cannot be limited; that grace can reach the guiltiest. The blood of Christ can make the vilest clean, even at the close of a godless life. "His ways are past finding out." He never fails those who honour Him and regard His Word. "Them that honour Me, I will honour" (1 Sam. 2:20). Grace does not run in the blood, but it certainly does in the line of the godly; many instances of this may be found in the Word of God. It has been proved by all who have sought it "with purpose of heart."

A godly family influence, and a place for the Word of God in the family, are of paramount importance. Our children absorb just as much of God's Word as they see is a reality in the home circle, and God's blessing is added under the same condition. In other words, that which is dearest to the heart of the Christian parent and most esteemed in the home, will bear fruit in their children. If home influences are adverse, the fiat of Jehovah is against all other influences combined. There is greater hope for the children of the stranger when under the Gospel's sound, for whatever their home may be, base or refined, it is not a denial of the great truths of the Gospel. But for God's people, "sowing to the wind", means reaping the cyclone, and all "sowing to the flesh" reaps corruption.

Before God took up the nation of Israel, the only testimony and witnesses here for Him were individual men of faith and their families. Set apart for God, by special dealings, to bear witness for Him, were Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Job, etc. He says of Abraham "For I know him that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment, that the Lord may bring upon Abraham, that which He hath spoken of him" (Gen. 18:9).

After God took up the nation of Israel, the hoops holding it together for God, were its families after the pattern of Deut. 6:6-9. "And these words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine *heart*; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and thou shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine *house*, and when thou walkest by the *way*, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine *hand*, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thine *house*, and on thy *gates*." While these conditions were fulfilled, and God's Word honoured, they prospered, and their children's children were blessed (Psa. 77:50). But when we

get near to the end of their history as a nation, family worship seems to have ceased, love for the truth had become obliterated (Jer. 5:1), and general corruption abounded. Sometimes a godly mother rose above her surroundings, and the result was a Samuel, a Josiah — whose mothers' names appear in honourable mention alongside the record of their sons' godly lives (see 2 Chron. 29:1; 2 Kings 22:1).

Centuries have rolled along; times have changed; knowledge has increased, but there are two things just the same to-day. 1st, "As face answereth to face so the heart of man to man." 2nd, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it" (Prov. 22:6).

How many of the Lord's people are mindful of the cow for the milk, the chickens for the eggs, the bees for the honey, and the trees for the fruit, but utterly neglectful of the place the Word of God should have in their family circle, till a sudden outbreak at home has caused them to cry out bitterly, "They made me the keeper of the vineyards, but *mine own vineyard* have I not kept" (Song of Sol. 1:6). For three reasons at least, the daily honouring of God's Word and family prayer are essential to real godliness in the home, spiritual prosperity, and testimony for the Lord.

First. In the father (or the mother in his absence) maintaining the place of authority as head of the house, and receiving the respect due of the family. Second. In bearing testimony to the world and to the Church, that God is honoured and His Word recognized as the guide. Third. There will be fruit unto God, in the home, in the Church, and in the world. The first commandment with promise is, "Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

If our children are to be well pleasing to God (and this is surely to be desired by all who are Christian parents) we cannot afford to be half-hearted for the glory of Him — "whose we are and whom we serve." If our children are displeasing to God, and disobedient to us, we are to blame. Honour God and the children will honour you, is the royal law. Children know what their father professes to be; they see the place he takes before men; they hear his public prayers, admonitions, and warnings, and they also know to a certainty what it all amounts to, by what they see of him at home. If the home life contradicts the church or world testimony, they become sceptics. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, and thy house," has been given to be believed, counting upon God to grant the desire of the heart.

(To Be Continued)

ABOUT COUNTING THE COST

Mervyn Paul

"Give me liberty, or give me death," cried Patrick Henry, as he stormed against the Stamp Act, and sought to rouse the American colonists to fight for independence. And many young persons have echoed that cry within their own souls when, with unwelcome living conditions they have found themselves:

- Trapped by circumstances;
- Hedged in by compulsive duties;
- Thwarted, frustrated by this thing and that;
- Yet compelled to keep on going when they long to "fly away and be at rest" from it all (Psa. 55:6). Many a Christian, I repeat, finds himself, herself, cornered in this way.

And many a proud spirit, striving to be self-sufficient, like Saul of Tarsus, continues "to kick against the goads", finding the effort painful, hard, and unrewarding except as this expression of their rebellion against circumstances may serve to keep their spirits from fainting in their adversities . . . an inward conviction advising them *they simply must keep up the struggle at all costs*, lest they sink down into hopelessness, despair. To these dear harassed Christians it seems certain that to give up the battle could be nothing less than fatal. The Voice that called in salvation's day, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," seems much too impractical for all these forms of problems. And yet, **THAT BLESSED VOICE IS CALLING STILL!**

* * * *

"Oh well, of course I do come to Him in prayer, and I do try to cast my burden on the Lord. Bnt then, oh well you just wouldn't understand."

I see . . . yet not too clearly because behaviour patterns and their resultant reactions are pretty much an open book these days. Moreover I suspect that I have come over about as many humps and hollows of emotional conflict as most ordinary folk. Still, even if it be true that I wouldn't understand, there are three things of vastly more importance to consider. The first one is that, if there be such conflicts in your life, it is an absolute proof spiritually, and psychologically, *that you do not understand yourself*. The second is *that there is One Who understands you through and through*. And it is He Who calls you again to come to Him, to take His yoke upon you, and to learn of Him — that is, if you honestly do desire to find rest to your soul; Matt. 11:28-29.

In those days when we were troubled about our sins it was none too easy to admit to ourselves that we were utterly bankrupt sinners.

For some of us it was a hard fight to get ourselves down, down, to the place of admitting that we were lost, undone — “to come to an end of ourselves.” We feared to let go altogether, for then we felt we surely would be lost! And in a similar way it often proves every bit as much a battle for saved sinners to get down to the facts that, in ourselves, there is *no sinlessness*, Roman 7:17; *no goodness*, verse 18; *no power* to live as we should, verse 19. These commonly are called “the three bitter lessons of Romans 7.” They are necessary lessons for those of us who have not yet learned, in practice, our bankruptcy . . . that we died — *died* — yes, DIED when Christ died on the cross: Romans 6:3-9; 2 Cor. 5:14; Gal. 2:20. For is it not a fact that most of our conflicts grow out of five things?

--We can't have, or can't get, what we want.

--We can't do what we want to do.

--We can't be what we want to be.

--We can't go where we want to go.

--We can't get clear of some person, or persons, who cause us trouble.

If you can agree that this is so, then our third important consideration will have to be that you — or we — have not yet understood that people who have died do not have such concerns! Those Christians who have learned to “reckon” themselves “dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 6:11) count that all such concerns stayed down there in the tomb when we died with Christ. Oh yes, I know that we rose again with Him; but that was to walk in newness of life — *a new kind of life altogether* — a kind of life where me and my desires do not matter at all, where nothing matters — nothing whatever — except the will of God. But please — oh please! — do not wring your hands and cry out in despair, “That’s far too high ground for me!”

Neither let yourself say, “I must count the cost! I know within myself I just never could pay the price!” Instead, ask yourself, “Was it too great a cost for me to step out of my sins into Christ, that day I was saved?” And tell me this: Would you care to go back (if you could) into your former “lost estate”? Did you find you had paid an intolerable price after the Holy Spirit had revealed to your troubled soul both a finished work, and a Saviour who had finished that work? If you did not, then can you suppose that to step out of your self-centred life into the life where Christ is truly Lord will cost you more?

Oh no, Beloved! It cannot be; for He Who paid the cost of our redemption by dying on the cross, now lives to save us by His life: Romans 5:10. Just as the Good Samaritan, who first rescued the man on the Jericho road, afterwards assumed the full costs of his further

care (Luke 10:35) so, too, does the Lord Jesus make Himself responsible for those who *obey the command* in Romans 6:13. For the word telling us to "yield ourselves unto God as those that are alive from the dead" is a command, every bit as forceful as that relating to Baptism . . . even as is Romans 12:1; which is exemplified in 2 Cor. 8:5, and is made good in our lives by daily renewal; 2 Cor. 4:16 — But what about counting the cost?

If you will read Luke 14:25-33 you will have the Lord's answer. In verses 25-27 He tells us bluntly that total abandonment to Himself is the threshold leading to Discipleship, even as in Romans 6:13. Then He gives us two illustrative parables re counting the cost.

—The man *who is not able* to finish his tower will surely hear Satan's sneers and mockery; verse 30.

—The king who essays with a small army to make war on one twice its size, *if he be not able* to defeat it, surely will have to send an embassy to the enemy seeking conditions of peace . . . And are we not among the number, Beloved, who have heard those Satanic jeerings because we have had to see, so often, our hopes of living "all for Jesus" go glimmering? And how often, also, we have given up, and sought conditions of peace! . . . But for what reason?

Clearly the cause of such defeats is our failure to count the cost. But then, **WHAT IS THE COST?**

In both parables the men *were not able*. Their need was that there should be **SOMEONE IN CHARGE WHO WAS ABLE**. And this is the cost — the only cost. We, ourselves, *are not able*. But **HE IS ABLE**. And handing ourselves, and our all, over to Him we are abandoning our inabilities in order to avail ourselves of His infinite ability. Compare Josh. 5:13-15. For not in independence, but in total dependence on the Lord, even as little children, do we begin to enter into the meaning of Matt. 11:29. Was there ever one more wholly dependent on God than our Exemplar, the Lord Jesus, as a Man upon earth? And was His dependence "worth while"?

Peter was a witness of the sufferings of Christ and a partaker of the glory (1 Peter 5:1).

Paul was a witness of the glory (Acts 22:14) and a partaker of the sufferings (Col. 1:24, Phil. 3:10).

Paul's theme is the *Heavenlies*.

Peter's theme is the *Wilderness*.

Peter addresses the saints as "strangers scattered", Paul's word is "no more strangers" (Eph. 2:19). Up there, in Heaven, we are at home. Down here, "strangers" we are no longer at home in the world.

NOTES ON SCRIPTURAL HYMNS AND THEIR WRITERS

Hector Alves

“All things are ready — Come!
 Come to the supper spread;
 Come, rich and poor; come, old and young;
 Come and be richly fed.”

Three of Albert Midlane's hymns appear in “The Believers' Hymn Book” —

“Lord Jesus, Thine.”
 “Revive Thy work, O Lord!” and
 “Without a cloud between.”

Five are found in “The Gospel Hymn Book”. (Vancouver.) Besides the above, there are in it —

“How solemn are the words.”
 “Passing onward, quickly passing.”
 “Salvation, oh Salvation,” and
 “There's a Friend for little children.”

The last of the above hymns was written in 1859, the year of “The Great Revival” which swept the British Isles. It was this children's hymn which brought Mr. Midlane world-wide fame.

The name of Albert Midlane is cherished to this day in Newport, Isle of Wight, where he was born, January 23, 1825. Before he died, February 28, 1909, he had written more than 800 hymns. We quote the following. “Unlike most authors, Mr. Midlane did not take out a copyright for any of his hymns, and never derived any monetary benefit therefrom. This was indeed noble of him. “Freely ye have received, freely give,” Christ said when He sent His disciples out to preach.” As hymn-writing is only another form of ministry, the same rule would apply to it, we believe. But faith is not without its testings and trials, and after more than fifty years of close and honest attention to business, Mr. Midlane found himself a bankrupt to the extent of \$2,500. This was through no direct fault of his, for his failure was brought about through his having become guarantor for a friend. It is the same old and oft-repeated story of a man smarting for becoming surety for another's debts. (See Prov. 6:1; 17:18; 22:26).

“But loyal friends quickly rallied to his relief. His misfortune became public, and Sunday School friends throughout the country subscribed generously, with the result that Mr. Midlane was able to pay all his creditors, and get his bankruptcy annulled; and an annuity was secured which relieved the veteran hymn-writer and his wife of further anxiety in this respect.”

On the morning of Feb. 11, 1909, this good man was stricken with apoplexy, and on the last day of that month, just as the Lord's

Day was dawning, while in sleep, he quietly passed away, to be with Christ, "above the bright blue sky." At the laying away of the body, those gathered sang some of his hymns; "Star of the morning, rise!" and "One lasting, long Amen." The service was concluded with a number of children singing "There's a Friend for little children." A touch of pathos was added to the scene by the internment of a little child, not twenty yards away, while the last verse of the childrens' hymn was being sung —

"There's a crown for little children,
 Above the bright blue sky —
 And all who look for Jesus,
 Shall wear it by and by.
 A crown of brightest glory,
 Which He will then bestow
 On all who trust the Saviour,
 And love His name below."

The following lines were among the last penned by this author:

"What is the world to one whose hopes
 Are fixed beyond the skies?
 What can impede the charioteer
 Just near to grasp the prize?"

"Enough! One's cup is brimming full,
 All earthly struggles o'er;
 Beneath the shadow of His wings,
 In bliss for evermore."

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question. Is it right or wrong for a brother, with his family, to seek fellowship with a company of believers meeting in a town some distance away, when there is an assembly of saints gathered to the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, in the town where he lives? Is it scriptural to pass that assembly by, and go to the more distant one?

Answer. Without any knowledge of the circumstances, it would be difficult to give an intelligent answer to this question. However, we can quote Scripture which ought to give guidance in the matter. In the opening words of both the First and the Second Epistles to the Thessalonians, we read, "Unto the church of the Thessalonians;" and so in all of the best translations. This expression suggests to us that the church in Thessalonica was composed of those living in that city.

As a rule, we believe that fellowship in an assembly is decided by residence. But there could be exceptions which are quite scriptural. In some places things are practised which ought not to be done. People are received into the assembly who ought not to be received. Men are permitted to preach and minister the Word, who are not scripturally qualified to do so. The fruit of self-will is seen; the Word of God is set aside. So it cannot be wondered at if, in such a case, the more spiritual desire to travel a longer distance in order to enjoy fellowship with those of like mind. We may exhort or instruct where there is fault in passing by a scriptural assembly to go to one further away. On the other hand, there may be good reason for going; and there we must leave the matter. H.A.

Question. Should the Lord's servants wait for an invitation from the brethren to come and have meetings in the assembly? or should the preacher write to the brethren and ask for meetings? If there is any portion of Scripture to guide in this matter, please give it.

Answer. Either way is right, and quite scriptural; and both are in common practice amongst the assemblies of the saints today. In 1 Thess. 3:6 we read, "But now when Timotheus came from you unto us, and brought us good tidings of your faith and charity, and that ye have good remembrance of us always, desiring greatly to see us, as we also to see you," etc. The saints at Thessalonica remembered Paul's ministry among them, they had enjoyed and appreciated it, so they greatly desired him to come again. There was no postman, or telegraph office in those days, so they sent the invitation to Paul by the hand of Timothy.

Then, in Acts 15:36 we have the other way. "Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the Word of the Lord, and see how they do." Here the initiative is on the part of the servant of the Lord. We have known of instances when the exercise was working at both ends at the same time. There ought to be exercise on the part of both the assembly, and the servant of the Lord; and God will lay it upon the heart of the overseeing brethren to write and invite the men whom He will use to edification and blessing. The Holy Spirit also will guide and direct the true servant of the Lord aright. "I being in the way, the Lord led me." (Genesis 24:27). A voice from Macedonia. (Acts 16:9) etc. H.A.

A single sin is more horrible to God than a thousand sins — nay, than all the sins in the world — are to us.

GLEN EWEN, SASK.—S. Maxwell had two weeks' profitable ministry meetings and is now preaching the Gospel in Portage la Prairie.

KENORA, ONT.—R. Boyle had three weeks' Gospel meetings in Rabbit Lake, three miles from Kenora, one professed.

PORT ARTHUR, ONT.—J. Hutchison had a week in the Gospel. One young girl professed.

MANITOULIN ISLAND—F. Pearcey and R. Booth are preaching the Gospel.

TORONTO, ONT.—Meetings by H. Paisley and A. W. Joyce in Pape Ave. hall were most encouraging with a full hall nightly. A good number professed to be saved. The last Monday night brother Paisley told the story of his conversion with about 500 present. He is now having ministry meetings before leaving for the States and the east. F. Mehl is having meetings on the Tabernacle in the West Toronto hall.

PARRY SOUND, ONT.—Earl Pears is preaching the Gospel.

SARNIA, ONT.—L. E. McBain is having ministry meetings to help the Lord's people.

QUEBEC, QUE.—The work here goes on slowly with some encouragement. Through tract work contacts are often made which prove to be fruitful. A girl of seventeen professed a short time ago. She is one of a family of ten, so trust this may be the beginning of a work in this family. The assembly here is small but is growing slowly and the saints have a desire to go on, following the pattern in His Word. Remember in prayer brethren McCready and Smith in their work here.

BEDEQUE, P.E.I.—Albert Ramsay and Robert McIlwaine are continuing in this district with a good interest. They have been able to obtain a vacant school-house for this work since the tent was taken down.

RAWDON, N.S.—W. Cudmore and Bert Joyce have started Gospel meetings in an old Meeting House. The former had appreciated meetings in Halifax.

DALHOUSIE WEST, N.S.—J. McCracken and D. Petherick continue to visit here Lord's Day and one night a week. The former expects to sail for Ireland on November 20th for three months.

PHILADELPHIA, PA.—W. Warke and A. Klabunda faithfully preached the Gospel in the Olney Hall.

McKEESPORT, PA.—Fisher Hunter, David Calderhead and George Graham each had a week of appreciated ministry meetings which were a help to the people of God.

TORONTO, OHIO.—Sam Hamilton and S. Mick have been encouraged with some blessing in the Gospel.

BLUE RIVER, WIS.—The conference was about as large as usual with 9 of the Lord's servants to minister the Word.

OSAGE, IA.—O. Smith and P. Elliott are preaching the Gospel.

BEETOWN, WIS.—B. Jamison had blessing in the Gospel.

WATERBURY, CONN.—The conference was profitable and practical. A. T. Stewart remained for some ministry and was to go on to Torrington. G. G. Johnston was at E. Boston, Methuen (Italian hall) and Byfield, expecting also to visit assemblies in Conn. G. McKinley visited various assemblies. W. Gustafson was to have cottage meetings in Montpelier, Vt. Brother Joseph Pearson is slowly regaining strength, but is unable to get out to meetings yet.

SEATTLE, WASH.—Hector Alves had two weeks' practical and helpful meetings on the Tabernacle; attendance was fair considering the weather.

STRATFORD, CONN.—Brother J. McCullough is recovering from the heart attack he had in the summer but under Doctor's orders cannot attempt any preaching till after the end of the year. He has been out to the Breaking of bread.

ONTARIO, WIS.—An all day meeting was held Lord's Day, November 4th at the opening of the new hall. Six of the Lord's servants were there to minister the Word which was with profit. The hall was packed in the afternoon. A few have recently been added to the little assembly which is cause for thanksgiving.

CONFERENCES

LOS ANGELES, CAL.—We purpose, D.V., holding our annual Conference in the Gospel Hall, 1231 West Jefferson Blvd., with a prayer meeting December 28 at 7.45 p.m. Meetings continuing through Tuesday, January 1. Servants of the Lord walking in the old paths and maintaining its truths are welcome. Visitors from a distance write, James Parr, 2614 South Harcourt, Los Angeles 16, Cal.

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WITH CHRIST

PARKHILL, ONT.—Mrs. Mary Greenlees went home, October 1st, in her 81st year. She has been saved for 40 years, in fellowship in Central Hall, Detroit and in Parkhill for the past ten years. Noah Gratton gave faithful words at the funeral which was large.

TORONTO, ONT.—Our dear brother, Robert Hamilton, of Brock Ave. assembly departed to be with Christ on October 24 at the age of 72. He was saved about 48 years ago and has been in the Brock Ave. assembly for 47 years. He had been superintendent of the Sunday School and had always a real care for the saints so he will be greatly missed. The Word was preached to saint and sinner by F. G. Watson and H. Fletcher closed in prayer.

GUELPH, ONT.—Our dear brother, Claude W. Foster, was taken home shortly after a car accident near Birks Falls on August 10. Our brother was in his 53rd year, having trusted Christ in his early twenties and was shortly after baptized and received into fellowship. As he was much esteemed a large company gathered for the funeral which was taken by brethren R. McClurkin and J. McCormack. Remember our sister in prayer, she was injured in the accident which took her husband home.

HAMPTON, IA.—Our dear brother, Carl Switzer, went home on October 29th at the age of 27 years. He was saved seven years ago and was in happy fellowship in Hampton where he has left a good testimony behind. The funeral was held in a large rented Methodist building and it was estimated that 650 heard the Gospel preached by O. Smith and Paul Elliott. L. DeBuhr spoke at the home and at the burial.