

Things New and Old

*An Avenue of Ministry to the
Whole Church and Gospel for
the Whole World*

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Faithful Promises

Isa. 41:10.

NEW YEAR'S HYMN

Standing at the portal
Of the opening year,
Words of comfort meet us,
Hushing every fear;
Spoken through the silence
By our Father's voice,
Tender, strong, and faithful,
Making us rejoice.
Onward then, and fear not,
Children of the day!
For His Word shall never,
Never pass away!

I, the Lord, am with thee,
Be thou not afraid!
I will help and strengthen,
Be thou not dismayed!
Yea, I will uphold thee
With My own right hand;
Thou art called and chosen
In My sight to stand.
Onward then, and fear not,
Children of the day!
For His Word shall never,
Never pass away!

For the year before us,
Oh, what rich supplies!
For the poor and needy
Living streams shall rise;
For the sad and sinful
Shall His grace abound;
For the faint and feeble
Perfect strength be found.
Onward then, and fear not,

Children of the day!
For His Word shall never,
Never pass away!

He will never fail us,
He will not forsake;
His eternal covenant
He will never break!
Resting on His promise,
What have we to fear?
God is all-sufficient
For the coming year.
Onward then, and fear not,
Children of the day!
For His Word shall never,
Never pass away!

—F. R. Havergal.

Divine Intervention

(Continued)

THE PLAGUE OF FLIES

The plague of flies which followed the plague of lice “differed from the others in that it is now said that a difference should be made between the land of Goshen and Egypt. There should be no flies in Goshen, that Pharaoh might know that God was Jehovah in the midst of the earth. But ‘there came a grievous swarm of flies into the house of Pharaoh and into his servants’ houses, and into all the land of Egypt; the land was corrupted by reason of the swarm of flies’ ” (Ex. 8:24).

There was to be a difference between the land of Goshen and Egypt! “I will put a division between

My people and thy people: tomorrow shall this sign be."

A division! A God-made division! The word is an interesting one. It may be translated "separation"; literally, "deliverance" or "redemption." "I will put **redemption** between My people and thy people: tomorrow shall this sign be."

"God's separation of His people is a redemption, the work of His grace in them as well as for them, which in the typical meaning comes out very distinctly."

"It will be noticed that the Authorized Version does not definitely say what insect is referred to, the words 'of flies' being added. There were swarms of some insect, but what insect is alluded to is not at all certain. The same word in the original occurs in Psalm 78 where it is translated 'divers sorts of flies'. The original word is taken to signify 'a mixture or variety', so that many have supposed that there were really a variety of insects, a swarm of different sorts. It was something that 'devoured', something of small size, making up for this in numbers; various in kind, whether flies or insects generally; the prominent thought is that of 'mixture'.

"It is the contrast between the world and the people of God that is before us. It speaks, on the one hand, of 'obedience', 'righteousness', on the other, of 'will', 'rebellion'. God's work is one, manifested always as that—internally, still more than externally, a unity. Man also, when obedient to His will, is at one with himself as with God—at one

with himself because with God. His life is of a piece, self-consistent and harmonious. If sin come in, it is a confusion, a contrary will: independence of God is discord, disunity, and man, no longer at one with God, is no longer at one with himself either. His 'will', astray from God, falls asunder into many divided 'wills' as the 'lusts' within 'war in' his 'members' (Jas. 4:1). And so with all that comes under the power of evil: it corrupts, falls apart, is disorganized; death, which is the stamp upon and fruit of sin, separation, dissolution.

"To one taught of God, the world is a thing smitten with the plague of incoherency, confusion, 'mixture', out of which is only one way of deliverance."

This "mixture" is found in Pharaoh's proposal "Go ye, sacrifice to your God in the land." The proposal is simply this: Worship God where you are; remain in the world; don't leave it. But "in the world, faith's sacrifice is an abomination—Christ's cross only an offense. The cross is the judgment of the world—of man in the flesh—and if we can worship there, no cross is needed: it is in this case simply a false indictment against man. Thus there is irreconcilable difference between the world and the believer. By the Cross, he is crucified to the world and the world to him, and he glories in that which has done this. How impossible, then, to mix the world and Christ!" (F. W. G.)

In the objection by Moses to Pharaoh's proposal to sacrifice in the land, he said: "Shall we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, and will they not stone us?"

Some think this refers to the manner in which the Israelites would conduct their sacrifices; but undoubtedly it is an allusion to the animals held sacred by the Egyptians, especially heifers. If the Israelites sacrificed these, it would be like sacrificing their gods before their eyes.

The contest with Pharaoh continues only now the proposal is to sacrifice to God in the wilderness; "ye shall not go very far away." This is but another form of the same compromise and only speaks of "borderland Christianity" which seeks a place in the world and with Christ at the same time. To all such the apostle of love entreats by the Holy Ghost:

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." (1 John 2:15-17).

(To be continued, D. V.)

Light In Our Dwellings

(Continued)

"Submitting yourselves to one another in the fear of Christ."
(Eph. 5:21)

There is a difference between submission and obedience, and it is well, before entering upon the subject of our chapter, to be clear about it.

Submitting myself to another, means, my accepting and taking a subordinate place under an-

other person's lawful authority over me. Obedience means my behaving and acting according to that place, no matter, whether I am in it by my own choice, or through necessity (by birth, etc.) by submitting my will to the will of the one, who is in the place of authority over me. Submission and obedience, in a natural sense, are not necessarily identical. There may be an outward submission without real obedience. In the Christian sense, both are a matter of the heart as being done to the Lord. "The principle of submission and of obedience," as another has said, "is the healing principle of humanity; only God must be brought into it, in order that the will of man may not be the guide after all. But the principle that governs the heart of man in good, is always and everywhere obedience."

Now, before proceeding, we may just notice, that although the words that head this chapter, refer to all those who are in a subordinate relationship, i. e., wives, children and servants, yet the word "submitting," in our chapter, as well in the other passages of the New Testament, is only applied to wives, but not to children nor servants. The reason is clear. Children, as being born in the subordinate place, and servants, or rather slaves (for in those times, hired servants were unknown) being in the same place either by birth, or purchase, or as prisoners of war, could not be enjoined to accept or take that place, in submitting themselves to their superiors—parents or masters—because they were already in that place, independently of their

own consent. Therefore they are in our chapter exhorted to obey their superiors. It is not so with wives. They have become so by their own free consent; and knowing beforehand the character and relative duties of their place. Therefore they are told to "submit" themselves to their own husbands, and reverence them, according to the place, upon which they have entered with their own full and free consent, as before the Lord, and according to His will, Who has thus united them. Children and servants (or slaves), therefore, are told to obey whilst submission—and submissiveness—is enjoined upon the wives.

But, as I have said before, the divine injunction: "Submitting one to another," applies, in a general sense, to all the three classes of subordinate relationships in our chapter. For if children and servants are not enjoined to submit themselves, from the reason stated above, yet they as well as the wives are to behave to their superiors in the spirit of submission, i. e., submissiveness, which characterizes true Christian obedience. Thus the exhortation in Chap. 5:21, in this sense, applies not only to children, but also to the servants of our days. Therefore, as under grace, and in the spirit of grace, the injunction is general.

But though in our chapter as well as in Col. 3, the word "obedience" is not used with reference to "wives," because in both these epistles the exhortations to the "wives," are in close connection with the relationship of the Church to Christ, which is a relationship of subjection (5.24) of the body to

the Head, rather than of obedience (which is applied to Christians individually), we find, on the other hand, in the epistle of the Apostle Peter (which deals with Christians individually as pilgrims and strangers on earth), both expressions, i. e., "submission" and "obedience" applied to "wives." There the Spirit of God points back to Sarah, as a pattern of submission and obedience for all her spiritual "daughters," just as in the epistle to the Romans we are exhorted to walk in the steps of that faith of Abraham, "Who is the father of us all." Therefore in that beautiful passage (1 Peter 3. 1-6), both expressions are applied to Christian "wives." But I shall enter more closely upon that portion in the next chapter, when speaking on the relationship of "wives."

I now would direct the reader's attention to the second part of our verse, which tells us that such submission of one to another is to be "in the fear of Christ." For such is the correct reading, and not "in the fear of God," as the common version has it. For all-important as is the fear of God, as not only characterizing the beginning of the work of God in a soul, as in the case of the thief upon the cross, but also as to the Christian's walk in holiness of life (2 Cor. 7. 1), it is evident, that in our portion of the Ephesians, as well as in Col. 3 (where we find a similar mistake, viz., the "Peace of God," whereas it ought to read "the peace of Christ") it is the second Person of the Godhead, Christ, the Father's well-beloved, Whom the Spirit of God delights to set in full relief before the eye

of faith, as Head of the Church.

And here may be the place for an observation, which in these latter days of religious profession, constantly obtrudes itself on our notice. It is the Christless character of all human religion. The mention of that ever blessed and glorious Name of Jesus, indeed, is not lacking in the religious books and phraseology of our days, (though even then in a familiar way, most offensive to every spiritual Christian, and generally without His proper title—"Lord"). But of Christ very little is seen or heard. The reason is natural enough.

Christendom having degenerated and relapsed into, and returned to the religious "husks," or, as Paul, the once so zealous religionist, called it, "dung" of Jewish (though Christianized) legal ordinances and attainments, with earthly blessings and promises, without any real sense of what it is, to a believer, to have risen with Christ, and to be linked through His Spirit, with the risen, ascended, and glorified Head there above on the right hand of God, and of being seated in Him in the heavenly places—no wonder, that Christ, i. e., Jesus glorified, is, as such, scarcely known in the religious books and language of our days. Their gospel does not go beyond the Cross (and even this, as to its effects, is only partly known), blessed foundation, as that is of our salvation; but as to the heavenly position into which the believer has been brought by the resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ, very little, if anything, is known and realized. Resurrection and Resurrection-ground, is

scarcely mentioned in their "gospel," such as it is, leave alone the believer's union with Christ, and his position above as identified with Christ, accepted in the Beloved, and his heavenly calling and hope. Therefore Jesus, i. e., Christ in His humiliation here on earth, as the despised Jesus of Nazareth, as presented in the gospels (where He is called "Christ" only in His earthly relationship as Israel's Messiah, comp. John 1.42) is only known as an individual Saviour, whilst the exalted Jesus, i. e. Christ, as the Head of the Church, His body, is a thing unknown, or if known, hardly mentioned, though the whole New Testament, from the Acts of the Apostles, till the book of Revelation (where the Lamb is the prominent feature), is full of it. The first Name in the first gospel at Pentecost (after Peter's few introductory words), is that ever blessed Name of Jesus. And how does the Apostle finish—"Therefore let all the house of Israel know, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (as to His exaltation at the right hand of God). Consequently in our chapter, and so in Col. 3, where we have Christ as the glorified Head of the Church, it is all "Christ," except when His ever-blessed Name is mentioned, when we find Jesus, as in verse 20, of our chapter, (Eph. 5) and in Col. 3.17. Now this is exactly the point of weakness, that lies at the root of the evil of all human religion. Having subsided, or relapsed, into an earthly Jewish position, Jesus, i. e. Christ in His humiliation on earth, is known only as their individual Saviour from judgment. Blessed Name above every Name, I repeat.

“Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” “And thou shalt call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest,” says the angel to Mary. But, beloved, it is one thing, to know Jesus as my Saviour, as the manna, the bread come down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die; and another thing to know that blessed Jesus as Lord and Christ, as the Head of the Church at the right hand of God, and to have the consciousness of being one with Him, as our risen and ascended Lord, and of our life being hid with Him in God, and thus feeding on Him, as the old corn of the land, Canaan above, in the sense of Col. 3, and of having the living consciousness, of being a member of His Body, the Church, of which He is the glorified Head. How little is it known and understood, what is written, not only in the epistles of Paul, but even in the gospel of John: that Jesus died “not for that nation only, but that also He should gather together in one, the children of God that were scattered abroad.” (John 11.52) Jesus died not only to save individuals, i. e. to have a certain number of saved units, but in order that each individually saved child of God might be gathered in one, i. e. baptized by one Spirit into one body, “whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free,” (1 Cor. 12.13) of which each believer forms a member; Christ, i. e. the Risen, Ascended, and Glorified Jesus, being the Head of them all, i. e. of the Church, His Body.

(To Be Continued, D. V.)

—J. A. VON P.

The Marriage of the Lamb

(REPORT OF AN ADDRESS)

"The marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." (Rev. 19:7, 8)

A woman, arrayed in purple and scarlet, called in the plain language of Scripture "the great whore"; and the Lamb's wife clothed in fine linen, clean and white—these two we see in these latter chapters of the Revelation; and they stand out in startling contrast the one to the other, both as to their character and destiny. Chapters 17 and 18 describe for us the magnificence, the power, the farstretching influence, the horrible corruption and terrible doom of the former. Chapter 19 shows us the purity and blessedness of the latter, her destiny is the glory of the Lamb. The former, whose names are given to us in capital letters in our Bible, is *"Mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth."* *IT IS ROME.* She professes to be the true church, the faithful spouse of the Lamb, but she is false, and denies in principle and practice His Name, character and word; she will become, as shown in these chapters, utterly apostate, and shall fall under the over-whelming and righteous judgments of God.

This mystery, described in its twofold character of the great whore and Babylon, is not Popery

stripped of its temporal power as we know it yet working insidiously but ceaselessly to undermine and destroy what is known as the Protestant faith, but popery triumphant. In the time described in these chapters it will have gathered into its magnificent but corrupt unity the whole profession of Christianity, and will have brought into complete subjugation the Western nations. It will not only have enslaved the consciences of men religiously, but will also have control over their politics. *The woman rides the beast.* The kings that she will dominate will hate her for her arrogance, and will eventually destroy her and so fulfill the will of God, but for a while she will hold an undisputed sway over them all. This is all plainly taught in chap. 17.

Rome is working for this universal supremacy now, but she cannot achieve it while the true church is here; the presence of the Holy Ghost in the church, and the restraining hand of God prevent it. But at the coming of the Lord, as given in I Thess. 4., the true church, which is the one body of Christ, and which is to be the wife of the Lamb, will be caught up to heaven, then the hindrance will be removed out of the way and apostate Rome will speedily reach the goal of her ambition. The true church, that which the Lord spoke of in Matthew 16 as "My church," is not a great organization, held together by human power and wisdom, but is made up of all who have in sincerity owned Jesus as their Lord and Saviour; all such have a vital link with Him as the Son of God, and are not Christians by profession only. They are united in

one body to Christ, who is their Head in heaven. This is a unity that is of God, and it will abide forever; the other is a unity that is of the devil and it will perish in the depths of perdition. But Rome is making rapid progress towards its desired end, showing that we are in "the last days." The growing love of ritual and popish practices in the English and other state churches are an evidence of this, and of the power and influence that it already wields. O Christians, let us be fully awake to the situation. There are two great unities in Christendom, and they are growing to their completion. The Spirit of God is the power in one, and the spirit of evil works in the other. We must be wholeheartedly in that which is of God and separate from that which is corrupt and of the devil. "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing" (2 Cor. 6.7). "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Rev. 18. 4).

Chapter 19 opens with the adoration of the host in heaven; they rejoice and praise God that He has judged the false and corrupt church which instead of being a witness for Christ in the earth, and so the channel of blessing to it, has corrupted it with its own terrible corruption. "True and righteous are His judgments," they say, as they turn from beholding the destruction of the evil thing, to rejoice in that which is eternally good. They celebrate the supremacy of the Lord God omnipotent, and if He reigneth none can thwart His eternal purposes. These have as their centre

Christ and His church—the Lamb and His wife. Yes, before the worlds were made it was in the heart of God that His beloved Son should have a bride; and in this chapter the hour has arrived, and all heaven rejoices with a great joy. “I heard,” says John, “as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings.” “Let us be glad,” say they, “and rejoice . . . for the marriage of the Lamb is come and His wife hath made herself ready.” It is the joy of God that fills every heart and rolls in its wonderful melody to the utmost bounds of heaven. The Father rejoices, for the hour has come for the consummation of His purpose for the joy of His Son; the Son rejoices, for the hour has come in which He will see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied; the Holy Ghost rejoices that His work is completed, and that the Bridegroom is satisfied with the bride that He has brought to Him. And cannot we who love the Saviour rejoice also in anticipation of His joy, which we shall surely share, for we are part of that which is to be His wife.

If we are to understand God's purposes we cannot neglect any part of God's word. The Holy Scriptures are not fragmentary, but one complete whole, so we read, “No Scripture is of private interpretation.” That means no Scripture stands alone, each part of it has its connection with every other part. So we find that the beginning of Genesis connects with the end of Revelation. This purpose that was in the heart of God for the joy of His beloved Son was first expressed at the creation

of man. He was made in the image and after the likeness of God and set in dominion over this lower creation, and the acuteness of his mind was proved in that when God brought the animals to him he was able to give each a name that described its character. But he had a heart as well as a mind, for God Himself has a heart as well as a mind, and none of the animals nor all the power that was given to Adam could satisfy his heart. Hence God said, "It is not good for man to be alone, I will make a helpmeet for him." With that in view God cast him into a deep sleep, and took a rib from him, and with it He built a woman, and when Adam awoke, he said, "This is now bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh." She was part of himself, and she satisfied his heart.

The New Testament tells us that Adam was a figure of Him that was to come, of Christ. He is to have universal dominion, and in that place of glory and power He is to have a helpmeet who shall be more to Him than it all, for she shall satisfy His heart. But He had first to go into the deep sleep of death. It was this that was foreshadowed in Adam's sleep. And as a result of His death He has secured for Himself His church, so we read, "Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish." (Eph. 5. 25-27).

Let no one think that it is mere fancy that

connects the beginning of the Bible in this way with the end of it; the Bible itself does it, for Eve's marriage to Adam is introduced as an illustration of Christ and the church in Eph. 5., where it is said, "This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the church."

Take special notice of the fact that it is *the Marriage of the Lamb*. In this Book of the Revelation the Lord bears many great titles. In chap. 5. He is the Lion of the Tribe of Judah; in chap. 12. He is the Man-child that shall rule the nations with a rod of iron; in chap. 16. He is the King of kings; in chap. 22. He is Alpha and Omega; great and varied are His glories, upon His head are many crowns, but when the Marriage comes it is not by any of these titles that He is known, but as the Lamb. The joy of the marriage day is linked up with the sorrows of Calvary. It is the One who bowed His head beneath the judgment of God in death who is to see of the travail of His soul, and receive to Himself His church, a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing. The Lamb was the sacrifice. He became sacrificially what we were actually, for "He was made sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him," and the sorrow through which He passed then is to have a full answer of joy in the day that is to come.

This great event will take place in heaven, for it, the church must be there complete, and perfect, and so it shall be, for "The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God; and the

dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." Not one blood-bought saint will be missing from that glorified company, and *all will be there not because of their faithfulness, but because of the value of the blood of Christ; they will be there accepted in Him, the Beloved.*

"And His wife hath made herself ready." She does not make herself fit or ready for heaven; her fitness for that spotless home of eternal love is Christ Himself, for He "is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." But she makes herself ready for the marriage; and that by being clothed in fine linen, clean and white, which is the righteousnesses of the saints. The word should be in the plural, it is righteousnesses, not righteousness. Christ alone is our righteousness, but being made righteous in Him, the saints of God are able to produce good works on earth, and these are the fine linen, clean and white, that shall be the marriage robe of the wife of the Lamb on that great day. In Eastern lands, I suppose, the bride is presented to the bridegroom in the garments her own fingers have wrought. It shall be so with the wife of the Lamb, for to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white. But how and where can this material be produced? Suppose a prince wishes to appear at some great state occasion in a garment designed and made by himself, but when he looks round for the material that will suit his design,

he finds nothing that satisfies him, nor any loom upon which it can be woven. What must he do? He must invent a loom that can produce the material, and then when his cloth is ready he can fashion it as he will for his own satisfaction and the praise of his genius. So it is, God determined, when He purposed that the Lamb should have a bride, the very sort of garment she should wear; it was to be of fine linen, clean and white, but where on earth, among men, could it be found? In Old Testament days God gave men the opportunity of bringing it forth; and He gave them the law, a perfect loom upon which to do it. But they miserably failed in their efforts, and after centuries of patience with them, God had to say, "*All your righteousnesses are as filthy rags.*" "They that are in the flesh cannot please God."

Then was God's intention to fail? No. If I may use my illustration—He has brought into being a new loom capable of producing that which He desires. The Lord Jesus came into the world to do the will of God. He lived a life of complete obedience to God, and near the end of it He took three of His disciples into the holy mount and there He was transfigured before them, "and His raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow: so as no fuller on earth could white them." (Mark 9. 3). This was an unearthly, heavenly white-ness, emblematic of the life of righteousness He had lived on earth. And God said, I am going to reproduce that life in My saints; and so we read, "*For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that*

we should walk in them" (Eph. 2. 10). I want that statement to be understood by us all, for upon it I am hanging the whole of this part of my address. God has a loom now that can do it, and you Christians, young or old, are part of it. Upon that loom He is producing fine linen, clean and white, He is reproducing in His people now the graces that shone in all their perfection in Jesus. The life of Jesus is being manifested in their mortal flesh (2 Cor. 4. 10).

We all know how textiles are produced. There is the loom, the weaver, and the raw material. As a matter of fact the raw material goes through a series of processes before it reaches the loom, but there it is at last, and as the weaver works the warp and weft into the loom, the loom works out the finished article. And that is what we get in Philippians 2. 12, 13, "*Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you, both the willing and the doing of His good pleasure.*" God is the great weaver, we are the loom, and as He works in we must work out the fine linen, clean and white. He is, He must be, deeply interested in our lives and ways with the marriage of the Lamb in view.

But what is this fine linen? Says one, "I should like to serve the Lord Jesus, but I cannot stand upon the platform and preach to multitudes, or do any great work for Him; I am ignorant and poor, and my life is lived in obscurity." Do not think that this fine linen is preaching or doing some spectacular service; many a man preaches to large congregations and produces nothing but filthy rags,

for self is the end and aim of his efforts. But there is a poor woman who loves the Saviour, and she is producing fine linen in abundance. Happy in His love she starts her arduous day with a song of praise and thanksgiving to God—that is a bit of fine linen. When spoken to harshly she answers with meekness, and overcomes evil with good—that is another bit of fine linen. You need not be great and famous for this, if you can be patient and forbearing when you are not treated well, and if you can *forgive*—Ah, that is difficult, is it not? He spoke ill of you. She was so spiteful. And you have already been kind and forgiving. Your patience is exhausted, and you can't forgive again! Can't you? You who have been forgiven so much! Yes, grace can enable you to do it, and if you do, it will be fine linen, clean and white, for that is what Jesus did: when He was reviled, He reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not, and when His foes did their worst, He prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance—all these are fine linen, clean and white, and not one thread of it will ever be lost. God Himself will preserve it, it is imperishable. You may not have thought when you did that kind act for Jesus' sake that it would live forever, but it will; and that word of cheer and comfort spoken to a tried and sorrowing saint will never be forgotten, nor will that effort to win a soul for the Saviour. All those things will go to make up the marriage garment. Every Christian has the privilege of contributing to it,

then how important it is that we should be walking in lowliness of mind and obedience to God that His gracious work may go on in us and through us. He has left us in the world for this, may we not forget it. Do not say that this is beyond you. Think again of my text. You are God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus with this end in view. Is that true? Thank God, it is, if you are saved by His grace. Then you have been fitted by Him to produce this fine linen. Do not doubt that, but place yourself without reserve in His hands, and it shall be done.

This garment of fine linen, clean and white, will be a wonderful triumph for God. He will be able to show in that day the reality of His work in His saints. He will be able to show that in spite of the world, the flesh and the devil, that beset His saints on earth and conspire to make them false to their Lord, they have brought forth these righteousnesses. So will the devil be defeated and the accusations that are brought against the saints be silenced. How wonderful it is, that in this filthy place, a world reeking with moral putrefaction, this work is going on, and that we may have our part in it. We have but to keep near to our Lord and His love will constrain us to be very diligent in this matter.

After the marriage the Lord will come forth as King of kings and Lord of lords, but when He does His saints will come with Him in this same raiment (ver. 14). They will share His triumph and glory and live and reign with Him a thousand years (chap. 20).

We have one last view of the church in chap. 21. The first eight verses of that chapter describe the eternal state of things in which nothing will change, and there we see the Holy City coming down from God out of heaven *as a bride adorned for her husband*. When kingdoms and governments have served their purpose and ceased to be, and God shall dwell with men and rest in His love, the church will still abide as Christ's own possession. It is described "as a bride adorned for her husband," and that means she will be for Him for ever, and only for Him. Are we not thrilled at the thought that the day is coming when we shall be altogether and exclusively for Him, without a rival

Now we sing sadly—

"O Lord, alas, what weakness
Within myself I find,
No infant's changing pleasure
Is like my wandering mind."

But it will not be so then. All fickleness will be over, and Christ will be for ever the sole and supreme object of our hearts. The bride of the Lamb will receive into her heart His love in its infinite fulness, and she will respond to it without reserve. Wonderful prospect! —J. T. MAWSON.

A Word of Thanks

The editor deeply appreciates the help given, both in papers submitted for publication and in practical fellowship throughout the past year. Such fellowship will be remem-

bered in the coming "Day" as "fruit" to the account of each one. (Phil. 4:16-17.)

Many encouraging letters as to the helpfulness of the magazine have been received, and, as we stand at the door of 1945, we trust the printed ministry will be greatly blest of God to all our readers.

It is gratifying to know that "*Things New and Old*" is being acceptably received by Chaplains and many in the armed forces, in both camps and hospitals. (A partial account of this is given in "The Harvest Field," a copy of which will be sent to any enquirer.)

Finally, pray for us. Grace, wisdom and strength are continually needed and only God is sufficient for these things—but, thanks to His peerless name, *He is sufficient*.

And as we enter another year of conflict, at home and abroad, we would address those especially whose loved have been called into service. There is often anxiety—it could not be otherwise. But, troubled soul, remember, God is the God of our salvation. He is "the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off upon the sea . . . which stilleth the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves, and the tumult of the people."—Ps. 65:5, 6.

God's way is in the sea. He walketh upon the waves to come to the help of His own. What a God to trust! May His gracious hand rest upon every troubled heart, as upon the restless sea, with the calm assurance that "all is well." May we trust and not be afraid.

"He sitteth o'er the water-floods;
Then doubt and fear no more,
For He who passed through all the storms,
Has reached the heavenly shore;
And every tempest-driven bark,
With Jesus for its Guide,
Will soon be moored in harbour calm,
In glory to abide."

“Led Safely”

“He led them on safely.”—Ps. lxxviii. 53.

“The Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire.”—Exod. xiii. 21.

“He leadeth me.”—Ps. xxiii. 3.

* * * * *

He led *them* on safely, and so can lead *thee*,
Dear child of God's covenant grace;
No matter how special thy case seems to be,
He can lead to the longed-for place.
Though trackless thy path seems, there still is a way—
A way thou shalt yet own as best—
A path that shall open as dawns each new day,
Than long-stretching roadways, more blest.
Though dangers attend as thou takest thy way,
Or failure most sure, seems in store,
Turn Him-wards thine eyes; on Himself thy heart stay;
His greatness thou yet shall learn more.
Should darkness o'ertake thee and fill thee with dread,
In Him thou art still quite secure;
If He leads thee on, thou art still “safely led,”
And faith is for “dreading” the cure.
Should waters sweep down, or affliction or loss—
The more as thy heart would beat true—
“Led safely” by Him thou need'st not fear to cross,
All safely He will bring thee through.
“Led safely” by Him, in the way He deems best,
Through sunshine, or sorrow and pain,
“Led safely” by Him, with thy heart quite at rest,
“Led safely”—be this thy refrain.
No pillar of cloud or of firelight may show
The pathway which thy feet should tread;
But His word and His Spirit—through these thou shalt
know
The way, and be thus “safely led”

—J. DANSON SMITH.

The Mornings of Scripture

In the progress of Scripture, we have several infant-seasons, as I express myself, or mornings.

Creation was one—but that of course. That was the birthday of the works of God—the morning of time. And when the foundations, in that season, were laid, “the morning-stars sang together,” as we read in the Book of Job.

The Exodus was another of these mornings. Israel, as a nation, was then born, or in its early infancy. “When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt,” the Lord says by the Prophet Hosea. The year started afresh then, as though it were new-born. The month of the Exodus was made the beginning of months. Life from the dead, a resurrection morning, was celebrated in the song of Moses and the congregation on the banks of the Red Sea.

The birth of the Lord Jesus was another. That event rose upon the world like the light of morning. A very long and dreary night had preceded it. Israel was a captive, and in the dust. There were no signs. The voice of the last of the Prophets had been silent for centuries. No Urim or Thummin, no ephod of the priest, was delivering oracles, or answers from God. No glory filled the Temple. Nothing distinguished the city of peace, the favoured seat of God on the earth, save now and again the angel-stirring of the waters of Bethesda, when little expected and scarcely welcomed. But the birth of the Lord Jesus, like the morning, awakened the

creation; and the lights of many other days broke forth together, to tell that the long, dark night had at length given place to a very bright and cheerful morning. Heaven rejoiced, like the sons of God at the creation. Angels, once so well known in Israel, reappeared. The grace that had acted in infant, patriarchal days, again displayed itself. Promises to Abraham and to David, which anticipated the new birth of the people and of the kingdom, are cited and rehearsed. All this is seen on this great occasion, this fresh morning-hour in the progress of the ways of God. And the child born in Bethlehem is welcomed by the Seer of God as "the day-spring from on high," the sunrise or the morning. (See Luke i., ii.)

The resurrection of the Lord was another of these mornings. It came after the gloomiest night that ever brooded on the face of creation. But it was light, and light indeed. It was the pledge, the harbinger of an eternal day. It was the turning of the shadow of death into the morning. "It began to dawn toward the first day of the week," when this great mystery disclosed itself—as we read in Matthew xxviii.

The Kingdom will be another of these mornings. It will be day after night, Christ's day after the night of sin and death, Christ's world after man's world. "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God; and He shall be as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after

rain." This is written of this coming kingdom. (2 Sam. xxiii.)

The new heaven and the new earth will be another. It will be creation at its *second birth*. "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth," says the prophet: "for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away." It is called the dwelling-place of righteousness, the scene where "God will be all in all."

Sweet it is to see morning after morning thus rising, as we pass down the ages which Scripture measures.

But we have another sight to see to. Man has been again and again turning God's morning into the shadow of death. Creation, which came forth from God so fair and full of joy, quickly was turned into a wilderness of thorns and thistles. The ground was cursed which, at its morning-hour, had witnessed the joy of the Lord over it, and the blessing of the Lord on it.—Israel, who sang their resurrection-song on the banks of the Red Sea, became a captive in the dungeons of Babylon, and the land of the glory was left wasted and desolate under the foot of uncircumcised oppressors.—The Sun that in the morning of Bethlehem rose on the world as the light of it, and on Israel as the pledge of a renewed day, set in the night of Calvary—for man was a sinner, and rejected Him.—The same blessed Jesus who rose a second time upon the world and upon Israel as life from the dead, bringing light and life for eternity to us with Him, now has to see the waning, fading, evening shades of Chris-

endom, which are soon to close in the midnight of Apocalyptic judgments.—The kingdom which is to break forth as the light of “a morning without clouds,” is to close in the great apostasy of Gog and Magog, in the judgment of death and hell, and all not written in the book of life, and in the fleeing away of the heavens and the earth from the face of Him who sits on the great white throne.—The morning, however, of the new heaven and the new earth, God will maintain in its first beauty and freshness forever. There will be no evening shades of man’s corruption and revolt, no night of judgment in the story of it. It shall be maintained as the one eternal day, the sun of which shall never go down.

What sights are these which pass in vision before us! The blessed God begins again and again to lay His foundations, as in the freshness of morning, and man again and again turns His morning into the shadow of death. But God cannot dwell in darkness. He is not the God of the dead, but of the living—and, therefore, though man may not join Him in maintaining the light, but plunge the whole scene in darkness again and again, He Himself will make good His own glory and secure His own joy, and having at the beginning called forth light from darkness in the morning-hour of the first creation, will hold in eternal beauty the morning of the second creation.

—J. G. B.

Light In Our Dwellings

(Continued)

This is the reason why, in the epistle to the Ephesians, the Spirit of God exhorts the Christians, to submit themselves one to another "in the fear of Christ," in His supreme authority as Head of the Church. It is their character as being members of Christ, that the members of the Christian family are exhorted to submit one to another. For although family-relationships are of an earthly character (individual, in a certain sense), yet we see, how closely the Spirit of God in His teaching in both the Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians, connects them and the relative duties of the Christians in them, with, and as flowing from their relationship as members of the Church, which is the body of Christ, its Head.

It is His supreme authority as such, which the Holy Ghost delights in setting forth throughout these two epistles, that deal in an especial way with our earthly relationships too, as the place, where, according to God's intentions, church truth is to be practised, and our heavenly relationships to be reflected in our daily walk. And we may be sure, that if our light does not shine in our houses and families, it will certainly not shine much in the world around us in the sense of Phil. 2:15.

The Lordship of Christ, in His supreme authority, is stated by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven by Him, at the close of the very first gospel, as referred to above. God had made that same

Jesus, Whom the Jews had seen daily going in and out among them, "both Lord and Christ."

But what was, at Pentecost, in a general, partly Jewish sense, only the first simple statement of the fact, that God had thus honoured and invested with the highest authority His well-beloved Son, the once rejected and despised Jesus of Nazareth, we find, at the end of the first chapter of that grand Epistle, which unfolds God's wondrous counsels, as to Christ and His Church, set forth in divinely magnificent language, as if the Spirit, whilst pointing upwards to the Man in glory, Whom Stephen, when filled with the Holy Spirit, saw there at the right hand of God, had been taking pains, to speak with reverence, to depict in those magnificent terms, that all Glorious and all Beauteous One in His position of Honour and Dignity, as the Head of the Church, "the First begotten from among the dead," and "the First-born of many brethren," whom God had raised from the dead, and

"Set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places,"

"Far above" (mark the word "far") Christian reader! The Holy Spirit, who "glorifies Christ," cannot point high enough upwards in glory to point out, as it were, to the eye of faith, the glorified Person of Christ as Head over all other authorities.

"Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world but also in that

which is to come:"

"And hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the Head over all things to the church,"

"Which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all."

What a position, truly glorious, truly lordly! And yet nothing more than the due place for Him, Who once bore the cross, and gave His back to the smiters, and His cheeks to them that plucked off the hair, and Who did not hide His face from shame and spitting!

What was the power and dominion over the lower creation, entrusted to the first Adam, compared to that of the last!

Now, may I ask my Christian reader and myself: has the fear of Christ, the One, Who holds such a place there above in glory at the right hand of God, its due sway over our consciences? I need not say, that I am not speaking of legal or slavish fear. I mean that reverential fear, which is produced by authority, when recognized, felt, and willingly bowed to. A man, when in the presence of his betters in authority, feels very different from what he does, when among his equals. And the higher the rank or lawful authority of the one in the superior place, the greater would be the sense of reverential fear on the part of his subordinate before his presence. A common soldier, however submissive, if he is a good soldier, his behaviour may be before his superiors, if only a degree or two above him in rank, will feel and be-

have very differently, when standing before his Commander-in-chief. And in the presence of the highest authority, of a mighty King or Emperor, will not that feeling of reverential fear, produced by such a presence, pervade every one before him, from the commander-in-chief or his prime minister down to the lowest servant?

I hope my Christian readers will pardon me for adducing such common-place illustrations, but as the writer of these lines prays and desires, that he may write them as in the sight of God and in Christ, he feels, from his own humbling experience, how little we have learnt in these days of boasted independence, where, nevertheless, the fear of men holds greater sway than ever, to realize the meaning of those words: "In the fear of Christ." And why? Because we have understood so little, what it means, in the power of faith and of an ungrieved Spirit, to be really in His Presence, where we discover our nothingness, aye, and our own good-for-nothingness too. We have been too much in the presence of each other, or of the world and daily circumstances, permitting all kinds of things, such as testimony, the church, service (leave alone other things) to step in between Christ and our souls, instead of keeping Christ between us and circumstances. Thus it is that the "fear of Christ," which is produced by being in His Presence, is so feebly known amongst and within us. It is all right and well, talking of the constraining love of Christ, but let us not forget that His great apostle Paul knew also what "the terror of the Lord" means.

Not, I repeat, as if that terror made him tremble in slavish fear, but it had impressed his conscience with its awful solemnity for others, so that he was able to "persuade" men, i. e., to appeal to their consciences first with the power of a preacher, whose own heart had been solemnized by the thought of the terror of the Lord, in His judgment—for others, of course, not for himself, and then feeling in his heart the constraining power of the love of Christ, he was enabled to "beseech" poor sinners and enemies to be "reconciled to God." With a conscience, perfect and at ease in the Presence of God, but his heart solemnly impressed with what "the terror of the Lord" meant for His rejectors, i. e., for every unbeliever he could, in the power of that solemn impression, appeal to their consciences, and on the other hand, with the "small voice" of God's grace in his ministry of reconciliation, apply the balm of the gospel to broken-hearted and troubled ones.

(To be continued, D. V.)

Abiding in the Truth

A Word of Exhortation for the Last Days

We are living in 'serious times. We are living in a day when the foundation truths of the Christian faith are being denied, and that not by those who profess to be infidels but by those who profess to be believers of the truth, by those who accept the Scriptures as the word of God.

Jude desired to write to the saints about the "common salvation" that is, the salvation common

to all, but found it necessary to write and exhort them to contend earnestly for the faith which had been once for all delivered to the saints. The same necessity exists at the present day, when professed believers are introducing deadly error concerning the Person of Christ and do not hesitate to corrupt the word of God in order to support this and other false teaching. But the Scripture has warned us that such things would come to pass, so we must not be surprised.

The apostles Paul and Peter and John all speak of the days in which we are living, calling them either the "last days" or the "last time." All three write very plainly, and we should give earnest heed to what they say.

In Acts xx. 29, 30, the apostle Paul warns the elders of the church at Ephesus in these words: "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock; also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."

The apostle Peter writes: "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of" (2 Pet. ii. 1, 2).

The apostle John in the second chapter of his First Epistle writes thus: "Little children, it is

the last time; and as ye have heard that Antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists whereby we know that it is the last time" (ver. 18). And then the apostle goes on to describe these antichrists: "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son the same hath not the Father: he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also" (ver. 22, 23).

These are plain statements and require our utmost attention. The word "deny" is used three times in verses 22, 23, indicating three methods of attack: (1) denying that Jesus is the Christ; (2) denying the Father and the Son; (3) denying the Son.

Each denial is an attack on the truth which the "little children" believe and know. What then is the believer to do? The same scripture (verse 24) tells us: "Let that therefore abide in you which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain (abide) in you, ye also shall continue (abide) in the Son and in the Father."

May we all take heed to these words of apostolic warning and hold fast that which we have heard from the beginning, without being deceived by those who would fain introduce something "new."

—G. K.

Short Papers On Church History

Editor's Note:

"Short Papers on Church History" by Andrew Miller were written many years ago.

They appeared in the magazine "Things New and Old," edited by C. H. Mackintosh, and were then published in separate form and doubtless some of our readers have these three volumes in their libraries.

Of late years, however, there has been a demand for these books, as many do not possess them, and as the "TN&O" volumes in which they first appeared, and also the separate volumes are now out of print and impossible to secure, the editors feels that a re-issue of portions of these valuable papers would be both timely and helpful.

They will appear, D. V. occasionally, and we trust the blessing of God will accompany their appearance in our magazine.

INTRODUCTION

Many have neither the time nor the opportunity for reading the voluminous works that have been written from time to time on the history of the Church. Still, that which has been the dwelling-place of God for the last nineteen hundred years must be a subject of the deepest interest of all His children. We speak not now of the Church as it is often represented in history, but as it is spoken of in Scripture. There it is seen in its true spiritual character, as the body of Christ, and as the "habitation of God through the Spirit." (Eph. 2:22).

We must always bear in mind, when reading what is called a history of the Church, that from the days of the apostles until now, there have been two distinct and widely different classes of persons in the professing Church: the merely nominal, and

the real—the true, and the false. This was predicted. “For I know this,” says the apostle, “that after my departure shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them” (Acts 20). His Second Epistle to Timothy is also full of warnings and directions as to the various forms of evil which were then but too plainly manifest. A rapid change for the worse had taken place from the time that his First Epistle was written.

It is interesting to mark the difference on this point between the First and Second Epistles to Timothy. In the first, the Church is spoken of according to its true character and blessed position on the earth. There it is seen as the house of God—the depository and display of truth to man. In the Second Epistle, it is spoken of as what it had become through the failure of those into whose hands it had been entrusted.

Take one passage from each Epistle in illustration.

1. “These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly. But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, the pillar and ground of the truth” (1 Tim. 3:15).

2. “But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour” (2 Tim. 2:20).

Here all is changed—sadly changed. In place of

Divine order, there is hopeless confusion. In place of the house being kept according to the will of God and suitable for Him, it was arranged and ordered according to the will of man, and for his own personal advantage and exaltation. Thus early had the evils, which have been the sin and the disgrace of Christendom ever since, made their appearance. But this was overruled for good. The Spirit of God, in great mercy has supplied us with the plainest directions for the darkest day of the Church's history, and has pointed out the way of truth for the worst of times; so that we are left without excuse. Times and circumstances change, not the truth of God.

THE MISTAKES OF HISTORIANS

Some historians have not taken into account this sad mixture of evil vessels with the good—of true Christians and false. They have not themselves been spiritually minded men. Hence they have rather made it their chief object to record the many un-Christian and wicked ways of mere professors. They have dwelt at great length, and with great minuteness, on the heresies that have troubled the Church—on the abuses that have disgraced it, and on the controversies that have distracted it. Much rather would we endeavour to trace, all down through the long dark pages of history, the silver line of God's grace in true Christians; though at times the alloy so predominates that the pure ore is scarcely perceptible.

God has never left Himself without a witness. He has had His loved and cherished, though hid-

den, ones, in all ages and in all places. No eye but His could see the seven thousand in Israel who had not bowed the knee to the image of Baal, in the days of Ahab and Jezebel. And tens of thousands, we doubt not, even from the darkest ages of Christianity, will be found at last in the "glorious Church," which Christ will present to Himself, on the long-looked-for day of His nuptial glory. Many precious stones from the rubbish of the "middle ages" will reflect His grace and glory on that crowning day. Blessed thought! Even now it fills the soul with ecstasy and delight. Lord, hasten that happy day for Thine own Name's sake!

The truly godly are instinctively humble. They are generally retiring, and for the most part but little known. There is no humility so deep and real as that which the knowledge of grace produces. Such lowly and hidden ones find but a small place on the historic page.

We will now take a general view of the first part of our subject, namely:

THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA

These seven epistles, so far, will guide our future studies. We believe they are not only historical, but also prophetic. Doubtless they are strictly historical, and this fact must be allowed its full weight in studying their prophetic character. Seven Churches actually existed in the seven cities here named, and in the condition here described. But it is equally clear that they were intended by Him who knows the end from the beginning, to bear a prophetic meaning, as well as a historical application. They were select-

ed from amongst many, and so arranged and described as to foreshadow what was to come. To limit their application to the seven literal Churches then in Asia, would be to mar the unity of the Apocalypse, and to lose the promised blessing. "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy" (Rev. 1:3). The character of the whole book is prophetic and symbolic. The second and third chapters are no exception to this. They are introduced by the Lord Himself in their mystic character. "The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven Churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven Churches" (Rev. 1:20).

Number seven is characteristic. It marks a complete circle of the thoughts or ways of God as to time. Hence the seven days of the week—the seven feasts of Israel—the seven parables of the Kingdom of Heaven in mystery. It is often used throughout this book, which takes up both Jew, Gentile, and the Church of God as responsible on the earth. Hence we have seven Churches, seven stars, seven candlesticks, seven angels, seven seals, seven trumpets, seven vials, and seven last plagues. In chapters 2, 3, only the Church is seen as responsible on the earth, and the object of Divine government. From Revelation 4 to 19 she is in Heaven. Then she appears in full manifested glory with her Lord. "And the armies which were in Heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean."

In the body of the book, especially from chapter 6, the Jews and Gentiles come before us, and are judicially dealt with from the throne of God in Heaven. .But this will not take place till after the Church—the true Bride of the Lamb—is caught up to Heaven, and the merely nominal, corrupt thing finally rejected.

The threefold division of Revelation, as given by the Lord Himself, makes the order of events quite plain, and ought to have immense weight as a principle of interpretation in the study of the Apocalypse. In chapter 1:19, He gives us the contents and plan of the whole book: "Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter"—or, literally, "after these things." "The things which thou hast seen" refer to the revelation of Jesus as seen by John in chapter 1. "The things which are"—to the time-condition of the professing body as presented in chapters 2 and 3. "The things which shall be hereafter"—from chapter 4 to the end. The third division begins with chapter 4. A door is opened in Heaven, and the apostle is called to come up. "Come up hither and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter," or "after these things." It is the same word in chapter 4:1, as in chapter 1:19. The things which are, and the things which shall be after these things, cannot possibly be concurrent. The one must end before the other begins.

When the number seven is used, not in a literal, but in a symbolic sense, it always signifies completeness. It is evidently thus used in chapters 2 and 3.

There were other Churches, we know, besides those named, but seven are selected and associated to present a complete picture of what would afterwards be developed in the Church's history on earth. The more important moral elements which then existed, the Lord foresaw would reappear in course of time. Thus we have a seven-fold or divinely perfect picture of the successive states of the professing Church during the entire period of her responsibility on the earth.

(To be continued, D. V.)

The National Restoration of Israel

God has not cast away His people for ever (Rom. xi. 2), nor has He forgotten His ancient promise and oath to Abraham that through his seed blessing should flow to all nations under heaven. "The reason why men in general in Christendom do not believe in the restoration of Israel—though of course there are individuals who believe it—but the reason why there is general scepticism about the return and restoration of Israel and the rebuilding of Jerusalem as a scene of glory for the Lord is this: they have an instinctive sense that the national blessing of Israel supposes the judgment of Christendom; for if Christendom continues it is impossible that this reinstatement can take place.

"And this view of theirs is quite true and scriptural. There cannot be the restoration of the Jews unless the complete judgment of Christendom and

its disappearance takes place first, because God cannot have two corporate witnesses on the earth at the same time. And when Christendom, the present witness, becomes entirely apostate, God will then judge it by His appointed agent, and when its judgment and final destruction have taken place, then He will restore His ancient people. Such is the declared order of Scripture."

—Taken from *Jeremiah*, by W. K.

Gleanings

*"Say not thou, I will recompense evil;
But wait on Jehovah, and He shall save thee."*

—Prov. 20:22.

No lesson is harder for some of us to learn than that of confining all our affairs to the hands of the Lord, especially when we feel we have been wronged and ill-treated. Yet it is plain from Scripture that the saint can make no greater mistake than to take charge of his own affairs in such a case. Nothing could be clearer than the injunction, "Recompense to no man evil for evil . . . Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is Mine; I will repay, saith the Lord" (Rom. 12-17-19). To set about meting out evil for evil in the face of words like these is to act in direct disobedience to God, and we need not wonder if we make a terrible botch of it all. He who, owing that all has been allowed by the Lord for his good, bows his head and bends before the blast, will find

God ever ready to interfere at the needed moment. To look away from the human instrument of our grief, however vindictive he may be, and to see, behind it all, the purposes of our Father working out, gives rest and comfort to the sorely-tried soul. It was this that sustained David when Shimei cursed and stoned him. The whole passage is so tender and striking, I cannot forbear quoting it in full: "And when king David came to Bahurim, behold, thence came out a man of the family of the house of Saul, whose name was Shimei, the son of Gera: he came forth, and cursed still as he came. And he cast stones at David, and at all the servants of king David: and all the people and all the mighty men were on his right hand and on his left. And thus said Shimei when he cursed Come out, come out, thou bloody man, and thou man of Belial: the Lord hath returned upon thee all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose stead thou hast reigned; and the Lord hath delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom thy son: and, behold, thou art taken in thy mischief, because thou art a bloody man. Then said Abishai the son of Zeruiah unto the king, Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head. And the king said, What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah? so *let him curse, because the Lord hath said unto him, curse David*. Who shall then say, Wherefore hast thou done so? And David said to Abishai, and to all his servants, Behold, my son, which came forth of my bowels, seeketh my life:

how much more now may this Benjamite do it? Let him alone, and let him curse; for *the Lord hath bidden him*. It may be that the Lord will look on my affliction, and that the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day." (2 Sam 16:5-12).

It is doubtful if, in all David's spiritual history, he ever reached a higher height of holy confidence in God than at this time of deep, deep trial. Shimei's spiteful cursing in so public a manner, and at so sorrowful a time, must have deeply lacerated his already wounded spirit. But he bows his head in submission; and instead of executing vengeance on Shimei, and seeking self-vindication from the charges made, "through evil report and good report" he holds on his way, in submissive confidence, saying, "Let him curse," and taking all from the Lord Himself.

Shimei was but an instrument, inspired by Satan, yet really permitted of the Lord, for David's chastening and discipline. As such he views him, and looks not at second causes, but at the great First Cause Himself. This is most blessed! Would that every tried saint could follow his example!

The day came that Shimei was a cringing suppliant at the feet of the man he had cursed; publicly owning that he had acted perversely, and confessing "thy servant doth know that I have sinned" (2 Sam. 19:16-23). David's royal clemency was extended in forgiveness—a far greater victory than vengeance would have been. Afterwards, in God's righteous government, he was put to death for the treachery that ever characterized him, in the reign

of Solomon. "He that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons" (Col. 3:25). With Judgment I have not to interfere. Be it mine to bow in submission to all God's ways, owning His hand in everything that would otherwise disquiet me.

—Sel.

"The integrity of the upright shall guide them: But the perverseness of the treacherous shall destroy them." Prov. 11:3.

When there is purpose of heart to walk in the truth, the Spirit of God can be counted upon for guidance and direction. When the heart is treacherous, destruction will assuredly follow. The principle here laid down is far-reaching and of vast importance. It enters into every detail and ramification of a believer's path and service. *It is not so much intelligence that is lacking among the saints as real integrity of heart.* There will often be found true devotedness to Christ coupled with very little knowledge of Scripture, and yet remarkable ability to try the things that differ, and to use what little one has for the glory of God. On the other hand, great intelligence has frequently been found coupled with gross carelessness and treachery of heart, leading to a moral and spiritual breakdown eventually. A tender conscience, subject to the guidance of the Word and Spirit of God, is the great desideratum. Contrast Obadiah and Ahab (1 Kings 18:3,4; 21:25).

—Selected.

"When He had heard therefore that he was sick, He abode two days still in the same place where He was."—John 11:6.

"God's ways are not like human ways,
He wears such strange disguises:
He tries us by His long delays,
And then our faith surprises.
While we in unbelief deplore,
And wonder at His staying,
He stands already at the door
And interrupts our praying."

Why should there be any delay at all? Why does He not answer the first knock? He is awake and willing before we knock at all. Why then should we knock again? Why keep on knocking, knocking? Why keep on praying, praying? Why be importunate? Because importunity provides the atmosphere in which the implanted seeds become matured. In prayer I receive the seed. By prayer I shall receive the fruit.—J. H. J.

CONFERENCE

St. Maries, Ida.

The annual Bible Conference for the study and ministry of the Word, will commence (D. V.) Friday at 9:30 a. m., June 1st, 1945. Prayers of the saints are desired that our coming together may be for much blessing to all and glory to His Holy Name. All coming kindly notify Mr. Sam Jacot, St. Maries, Ida., or Mr. Edwin Mueller, 227 Second St., St. Maries, Ida.

“The Lord Knoweth the Days”

(“The Lord knoweth the days of the upright.”—Ps. 37:18)

God knows our Days. The days of darkest sorrow,
When crushing grief hath stunned the heart with pain;
When no desire seems left that life's to-morrow
Should pleasant be, or smile or shine again.

He knows the Days of overwhelming weakness,
When, laid aside, we may not join the throng:
Knows, too, the days when all through Christ's own meek-
ness,
We silent suffer—insult, shame, or wrong.

He knows the Days when conflict strong is raging;
When wicked hosts our spirits sore assail;
He knows the warfare we, through Christ are waging;
Knows too, and waits to lift us, should we fail.

He knows our Days! the darkest and the brightest!
He knows Each Day: He knows them One by One:
The sunny days, — the days when heart is lightest:
He knows them all! Our God! Our Shield! Our Sun!

—J. Danson Smith.

Short Papers on Church History

(Continued)

We will now take a rapid glance at the outline of the seven churches and give a general idea of the different periods in history to which they apply.

Ephesus.—In Ephesus, the Lord detects the root of all declension. "Thou hast left thy first love." But though true of the apostolic age, it was also solemnly prophetic of the ages following. It is threatened with the removal of the candlestick unless there be repentance. Period—from the apostolic age to the close of the second century.

Smyrna.—The message to Ephesus is general, to Smyrna it is specific. And though it applied at that time to the Assembly there, it shadowed forth, in the most striking way, the repeated persecution which the Church passed under the heathen emperors. Yet God may have used the power of the world to arrest the progress of evil in the Church. Period—from the second century to Constantine.

Pergamos.—Here we have the establishment of Christianity by Constantine as the religion of the State. Instead of persecuting the Christians, he patronised them. From that moment the downward course of the Church is rapid. Her unholy alliance with the world proved her saddest and deepest fall. It was then that she lost the true sense of her relationship to Christ in Heaven, and of her character on earth as a pilgrim and a stranger. Period.—from the beginning of the fourth to the seventh century, when Popery was established.*

Thyatira.—In Thyatira, we have the Popery of the middle ages. Jezebel-like, practicing all kinds of wickedness, and persecuting the saints of God under the disguise of religious zeal. Nevertheless there was a God-fearing remnant in Thyatira, whom the Lord comforts with the bright hope of His coming, and with the promise of power over the nations when He Himself shall reign. But the word of exhortation is, "That which ye have already, hold fast till I come." Period—from the establishment of Popery to the Lord's coming. It goes on to the end, but is characterised by the dark ages.

Sardis.—Here we see the Protestant part of Christendom—that which followed the great work of the Reformation. The foul features of Popery disappear, but the new system itself has no vitality. "Thou hast a name that thou livest and art dead." But there are true saints in these lifeless systems, and Christ knows them all. "Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white; for they are worthy." Period—from the eventful sixteenth century onwards. Protestantism after the Reformation.

Philadelphia.—The Church of Philadelphia presents a feeble remnant, but they are faithful to the Word and Name of the Lord Jesus. They shadow forth the outcalling of God in these last days. That out of which they are called becomes Laodicean in character. Christ is in their midst as the Holy One and the True, and is represented as having charge of the house. He has "the key of David." The treas-

ures of the prophetic word are unlocked for those inside. They are also in the sympathies of His patience, and in the expectation of His coming. "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." Period—since the Reformation; but more especially from the beginning of this century, and still more in the present day.

Laodicea.—In Laodicea, we have lukewarmness, indifference, latitudinarianism; but with high pretensions, a boastful spirit, and great self-sufficiency. But, alas, it is intolerable to Him. He spues it out of His mouth. That which ought to have been sweet to His taste, has become nauseous. Period—co-existing with Philadelphia, Sardis, and Thyatira, but especially the closing scene.**

Having thus taken a general view of the seven Churches, we would now endeavour, through the Lord's help, briefly to trace these different periods of the Church's history. And we purpose examining more fully, each of the seven epistles as we go along, that we may ascertain what light is shed on the different periods by these addresses; and how far the facts of Church history illustrate the Scripture history of these two chapters. May the Lord guide, for the refreshment and blessing of His own beloved ones.

*The title "Pope" was first adopted by Hyginus in 139; and Pope Boniface III induced Phocas, Emperor of the East, to confine it to the prelates of Rome in 606. By the connivance of Phocas also, the Pope's supremacy over

the Christian Church was established.—Haydn's "Dictionary of Dates."

******It must be remember that Laodicea is one of the seven golden candlesticks of Chap. 1, and therefore does not represent worldly religion as such, but a company on true Church ground. Nothing is said of false doctrine, but of lukewarmness of self-satisfaction. Christ is outside. He cannot recognize the testimony, but He is ready to bless the individual.—Andrew Miller.

(To be continued, D. V.)

Light In Our Dwellings

(Continued)

But it is not only the "terror of the Lord," (as to the judgments that will come upon this world, when the "great day of the wrath of the Lamb" will have come, and finally at the judgment of the dead, small and great, before the great white throne.) that the apostle speaks of in 2 Cor. 5, for this would have less bearing on the Christian's family life, (except as to unbelieving members of his family). In the same chapter, we find the "Judgment seat of Christ," in its solemnity as to ourselves, and not only for others:

"For we" (mark well, Christian reader, *we*) "must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

It is not a question of others only, but of ourselves too. But as many, especially such who have no settled peace, have been perplexed and troubled by this well-known passage of scripture, it will be

well to give a few remarks, which, under the Lord's blessing, may help to remove those difficulties, or, at least, to simplify them; for the word of God is simple enough, and explains itself, if read and taken in its true connection.

First of all, then, we must remember, that this passage has the character of a general divine principle, with all its force intended for the conscience of the Christian. Neither the time, nor the place of the judgment is mentioned. It has the force and meaning of a general principle of truth. It refers neither to the judgment of the quick, in Matthew's gospel (chap. 25:31), "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him," when "he shall sit upon the throne of his glory;* and before him shall be gathered all nations;" that is, at the beginning of His millennial reign; nor to the second resurrection, that is, at the end of the thousand years, when He, as the Judge of the dead, shall sit on the great white throne. But, "we all," i. e., His saints too, "must appear before His tribunal. When? or Where?" is not said. Of course, it is not before the great white throne; that is for the unbelievers. But whether as to saints, it is to be during the time of our being with Him in the Father's house (before Christ's public appearing), as some think,

*God has not merely glorified His once rejected Son, outside the scene of His rejection (as in Eph. 1 and Col. 3); but He will, and justly so, glorify Him one day, on this very earth, the scene of His Cross.

or at His public appearing, as others suppose, is no matter here. Enough, that that solemn, yet blessed and happy moment will appear. I say, solemn, yet blessed and happy: For whilst one would fear to utter one word that might lead to weaken in the least the solemn effect upon our consciences, which the Spirit of God intended by such words as these, yet at the same time, for a heart that knows what grace, and peace with God mean; those words, notwithstanding their solemn weight for every honest Christian's conscience, afford the best assurance and comfort to his heart.

In order to explain myself more fully, it is necessary to remember, that this passage does not speak of personal judgment in the sense of condemnation, or even of correction and chastisement. As to the former, it has nothing to say to the believer. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." God is not unrighteous, that he should pardon us and give us eternal life, and then condemn us after all. The very thought would be blasphemous. And as to correction or chastisement, they belong to this earth, whilst we are in these poor frail bodies, where flesh, and self, and sin are in us, though we are not in the flesh even now, but in the Spirit before God. It cannot, of course, apply to our glorified bodies, when we shall be with Christ.

What, then, do the words: "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ," mean? First, it is necessary to remember that the word in the original, which, in our common version, is trans-

lated: "appear" means, "being made manifest" before Him, either in spirit, in our consciences now, or in our resurrection bodies. The word "appear," expresses rather the latter kind of manifestation. There is, therefore, a double way of being made manifest before the Lord: now, by faith, in our consciences; and, as to the future, in our resurrection bodies. Therefore the apostle says (v. 11): "But we are made manifest to God." (The word in v. 11 is, in the Greek, the same as in v. 10.)

What is the effect of "*being manifest*" to God, and of having been fully exposed to the all-searching light of His Holy Presence? Do you dread the thought, and tremble at it, and shrink from it? If you do, reader, whoever you may be, it is a sure sign, either that you have no settled peace with God, and thus are under the spirit of bondage; or, what is worse, that your conscience is practically bad, because your heart is not upright before God, and you keep some portion of it shut up from Him, and do not want the light of God's presence to enter into that dark chamber of your heart, because it is a secret *idol-shrine*, and you do not want the idol to be exposed to the light of a justly jealous God, who says: "I am the Lord thy God. Thou shalt have none other gods before me." And remember, an "idol" is anything that is preferred to Christ, and permitted to slip in between Him and the soul.* Vain attempt

* "Little children, beware of idols": the apostle John writes to Christians. He was the Lord's bosom-disciple, and whilst resting upon the bosom of Jesus, no idol could slip in.

of hiding one corner of your heart from God's searching light, and keeping the other part lit up! The darkness will soon spread from that dark idol closet, over the whole heart, and, alas! the conscience too, and thus, the eye not being single, the whole body will be full of darkness. You are, perhaps, not so bold and hardened, as those men of the house of Israel, of whom the prophet speaks (Ezek. xiv.) who had set up their idols in their hearts, and put the stumbling block of their iniquity before their faces, and yet were bold enough, to come to a prophet, to enquire of him concerning the Lord, whether He would be with them and prosper them, as King Ahab did. You do not seek, but you shun the light of His *Word* and of His Presence, where that word takes you (comp. Heb. iv. 12 and 13). But are you more honest than they, on that account? No, you are as dishonest as they, only in a different way. Awake! awake, poor half-hearted one! Flee to Jesus Christ, and Satan will flee from you. "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from among the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." (lit.: "Shine upon thee.") He says: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." Listen to His touching appeal, lest He "set his face against" you, and make you "a sign and a proverb," and cut off from the midst of His people, that you may know that He is the Lord. (Ezek. xiv. 8) Throw open your whole heart to Him; make a clean breast of it all, as in the light of

His judgment seat, and in the morning light of His forgiving and restoring grace, and returning sense of His favour, Dagon's stump will be cast out, and no part of your heart and body, which is "the temple of God," be dark any longer.

How different the effect of that solemn passage upon a Christian, who has settled peace with God, and walks uprightly before Him, though conscious of his many failures! Instead of *dreading* the light, he *loves* it, because he knows God's perfect grace in Christ Jesus; he wishes the light to shine into every corner of his heart, and into every crevice of his soul, and says, though in a far higher, deeper, and fuller sense, with the Psalmist: "Search me, O God, and know my heart, and see if there be any wicked way, (or, as the margin has it: "way of *pain*" or "*grief*"*) in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." He says so, not merely because he has *been searched* by the Lord and His word, and found how vain is the attempt of fleeing from His Presence, or of concealing or covering anything before Him; but knowing that perfect grace which makes the heart *true* (Heb. x. 22), he seeks, yea, *courts* the light, instead of fleeing from it.

But, let not the Christian reader forget, that it is not only *now*, that we are to be in the light of His Presence, there to judge everything that is not consistent with it, but that we all *must* (as a future thing) "appear before the judgment-seat of Christ,

*Lit. "way of troubles," i.e., "idols." (See new German translation.)

that every one *may receive* (mark the words—"may receive") the things done in his body according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." There is the thought of retribution—I do not say **condemnation**, or **judgment on persons**, in the passage. As to the *latter*, Christ has borne that. But there is retribution, as has been justly pointed out by another, i. e., as to the reward, for those that have done good, and as to *loss*, for the evil that has been done in the body.

I know we are treading on tender ground, and have therefore to take care, not to go beyond the terra firma of Holy Writ, lest we should get into swamps. Therefore, I would remind my Christian reader, that our so much debated passage, instead of weakening the sense and assurance of the believer's relationship in settled peace through and in Christ, only serves to consolidate that sense of our relationship, and, indeed, can be only valued and fully realized by those who have settled peace. But as the words: "that every one *may receive* the things done in the body" have been a difficulty to many, and may be so still to some of my readers; it will be well to ascertain, what is the meaning of the Greek words, used in the original. For we must always remember, that the *Spirit* of God, Who has written the *Word* of God, whilst condescending to use the language of poor mankind, to convey to us the "wondrous thoughts and counsels of God to us-ward," could never write contrary to the common rules, either of the Hebrew language in the Old, or of the

Greek in the New Testament. It would be worse than absurd, to suppose such a thing, else the *word of God*, as being His oracles, would defeat its own end. Translators will therefore always do well to remember this.

Now the *Greek* word employed by the Holy Spirit in this passage, and rendered in our common version by "*receive*," means: to *carry off* for my own use, something which has become mine, either by promise, present, reward, or under any other lawful title.* This is the *original* meaning of the word in Greek. Then, in a general sense, it is used for to *receive*, or to *obtain* something. Thus, the word evidently conveys to us the idea of one, who receives praise and reward or suffers loss, as the case may be, for the way in which he has accomplished his work.

Although every good thing that a Christian may have done, whilst in his body here below, is only through the gift and grace of God and His Spirit, yet it will, through divine grace, be accounted to him, as if it were all his own work. He will hear the "Well done!" from the blessed lips of his Master. But he will not only receive the *mark of approbation* from the Lord, but also the corresponding reward, in the place that will be assigned to him in the millennial glory, during the kingdom—not on the earth—but when we shall reign with Christ *over* the earth. For there *are different rewards*. Whilst in the gospel of Matthew xxv it is a question of being

*Comp. Schleusner and Rost Dictionaries.

faithful, during the Master's absence, as to the talents He may have committed to us, without speaking of the *degree* of faithfulness,* and thus each of the faithful servants receives the same reward, viz., that of being ruler over many things and entering into the joy of his Lord; in Luke (xix) each of the ten servants receives the *same amount*, but *not* the same *reward*. The difference there is as to the *degree* of the *faithfulness* of each servant; consequently their *reward* is *different*, according to the different degree of faithfulness. The one who has gained *ten* pounds, receives authority over *ten* cities, and the one who has gained five pounds, over *five* cities. The reward corresponds exactly with their faithfulness.—So there will be evidently a difference of reward. One star will differ from another star in glory, not as to the degree of glory in our resurrection-bodies, I think, but as to the places that we shall receive during the millennial kingdom, when reigning with Christ *over* the earth. So that there will be not only the *approbation*, but also the *reward*, or else the *loss*. A solemn thought for you and me, Christian reader!

In the light of the judgment-seat of Christ, "Who will make manifest the counsels of the hearts," everything inconsistent with that light, that has been permitted in us, whilst in our bodies, will be fully exposed and judged *by ourselves*, because being

*The difference in Matthew is in the number of talents given to each, not in the different degree of their faithfulness.

then in glory and in glorious bodies like Christ, it is not only the light of His Presence, that will manifest everything, but flesh and self no longer being there to deceive or to blind, we, as having the mind of Christ (which we have *now*, only impeded, so often, alas! by self and flesh) and in the perfect light of His Presence, and as having bodies like His own glorious body; there will be nothing to hinder the perfect judgment, on *our own* part, of everything that has prevented the intended fruits of Light, and of His Spirit to appear in us, when in our earthly bodies. His judgment of approval, as to anything *good*, done in the body, we shall receive under the deep and perfect sense of that divine grace, to which we owe everything that is good in us, as being "saved by grace, through faith, which is the gift of God," and as being "His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them."

And as to the evil, done when in our bodies, we shall judge it ourselves, as God judges it. For there can be no question of personal judgment *by Christ*, at that time, for the evil done in our bodies. As to condemnation, it is, blessed be God! a thing of the past: for Christ has borne the judgment due to us: and as to judgment in the sense of chastisement, (where this was necessary, because we did not judge ourselves by His Spirit and under His Word) this process of God's love to us, in correction, will *then* be also a thing of the past; for chastisement has to do with our *present* state, whilst we are on earth in

these frail bodies of ours. So that there cannot be any question of *personal* judgment of the saints by Christ at that time, because then we shall be with Him in *glorious bodies*, in which there will be nothing to be judged. Thus *no sin* can reappear and arise against us there as to *judgment*, may it be condemnation, or chastisement.

But if so, some reader might say, what does the apostle mean by saying, "We must all appear before the *judgment-seat* of Christ!" It does not mean that the "judgment-seat of Christ" would or could have anything to say, in the way of judgment, to His saints *personally*, from the reasons mentioned above. It does not say, "We shall all be 'judged'," but we shall all be made *manifest* before the judgment-seat of Christ, because the *Saints* are included.

(To Be Continued, D. V.)

Divine Intervention

(Continued)

FURTHER PLAGUES IN EGYPT

As we have before remarked the plagues that came upon Egypt prior to the exodus were sent, in the wisdom of God, to humble Egypt. "It was not only an infliction on the land; it was not only a deep pain and anguish to the natives, and this with increasing intensity; but it was a solemn contest between Jehovah and the gods of Egypt. The plagues were calculated to strike them most acutely in what constituted their religion."

The plague that now came upon the cattle and

other animals was aimed at the destruction of the entire system of brute worship. It is well known what the ox and the sheep were in the eyes of the Egyptians. But the plague had to be sent. **“Behold the hand of the Lord is upon the cattle which is in the field, upon the horses, upon the oxen, and upon the sheep: there shall be a very grievous murrain—* and all the cattle of Egypt died: but of the cattle of the children of Israel died not one.”**

Pharaoh sent to see if any of the cattle of the Israelites had been attacked and when he found that not one had died, his heart was hardened and he would not let the people go.

As to the hardening of Pharaoh's heart, “God never compelled a man to be an unbeliever. Unbelief, in the first instance, is never the consequence of judicial hardening on God's part. God had sent a testimony to Pharaoh, as He does to everyone in some form or another. But man left to himself invariably refuses the testimony of God. He knows it is God; he has the consciousness that he is doing wrong in refusing it, yet he does refuse because he does not like and dare not trust God, Whose Word interferes with everything that he likes. Hence man gives himself up to unbelief, and then God may either at that or a later time, according to

*It will be here seen that murrain fell upon the cattle which was 'in the field', which qualifies the word 'all', in 'all the cattle of Egypt died.' It is in contrast with 'not one' of the cattle of the Israelites.”

His own wisdom, seal up a person in a judicial hardness which is a distinct positive act on God's part, which comes in after man has proved himself an unbeliever and has persisted in it. It was so with Pharaoh, and his is a typical case, the permanent warning in the New Testament as it is the first specified instance in the Old. It is the one which the apostle Paul quotes for this purpose. Consequently it is the standing witness of this solemn truth. And remember that this is not a mere exceptional fact. It is commoner than people imagine. It will be on a great scale in Christendom shortly (2 Thess. 2) as I have little doubt that it may be in many individual cases now, and has always been so. Thus it was when our Lord Jesus was here and the presence of the Spirit, instead of preventing, confirmed it. Hence, whether on a great scale or in individual dealings with God, nothing can be more certain than that there is such an action on His part. At the same time it is never God Who makes man an unbeliever. Hardening is a judgment which comes when man persists in unbelief in the face of distinct and repeated testimony from God." (Wm. Kelly).

In connection with this judicial hardening, see Romans 1:18 to 32.

(To be continued, D. V.)

The Talebearer

"A talebearer goeth about revealing secrets:
But he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth

the matter.”—Prov. 11:13.

Talebearing, even though the tales be true, is most mischievous. If there be a fault, to lovingly admonish in private, and then conceal from all others, is in accordance with the mind of God.

There is an instructive word in this connection in the 37th of Exodus. Vers, 17 to 24, inclusive, relative to the making of the candlestick, or lampstand, for the tabernacle. Among the accessories to it, we read in ver. 23 that Moses “made his seven lamps, and his snuffers, and his snuff-dishes, of pure gold.” There is that here that is intensely interesting, and unspeakably precious.

No lamp will long burn well without occasional snuffing. Hence God has made provision even for so apparently insignificant a matter as this. To the mind of man it might seem of trifling importance as to how a light was snuffed, and what was done with the black snuff afterwards. In God’s eye, nothing is trivial that concerns the glory of His Son, or the welfare of His people.

The snuffers were made “of pure gold”—that which symbolizes the divine glory, and speaks, too, of perfect righteousness. It may often happen that some saint of God is losing his brightness, and no longer shining for Him as he once did. It is the priest with the golden tongs to whom is entrusted the delicate task of “snuffing.” “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye who are spiritual restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted” (Gal. 6:1). Thus will the “snuffing” be accomplished according to

God, and the restored brother's light burn all the brighter for it.

But what then? Is the evil to be spread abroad, and made a matter of common knowledge? Ah, there were not only the snuffers, but the snuff-dishes; and they too were of pure gold! The priest was to put carefully away, in these golden receptacles, the black, dirty snuff which he had removed from the wick. To have gone about spreading the filth upon the spotless garments of other priests would have been to defile them all. It must be hidden away in the presence of God! Is not this where we often fail?

How much grief and sorrow might have been prevented in many an assembly if the golden snuff-dishes had been more often used! On every hand we hear of strife and discord brought about through evil speaking; and it is remarkable how ready we are to listen to that which we know can only defile. Oh, that there might be more "angry countenances" among us when the backbiter is out seeking to spot and blacken the snowy garments of God's holy priests! See Chap. 25:23.

In the New Testament the divine way of dealing with a brother's fault is clearly defined: "Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother" (Matt. 18:15). If brethren would sternly refuse to listen to complaints against others until this first condition has been complied with, it would go far to do away with evil speaking. Many a brother

would be won if approached in priestly nearness to God by one who carried with him the golden snuffers and the snuff-dish.

But if he refuses to hear? Then "take with thee one or two more;" and if still willful, as a last resource, "tell it unto the church." But this not till the other means have failed.

By thus acting in accordance with the word of God, much shame and misery might be spared innocent persons, and many wandering ones recovered who, through backsliding, are driven deeper into the mire. God, too, will be glorified, and the Lord Jesus honored; for He has said, "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet . . . If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." (John 13:14,17). —Sel.

The Purpose of God in the Old Testament

(Continued)

It is abundantly evident that from the earliest days of the history of God's earthly people it was ever in the mind of God to bring blessing to the Gentile, and we find that after the history of Melchisedec, the next stranger noticed is ASENATH, the daughter of Potipherah, priest of On, (the sun god,) who became the bride of Joseph while he was estranged from his brethren, but exalted to the throne of Egypt.

In Genesis 41 we find the marriage of Joseph

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with a "stranger" and this is immediately followed by the account of his making himself known to his brethren. In all that takes place we have a most remarkable type of our Lord in His dual character. The details are most interesting and instructive.

First, we see foreshadowed in Joseph, our Lord Jesus Christ presented to the nation, but rejected, and as a result, hidden in the heavens, and the Holy Spirit sent to gather out—from Jew and Gentile—those who are united with Him in the place of His exaltation.

But it was while estranged from his brethren that Joseph took his Egyptian bride and linked her in the most intimate way with his glory, and becoming part of himself (they twain shall be one flesh) she became sharer of all that was his and necessarily HAD A PLACE OF NEARNESS THAT NONE OTHER MIGHT SHARE.

Thus in type we see our blessed Lord and His chosen bride; she becomes the sharer of both His rejection and His glory. Another has remarked: "It is Christ's position which gives character to the position of the church, and her position should ever give character to her walk. If we are gathered to Christ, it is as exalted in glory, and not as humbled down here."

It is important that we grasp the truth as to our union with Christ our Lord. There is a favorite slogan (if we may so speak) current in Christendom: viz: "The blood of the Lamb is the union of saints." This of course asserts that the blood is the

ground of unity. We would certainly assert most strongly that it is the "blood" which is the alone ground of our fellowship with God, indeed Scripture asserts it (1 John 1:7).

But if we think of "the union of saints," this has another connection, for we read: "BY ONE SPIRIT are we all baptized into ONE BODY, and have all been made to drink into ONE SPIRIT" (1 Cor. 12:13). So that "the union of saints" is by the Holy Spirit, and He gathers to the Person of ONE, who is risen and glorified.

—J. W. H. N.

"Perhaps"

(Perhaps he 'herefore . . . that thou shouldest.)—Phile. 15)

"Perhaps! "Perhaps!" Blest word for contemplation
In shadowland and tears;
Perhaps! Perhaps! How dear its sweet salvation
Through life's mysterious years.

"Perhaps!" We'll say it, — e'en with spirit aching, —
Perhaps — time will explain!
Perhaps the griefs, which meantime hearts are breaking,
Will yet be seen as gain.

Perhaps! And, while we may not now affirm it,
We yet can simply say
"Perhaps," — and leave God later to confirm it, —
There was no other way.

Perhaps! Perhaps! This simple word believing
Shall hush our "Why" and "How,"—
Till, satisfied, with opened eyes perceiving,
We, worshipping, shall bow.

—J. Danson Smith.

Gleanings

"But their eyes were holden that they should not know Him."—Luke 24:16.

"Hark my soul ! It is the Lord;
'Tis thy Saviour—hear His word;
Jesus speaks, He speaks to thee;
'Say, poor sinner, lov'st thou Me?'"

This was not the only time the disciples did not know their Lord. Weary and sad from a night of fruitless toil they did not know Him on Galilee's shore (John 2:4). Startled in the storm, when striving to row against wind and tide they did not know Him as He walked upon the waves (Matt. 14:26). Blinded by hopeless grief, Mary Magdalene did not know Him in the garden (John 20:14). But it was He. It was the Lord alone who could gladden and brighten and thrill with hope fainting hearts and He was with them, though not known. In our darkest hour He is with us. In our hopeless grief He is never away. Our blindness may not recognize Him till He shows us His hands or calls us by name. But when we know it is the Lord, every difficulty vanishes in the joy of His presence.—L. S.

"Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand"—Eph. 6:13.

"One sin indulged in brings another in,
The second pulls a third, the third draws more,
And they for all the rest set open the door:

Till custom takes away the judging sense,
That to offend we think it no offence."

Every sin being the fruit of our sinful nature, comes under the sentence of God's wrath, even the cross of Christ, and must needs come under the severest judgment of the believer, if he would walk with God. He cannot go on with unholiness, however small it may seem. If we do not judge the first approach of sin, our consciences will soon cease to be our faithful monitors, and who can tell to what lengths we may go? Oh, to shudder at the very appearance of sin! but alas, how easily we are caught in the enemy's trap, if the shield of faith is down! —Sel.

Conference

St. Maries, Ida.

The annual Bible Conference for the study and ministry of the Word, will commence (D. V.) Friday at 9:30 a. m., June 1st, 1945. Prayers of the saints are desired that our coming together may be for much blessing to all and glory to His Holy Name. All coming kindly notify Mr. Sam Jacot, St. Maries, Ida., or Mr. Edwin Mueller, 227 Second St., St. Maries, Ida.

"Unto This Day"

(Acts 26:22)

"Unto this day" He hath guarded and guided;
Unto this day He hath graciously planned;
Unto this day He hath sweetly provided,
Yea, hath provided with bountiful hand.

"Unto this day" He hath well undertaken;
Unto this day He hath kept by His grace:
Why then should spirit or mind be now shaken
Though future pathways one may not now trace?

"Unto this day," both through joy and through sorrow,
He hath been near with His tenderest care:
Will He not then, through life's unknown to-morrow,
Sweetly and safely His trusting child bear?

"Unto this day!" Shall we sing it with gladness?
God hath been faithful right "Unto This Day";
Thus shall we be saved from sigh and from sadness,
Though now unknown and obscure is life's way.

—J. Danson Smith.

The Throne on Wheels

I start the new year with Ezekiel as torchbearer.
This is the man for me, the prisoner by the river
Chebar, who could not run himself, he saw the
Throne on wheels doing all the running for him.

Face to face with all the mad, unaskable questions of destiny here, I have my sacred solution at last. Am I stuck fast in a seeming conspiracy of circumstances, no advance possible? Then the Throne of my God is on omnipresent wheels, and He can run where it would not be safe for me to try to. These whirring wheels of my God are in consoling contrast to the Chebar chains. Ezekiel could not run,

so God did all the running for him. Every time you see a sick invalid pushed along on rubber tires, think of the Throne of God rushing on welcome wheels to the succour of that very sick one!

Up to this point God's Throne was revealed as the most unmovable thing in the universe. Seated on the Rock of Eternity, there was the High Throne of God unshakeable and irrevocable. But here I see that same Throne whirring on these wheels of celestial celerity. God, immovable, yet always on the move; God unchangeable, but always here, there and everywhere for the succour of the soul.

The wheels are full of eyes, and that means to prisoner Ezekiel that there was no difficult corner he could be in, but there was ever an Eye on the situation. For the wheels were *full* of eyes, and that means they were as full of eyes as life can be full of trials, and so there is always an eye for each and every trace of trial.

Some of the best Epistles Paul ever wrote were penned when he was in a Roman prison: Philipians is all a-throb with "Joy! Joy! Joy!" just because the Throne on wheels rushed to the succour of Paul's soul. Ephesians and Colossians are all about the Heavenly calling, about being seated in the Heavenlies, just when the writer was actually seated in the worst place earth could give him.

History is full of dark corners, but the Throne on wheels is full of bright eyes, and for every twist and turn of the pilgrim path there is An Eye that saw the bend of the road before the pilgrim did. Do not let us "Paul! Paul! the apostle!" as though

God could not do for others what He did for him.

Francis Baker in the Tower of London found the same succour from the Throne on wheels. Bars or no bars on the prison, the same Christ who came to them, *the doors being shut*, He it is who is the highest expression of The love that laughs at locksmiths. And so God repeated in Francis Baker what He did in Paul, for then and there it was He wrote, "Jerusalem, my happy home." "The further off from England, the nearer is to France"—and Heaven is all the nearer because earth is receding.

Rutherford proved that the God of Paul was only Paul's God in the sense that He was working out a pattern for us in him. Look at those love letters he wrote from "God's palace of Aberdeen." There are 362 of these effusions, and all aflame with the love that passeth the love of women, all written in the cold, clammy prison, and all alive with the testimony that the wheels of Omnipotence were also full of the eyes of Omniscience. For the power to go is one thing, and the other power *to know where to go* is another, hence God's wheels do the former, and God's eyes in the wheels do the latter.

James Montgomery, locked up in York Castle, wrote his holiest hymns there, for the same God had the same solution for all His children. He had no other way with The Son: has He any other way with *the sons*? The harder you dash a rubber ball to the ground, the higher it will rise on the rebound; and Joseph was only put down in the pit on the way to his ascending the throne.

Thank God for the wheels, but bless Him also for the endless Eyes that guide them where to go. They reached old Savonarola in prison, else how could he have written those matchless commentaries of his on the thirty-first and fifty-first Psalms.

They got Bunyan all right when he wrote the "Pilgrim's Progress," that has gone round the world to certify that the more you try to lock up the truth the more the truth will run to the rescue.

Tyndal in Vilvorde Prison heard the whir of the wheels of God when he translated the Word of God; and so did Ann Askew from Smithfield, and Judson in the Burmese prison. All, all echoing the oldest thing in the economy of God, that as the sufferings abound, so the consolations. Thus God would have us get honey out of the bee that stings us. Well, He knows that if adversity has killed its thousands, then prosperity has killed its tens of thousands.

—SEL.

Divine Intervention

(Continued)

THE THIRD THREE PLAGUES OF EGYPT

Thunder — Locusts — Darkness

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord God of the Hebrews, Let My people go, that they may serve Me.

"For I will at this time send all My plagues upon thine heart, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people; that thou mayest know that there is none like Me in all the earth.

"For now I will stretch out My hand, that I may smite thee and thy people with pestilence; and thou shalt be cut off from the earth.

"And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee My power; and that My Name may be declared throughout all the earth.

"As yet exaltest thou thyself against My people, that thou wilt not let them go?

"Behold, tomorrow about this time I will cause it to rain a very grievous hail, such as hath not been in Egypt since the foundation thereof even until now.

"Send therefore now, and gather thy cattle, and all that thou hast in the field; for upon every man and beast which shall be found in the field, and shall not be brought home, the hail shall come down upon them, and they shall die.

"He that feared the word of the Lord among the servants of Pharaoh made his servants and his cattle flee into the houses:

"And he that regarded not the word of the Lord left his servants and his cattle in the field." Exodus 9:13-21.

"Let My people Go!"

Or else—*"thou shalt be cut off from the earth!"*

The demand of Jehovah "Let My people go" is written large in the Book of Exodus, and all the power of Satan cannot nullify it. The word to Moses at Horeb must be fulfilled; God had pledged Himself and "He abideth faithful." Propositions on the part of the enemy are nothing to Him; His

purposes go on to certain fulfillment and no power in the universe can alter them. To be on the side of God is to be on the side of Omnipotence—safe, solid and secure.

It has been pointed out that the middle plagues that came upon Egypt proceeded more from the man himself, although the government of God is seen in them.

The plagues that now fall on that unhappy land are direct inflictions. “Moses stretched forth his rod toward heaven: and *the Lord sent* thunder and hail, and the fire ran along upon the ground; and *the Lord rained* hail upon the land of Egypt.” Exodus 9:23.

Here it was direct Divine intervention—God intervening once more with “hailstones and coals of fire” when He thundered in the heavens and shot out lightnings to discomfit His foes (Ps. 18). All of which speaks of the wrath of God as in the book of the Revelation under the first trumpet. Even now the world lies under the wrath of God because of sin and the rejection of Christ, while, at the same time provision has been made for everyone who puts his trust in Him.

“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.” John 3:36.

Hail-storms were not unknown in Egypt, for travellers have often testified of these but they were of a harmless character. Thunder was less

known than hail and this doubtless added to the general terror for with the thunder—"the voice of God" "there was hail, and continuous fire amid the hail, very heavy, such as had not been in all the land of Egypt, since it was a nation. And the hail smote in all the land of Egypt all that was in the field, both men and beast; and every herb of the field did the hail smite, and shivered every tree of the field. Only in the land of Goshen, *where the children of Israel were, was there no hail.*" Exodus 9:22-26 (Num. Bible).

At the appearance of Moses before Pharaoh with his message, "A remonstrance followed, for the words should read to the effect, that though God had stretched out His hand, Pharaoh was not yet cut off, but was preserved, so that he might, either by humbling himself, or by rejecting the Divine warning, be the means of magnifying God's Name. 'As yet exaltest thou thyself'—like a dam to resist the waters, 'behold, tomorrow about this time I will cause it to rain a very grievous hail, such as hath not been in Egypt since the foundation thereof even until now.' Exodus 9:18.

"We know not Pharaoh's reply, but the words recorded indicate there was a conversation between Moses and the king. Some of the court believed, and availed themselves of the advice to house their cattle and their servants; others despised the counsel, and lost all.

"At its appointed time the storm burst. Fire and hail fell upon the ground; trees and herbage, man and beast exposed to its violence were de-

stroyed. Only in Goshen, 'the land of flowers'*, nature smiled. There, though the sound of the storm was heard, no wrath from heaven fell. The wall of partition separating Israel from Egypt rose right up to the sky.

"Pharaoh attributed the unwonted thunderings to the very 'voices of God' (Margin). He quailed and sought the intercession of Moses. He owned he had sinned—an astounding descent from his throne of pride—and Moses promised deliverance, but added, 'As for thee'—and we may well suppose him looking round upon the court —'and thy servants, I know that ye will not yet fear Jehovah Elohim' Exodus 9:30 the Sole and Only and Everlasting One, the Maker of All!

"To such lengths did he go in the power of his God that he would not even intercede within the walls of the idolatrous city, but lifted up his hands when outside of it, and at once the storm ceased. Then, true to the prophecy, Pharaoh and his court hardened their hearts.

"The flax and barley crops being specially named, we can fix the date of this visitation; it was late in the month of January or early in February. The end was near; there were but four weeks more and Israel would be free."**

(To be continued, D. V.)

*"Israel in Egypt"—Osburn, p. 26.

**"Light from the Land of the Sphinx."

Light In Our Dwellings

(Continued)

SUBMISSION

In order to remove, as much as possible, the last difficulty from the mind of any of our readers, I will give here the word of an eminent servant of Christ, which will serve the purpose better than anything I could say. And, as the subject is of great importance for the spiritual health of every Christian, and many of my readers, perhaps, are not in possession of the important work I am going to quote from, I have, for their benefit, permitted myself to draw rather largely from it.* He says:—

“However great the happiness of being in the perfect light—and this happiness is complete and divine in its character—it is on the side of *conscience* that the subject is here presented. God maintains His majesty by the judgment which He executes, as it is written: ‘The Lord is known by the judgment that He executes.’—And, for my part, I believe, that it is very profitable for the soul, to have the judgment of God present to our minds, and the sense of the unchangeable majesty of God, maintained in the conscience by this means. If we were not under grace, it would be—it ought to be—insupportable; but the *maintainance of this sentiment* does not contradict *grace*. It is, indeed, *only under grace*, that it *can* be maintained in its *truth*; for

*J. N. Darby’s “Synopsis of the Books of the Bible.” Vol. 4—The italics are mine.

who otherwise could bear the thought for an instant, of receiving that which he had done in the body? None but he who is completely blinded. But the authority, the holy authority of God, which asserts itself in judgment, *forms a part of our relationship with Him*: the maintenance of this sentiment, *associated with the full enjoyment of grace, forms a part of our holy spiritual affections*. It is the *fear of the Lord*. It is in this sense, that "*Happy is he that feareth always*." If this weakens the conviction, that the love of God rests *fully, eternally upon us*, then we get off the only possible ground of any relationship whatever with God, unless perdition could be so called. But, in the *sweet and peaceful* atmosphere of grace, *conscience maintains its rights and its authority against the subtle encroachments of the flesh*, through the sense of God's judgment, in virtue of a holiness which cannot be separated from the character of God, *without denying that there is a God*; for if there is a God, *He is Holy*.

"This sentiment engages the *heart* of the *accepted believer*, to endeavour to please the Lord in every way; and in the sense of how solemn a thing it is for a sinner to appear before God, the love that necessarily accompanies it in a believer's heart, urges him to persuade men with a view to their salvation, while maintaining his own conscience in the light. And he who *is now walking* in the light, *will not fear it* on the day when it shall appear in its glory. He must be manifested; but walking in the light, in the *sense of the fear of God*, we are already

manifested to God; nothing hinders the sweet and assured flow of His love.

“Accordingly, the walk of such an one justifies itself in the end to the consciences of others; one is manifested as walking in the light. These are, therefore, the two great practical principles of the ministry; to walk in the light, in the sense of God’s solemn judgment for every one; and the *conscience being thus pure in the light, the sense of the Judgment* (which, in this case, cannot trouble the soul for itself, or obscure its view of the love of God,) impels the heart to seek in love those who are in danger of this judgment.”

“This work of manifestation is *already true*, in so far as *we have realized the light*. Cannot I, being now in peace, look back at what I was before conversion, and at all my failures since my conversion, humbled, but adoring the grace of God in all He has done for me, but *without a thought of fear, or imputation of sin*? Does not this awaken a very *deep sense of all that God is*? Such will be the case perfectly, when we are manifested, when we shall know, as we are known.”

“What we find in this passage, is the perfect manifestation of all that a person is and has been, before a throne characterized by judgment, without judgment as to the person in question being guilty. No doubt, when the wicked receives the things done in the body he is condemned. But it is not said (“for we must all be”) ‘*judged*,’ because then all must be *condemned*. But this *manifestation* is exactly what brings all morally before the heart,

where it is capable of judging evil for itself. Were it under *judgment*, it could not.

"Freed from all fear, and in the perfect light, and with the comfort of perfect love, (for where we have the consciousness* of sin, and of its not being imputed, we have the sense, though in an humbling way, of perfect love,) and at the same time the sense of authority and divine government, fully made good in the soul, all is judged *by the soul itself, as God judges it, and communion* with Him entered into. This is exceedingly precious. We have to remember, that at our appearance before the judgment-seat of Christ, we are *already glorified*. Christ has come Himself, in perfect love, to fetch us; and has changed our vile body, according to the resemblance of His glorious body. We are glorified, and *like Christ before* the judgment takes place. And mark the effect on Paul. Does the thought of being manifested, awaken *anxiety* or *dread*? Not the least. He realizes all the solemnity of such a process. He knows the terror of the Lord; has it before his eyes; and what is the consequence? He sets about to persuade others, who are in need of it."

"But this view of judgment, and our complete manifestation in that day, has a *present effect* on the saint, according to its own nature. He realizes it by faith. He is manifested. It will unfold all God's past ways towards him, when he is in glory, but he is manifested now to God; his conscience

*The English translation from the French says, "conscience of sin," I suppose by misprint.

exercised in the light. It has thus a present sanctifying power."

"Thus we have here (2 Cor. v.) set before us: *glory*, with the personal certainty of enjoying it; and *death*, become the means of being present with the Lord; the *tribunal* of Christ, and the necessity of being manifested before it; and the *love* of Christ in His death, all being already dead. How are such *diverse* principles as these to be *reconciled* and *arranged* in the heart? It is that the apostle *was* manifested before God. Hence the thought of being manifested before the tribunal, produced, along with *present sanctification*, no other effect on him than that of *solemnity*, for *he* was *not* to come into judgment, but it became an urgent motive for preaching to others, according to the love which Christ had manifested in His death. The idea of the *tribunal* did not in the least weaken his *certainty* of glory. His soul, in the full light of God, *reflected* what was in that light, namely, the glory of Christ, ascended on high as Man. And the love of this same Jesus was strengthened in its activity, by the sense of the tribunal which awaits all men."

"What a marvellous combination of motives we find in this passage, to form a ministry characterised by the development of all that in which God reveals Himself, and by which he acts on the heart and conscience of man! And it is in a pure conscience that these things can have their force together. If the conscience were not pure, the tribunal would obscure the glory, at least as belonging to

oneself, and weaken the sense of His love. At any rate one would be occupied with self in connection with these things, and ought to be so. But when pure before God, it only sees a tribunal which exerts no sense of personal uneasiness, and, therefore has all its true moral effect, as an additional motive for seriousness in our own walk, and a solemn energy in the appeal, which the knowledge of Jesus impels it to address to man."

I have nothing to add, trusting, that after the helpful remarks I have just quoted, the last lingering difficulty in the mind of some readers may have been removed.

I have thought it right to dwell at great length upon the subject of "*the fear of Christ*," for, so far from making us uneasy, the "*fear of Christ*," in its *restraining* and subduing power, as well as the *constraining* power, form both of them, together with the full enjoyment of grace, a part of our holy *spiritual* affections, as we have been so blessedly reminded; just as the authority, the holy authority of God which asserts itself in judgment, forms a part of our *relationship* with Him

And where this "*fear of Christ*," in His own supreme authority, has its solemnizing and soul-subduing effect upon us, dear Christian readers, it will most certainly teach us, to submit ourselves one to another in our family relationships, where, in the places of *obedience* and *love*, the "*fear of Christ*" and the "*love of Christ*," find the happy and natural scope for their daily healthy exercise, for the glory of our God and Father and of Him

Who is our Blessed Head and Master in heaven.

All crowns will be cast at His feet, all His enemies be made His footstool, and at the Name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of those in heaven and of those on earth, and those under the earth, and every tongue will have to confess "*that Jesus Christ is Lord*, to the glory of God the Father." Such is God's just decree, at first announced by His Spirit on the day of Pentecost, and that divine decree will be carried out without fail, as to those who have not confessed and bowed to that Name, under grace. There will be a day of homage of the whole universe before Him, whom Satan and men once derided, when He hung, as the forsaken Sufferer, between heaven and earth, when there was no eye to pity Him, and they cried: "Aha, so would we have it." Thus God *will have it*, and His will must be done. Even so. Amen. Hallelujah!

And we, beloved, whose tongues and knees have learnt, through, and under grace, to confess and to bow to that ever blessed Name, and who confess now that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father, how far do we, practically, own His Lordship in our daily lives, especially in our houses? We bow our knees before Him every morning in our family worship, and own Him Lord, blessed be His grace, that taught us to do so. But does our daily life impress the members of our family or household with the conviction that the "*fear of Christ*" sways our conduct, and that He is the Lord of our consciences, and the Master of our affections, and that our thoughts are brought

“into captivity to the *obedience* of Christ?”

With what divine fitness and wisdom, then, does the Spirit of God, before entering upon the duties connected with our divers family relationships, set before us, as the only true moving principle for Christian submission, “*the fear of Christ!*” May it be true, in our *family worship (and life)*, as well as in our public worship!

—J. Von P.

Short Papers on Church History

(Continued)

THE ROCK FOUNDATION

In commencing the study of any subject, it is well to know its beginning—the original intention or plan, and the first step in its history. These we have in the clearest, fullest way, as to the Church, in Holy Scripture. There we have not only the original intention, but the plans and specifications of the great Builder, and the early history of the work under His own hand. “And the Lord added daily such as should be saved” (Acts 2. R.V.). This is historical. The foundation had been laid, and the work was going on; but the Lord Himself was still the only Builder; therefore, up to this time, all was real and perfect.

At the close of the Jewish dispensation the Lord added the saved remnant of Israel to the newly formed Church; but at the close of the present or Christian dispensation, He will take all who believe in His Name up to Heaven in glorified bodies. Not

one belonging to the Church will be added to the congregation of Millennial saints. "For the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. 4:16-18). This will be the happy close of the history of the Church on earth—the true spouse of Christ. The dead raised, the living changed, and all, in their bodies of glory, caught up together in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Thus we have the entire limits of the Church defined, and the whole period of her history before us. But we return to the dawn of her day on the earth.

Under the figure of a building, the Lord first introduces the subject of the Church. And so infinitely precious are His words, that we may adopt them as the text or motto of its whole history. They have sustained the hearts and the hopes of His people in all ages, and in all circumstances; and they will ever be the stronghold of faith. What can be more blessed, more assuring, more peace-giving, than these words? —

**"UPON THIS ROCK I WILL BUILD MY
CHURCH; AND THE GATES OF HELL
SHALL NOT PREVAIL AGAINST IT."**

In Matthew 16 the Lord questions His disciples as to the sayings of men concerning Himself. This leads to the glorious confession of Peter, and also

to the gracious revelation of the Lord concerning His Church. It may be well to transfer the whole conversation to our pages. It all bears so directly on our subject.

“When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I, the Son of Man am? And they said, Some say that Thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but *My Father which is in Heaven*. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church; and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.”

THE FOUNDATION OF THE CHURCH

Here we have the two main things connected with the proposed building—the Rock-foundation and the Divine Builder.

“UPON THIS ROCK I will build My Church.” But who is, or what is, “this Rock?” some may inquire.

Clearly, we answer, the confession of Peter; not Peter himself, as the apostacy teaches. True, he was a stone—a living stone in the new temple; “Thou art Peter”—thou art a stone. But the Father’s revelation, by Peter, of the glory of the Person of His Son, is the foundation on which the Church is built—“Thou art the Christ, the Son of

the living God." But the glory of the Person of the Son in *resurrection* is the unveiled truth here. "Flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but My Father which is in Heaven." Immediately on the confession by Peter, the Lord intimates His intention to build His Church, and asserts its eternal security. "The gates of Hades shall not prevail against it."

He Himself, the Fountain of Life, could not be conquered by death, but in dying as the great Substitute for sinners, He triumphed over death and the grave, and is alive for evermore, as He said to His apostle John after His resurrection: "I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of Hell and of death" (Rev. 1:18). What majestic words are these! They are the words of a Conqueror—of One who has power; but of power over the gates of Hades—the place of departed spirits. The keys—symbol of authority and power—hang at His girdle. The *stroke* of death may fall upon a Christian, but the *sting* is gone. It comes as a messenger of peace to conduct the weary pilgrim home to eternal rest. Death is no longer the *master*, but the *servant* of the Christian. "For all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or *death*, or things present, or things to come; all are yours: and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's" (1 Cor. 3:21-23).

The Person of Christ then, the Son of the living God—in His resurrection-glory—is the foundation, the solid, the imperishable foundation, on

which the Church is built. As alive from the dead, He communicates life in resurrection to all who are built on Him as the true Foundation-stone. This is plain from what Peter says in his First Epistle. "To Whom coming, as unto a living Stone . . . ye also, as *lively* stones, are built up a spiritual house" (1 Peter 2:4-5). And further down in the same chapter he says; "Unto you therefore which believe, He is precious," or "an honour" (see margin). Note well these two most precious truths in connection with our "Rock-foundation," Divine life and Divine preciousness. These are communicated to, and become the possession of all who put their trust in Christ. "To *Whom* coming," not to *what* coming; it is the *Person* of Christ we come to, and have to do with. His life—life in resurrection—becomes ours. From that moment He is our life. "To Whom coming, as unto a living Stone . . . ye also, as *living* stones, are built up a spiritual house." Christ's own life, as the risen Man, and all that He is heir to, are ours. Blessed truth! Who would not desire, above all things, this life, and this life beyond the power of death—the gates of Hades? Eternal victory is stamped on the risen life of Christ, it can never more be tested, and this is the believer's life.

But there is more than *life* for every living stone in this spiritual temple. There is also Christ's *preciousness*. "Unto you therefore which believe He is precious;" literally, "the preciousness." That is, just as the life of Christ becomes ours when we believe in Him, so does His preciousness. The prin-

ciple in both is the same. The life may be viewed as our capacity to enjoy; and the preciousness, as our title to possess our inheritance on high. His honours, titles, dignities, privileges, possessions, glories, are ours—all ours in Him. "To them that believe He is the preciousness." Such then is our Rock-foundation, and such the blessedness of all who are on the Rock. —A. MILLER.

(To be continued, D. V.)

The Proud Complacency of Christendom

"Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall".

(Proverbs 16:18.)

Christendom boasts on the one hand in the antiquity of its forms and ceremonies and on the other hand in its toleration of all shades of religious opinion which the human mind or imagination can invent. A similar haughtiness of spirit existed among the Jews before overwhelming judgment by the Chaldeans fell upon them. Was not the temple of Solomon in all its glory still in their midst? they said. Gazing upon the splendid pile of buildings, they exclaimed with exulting pride, "The temple of Jehovah, The temple of Jehovah, The temple of Jehovah are these." These boasts were lying words, for Ichabod was already written upon it, from its pinnacle to its base (Jer. vii. 4). Priests and people alike had departed from the living God, daily breaking both tables of His law by sin against Him

and their neighbour. And the axe lay at the root of the tree.

Jeremiah shows them that their boast in an uninterrupted succession of national privilege was a vain trust. Their false confidence was quite as strongly the notion of the Jews as ever it has been of papists and others in Christendom. The delusion was equally destructive to them (by the power of Nebuchadnezzar) as it will be to Christendom (by the power of the beast and his allies, Rev. xvii). There is nothing more certain to bring judicial destruction upon Christendom than its notion of an indefectible security (see Rev. xviii. 7, 8).

I do not mean security for the soul, for the individual believer. This assurance is quite right and scriptural. We cannot too strongly hold the eternal life of the believer; but it is to be caught in the wiles of the wicked one for any to apply to the state of Christendom the notion that it will go on indefectibly, without decay or corruption, when, on the contrary, God has warned us in His word that Christendom will fall just like the Jewish state before it (see Rom. xi 20, 21). Such a complacent notion is precisely the delusion by which Satan brings about its total departure from God.

What is true for the individual soul in Christ about guaranteed security is thoroughly ruinous for the general collective state in religion. There is nothing finer than the faith that gives God credit for His sovereign grace to the soul; but there is no greater pit of error and delusion than to predicate generally of the apostate state of things in Chris-

tendom what is only true of and for the individual soul. The one is real genuine faith, which God will honour; and the other is most arrogant and lofty presumption, which God will judge.

Taken from *Jeremiah*, by W.K.

“Ye Have Not, Because—”

If you had been living, when Christ was on earth,
And had met the Saviour kind,
What would you’ve asked Him to do for you,
Supposing you were stone blind?

The child considered, and then replied, —
“I expect that, without doubt,
I’d have asked for a dog, with a collar and chain,
To lead me daily about.”

And how often thus, in our faithless prayers,
(We acknowledge with shamed surprise),
We have only asked for a dog and a chain,
When we might have had — opened eyes.

—M. Colley.

“Ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.”
—James 4:2-3.

“If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.”
—1 John 3:20-22.

Gleanings

Surely, if we have a single eye to the glory of God, if we desire to walk in the light, we shall seek to be separated from all evil, whether of heart or position, to make God's word the lamp unto our feet and the light unto our path, both for daily walk and life, and for all our church practices and associations. Nay, to set up anything in the house of God which has not the direction and sanction of the Scriptures is practical disobedience to the Lord as Head of the Church.

(*Extract from "The Step I Have Taken."*) —E. D.

"He that is first in his own cause seemeth just; but his neighbor cometh and searcheth him."
—Prov. 18:17.

It is most unwise to hear but one side of a story (particularly when it is a matter that is troubling the saints of God), and give judgment upon what has been presented. Even with the most conscientious there is always the likelihood of but a partial account having been told. Therefore the wisdom of hearing, not only both parties, but, if possible, of having them face to face. Most men can make out a good cause for themselves, if left alone; because it has been natural for fallen man to justify himself since the day that Adam sought to throw the blame of his sin back upon God. Therefore, to decide a case on one-sided testimony is almost certain to result in a miscarriage of justice.

See David's erroneous judgment as to Ziba and Mephibosheth. 2 Sam. 16:1-4; 19:24-30).—SEL.

Compassion

When God looked down in pity
On this world undone by sin,
And He planned for its redemption
By His Son, our hearts to win.
"In the volume it is written
'Lo! I come to do Thy will";
He assumed our obligations,
And our fears of death did still.

Thus He laid aside His glory
Which before the world was made,
He had ever with the Father,
And our debt of sin He paid.
Took the place here of a servant:
Learned obedience here below
He delighted in this service,
Teaching men His love to know.

Wicked men refused, disowned Him,
Scourged and nailed Him to the tree;
Scorned and mocked Him in His suffering,
Thus He died for you and me.
God there laid our sin upon Him,
Sinless, He our judgment took.
Shut within that dreadful darkness,
God for sin, His Son forsook.

All the world has heard the story,
How He rose in mighty power,
To the Father's throne in glory
Where He's waiting for that hour;
To fulfil that wondrous promise
"I again will come for thee,"
Take unto the heavenly mansions
Those whose hearts are won for Me.

—J. T. C.

Going Slow With God

God is never slow from His standpoint, but He is from ours, because impetuosity and doing things prematurely are universal human weaknesses. It may not only be the result of our fallen condition, but one of the infirmities in our very nature as creatures to be in a hurry. When we begin to learn the ways of God we have so many things to unlearn that there are some lessons which God does not begin teaching us till after we have passed the initial stages, and one of these deeper lessons is that of moving very slowly with Himself. It is not indifference, nor lagging behind; it is just the opposite of a dull and slovenly spirit, for it is a disposition entirely wide awake and energetic to keep in the order of God's will.

God lives and moves in eternity, and every little detail in His working must be like Himself, and have in it the majesty and measured movement, as well as the accuracy and promptness of infinite wisdom. When we deal with God we are not dealing with impetuous, short-sighted creatures. It is a great thing to really come to the knowledge as to who God is, and how we are to behave with Him. There is no hurry in a Being who sees and knows everything from all eternity. True, God often acts instantaneously, but it is the instantaneousness of mature and boundless wisdom, and not the quickness of a creature's hurry. It is also true that we are to "run the race set before us," and "run in the way

of God's commandments," but we are to run with all our faculties calmly collected, with thoughtful deliberation. Running with God is a slow walk with the creature. We are to let God do the swiftness and we do the slowness.

The Holy Spirit tells us to "be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath." That is, swift to take in from God, but slow to give out the opinions, the emotions of the creature. We can never walk with God until we learn to go slow, to take time to pray, to think twice before we speak once, to watch the pace of His guidance, and measure our steps accordingly. Rebekah and Jacob were in a hurry to get God's fore-ordained blessing from the lips of Isaac, and paid the penalty of twenty years' separation and sorrow. Peter lagged behind Christ at the trial before Pilate, but his very tardiness was the effect of his previous impetuosity in boasting of his fidelity. Had he gone slow in his avowals of heroism, and taken time to weigh his words, he would have gone faster, and closer to the cross. The very recollection as to who God is, would produce a thoughtful, slow, quiet movement in all our dealings with Him.

We miss a great many things from God by not going slow enough with Him. It must be a secret joy in God to give Himself forth to those who love and appreciate Him, but God must always act like Himself, and if we fail to move in harmony with His attributes, and get the things He wants to communicate in His own way, He cannot change His

perfections to accommodate our whims, and even if He should undertake to hear and bless us without regard to time and fitness it would do us no good, for the very blessings of God, if not conferred in God's way, would prove curses, like eating raw meat or green fruit. There are glimpses into God's perfections, insight into wonderful truths, quiet unfoldings of daily opportunities, gentle checks of the Holy Spirit upon our decisions or words, sweet and secret promptings to do certain things, the quiet solving of hard problems and mental articulations of special words of strength, which we have often missed because we took our ear from God's telephone a little too quickly, or ran past the angle of vision, or wasted time by asking a question, or got in a feverish state of anxiety, or attempted to take God's work into our own hands. There is no telling how much we have lost spiritually, mentally, and physically, by not going slow with God.

There is a time for everything in the universe to get ripe. All thoughts, words, prayers, actions, providences, opportunities, blessings, spiritual experiences, divine revelations, all avocations, all dispensations, whether in nature, grace, or glory, have a time in which they get ripe; and to go slow with God is the heavenly pace that gathers up all things at the time they are ripe. What can be greater than to see God, or to hear Him speak, and we miss both by not going slow.

Going slow with God is our greatest safety. It is dangerous to live with a thousand live wires around

us, against which we may jostle at any time by not keeping calm and thoughtful in our movements. In factories of multiplied and complicated machinery a man must needs move cautiously, and especially when wheels, bands, electric motors, and sharp-cutting instruments are running with lightning speed, and a wrong step, or a careless movement of the hand, may cause instant death. In many respects, we are moving amid just such unseen and complicated machinery; and walking quietly and slowly with God is the only safe way to escape the swift flying bands and pulleys of mighty laws, as well as demoniac snares.

There are more religious delusions at the present day than since the fall of man, and every one of them could be traced to a rash impetuous taking up with thoughts and things, without taking time to wait on God in humility and teachableness of spirit. Doctrines are formed on one text of Scripture not half understood, while a dozen plain texts to the contrary receive no attention. New, wild, and extravagant teachers are rushed after like a Klondike gold field. All sorts of pious fads, religious delusions and visionary theories are hastily swallowed down, because people do not keep humble enough to watch God and trace His slow and peaceful footsteps. It is not merely going slow that is our safety, but it is loving to go slow; it is to lovingly prefer the deep, quiet, peaceful river of God's life to the rushing, noisy, exciting and wild things which always characterize men's foolishness. The

soul that has the itch of impatience in it will sooner or later champ the bit, break the traces, or run over a precipice. The very center of the soul must be calm and peaceful, so that it can prefer God's way and God's time of doing things. Did we ever have to repent for taking time to wait on God, and did we ever fail to repent for not taking time to work in His order?

We must needs go slow with God in order to keep in a reverent and worshipping spirit. This is the way saints have turned their lives into a beautiful continual worship of God, by going slow enough to mix God in with everything, and tie all the events of life fast to His throne, by referring all things to Him, and with the eye of thought looking up to Him to dictate their services and their steps.

Some people pray too fast to get any answer from God, like nervous children that rattle away at their parents so rapidly that their words are not intelligible. They must quiet down and talk slow enough to be understood, before their wants or fears can be relieved. One of the curses put on Adam was that of "sweat," which expresses the hurried, overheated or excited state of the body; and the Lord told Ezekiel that His priests must not enter the holy sanctuary with "woolen garments on them, or anything that would cause them to sweat," because the God of eternal and unruffled peace wants us to worship Him with a calm, collected, reverent spirit, and not with the sweat of creature-hurry in our minds. How can we speak of God in a reverent way

or look to Him with adoring love when we have run ourselves into a feverish perspiration and precipitation of thought? Whatever we do accurately must take time and collectedness of mind, and there is no accuracy in all the world like keeping company with God, and yet nothing so free from bondage or tediousness. By going slow with the Lord we accomplish more than by going with a rush, because what we do is done so much better and does not have to be undone. It is done in a better spirit, with deeper motives, and bears fruit far out in the future, when all mushroom performances have been dissipated forever.

—G.O.W.

Short Papers on Church History

(Continued)

CHRIST THE ONLY BUILDER OF HIS CHURCH

But Christ is also the Builder of His Church. The building against which no craft or power of the enemy can ever prevail is Christ's own work, though we read of other builders. "Upon this rock I will build My Church." It is well to be clear on this point, so that we may not confound what *man* builds with what Christ builds. There must be the greatest confusion of mind, both as to the truth of God and the present state of Christendom, unless this distinction is seen. Nothing is more important to note here than that Christ is the only Builder of His Church; though Paul and Apollos, and all true evangelists, are *ministers*, by whom

sinner's believe. The Lord's work in the souls of believers is perfect. It is a real, spiritual, personal work. Through His grace in their hearts they come to Himself, as unto a living Stone, and are built upon Him who is risen from among the dead. They have tasted that the Lord is gracious. Such are the living stones with which Christ builds His holy temple; and the gates of Hell can never prevail against it. Thus Peter himself, and all the apostles, and all true believers are built up a spiritual house. When Peter speaks of this building in his First Epistle, he says nothing of himself as a builder. Here Christ is the Builder. It is His work, and His *only*.

Paul, as one chosen of the Lord to do His work, laid the foundation of "God's building" in Corinth, and others build upon it. But they did not all build with Divine materials. The right foundation was laid, and every man was to take heed how he builded thereon. In connection with the true foundation, some might build *gold, silver, and precious stones*, and others *wood, hay, and stubble*. That is, some might teach sound doctrine, and look for living faith in all who applied for communion: others might teach unsound doctrine, and receive into the fellowship of the Church persons in whom was no faith—the mere outward observances of ordinances taking the place of faith and eternal life. Here man's instrumentality, responsibility, and failure came in. Nevertheless, the builder himself may be saved, having faith in Christ, though his work is destroyed. But there is another and a worse class

of builders, who corrupt the temple of the Lord, and are themselves destroyed. We give the entire passage. Nothing can be plainer. "According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master-builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire . . . If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy." (1 Cor. 3:10-17)

We may further observe on the Lord's words, "Upon this rock I will build My Church," that He had not begun to build it at this time. He is telling them what He is going to do. He does not say "*I have* built it," or "*I am* building it," but "*I will* build it;" and this He began to do at Pentecost.

—A. Miller.

(To Be Continued, D. V.)

Which of Them Will Love Him Most?

The most wonderful message that has ever fallen on human ears is that of the great love of God to

sinful man in giving His only begotten Son to bear the penalty sin, so that the holy law of God might be maintained and pardon freely offered to those who repent and believe the gospel.

The story is unfolded in a wonderful and touching way by the apostle John, who exclaims, "We love Him, because He first loved us," and there we have brought before us the great object of the gospel, to win man's love for God.

As believers we can with glad hearts join heartily with the apostle in saying, "We have known and believed the love that God hath to us" and we have no doubt whatever about it, but most of us would like to be conscious of greater fervour on our part when we say, "We love Him." Indeed a verse of a well known hymn aptly describes what we feel:—

Lord, it is my chief complaint,
That my love is weak and faint;
Yet, I love Thee and adore,
Oh, for grace to love Thee more.

If then we confess with some shame to the poor response we make to the love of God, let us be sufficiently sincere and earnest to seek the causes of what is, sad to say, all too prevalent among Christians in these days, resulting in lack of power and usefulness in witness for the Lord.

Let us first mark the words used by the Spirit of God through the apostle John as we repeat what he states, "We love Him, BECAUSE He first loved us." And again, "HEREIN is love, NOT that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

This makes plain to us that the SOURCE of love is not in us but in God Himself and we love God only in the measure that we have appreciated His love to us, remembering that "Of His own will begat He us with the Word of Truth," making it abundantly plain that but for God's sovereign love and grace towards us we would have remained "dead in trespasses and sins" and been without Christ and without hope in the world" as so many are. Oh, the wonder of the love of God!

We see then the Source of love and how responsive love was only awakened in our hearts when we were aroused to a sense of our need as lost sinners and turning to God in repentance we were converted and received the forgiveness of sins through faith in Christ Jesus.

Yes, this is the way love to God begins, but why is love with us not more fervent? For answer let us listen with close attention to the words of the Great Lover of our souls in His conversation with the Pharisee who had invited Him to his house, as recorded in Luke 7.

As they sat at meat together a woman of the city came in and overcome with feelings of gratitude wept at the Saviour's feet and breaking an alabaster box of very precious ointment anointed His feet. The Pharisee had received the Lord without the courtesies ordinarily shown to a welcome guest.

Christ did not show resentment but presently turning to His host, Jesus said unto him, "Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he said, Master say on. There was a certain creditor which

had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore which of them will love Him most? Simon answered-and said, I suppose that he to whom he forgave most. And He said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged. And He turned to the woman and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest Me no water for My feet: but she has washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, her sins which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little."

I have written out this incident because it is so full of instruction as we seek the cause of lack of love to God. Some of us are so little conscious of the greatness of the debt that we have been forgiven that we have little sense of gratitude or love to our Redeemer. The significance of what we have written is that but for the grace of God we might have been in hell today, but the words have so little meaning to us that we are apathetic—may we not do well to do as the apostle Paul urged, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith: prove your own selves." It is certainly a matter for real heart searching.

If by grace both writer and reader have the wit-

ness of the Spirit that they are children of God, let us pursue our search for the way fervent love grows and is manifested. Surely this can only be learned at the feet of the Master. Let us then in thought join the disciples in the upper room at Jerusalem and with them listen to His last loving words ere He goes forward to the Cross to make atonement for sin, there to prove His love to the full. His words are recorded by the apostle John who in his gospel refers to himself as "the disciple whom Jesus loved."

Try to catch the tender tones of His voice as our Saviour talks to His loved ones about their love to Him, for after all what really matters is what He thinks about it. Listen then earnestly to His words as though addressed to you personally, "If ye love Me, keep my commandments." Then further, "He that hath My commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me: and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him."

These words from Him Who alone can rightly estimate our love, makes it very plain that our love is seen only in the measure we keep His commandments and if we are careless of His commandments it is a sure sign of our lack of love for Him. This we can well understand in ordinary life, for we could never credit the sincerity of expressions of love for another on the part of one who showed indifference to the wishes of the other.

And how great the recompense for him whose love is manifested by keeping His commandments!

for Jesus said, "He shall be loved of My Father and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him." Surely here then we see the way our love must grow if it is to increase in fervour.

Does someone ask why the keeping of Christ's commandments is urged when Scripture affirms that the Christian is not under law but under grace.

Do we call our blessed Saviour, Lord? If so, and we mean it, then we will look for His directions and be eager to know what is His will for us that we may do it. Let us remember His own words, "One is your Master, even Christ: and all ye are brethren." Sad indeed it would be should we need the word of the apostle Paul, when he asks, "What then? shall we sin because we are not under law, but under grace?" Well, may he add, "God forbid!" (or "Far be the thought.")

When considering this aspect of the truth, it is very instructive to read what the same apostle states in 1 Cor. 9, when writing of seeking to reach all kinds of men, that when approaching men without law, he did so "as without law (being not without law to God, but under law to Christ)" and we have Christ's own words, "Ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." From this then we see that love, if real, and not in word only, delights to obey such a Master, and if we obey because we love, then it is grace and not law which controls us.

Have we not all experienced that it is in the measure we have interested ourselves in others for the Lord's sake that we have experienced the joy

of the Lord and our love has been fervent; whereas when we have allowed our interest to flag and have become self-centered, joy and fervour of spirit have declined and we have missed the sense of the Lord manifesting Himself to us as He promised those who have His commandments and keep them.

Our search for the causes of lack of fervour has revealed to us that a fuller realization of the greatness of the debt we have been forgiven would cause us to love much and the keeping of our Lord's commandments would be rewarded with a manifestation of His love and a consciousness of His abiding presence, for He said, "I will love him and will manifest Myself to him." This we shall not have if we fail to appreciate what He has done for us or are not eager to know and to keep His commandments

Good indeed will it be if love to the Lord leads us to this experience, yet love with us may grow even still more and then we shall not only make ourselves acquainted with our Lord's commandments and keep them, but we will diligently seek to find what is the mind of Christ in the Scriptures, learning from the divine record the things that please Him and what He would have us do, even though no definite command is expressed.

This carries with it a still greater blessing, for as we listen to the talk in the upper room, we hear the Master say, "If a man love Me, he will keep My word: and My Father will love him and We will come unto him and make our abode with him." Surely this means full communion with the Father

and the Son by the power of the Holy Spirit, such as is not enjoyed by those who have not love sufficient to impel them to become acquainted with our Lord's mind by meditation on His word. If then, our sincere desire is that our love shall be more fervent, let us respond to the word of the Psalmist, "Delight thyself also in the Lord; and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart." And let the word through Jude be what we ever have before us: "Keep yourselves in the love of God," remembering that it is the love of God that awakens and strengthens our love and there is no measure to His love.

"The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the patient waiting for Christ."

—Arthur F. Pollock.

Light In Our Dwellings

WIVES

"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord."

"For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and He is the Saviour of the body;"

"Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything." Ephesians 5:22-23-24.

"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord." Col. 3:18.

Let us go back, for a few moments, to the first

pages of Holy Writ. It is always instructive for us to do so. The Spirit of God Himself points back, in our chapter, to that time. We can but follow His direction.

There was a garden, eastward in the land of Eden, planted by the Lord God (lit. Jehovah) Himself. It was a scene of perfect earthly bliss and happiness, because the Lord God had made it, and sin was not known. No groan was heard, to disturb the constant peace and harmony that pervaded the whole. Everything there was light, life and happiness, fresh and beautiful in its first bloom, as it had just come forth from the hand of its Maker.

And in that garden, which He had planted, the Lord God had placed man, made in God's own image, but formed by Him of the dust of the ground. (Alas! how soon did man forget the latter part of his being!) He had put Adam there to dress and keep it, not in the posture of a bondman, stooping, in the sweat of his face, to a ground cursed for his sake, that yields to his labour, besides the herbs for his food, "thorns also and thistles"—the rods of chastisement, and constant mementos of his fall. No, God had placed Adam there as the king, center and head of the whole of the lower creation, a figure of Him Who was to come. He was to have "Dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over everything living that moveth upon the earth." The Lord of lords, and King of kings, who had invested Adam, his vassal-king on earth, with such power, and given him that lovely garden of Eden for his royal residence, had

also Himself installed Adam in his place, and made the whole of the lower creation pass in review before its new sovereign, just as a king, on his accession to the throne, reviews his army, and makes his subjects, represented in their nobles or chiefs, pass before his presence, to bestow or confirm titles and names. Never since that day, has there been, or will there be, in this sinful world, such a coronation scene, until the millennial morn, that great coronation day, shall dawn, when the last Adam, under whose feet God has put all things — the heavens as well as the earth — shall come, as the Lord of lords, and King of kings, to reign over the earth. But He will not come *alone*. His Church, His Bride — “The Lamb’s Wife” — most precious title! will come along with Him, to reign with Him over the blissful and peaceful millennial earth — that happy moment for which the whole creation, subject to the bondage of corruption for man’s sake, is groaning and travailing in pain together until now.

It was not so with Adam in that lovely garden of Eden. There was a king, but no queen, to share the crown with him. When the “Sons of God” (i. e. angels) above in the heavens “shouted for joy,” on looking down upon that perfect scene of earthly bliss and beauty, they had one common interest and motive for joy, even the glory of God that made their hearts beat with one common impulse.—Even “The morning stars sang *together*,” when that bright creation scene sprung into existence. They had *fellowship* in their joy. But man was *alone* amidst that

lovely scene, *alone* in his power—*alone* in his honour—*alone* with his thoughts—*alone* with his heart. Each of those numberless creatures subject to Adam's dominion, from the eagle in mid air down to the singing birds on the trees, from the roaring lion down to the bleating lamb, that was feeding in peace alongside with him (as it will be again at a not far distant happier age), and lower down to the mute inhabitants of the waters—each had its mate, to share the enjoyment of its new existence;—but for Adam there was not found an **help meet** for him. Man was **alone** in the midst of a paradise, and therefore it was no paradise to him. There was a void in his heart, with all the abundance of that beautiful garden around him. There was no kindred heart to share and respond to his feelings; no kindred spirit to understand his thoughts and to take sweet counsel with; no countenance, to be the mirror of his own, to reflect his smiles of happiness; no familiar voice to answer to his, or to join in sweet harmony with his voice of praise and thanksgiving, when Adam looked up from the paradise around him, to the heavenly residence of his divine Liege-Lord above, the Father of Lights, from Whom every good gift and every perfect gift cometh. Adam knew what was light, for the sun and the moon and the stars of heaven declared the glory of Him, Who clotheth Himself with light as with a garment, and who is the "Father of lights." But he knew not what was **love**, for in the wide universe around him, there was no object to draw out that love, that gives itself for the beloved

object, loses itself in it, and shares everything with it. But the blessed God, who is not only **Light**, but Who is also **Love**, knew it.

“And the Lord God said: It is not good that the man should be alone, I will make an help-meet for him, (lit., “An help that is ~~his~~ equal.”)

Had not He Himself an object for His divine love, even His only-begotten, yet co-equal Son, in Whom the Father’s heart found its daily delight, before angels or heaven and earth had been called into existence?

“The Lord possessed me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was — when there were no depths, I was brought forth— when there were no fountains abounding with water — before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth; while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there; when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: when he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by him, as one brought up with Him; **and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him.**”

Wondrous words! Still more marvelous grace, that the Spirit of God should have written them, and given to such as us, such an insight into that

eternal relationship between Father and Son! But still more stupendous **grace**, that adds:

“Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.”

Oh love, all praise excelling, as it passes knowledge. That love, between Father and Son, though divine, and therefore perfectly happy and satisfied, if we may say so, and though the Son was daily His Father's delight, and rejoiced always before Him, yet that divine love of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, wanted to go beyond itself, and to manifest itself outside itself. **Love** as well as **light** cannot be hidden, but manifests itself in the wider range of a creation, called forth by His word, by Whom all things were made, and upheld by the word of His power — a range that not only embraces millions of angels in heaven and creatures on earth, whom that divine love provided for and made perfectly happy, each in their proper sphere and place. But that the vast range into which that love had expanded should contain, as the especial objects of it, **children of disobedience, enemies of God**, this it is, that makes that love so truly divine, and constitutes its highest glory — the glory of **redeeming** love — and the glory and riches of divine grace, which is the result of divine love.

Yes, dear fellow-heir of glory! The Father's love wanted many sons to be brought to glory, whom He had predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ Himself. He wanted His heavenly house there above, which is as large as is His divine heart, and where there are “many man-

sions," to be filled, not only with the brilliant hosts of His angelic servants (holy and blessed though they be!), but with **children** (once lost prodigals in a far country, in filthy rags, feeding with the swine), in glorious bodies, His daily delight **for eternity**, as His Son was **from** eternity, and will be for eternity. That blessed Son of His love, who had to shed His blood upon the cross, to fit them for that glorious house, far above the sun and stars, and to provide them, according to His power, with glorious bodies, like His own, fit for that glorious abode, will come, (and, oh! that may be to-day!) to fetch us up to, and introduce us into that Father's house, and present all of them (not one will be missing) to His and our Father: "Behold, I and the children which thou hast given me." Blessed hope, to be turned at any moment, into a still more blessed reality!

But the Father's love wanted not only children for Himself, but a **bride for His Son**, and He has given us to Him. "Thine they were, and thou hast given them to me." (John 17.) A bride—taken not from among His holy angels, who do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word, but from among the sons of men, fallen, sinful, and rebellious men! That bride is to dwell with Him in His Father's house above, whilst the terrible vials of divine wrath will be poured out upon this earth, where once the cross stood, and where He bought her, whom He loved and has washed in His own blood from her sins. She will dwell there with Him, in the daily perfect, peaceful enjoyment of

His love, and the object of the Father's perfect delight and love **in heaven**, as we are now, though being in this world, as He is, beloved, being accepted in the Beloved One. She will dwell there with Him, until the last vial shall have been emptied upon this poor world, and Babylon, the great whore, shall have met her threefold deserved fate, and the heavenly hallelujahs will chime, and announce, that "the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready."

We have turned away, for a few moments, from that bright and happy scene of a yet undefiled paradise, to a higher and brighter one, which will be ours, and never be defiled nor lost. Let us now return, for a little while, to the earthly type of our blessings in an heavenly paradise, and above all in Him, Who is the center of it. And may God's blessed Spirit of truth, of power, and of love, and of a sound mind, under His sure guidance, use these precious types of God's wondrous counsels, which He has given us in the very first pages of Holy Writ, and open them up to us, and apply them to our hearts and consciences for fruit in praises to God and in our daily lives.

"And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept; and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made He a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, this is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall

a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh."

Wondrous scene! foreshadowing that deepest mystery of divine love, power, grace, and wisdom; a scene without parallel, even in the divine record, except by its anti-type on Calvary and at Pentecost! The Holy Ghost, when referring to it in our chapter, through the inspired apostle of the Gentiles, to whom those three great mysteries of God, as to His church, had been revealed (Ephes. 3 and 5 and 1 Cor. 2:15) says: "This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the Church."

—J. A. VonP.

(To be continued, D. V.)

Gleanings

A WORD TO DOUBTERS

(Read carefully John 3:36 and 5:24, and Acts 13:38, 39.)

If all the *shalls* in Scripture meant *perhaps*,
And all the *haths* meant simply *hope to have*,

I well might doubt;

But since our Saviour-God means what He says,

And cannot lie,

I trust His faithful Word, and *know* that I

Shall surely dwell throughout eternity

With Him whose love led Him for me to die

E'en Christ Himself.

Particularly note the words *is* and *Verily, verily*, in the above text uttered by the blessed Saviour. Also notice that the word *know* occurs forty-two times in John's Epistles, which are addressed to *believers* in the Lord Jesus Christ.

—Comforted of God.

Faint Yet Pursuing

1 Sam. 30

Faint yet pursuing

We go on our way,
The Lord is our Leader
His word is our stay.
Though suffering and sorrow
And trial be near,
The Lord is our refuge
And whom shall we fear?

He raiseth the fallen,
He cheereth the faint.
If the weak are oppressed,
He hears their complaint.
The way may be weary
And thorny the road,
But how can we falter,
Whose help is in God?

And to His green pastures
How gently He leads,
His flock in the desert
How kindly He feeds,
His lambs in His bosom
He tenderly bears,
And brings back the wanderers
Safe from the snares.

Though darkness surrounds us,
Our God is our light,
Though foes rage around us
Our God is our might.
So faint yet pursuing,
Still onward we come,
The Lord is our Leader
And Heaven our home.

And there all His people
Eternally dwell
With Him, who has led them
So safely and well.
The toilsome way over,
The wilderness past,
And Canaan the blessed
Is theirs at the last. —J.N.D. 1850

“Remember Them That Are In Bonds”

Heb. 13:3

It seemed to me that the above word of exhortation took on an added urgency when I recently read of the experience of one of the Lord's servants who was arrested on the day war broke out between Japan and the United States of America and Great Britain on the 8th of December, 1941, and who was not released until the 8th of April, 1942.

How easy to forget the exhortation to pray for our fellow Christians who are interned in enemy prisons or internment camps, and even if we do pray for such, how little we may have the sense of being “bound with them,” or enter into their sufferings. May then, what I go on to relate bring a new urge, meaning and sympathy into our prayers for such.

Dr. Heaslètt felt being deprived of books more than anything. For the first month he was without reading matter of any kind. Both in the police station and in prison he begged again and again for the books he had in his suitcase, but it was six weeks after his arrest before he was allowed to

have a copy of the Bible. This is the one book that either in Japanese or English is found in all prison libraries of Japan and there is no hesitation in lending it to prisoners. The copy I was lent I found had been presented to the prison library by the agent of the American Bible Society in Japan. He had written his name on the flyleaf and added the text "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path." Dr. H., later was allowed to have his own books and when he passed on the prison Bible to others, more than forty of them read it; some who had never read it before went through it from cover to cover, evidently finding comfort there in their misery and loneliness.

Dr. H. poignantly describes how one night shortly after his arrest, he felt himself completely deserted and knew not what the future held for him. The uncleanness of body, the soiledness of mind, the hopelessness of isolation; the complete identification of himself with thieves, gamblers, suspects, men who trafficked in women; the ruthlessness of the machine in which he had been caught and in which he was as helpless as a small fly in a large spider's web; above all, what he thought of as being the failure of his friends and the way they had apparently abandoned him: the accumulated shame and weight of all this brought him that night to bitter tears and the verge of a breakdown.

When he had reached what seemed the limit of endurance, it was a message from God's Word that brought relief: "He was numbered with the transgressors." The effect these words had on him, he

describes as follows:

"A flood of light and illumination came upon me at that moment. For the first time and through my own experience, I knew what our Lord had suffered from His arrest until His crucifixion, as far as the human mind can fathom His experiences, but we must always remember that because of His unique relationship to God and His unique comprehension of sin, there is a fundamental difference between His "being numbered with transgressors" and anything anyone of us can experience, but we can in measure enter into and apprehend somewhat according to our spiritual capacity. So help came in an unexpected way, but effective beyond belief."

On another occasion, after a gruelling time of cross-examination which brought him to the point of exhaustion, he had a wonderful spiritual experience which he describes as follows:

"Toward the end of the session, when my cry became 'O God, end all this', quite suddenly relief came, and in a wholly unexpected way. There came into my room a Presence. There was a Presence behind me on my right hand, and a message, 'My grace is sufficient for thee and my strength is made perfect in thy weakness'."

May then, this description of the experiences of a prisoner of war send us to our knees on their behalf with a renewed sense of the need and privilege of prayer on behalf of those in bonds and with a better understanding of and greater sympathy for their sufferings. Let us praise our God for the way He sustained His servant at a time of great

trial and testing.

—Arthur F. Pollock.

Why Did God Permit the Entrance of Evil ?

"By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin."
(Romans 5:12.)

One great and important question here arises, reverting to the condition of man as first created of God. That is, the solemn question of the entrance of moral evil into this world. How frequently is such mooted by the sceptic; and as frequently found without reply, in the mind even of the believer in Christ! The question is, Why did God permit the entrance of sin? Why leave it a possibility? And in this is embraced the entrance of death by sin.

How immensely important to possess clearly an answer to this stupendous question; one that will leave the infidel without excuse, and, at the same time, settle firmly in divine truth the minds of those who believe. I do not here go further than its entrance into *this present world* on which we live. For we know from Scripture that sin had already entered the universe, possibly through Satan's rebellious fall, once an "anointed cherub." (Ezek. 28). Nor do I comprehend the fall of the angels that had sinned, and who are reserved in Tartarus (2 Pet. 2:4), until the judgment of the great day. I confine the question to the entrance of sin into *this world*; and that of death — its consequence — having passed upon *man* — the race of Adam alone. Death may have been, and was possibly, there — even in *this world*, in its previous periods of change during the ages and cycles which had passed prior to its having been shaped by God's hand, in the six days' work, into an abode for man.

I accept what is now pretty well known by the student of the Word, that in the term which opens the book of Genesis — "In the beginning," as well as in the next clause of the verse, God has left it open for the possibility

of millions of years to have elapsed since that "beginning" was, when God created the heavens and the earth; and thus time sufficient was allowed, to form the strata of the earth, as it is now found, before the work of the six days was accomplished, in the varied ages which had passed, and through the many catastrophes which had probably taken place. For we read in the next clause of the verse that the earth (not the heavens), was without form and *waste* (*tohu*), having probably fallen into chaos. God had not created it in this state, as Isaiah testifies. (Isa. 45:18.) "He created it *not waste*" — the same Hebrew word as used in Genesis 1.

We are aware that there are traces of death to be found in the fossils and petrifications of extinct animals, of species now unknown, in the strata formed by the ages gone by. This is admitted most fully; but it does not interfere with our present question in any wise.

I take therefore, the statement of Romans 5:13, as the basis of the great question now before us: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered *the world*, and death by sin; and so death passed upon *all men*, for that all have sinned." The first part of this important passage confines the entrance of *sin* to *this world*; and the second limits the passing of *death*, as a consequence of sin on *man*; without noticing, in the former case, the possible entrance of sin into other spheres; and, in the latter, the fact of death passing upon other than the human family.

Let us now turn to Genesis 1, 2, where we have the account of the creation of man, "And Elohim saith, We will make man (Adam) in Our image, after Our likeness, and they shall have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the heavens, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every reptile that is creeping on the earth." "So Elohim created the man (Adam) in His own image, in the image of Elohim created He him; male and female, created He them." *

*Translation of Genesis 1, from the Hebrew, by G. V. W.

There are two distinct words used here by God, very different in their signification; they are "image" and "likeness." Another has given valued thoughts on the use assigned to each, to which I would add some remarks. How accurately this usage is maintained throughout the Word of God, is amongst the wonders of its perfections.

The word "image" is sometimes, in human language, used to signify the likeness in one for another; as one would say, 'such an one is the very image of his father'—meaning that he is an exact likeness; but this is not the way it is used in general, in Scripture. There it is used, rather in speaking of that which is set to *represent* another, without having any reference to its being like or unlike, in features, or otherwise, to the person represented. As we read of Christ being "the image of the invisible God." (Col. 1:15). And man being "the image and glory of God" (1 Cor. 11:7), etc.; the word image being here used, as fully representing another, as the image of Jupiter, of Caesar, etc. Now "likeness" is different from this: its meaning is simple and readily understood, as describing a person being like another, that is, having the same traits of character and features, etc.

The man was created then in both these ways. He was set as the great centre of an immense system, fully to represent God, as His *image*. The dominion of the vast system was his. All created things were under him. All intelligences, his wife included, were to look up to him as God's representative in that sphere. God alone was over him; all else being subject to man. But he was also in the likeness of God. He was pure as his Creator made him, he was very good: he was sinless too, absolutely without evil: he was from God, to be for God, and thus like Him, and fit, therefore, to be His image — to represent Him; and to be the centre to which all should look up; and with an intelligent will; his choice also was free.

But again we ask, Why did God leave moral evil a possibility? Or, in other words, why permit the entrance of sin? Could He not have created a being, which could not

fall? one who could only do what was good and right?

The answer is plain. Because, if He would create a glorious creature — man, after His *own* image, and in *His* likeness, free to choose either good or evil, and not a creature governed by a mere chain of instinct, as the birds and beasts around him — He must leave the entrance to him of evil, a possibility, though not a necessity. If man, as God created him, could not choose evil, then he had no choice at all: and he would be no more virtuous in doing good than the mere animal which follows the instincts of its nature. And because, in such a case, he *must* do good, he would be no more virtuous in doing so than they.

Either God *must refrain* — we write the words with reverence — from creating such a being, of this high and glorious order of existence, with a free choice and will; or He must leave the question of evil a possibility to him. Alas, for the result! of which a fallen race speaks with such terrible reality. He chose the evil and refused the good; and the moment he exercised his choice he became a sinner. Man, created in the image of God, fell from that pinnacle of eminence, never to be restored to it again. Fallen Adam begets a son in his *own* likeness after *his* image (Gen. 5:3), while unfallen Adam had been created “in the likeness of God.” (Gen. 5:1.)

Observe, in all this there was no thought of man being *holy*: nor could it have been said as afterwards of the “new man,” that he of Him, was “created in righteousness and holiness of truth.” (Eph. 4:24) God is holy — absolutely so. But holiness is relative, inasmuch as it supposes evil to exist, and implies absolute separation from it. This could not be said of man, as God created him. He was pure, and perfectly good, but evil was not for him in existence, until he chose evil, when presented in the form of a temptation, and thus he threw aside the authority and will of God, who had given it to him. So of righteousness, which also presupposes the existence of evil.

How everything in the sinner now depends on his will, in having to do with God; his salvation and all, depend upon

the surrender of his will to Him. "Ye *will* not come unto me, that ye might have life." (John 5:40). And "Whosoever *will*, let him take the water of life freely." (Rev. 22:17.)

Now Christ is said to be the "Image of the invisible God" (Col. 1:15); the "Image of God" Himself. (2 Cor. 4:4) This is because He fully represents God; but He is never said to be in His "likeness;" simply because He is God Himself, therefore not merely *like* Him. But it is said that He came in the "*likeness* of sinful flesh," and rightly so; because He was *not* sinful flesh at all. (See Romans 8:3).

He too, had His own perfect will; and while tested to the uttermost in life and in death, it was always subject to God's. "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work." (John 4:34.)

This obedience and subjection found its perfection fully in death. He "became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." (Phil. 2:8.) Mark, He was not subject to death, as the first man, through his sin. With him it was the penalty of disobedience, and the ending, by God's sentence, in death, of *will* in him to the uttermost. But it was there that the perfection of Christ's surrender of a perfect will in obedience, shone out most fully. Or rather, may we not say? the perfect blending of a perfect will in Him with that of God, in obedience unto death itself.

"A Chosen Vessel"—by F. G. P.

The Little Plant

Leaving home for a few day's absence, we lowered the window shades and closed the doors. But we had left behind us in that dark house a beautiful little plant; and upon our return we soon discovered that a great change had taken place in it. Its freshness and beauty had passed away, and the flower had greatly wilted. We lost no time in letting in both *sunshine* and *fresh air*; then we

poured *water* upon and around the plant.

Lacking those three things essential to vegetable life — *sunlight*, *fresh air*, and *water* — it had suffered and withered. With the loving care which ministered these things to it again, its freshness, color, and bloom began to reappear, and it made us rejoice. It seemed to smile in our faces, and be grateful for the care bestowed. At the same time we had learned a valuable lesson:

The Plant spoke to us of each plant of our heavenly Father's planting — those who form part of His garden (Matt. 15:13; Song 4:12-16.)

The Sunshine, so necessary for the health and beauty of the plant, told of communion of heart with our Lord now in the heavens. He is the true *Sun of righteousness*.

The Water that ministers to the life of the plant, is a symbol of the precious *ministry of the Holy Spirit* by means of the Word of God; and ministry like this, day by day, is the sustaining power of the Christian's life. It puts freshness and beauty upon it.

Fresh Air, so imperative for a healthy condition, speaks of the *moral, spiritual atmosphere* in which we live and move day by day, including the people with whom we enjoy heart-to-heart communion, and the things with which we are occupied.

We might pause for a little and take warning concerning those three *essentials* to all life:

First, the Sunlight. How diligently we need to guard ourselves lest there be any neglect of communion of heart and feeling with our Lord and

Saviour. The least neglect in this respect will show itself soon. It was communion with Him which made the faces of Moses and Stephen to shine (Ex. 34:35; Acts 6:15). Neglecting this, the lovely graces and the spirituality of the Christian life will disappear (2 Cor. 3:18; Eph. 5:8-14.)

Second, the Water. There will be no lack of the enjoyment of the Spirit's ministry if communion of heart with Christ is sought and enjoyed; for it is the Spirit's ministry, through the medium of the Holy Scripture, that puts us in touch with Christ where He now is in the heavenly glory. This precious ministry to God's people is as the water to nourish and sustain the life; to impart bloom, freshness, beauty, and fill the life with such fragrance as we should look for from plants in the King's garden.

Third, the Fresh Air. No plant of God's planting can thrive except in the atmosphere of the new creation. Where can the devoted child of God find such an atmosphere? How important the question, and what exercise and searching of heart the subject requires: "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world," (1 Jno. 2:16). Well might we search ourselves and ask, "What is the fellowship which I seek? Is it that of the Father and the Son, or that of the world?"

How we are drawn to the little plant to learn at its footstool the serious lessons from the school of Nature! Properly learned they will lead the soul

away from the world-bordering spirit of the times in which we live, when the *theatre*, the *opera*, the *novel*, the *loose literature*, the *card table*, etc., etc., are often found with the profession of Christianity, which, as impure air robs the plant of its freshness, rob the Christian life of all spirituality! (Rom. 12:1-2; 2 Cor. 6:14-18; 2 Tim. 2:19-22.)

May we, in view of all this, seek the bright *sunshine*, the good *water*, and the pure *atmosphere* of communion with the Father and the Son. Then growth, freshness, and fruitfulness will result, gladdening both God and His people.—A. E. B.

Short Papers on Church History

(Continued)

THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

Christ, moreover, did not say to Peter that He will give him *the keys of the Church*, or *the keys of Heaven*. Had He done so, there might have been some show of reason for the evil system of Popery. But He merely says, "I will give unto thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven" — or of the new dispensation. Keys, it has been said, are not for building temples, but for opening doors; and the Lord honoured Peter to open the door of the Kingdom, first to the Jews, and then to the Gentiles (Acts 2:10.)

The language of Christ about His Church is of another order. It is simple, emphatic, and unmistakable. "My Church!" What depth, what fullness there is in these words: "My Church!" When the

heart is in fellowship with Christ about His Church, there will be an apprehension of His affections towards it, which we have no power of expressing. As it is, we love to linger over these two words, "My Church!" But who can speak of the measure of Christ's heart that is therein revealed? Again, think of these other two words, "This rock." As if He had said, "The glory of My Person, and the power of My life in resurrection, form the solid foundation of My Church." And again, "I will build." Thus we see in these seven words, that everything is in Christ's own hands, as "to the Church which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all."

THE OPENING OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

The administration of the Kingdom, the Lord, in an especial manner, committed to Peter, as we see in the early chapters of the Acts. The term is taken from the Old Testament (see Dan. 2,7). In chapter 2 we have the Kingdom; in chapter 7 we have the King. The phrase, Kingdom of Heaven, occurs only in the Gospel of Matthew, where the evangelist writes chiefly for Israel.

The bringing in of the Kingdom of Heaven in power and glory on the earth, in the Person of the Messiah, was the natural expectation of every godly Jew. John the Baptist, as the Lord's forerunner, came preaching, "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." But in place of the Jews receiving their Messiah, they rejected and crucified Him; consequently, the Kingdom, according to Jewish

expectations, was set aside. Nevertheless, it was introduced in another form. When the rejected Messiah ascended to Heaven, and took His place at God's right hand, triumphant over every foe, the Kingdom of Heaven began. Now the King is in Heaven, and as Daniel says, "The Heavens do rule," though not openly. And from the time that He ascended until He return, it is the Kingdom in *mystery* (Matt. 13). When He comes back again in power and great glory it will be the Kingdom in *manifestation*.

The New economy, Peter was privileged to open to both Jew and Gentile. This he did in his address to the Jews (Acts 2), and in his address to the Gentiles (Acts 10). But again we would draw attention to the fact that the Church or the Assembly of God, and the Kingdom of Heaven, are not the same thing. Let us be clear, in starting, as to this fundamental point. The identifying the two things has produced great confusion of thought and may be viewed as the origin of Puseyism, Popery, and every human system in Christendom. The following remarks on "the tare field,"* bear directly on this subject, though they refer to a later period than the early chapters of the Acts.

THE PARABLE OF THE TARES

"Matthew 13:24,25. 'Another parable put He forth unto them, saying *The Kingdom of Heaven* is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way'

*"Lectures on the Gospel of Matthew."—W. K.

—exactly what is become of the profession of Christ. There are two things necessary for the inroad of evil among Christians. The first is the unwatchfulness of the Christians themselves. They get into a careless state, they sleep, and the enemy comes and sows tares. This began at an early epoch in Christendom. We find the germs even in the Acts of the Apostles, and still more so in the epistles. 1 Thessalonians is the First inspired Epistle that the Apostle Paul wrote; and the Second was written shortly after. And yet he tells them that the mystery of iniquity was already at work; that there were other things to follow, such as the apostasy and the man of sin, and that when the lawlessness should be fully manifest (instead of working secretly), then the Lord would put an end to the lawless one and all concerned. The mystery of iniquity seems akin to the sowing of the tares spoken of here. Some time after, 'when the blade was sprung up and brought forth fruit' — when Christianity began to make rapid strides in the earth 'then appeared the tares also.' But it is evident the tares were sown almost immediately after the good seed. No matter what the work of God is, Satan is always close upon its heels. When man was made, he listened to the serpent and fell. When God gave the law, it was broken even before it was committed into the hands of Israel. Such is always the history of human nature.

"So the mischief is done in the field, and never repaired. The tares are not for the present taken out of the field: there is no judgment of them.

Does this mean that we are to have tares in the Church? If the world meant the Church, there ought to be no discipline at all: you ought to allow uncleanness of flesh or spirit there. Here is the importance of seeing the distinction between the Church and the world. The Lord forbids the tares to be taken out of the world: 'Let both grow together until the harvest' (v. 30), that is, till the Lord comes in judgment.

"What then is the meaning of this parable? It has nothing to do with the question of Church communion.

"The field is the world; the Church only embraces those believed to be members of Christ's body. Take 1 Corinthians, where we have the Holy Ghost showing the true nature of ecclesiastical discipline. Supposing there are professing Christians, guilty of any sin you please; such persons are not to be owned, while they are going on in that sin, as members of Christ's body. A real saint may fall into open sin, but the Church, knowing it, is bound to intervene for the purpose of expressing God's judgment about the sin. Were they deliberately to allow such a one to come to the Lord's table they would in effect make the Lord a party of that sin. The question is not whether the person be converted or not. If unconverted, men have no business in the Church; if converted, sin is not to be winked at. So that the teaching of the Word of God is most plain as to both these truths. It is wrong to use worldly punishments to deal with a hypocrite, even when he is detected. I may seek

the good of his soul, but this is no reason for punishing him thus. But if a Christian is guilty of sin, the Church, though called to be patient in judgment, is never to suffer it; but we are to leave guilty people, who are unconverted, to be judged by the Lord at His appearing.

“This is the teaching of the parable of the tares; and it gives a very solemn view of Christianity. As sure as the Son of Man sowed good seed, His enemy would sow bad, which would spring up along with the rest; and this evil cannot for the present be got rid of. There is a remedy for evil which enters the Church, but not yet for evil in the world.”

It is perfectly clear, both from Scripture and history, that the great mistake into which the professing body fell was the confounding of these two things—tares with wheat; the children of the Kingdom and the children of the wicked one. The vast difference between what we may call the *sacramental* and the *vital* systems, must be clearly understood and carefully distinguished if we would study Church history aright.—A. Miller.

(To Be Continued, D. V.)

Light In Our Dwellings

(Continued)

The One, Who had formed Adam out a piece of clay, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, we behold here bending over the sleeping man, to form a help-meet for him—not from the dust of the ground, but from *flesh—then sinless* flesh—even the rib out of Adam’s side. It is the Same,

Who after 4,000 years of poor humanity's probation, was to give His flesh for the life of the world. He Who had said: "It is not good that man should be *alone*; I will give him an help-meet," was one day, when hanging—between heaven and earth—upon the cross, to be *alone* in the most terrible sense of that word, to gain His "help-meet," i. e., His bride—His wife—to be His companion in a glorious heavenly home. He was to be alone—not in a paradise—but in the wilderness—to stand firm and immovable, and to bind the strong man, and to spoil him of his goods, whilst the first Adam, who now was lying sleeping before Him, soon *fell* at the first trial amidst the abundance of a paradise. He was to be *alone*, during His life-time, like a sparrow on the housetop, though followed and surrounded by thousands; for none understood Him, not even His own disciples. He was to be *alone* in the agonies of Gethsemane, when the prince of this world was approaching to bring all the power of death he wielded, to bear upon Him. His disciples, whom He wanted to be near Him and watch, whilst He prayed, fell asleep. They had forgotten their Master's watchword, which He gave, at the very threshold of that place, not only to them, but to us all. Poor sentinels! the enemy coming suddenly, found them sleeping, and the one who could not "watch one hour" with his Master, denied Him afterwards. And at last—*alone upon the cross*, after His own had forsaken Him! When the assembly of the wicked, the bulls of Bashan, the lions, and the dogs enclosed Him, He was *alone*—

forsaken of His God. The corn of wheat must fall into the ground and die; else it would have abode alone. But, blessed be His gracious and glorious Name!—He could not, nor would He be alone, even in glory. He must and will have His glorious and spotless bride *with Him there*. That same wondrous Psalm, that opens with the cry of agony of the forsaken One upon the cross—contains, as soon as He has been “heard from the horns of the unicorns,” these blessed words: “I will declare Thy Name unto My brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.” He could, He would not be alone, either as to His earthly people in the millennial blessing, when He will say: “Eat, friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved;” or even in His Father’s house above, surrounded by all the glories of heaven; He cannot be *alone*.

“Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be *with Me, where I am*; that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me; for Thou lovedest Me before the foundation of the world.”

And not only so, but:

“And the glory which Thou gavest Me, I have given them; that they *may be one, even as We are one*.”

Let us remember also *these* words of our gracious Lord’s prayer, beloved; as we find them reiterated by the Spirit of God in Ephes. 4:1-3. May the Lord keep you and me, beloved Christian reader, from any spirit of selfish and independent isolation, whilst in strictest separation from all that

is contrary to His Will, as expressed in His Word, which is truth. Soon will He, Who would not that "man should be alone," come again.

"In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto Myself; that where *I am*, there *ye may be also*." Everlasting praise be to Him, Who has procured for us such a hope, and Who *Himself is our hope*.

The Risen One, Who has breathed upon those for whom He had died, the spirit of resurrection-life, as His breath, and had made the first Adam a living soul, was the Same, Who took the rib out of sleeping Adam's side, and made Adam's help-meet out of it. The soldier's spear was one day to pierce His own side, and draw forth the blood and the water, to fit that bride, which the Father had given Him, to dwell with Him in glory.

If, before such a sublimely mysterious scene, one may be permitted to express oneself, for a moment, after the manner of men, one cannot help thinking with deep and holy reverence, what thoughts and feelings must have filled and moved the divine mind and heart of the blessed "Last Adam," when He, bending over the sleeping first Adam, began to carry into effect (though then but in an earthly sense) those wondrous deep counsels, in which He had agreed with His Father (Gen. 1:26, and John 17). Thoughts—feelings, beyond all human ken and expression, like those that filled and moved the

Father's heart, when He saw Abraham with His son Isaac wending their way up Mount Moriah (where afterwards Solomon built a temple to the Lord) near the spot where one day the cross of God's own beloved, only begotten Son was to stand. Then that heavenly Father's heart poured itself out in blessings upon the one on Moriah, who is the Father of all them that believe:

"By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son:

"That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gates of his enemies;"

"And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed My voice."

Ah! beloved fellow-pilgrim and fellow-heir of glory! Abraham's raised hand with the knife was stayed by the voice, that called to him from heaven: "Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing that thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me."

But that blessed One did not restrain His own hand from *His* only Son, when the time had come, and He spoke again:

"Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, and against the Man that is My Fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall

be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones."

Did He withhold that terrible cup from the lips of His beloved Son, in response to that thrice repeated appeal of agony in the garden of Gethsemane? No. The cry from the cross: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" proves it.

For Adam, to gain his help-meet, it required but a deep sleep and a painless operation; but to the One who performed it, it cost something more than a sleep:—*death*, even the *death of the cross!*—The sword of divine judgment had to fall upon Him, who was God's "Fellow," in order that such as you and I, reader, might be raised not merely from the dust of the ground, but from the deep mire of our sins, where we were once wallowing in rebellion against God, to the rank and title of Christ's "Fellows" (Comp. Zech. 3 and Heb. 1).

—J. A. von P.

(To be continued D. V.)

Wrong Separation

"He that separateth himself seeketh (his) pleasure; he is vehement against all sound wisdom."—Prov. 18:1—J.N.D. Trans.

Nothing is more clearly taught in the Scriptures than the need of a separation between the clean and the unclean, between those who love the truth and those who walk contrary to it. Separation from evil is imperative, and he who would honor God must bow to it, whether it be to separate from

evil friends, from ecclesiastical evil, or from evil in a business way. The word is plain: "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you" (2 Cor. 6:17). To walk apart from all that is unholy, and to refuse fellowship to those who by their endorsement are partakers of the sins of others, is the only proper course for a Christian who desires the Lord's approbation above all else.

But there is a separation that is very different from this, and which the same Scriptures unqualifiedly condemn. Of this we now learn.

There is a vast difference between one who in lowliness and subjection to God separates himself from evil, and another who, through pride and self-importance, separates himself from those who refuse evil, in order to do his own pleasure. This is the heretic of whom we read in Jude's epistle: "These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit" (Ver. 19). Men of this stamp are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage (Jude 16). It is most unhappy indeed when, as is sometimes the case, real Christians fall into the same ways as these false professors.

How often do we find men who are no doubt born of God, and unquestionably gifted by Him, but in whom nature is strong, who are unbroken and wilful! Men like these go on with their brethren as long as their mandates are bowed to and their authority owned. But let there be an unwilling-

ness to follow their advice implicitly, and their pride will brook no refusal. Either they must have their own way, or they will leave the assembly and begin something more to their own taste. These are the class who separate, not for the Lord's glory, but for their own pleasure; and having so done, storm and rage against all wisdom, railing against those who will not have their dictum to be supreme.

To separate from apostacy is right and Scriptural. To separate from what is of God is schism and heresy. It is the human will setting itself up to choose—and ignoring the authority of the word and Spirit of God.

Even where there are unhappy things among those who seek to be guided by Scripture—things which are hard to get at,—and which make cautious, godly men move slowly, to turn the back on what God has formed is very wrong. It is an egregious blunder to excommunicate myself because I fancy another should be disciplined. Where one is of a lowly spirit, such occasions will but furnish opportunities for waiting patiently upon God and seeking to exercise the consciences of fellow-saints. It is only the headstrong and wilful who will take matters into their own hands, and, if unable to override tender consciences, will separate themselves and rage against their brethren. Alexander the coppersmith was evidently a man of this stamp, if, as seems likely, he is the companion of Hymenaeus mentioned in 1 Tim. 1:20. Having given up the truth, he became the bitter opponent of those who stood for it (2 Tim. 4:14-15).—Sel.

Those Thirty Years

"And Jesus Himself began to be about thirty years of age."

Oh restless, hasty heart,
Oft checked in bitter tears,
What lesson see'st thou here to learn
From all those thirty years?
Behold the perfect Man,
God's purpose full in view,
Thus waiting, hidden and unknown,
With such a work to do?
Knowing well the mighty plan,
Hastens not to tread the road;
He waited patient for the sign,
Dependent upon God.
Lesson of priceless worth;
Those thirty silent years
Rebuke to anxious nature's zeal,
Its haste, its restless fears.
The peaceful, quiet mind
That needs no checking rod,
The patient dignity of faith
That dares to wait on God.
No rash unchastened zeal,
Pressing to do His will;
The heart that knows His guiding
Awaits it and is still.
Oh, wondrous thirty years,
They teach my restless heart,
If 'tis so blest to work for Him,
Blest, too, the waiting part.
How blest the quiet trust,
Those secret times with God,
Tho' friends around misunderstand.
Tho' Satan stalk abroad.

The heart in untouched calm,
With Him waits patiently;
Oh lesson of those thirty years,
I thank my God for thee.

— O. R.

Divine Intervention

(Continued)

THE PLAGUE OF LOCUSTS

Then the locusts came! The east wind brought them.

Moses and Aaron went in again to Pharaoh, asking how long would he be ere he humbled himself before God, threatening to bring locusts upon the Egyptians on the morrow if he refused. They would not come in hundreds or thousands, but “they shall cover the face of the earth, *that one cannot be able to see the earth*: and they shall eat the residue of that which is escaped, which remaineth unto you from the hail, and shall eat every tree which groweth for you out of the field: and they shall fill thy houses, and the houses of all thy servants, and the houses of all the Egyptians; which neither thy fathers, nor thy fathers’ fathers have seen, since the day that they were upon the earth unto this day.” (Exo. 10:5,6.)

Pharaoh’s servants now appeal to him, saying, “How long shall this man be a snare unto us? let the men go, that they may serve the Lord their God: knowest thou not yet that Egypt is destroyed?”

Thereupon Moses and Aaron were again brought

before Pharaoh, who said: "Go, serve the Lord your God: but who are they that shall go?" Moses replied that *all*, with flocks and herds must go. There can be no compromise! Pharaoh's third proposal that the men should go and the little ones left in Egypt was met with an unflinching No! The language of Moses, as of Joshua in a later day, was plainly and emphatically "As for me *and my house*, we will serve the Lord." (Joshua 24:15.)

An incident is recorded that at the time of the Civil War, representatives of the Confederate Armies came to President Lincoln with the proposal of a compromise — certain concessions would be made, certain boundaries retained. The President listened quietly to all the proposals and when the ambassadors from the south were through, arose to his feet and bringing his fist to the table, said in no unmistakable language, "Gentlemen, this Government must have all!"

Pharaoh's refusal to let the Israelites go was so violent, Moses and Aaron were driven from his presence.

"Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." (Eccles. 8:11).

But in time the tables are turned. As we write at this moment, events in Europe have borne this out. To quote from a brief epitome of the past few years, "When the war broke out Britain was grievously unprepared. And when France fell in the struggle, and this country stood alone, but for

God's goodness this country would have been overwhelmed. God allowed the miracle of Dunkirk. God allowed the enemy to make mistakes. Germany's attack on Russia took the fury of war to the east instead of to the west. God allowed Germany to bite deep into Russian territory, even almost to the gates of Moscow, and consequently it took a long time for the Russians to force the invader from their soil. God allowed this breathing space to enable the resources of this country to be mobilized. God allowed Japan to attack Pearl Harbor, and thus brought the United States of America with its immense man power and resources on Britain's side as ally. In all this we can see God's hand behind the scenes, answering the prayers of His people, in thus giving time for preparation for the final assault and final victory.

"Final victory has come at last. Germany planned to invade Britain. Germany has been invaded. Germany set out to subjugate the nations. Germany has been subjugated. Mussolini and Hitler set out on their lying, boastful, cruel role as world conquerors. Mussolini's dead body lay in the streets of Milan to be spit upon by those who hated his regime, and who had suffered under his terrible misrule. Hitler is reported dead. Russian armies swept all before them. Berlin was captured—the capital of the German Reich. British and American and Russian armies joined hands in the heart of Germany. Shortly after the inevitable happened. Germany lay crushed and helpless,

and the allied nations stood as conquerors.

“Can we not see most plainly the hand of God, if we may say it with the utmost reverence, the hand of God, the Great Master Strategist in all this? To Him be all the glory! As a nation we do not deserve God’s mercy, nay, even as Christians what do we deserve? God is good beyond all our deserts.

“The words of Psalm 124 may well describe the desperate condition we were in, and the mighty deliverance we have experienced.

‘If it had not been the LORD who was on our side, when men rose up against us: then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us: then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul: then the proud waters had gone over our soul. Blessed be the LORD, Who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth. Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken and we are escaped. Our help is in the name of the LORD, Who made heaven and earth.’ ”

Following the plague of hail, the land began to grow green again. Fruitful soil, life-giving water, and constant sunshine do wonders. Once more Egypt smiled and blossomed. Then Moses and Aaron appeared before Pharaoh and delivered their message. The tone was severe. It is impossible to imagine them twisting their hands and prostrating themselves before the king. “Thus saith the Lord God of the Hebrews, How long wilt thou refuse to humble thyself before Me? let My people

go, that they may serve Me," and then the alternative — locusts! — and without waiting for reply, Moses "turned himself and went out from Pharaoh."

"In modern times enormous flights of locusts have been known covering an area of over a thousand miles, and which when driven into the sea formed a bank of bodies upon the shore some four feet high, and fifty miles long! In India a railway train was actually stopped by a piled up host of these insects, as by running into a snowdrift. But the locusts threatened were such as never had been before, and such as never shall be. The consideration was terrible to the court. For the first time the flatterers around Pharaoh spoke out; the custom of the palace was set aside; a fear greater than that of the king impelled them, 'Let the men go,' said they; 'knowest thou not yet that Egypt is destroyed?' "

In a volume entitled "Minnesota, Manners and Customs," published by Harrison and Smith Co., with acknowledgment to the "Minneapolis Journal," it is recorded that during the great plague of locusts in the 1800's, causing wide-spread ruin throughout the whole region between the Mississippi River and Rocky Mountains, a proclamation was issued by Gov. Pillsbury of Minnesota calling upon the citizens of the state to join together, to ask for spiritual help against an enemy that was ravishing the country.

April 26, 1877 was set apart for this purpose, and although it was late in the spring, the suppli-

cations implored *divine intervention* to send a snow storm. According to the records of the day, the supplications had their effect, for on April 27 and 28 a violent storm of sleet and snow came.

“The common enemy responsible for this supplication was the grasshopper. Some called the insect a locust and others dignified him by the name, ‘Rocky Mountain Locust’ but it was all one to the farmers of Minnesota. The insects ate everything in sight. Billions of the creatures had appeared out of the west, descending in great clouds on the southwestern part of the state and becoming such a menace that the governor issued his famous proclamation. So on April 26, 1877, Minnesota gave the impression of being one vast Camp Meeting. Services were conducted in practically every community of any size in the state. So earnest was Gov. Pillsbury that he closed his flour mills in Minneapolis for the day, that his employees might give their undivided attention to prayer.”

As to results: “The governor was quoted as saying, ‘And the very next night it turned cold and froze every grasshopper in the state.’ That was over twenty years ago and the grasshoppers don’t appear to have been bothering us very much since.”

“The first invasion,” according to the reports, “started on June 12, 1873. On that day the sky was darkened by the hosts of grasshoppers moving in on Minnesota from the Dakota border. According to one historian, they made a noise like a roaring wind. Those that alighted on the prairies

seemed to know where the grain and fields were and gathered in them from all directions. Every grain stalk bent to the earth with their weight. The noise they made when eating could be heard a great distance and resembled that which might have been made by hundreds of hogs turned into the fields. In fact, such was the destruction that within a few hours after they came down, whole fields of grain were as completely harvested as though they had been cut with a reaper. After gorging themselves with the crops, the grasshoppers sometimes piled up in the fields and along the roads to a depth of one or two feet. Horses could hardly be driven through them.

"In many of the affected countries, families were in actual want as a result of the scourge.

"The grasshoppers came back in 1878, but the amount of destruction they did was negligible. The last year any great damage was done was 1877, the year of the official day of prayer.

"The pestilence attracted wide attention. Governor Pillsbury invited governors from nearby states, also attacked by the grasshoppers, to a conference at Omaha to consider some sort of united action against the pests. Executives from eight states attended and state entomologists were called in for their expert advice. During the session of the legislature in January, 1877, Ignatius Donnelly was appointed to head a joint committee to investigate the matter. The committee persuaded the legislature to adopt a resolution demanding that the Congress of the United States recognize the

peril and use the proceeds of the sale of public lands in a campaign to destroy grasshopper eggs. The resolution came to nothing. A bill did become a law in Minnesota that offered rewards for the destruction of eggs and grasshoppers. The insects were paid for at the rate of a dollar a bushel and fifty cents a gallon was the price for the eggs. Other provisions designed to be helpful were in the law, and many pamphlets were issued with instructions as to the best method of combating the winged marauders. All of these things may have done some good, but the indisputable fact is that the grasshoppers never caused any great trouble after April 26, 1877." *

For Egypt the twenty-four hours of grace were running out. "Part of the time had been spent over the unwonted scene in that dignified assemblage. Royalty and nobles were learning in a personal way the discomfiture the magicians had already proved. Not any longer was the calm of a god upon Pharaoh's countenance. Probably the court was too full of vexation to hear the ominous sound of the rising east wind, for Moses had already uplifted the rod at God's bidding, the wind had arisen, and all the remaining hours of the day it blew, and continued all the night. Already Je-

*"101 Best Stories of Minnesota."

Editor's note: A few years ago the editor related this incident during a Conference held in Minnesota. As soon as the tale was told, an aged brother named Anderson spoke up and said, "That's true, brother. I remember it well."

hovah's army of the skies, that had been lying at twenty-four hours' distance, was on the wing. Obeying the call of the wind, the huge host arose, and, borne upon its gusts the myriads sped on toward the land of Egypt.

"In the early morning, true to its time, all along the eastern horizon a yellow fringe could be seen, rapidly expanding over the heavens, till, like a dense brown cloud, it covered the blue sky and obscured the light. The rush of the wings of the moving myriads was presently heard, and then in another moment the land was covered with devouring hosts, and filled with the noise of their resistless jaws. Every succulent thing fell before them. All that the hail had left was taken away. So far as the eye could reach, the land of Egypt was a wilderness, as barren as the yellow deserts upon its borders. Goshen — the garden of Egypt — also fell under the plague, for its fruits and its crops were no longer necessary for Israel.

"Pharaoh trembled once more: he called in haste for Moses and Aaron. 'I have sinned,' he said, 'against—Jehovah your God, and against you. Now therefore, forgive, I pray thee, my sin only this once, and intreat Jehovah your God, that He may take away from me this death only.' And Jehovah was entreated. 'And Jehovah turned a mighty strong west wind, which took away the locusts and cast them into the Red Sea; there remained not one locust in all the coasts of Egypt.' "*

But alas! Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and

*"Light from the Land of the Sphinx."

he would not let the Israelites go.

(To be continued, D. V.)

Short Papers on Church History

(Continued)

But there is another thing connected with the professing Church which demands a brief notice here. We refer to

THE DIVINE PRINCIPLE OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT

Not only did the Lord give the keys to Peter that he might open the doors of the new dispensation, but He entrusted to him its internal administration. This principle is all-important in its bearing on the Church of God. The words of the commission are these: "And whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven" (Matt. 16:19). The question is: What do they mean? Clearly, we believe, authority and power from the Lord, to be exercised in and by the Church, but limited, in result, to this world. There is no thought in the Lord's words about the Church deciding anything as to *Heaven*. This is the false interpretation, and the deceiving power of the apostasy. The Church on earth can have nothing to say or do with what is done in Heaven as to binding or loosing. The sphere of its action is within its own limits, and when it so acts, according to the commission of Christ, it has the promise of ratification in Heaven.

Neither is there any thought here, we may add, of the Church, or of any of its officials, coming in between the soul and God, as to eternal forgiveness or eternal judgment. This is the daring blasphemy of Rome. "*Who can forgive sins but God only?*" (Mark 2:7). He reserves this power to Himself alone. Hence, the retaining or the remission of sins by the Church is only for the present time, and strictly *administrative* in its character. It is the Divine principle of receiving persons into an Assembly on the ground of adequate testimony to their conversion, soundness in doctrine, and holiness of life; and also of putting away impenitent offenders until restored by true repentance.

But some may have the common impression that this power was only given to Peter and the rest of the apostles, and consequently ceased with them. This is a mistake. True, it was given to Peter only in the first instance, as we have seen; and no doubt greater power was exercised during the days of the apostles than has been since, but not greater authority. The Church has the same *authority* now as then, as to discipline in an Assembly, though it lacks the *power*. The Word of the Lord remains unchanged. Only an apostle, we believe, could speak as Paul does in 1 Corinthians 5: "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 a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." This was spiritual power in an individual, not the judgment

of the Church. The same apostle, in reference to the same case, says to the Assembly: "Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person" (1 Cor. 5:13). The act of putting away was the act, not merely of the apostle, but of the whole Assembly. In this case, and in this way, the excommunicated person's sins were *retained*, though evidently a converted man. In 2 Corinthians 2 we find him fully restored. His repentance is accepted by the Assembly — his sins are *remitted*. The overflowing of the apostle's heart on this occasion, and his exhortations to the Church, are valuable lessons for all who have to do with Church government, and are intended to remove that cold suspicion with which an erring brother is too often received back to the privileges of the Assembly. "Sufficient to such a man is this punishment (or censure), which was inflicted of many. So that contrariwise we ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with over-much sorrow. Wherefore, I beseech you, that ye would confirm your love toward him." Here we have a case in point, illustrative of the government of the Assembly according to the will of Christ. "Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven."

PRINCIPLE OF GOVERNMENT STILL APPLICABLE

But "how can these principles be carried out now?" is still the question and difficulty with many.

Well, we must just go back to the Word of God. We ought to be able and willing to say, "We can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth" (2 Cor. 13:8).

The administrative authority and power of which we speak was not only given to Peter and other apostles, but also to the Church. In Matthew 18 we have the working out of the principle laid down in chapter 16: "Tell it to the Church: but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever *ye* shall bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven; and whatsoever *ye* shall loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven . . . For where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them." Thus we learn that the acts of the two or three, gathered together in Christ's Name, have the same Divine sanction as the administration of Peter. And again, in John 20, the Lord delivers the same principle of government to the *disciples*, not merely to the *apostles*, and that too on resurrection ground, where the Assembly is livingly united to Christ as the risen Man. This is all-important. The spirit of life in Jesus Christ makes the *disciples* free — every disciple free — from the law of sin and death. The Church is built upon "this rock" — Christ in resurrection, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

"Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews,

came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And when He had so said, He shewed unto them His hands and His side. Then were the *disciples* glad when they saw the Lord. Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you. And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost*: whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained" (John 20:23). They are to go forth as His messengers, from the resurrection side of His empty grave, bearing the blessed message of peace and eternal life to a world bowed down with sin, sorrow, and death. The principle of their own internal government is also clearly laid down; and its due administration will always give to the Christian Assembly a distinctive and Heavenly character, in the presence of both God and man.

THE PRINCIPLE OF RECEPTION AT THE BEGINNING

But as this principle is the proper basis of all Christian congregations, it may be well to look for a moment at its operation in the days of the apostles. Surely they understood its meaning and how to apply it.

"Then they that received His Word were baptised, and the same day there were added to them

*The Lord gave them Holy Ghost power from Himself to carry them over the interval between His own departure and the Personal descent of the Holy Ghost.

about three thousand souls" (R.V.) Receiving the word was the ground of baptism and fellowship; but the work was then entirely in Christ's own hands. "And the Lord added daily such as should be saved." The attempt to deceive by Ananias and Sapphira was at once detected. Peter acts in his right place, but the Holy Ghost was there in unaggrieved majesty and power, and Peter owns it. Hence he says to Ananias, "Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost" But this virgin state of things soon passed away. Failure set in — the Holy Ghost was grieved.

After the Church became so mixed with merely nominal professors, great care was necessary in receiving persons to communion. It was not enough that a person *said* he was converted and claimed admission into the Church on the ground of his own statements; he must submit to be examined by experienced Christians. When one professes to be awakened to a sense of sin, and to be brought to repentance before God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, his confession must be examined by those who have gone through the same kind of experience themselves. And even where conversion is manifestly genuine, godly care, with tenderness, must be exercised in reception; something dishonouring to Christ, injurious to themselves, weakening to the Assembly, may be entertained, even unconsciously. Herein spiritual discernment is needed. And this is the truest kindness to the applicant, and nothing more than a necessary care for the honour of Christ and the purity of com-

munion. Christian fellowship would be at an end if persons were received on the sole ground of their own opinion of themselves.

In Acts 9 we see the practical working of this principle in the case of the great apostle himself. And surely, if he could not be accredited without adequate testimony, who need complain? True, his case was peculiar, still it may be taken as a practical illustration of our subject.

We find both Ananias at Damascus and the Church at Jerusalem, questioning the reality of Saul's conversion, though it was a miraculous one. Of course he had been an open enemy to the Name of Christ, and this would make the disciples still more careful. Ananias hesitates to baptise him until fully satisfied of his conversion. He consults the Lord on the subject; but after hearing His mind, he goes directly to Saul; assures him that he has been sent by the same Jesus that appeared to him on his way to Damascus, and confirms the truth of what had taken place. Saul is greatly comforted; he receives his sight, and is baptised.

Then as to the action of the Church at Jerusalem, we read, "And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that He had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the Name of Jesus." Paul is

A MODEL MAN TO THE CHURCH

in many things, and in this also. He is received into the Assembly—as all applicants should be received—on the ground of adequate testimony to the genuineness of his Christianity. But while all godly care must be taken that the Simon Maguses may be detected, all tenderness and patience must be exercised with the timid and doubting ones. Still, life in Christ and consistency therewith must be looked for (see Rom. 14:15 and 1 Cor. 5, and 2 Cor. 2). The Church's path is always a narrow one.

Popery has shown its desperate wickedness in the evil use it has made of the Church's prerogative to retain or remit sins, hence all the abominations of priestly absolution. Protestantism has gone to the other extreme—probably fearing the very appearance of Popery—and has wellnigh set aside discipline altogether. The path of faith is to follow the Word of the Lord.

The ground being thus cleared as to the great fundamental principles of the Church and Kingdom, we come to the day of Pentecost—the first moment of the Church's history on earth. Unless we understand the principles of Christianity, we can never understand its history.—A. Miller.

Light In Our Dwellings

(Continued)

The blessed One, Who one day was to bow His head upon the cross and say: "It is finished," had accomplished His work with Adam. He awoke from his sleep, and was no longer *alone*. Before

him stood the "*woman*," taken from the man, and his beautiful "help-meet." There she stood before Adam, in her virginal beauty, amongst the beauties of the young undefiled young creation around Adam, she the fairest and purest of all. From that moment, the garden of Eden was to Adam not only the "Garden of the Lord," Who had planted it, but a paradise; for that blessed God, "Who giveth us richly all things to enjoy," had given him a companion, to enjoy its beauties and abundance, knowing that joy, without one to share it, is but selfish, and therefore no real joy. His own self, though not yet wretched, sinful self, lost itself in another being, his equal, sprung from himself, "Bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh." And as she was taken out of his side, so they were "One heart and one soul." When Adam looked around him at the beautiful scene, over which the Lord God had placed him as the centre and head, and when he tasted of the abundance of the garden of the Lord, there was one, the fairest of all, at his side to share it, whose face reflected every joyful emotion of his own heart, and whose eyes reflected every sunbeam from his own, of an affection, sinless and pure, as it had been planted in their hearts by that blessed God, Who is *love*, as He is light.

"And God blessed them, and God said unto them, **B**e fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowls of the air, and over every thing that moveth upon the earth."

Thus God had formed and consecrated with His

own blessing the sacred tie of marriage, as the first relationship among men upon the earth. He, Who created man in His own image, had made them male and female, and said; "For this cause shall a man leave father and mother and shall cleave to his wife, and they twain shall be one flesh."

Therefore they were no more twain, but one flesh. What God Himself joined, none was to put asunder. Thus it was "*from the beginning.*"

(To be continued, D. V.)

"Five Words"

1 Cor. 14:19

It is often very wonderful to mark the way in which the words of Scripture seize upon the heart. They are, indeed, "as goads, and as nails fastened by the master of assemblies." At times, some brief sentence, or clause of a sentence will lay hold upon the heart, penetrate the conscience, or occupy the mind in such a way as to prove the divinity of the book in which it stands. What force of reasoning, what fulness of meaning, what power of application, what an unfolding of the springs of nature, what an unveiling of the heart, what point and pungency, what condensing energy, we meet with up and down throughout the sacred pages! One delights to dwell upon these things at all times; but more especially at a moment like the present when the enemy of God and man is seeking to cast a slur upon the inspired volume.

The foregoing train of thought has been sug-

gested to the mind by the expression which forms the title of this article. "I had rather," says the self-emptyed and devoted apostle, "speak *five words* with my understanding, that I might teach others also, than *ten thousand words* in an unknown tongue." How important for all speakers to remember this! We know, of course, that tongues had their value. They were for a sign to the unbelieving. But, in the assembly, they were useless unless there was an interpreter.

The grand end of speaking in the assembly is edification, and this end can only, as we know, be reached by persons understanding what is said. It is utterly impossible for a man to edify me if I cannot understand what he says. But, further, we would do well to bear in mind that our only warrant for standing up to speak in the assembly is that the Lord Himself has given us something to say. If it be but "five words," let us utter the five and sit down. Nothing can be more unintelligent than for a man to attempt to speak "ten thousand words" when God has only given him five. Alas! that something like this should so often occur! What a mercy it would be, if we could only keep within our measure! That measure may be small. It matters not; let us be simple, earnest, and real. An earnest heart is better than a clever head; and a fervent spirit better than an eloquent tongue. Where there is a genuine, hearty desire to promote the real good of souls, it will prove more effectual with men, and more acceptable to God than the most brilliant gifts without it. No doubt,

we should covet earnestly the best gifts; but we should also remember the "more excellent way," even the way of love that ever hides itself and seeks only the profit of others. It is not that we value gifts less, but we value love more.

Finally, it would greatly tend to raise the tone of public teaching and preaching to remember the following rule, "Do not set about looking for something to say, because you have got to speak; but speak because you have something that ought to be said." This is very simple. It is a poor thing for a man to be merely collecting as much matter as will fill up a certain space of time. This should never be. Let the teacher or preacher attend diligently upon his ministry—let him cultivate his gift—let him wait on God for guidance, power, and blessing. Let him live in the spirit of prayer, and breathe the atmosphere of Scripture, then will he be always ready for the Master's use, and his words, whether "five" or "ten thousand" will, assuredly glorify God and do good to men. But, clearly, in no case, should a man rise to address his fellows without the conviction that God has given him somewhat to say, and desire to say it to edification.

—C.H.M.

The End of Christendom

May God give us to see and mark the course which this world is running, and enable us to avoid all its influences! When one knows what will be the end of a thing, one avoids that which would lead to it. The end of Christendom is awful. God makes us acquainted with it in order

that we may avoid it. The more I see what is taking place, the more I discover that things are hastening on that evil may have the upper hand and be judged, that God may judge it and purify the earth. The iniquity must be full before God strikes. We are in the last days in this respect. Men believe there is great progress taking place, yet they feel great uneasiness in the expectation of what is going to happen. Christians must keep apart, living according to the principles of their divine calling.—J. N. D.

Gleanings

PROVERBS 25:18

"A man that beareth false witness against his neighbor is a battle-hammer (or, war-club), and a sword, and a sharp arrow."

How little the slanderer considers the grief oft-times caused to the innocent objects of his vicious tongue! As war-like weapons, carrying pain and anguish in their wake, are the hateful and cruel words they recklessly utter, often destroying all peace of mind and arousing just indignation. On the other hand, it is well for the injured one to take all to the Lord Himself and leave it at His feet, accepting it as part of the discipline of the path. To remember that nothing can come to a believer but what divine love can use in blessing, is to rise triumphant above the tongue of slander and every other evil.

Nothing is harder for a wounded spirit and a sensitive soul than to endure uncomplainingly untrue accusations. Indignation against the false accuser, a determination to clear oneself at all costs,

if possible; to avenge oneself on the evil-doer — how natural are all these things to the human heart! But to go on, serenely looking to God for grace to so live that all shall see the falsity of the charge; to commit the keeping of my reputation to Him who permitted the trial for my humbling; to own the righteousness of His ways as I reflect on the many occasions upon which I have dishonored His name, however innocent I may be now; — these are healthful exercises indeed. Thus I am kept from taking things into my own hand, and can count upon God to act for me, as of old He did for Job, for David, for Daniel, and a host of others who had learned to commit all to Him whose love is unchanging, and who never permits a trial unless He discerns in the state of soul a “needs be” for the affliction which His government permits.—Sel.

Jesu

Jesu is in my heart: His sacred Name
 Is deeply carved there, But, the other week
 A great affliction broke the little frame
 Ev'n all to pieces: which I went to seek.
 And first I found the corner: where was I:
 After where ES: and next where U was graved.
 When I had got these parcels, instantly
 I sat me down to spell them: and perceived
 That, to my *broken* heart, He was
I ease you:
 And to my *whole* is Jesu.

Selected from Geo. Herbert's Poems.

What GOD is
 Determines what GOD does;
 What GOD does
 Proves what GOD is — LOVE.

“Hast Not Denied My Name”

Signs that feature the “falling away” or apostasy, foretold in the second chapter of 2nd Thess. multiply and abound. During comparatively recent years the orthodox profession of Christendom has been largely perverted, almost submerged, by a flood of antichristian creeds and Christless cults. Their name is legion: Higher Criticism, Modernism, Spiritism, Christian Science, Russelism alias Jehovah’s Witnesses, Theosophy, Communism, etc., etc. Much vital and fundamental truth is being denied, even including the foundation truth of Christianity, the Deity of our Lord, God manifest in flesh. Hence the form in which the Lord’s commendation is conveyed. In the midst of wide-spread defection and denial the Philadelphian had “kept My Word and *not denied My Name*”. Analagous to the seven thousand in the days of Elijah, who had *not bowed* the knee to Baal: “Hast *not denied*.” Whilst waiting for the manifestation of the Kingdom and *glory*, we are in the Kingdom and *patience* of Jesus Christ; how precious, then, His Word in verse 10 of Rev. 3: “Because thou hast kept the Word of My patience, I also will keep thee out of the hour of trial which is about to come on all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold I come quickly!” Our longing hearts respond, “Even so, come Lord Jesus.”—W.L.G.

The Lord amidst the candlesticks
In priestly robes arrayed,
Found both to censure and commend,
As He their works surveyed.
Whilst first love left, lukewarmness rife,
Drew weighty words of blame,
He hailed with commendation high
“Hast not denied My Name!”

Throughout the dispensations all
God’s plans ordained extend —
Our lot is cast ’mongst those on whom

Doth come the ages' end.
For signs abound, the Gospel day
Nears its apostate end,
And saints exhorted for the Faith
To earnestly contend.
The times are perilous — o'er all
There loometh on the sight
A Christendom that ever turns
Still further from the Light —
Till through "delusion" sent of God
They'll listen to a lie —
Because they spurn His grace and truth,
The Word made flesh deny.

The creeds discordant change, but He
Who ever is the same
Still gladdens every loving heart:
"Hast not denied My Name!"
O grant the needed grace that we
The Faith undimmed maintain;
And ever cleaving close to Thee
May glorify Thy Name.

As we our pilgrim path pursue,
How precious 'twere to hear,
From Thy blest lips the gracious words
Of comfort and of cheer:
"Hast kept My Word, My patience shared,
A little strength thou hast,
An open door I've set before,
That which thou hast — hold fast!"

With reverence the adoring heart
Doth marvelling behold
The Name of the incarnate Son
In prophecy foretold:
The Wonderful, the Counsellor,
Whose ways man cannot trace;

The Mighty God, — the only True —
Now known in saving grace:

The Father of Eternity,
The glorious Prince of Peace,
Who'll reign o'er all in righteousness,
And bid all warfare cease!
How blessedly, enveiled in grace,
The Godhead glories shine;
How blessedly His Manhood doth
The Word made flesh enshrine!

O Love of God ineffable!
How unlike man displayed,
When as a Holy Babe the Christ
Was in a manger laid!
As Son of Man, the promised Seed,
The Son Eternal came,
And in His ministry of love
Made known the Father's Name.

Obedient e'en to death, He came
To do the Father's will,
The Purpose fore-ordained of grace
And glory to fulfil.
He tasted death in deepest depths —
Yet deeper was His love!
Now bears in glory's highest height
A Name all names above!

When Christ His heritage shall purge
From sin and Satan's sway,
And in just retribution end
Man's sinful, stormy day,
God shall exalt as Head o'er all
The Son of Man who died,
And heaven and earth acclaim as Lord
Jesus the Crucified!

O blest provision of Thy love!
Our strength is as our day,
And Thou, Great Shepherd of the sheep,
Art with us all the way;
And to each loving, loyal heart,
The cheering call comes down:
"That which thou hast hold fast! hold fast!
That no one take thy crown!"
— W. L. Grant.

The Excellencies of Christ

ADDRESS BY R. S. STRATTON AT BALTIMORE,
MD., NOVEMBER 16, 1944.

I should just like to add a couple of remarks to what we had before us on Tuesday evening. We were reading from the 49th chapter of the book of Genesis; and I made the statement that the word "excellency" in Jacob's prophetic outline of his son Reuben was rendered quite frequently "that which remained," or was left over. I have been looking at it again since, and, if you remember, I spoke of Reuben as having been set aside, and representing the apostacy of the nation of Israel. We find the rendering of that word "excellency" connected a great many times with that which remained of the giants, that which remained of the Ammonites, and that which remained of the Sodomites. I mention this in passing, because I believe we have a distinct picture of the apostacy of the nation described for us in the corruption of Reuben, and in the violence of Simeon and Levi.

These giants were the product of apostate union. You read that in the 6th of Genesis; and we find all along that these men identified themselves in a large measure with the Philistines, and they were always seeking to oppose the progress and development of the children of Israel, God's people.

So we find in the 21st chapter of Numbers, after Moses has made mention of the fact that only Og, king of Bashan, remained of the giants, that Moses sees to it that Og and all of his sons are done away with. We find later on, of course, another company of giants rising up and being brought before us in the days of David; and you will remember how David gained that victory over Goliath. Sometimes there is a question as to why he took those five stones. It has always appealed to me that there was a good reason; there were four other giants that were later put to death at the hand of David or his men. Those giants affiliated themselves together, and are a picture of apostacy. I mention this because we are living in the beginning of the apostacy of the last days.

How beautifully then the picture fills out that I sought to make known on Tuesday evening! "Reuben, thou art my firstborn—the excellency of excellencies, the excellency of acceptance." Oh, isn't that true, fellow-Christian? Yes, we are accepted in the Beloved; and that word "accepted" in Ephesians 1:6 is found only once else in the New Testament, and there it is rendered "highly favored." It was spoken to Mary. In view of the apostacy of these closing days, and the dark-

ness that deepens, have we not been "highly favored in the Beloved!" accepted in Him in the more excellent sacrifice!

Let us turn tonight to go further afield into these excellencies of Christ. Psalm 36, verse 5. I shall remark, in beginning to read, that this word "mercy" is quite often rendered as "loving kindness." Let's read it that way, shall we?

"Thy loving kindness, O Lord, is in the heavens; and Thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds. Thy righteousness is like the great mountains; Thy judgments are a great deep: O Lord, Thou preservest man and beast. How excellent is Thy loving kindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Thy wings."

Does He have wings? You will remember what He said to the nation: "Ye have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I brought you on eagles' wings to Myself." That word "wings" carries with it the meaning of protection, covering, and power. Is there any unsaved one in this room tonight? I want to invite you to come to Him for this protection, for this covering, that is found in Him. You know, the Good Book tells us, "Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered;" and when He Himself—all the value of His person and work—is that which covers us in the sight of God, little wonder is it that He tells us that we are "accepted in the Beloved." Say, isn't that a grand thing! Wouldn't you like to be able to say that tonight, my friend? Accepted in the Beloved! Oh, to be accepted in Him! In the deep realization of soul that, though we were hell-bound,

helpless, hopeless sinners, God has shown us what we were, He has made us realize our need, He has drawn us to Himself! "How excellent is Thy loving kindness, O Lord, therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Thy wings."

Now He speaks of how He brought these people on eagles' wings to Himself; and in the book of Deuteronomy He gives us another beautiful simile, that "like as an eagle stirreth up her nest"—let us turn to it, Deut. 32:11—

"As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him."

Is that not beautiful! Look at that mother eagle. There are those little eaglets hovering in the nest, and she gets in, though the nest is perched high up on the cliffs with that deep abyss below, and she takes her wings and throws them out! My, is not that cruel? "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, so the Lord alone did lead him." Look at her swoop down underneath, and with those powerful wings she takes them up again, and puts them right back in the nest where they came from. God stirs up our nest sometimes; He wants us to realize that we are dependent on Him. He wants us to confide in Him. Your faith and mine glorifies Him. That is why oftentimes the nest has to be stirred up—"so the Lord alone did lead him." "O how excellent is Thy loving kindness; therefore the children of men put their trust under the

shadow of Thy wings." Put their trust in His protection, in His covering, in His power! Don't we? We sometimes sing that we do. Listen—

"We trust His protection; we'll lean on His might" — lean hard, brother, sister; these are perilous times in which we are living—days of a fast-ripening apostacy, but what a portion is yours and mine!

"We trust His protection; we'll lean on His might;
We're sure His direction will guide us aright;
We know WHO surrounds us, almighty to save;
And no one confounds us the Saviour who have."

That is the last verse of No. 267 in our "Little Flock" Hymn Book. What a grand thing it is to trust His protection!

Now then, let us turn, shall we, to a number of Psalms—back to the 17th Psalm; and it is interesting to see how often we find these two things connected.

"Show Thy marvellous loving kindness, Thou that savest by Thy right hand them which put their trust in Thee from those that rise up against them."

What a grand thing it is to know that we are His, to know that we are the object of His love and care! How sweet, how precious, as we pursue our pilgrim pathway in dark days like these! "Show Thy marvellous lovingkindness, O Thou that savest by Thy right hand (the hand of power) them that put their trust in Thee."

Now here are two very short prayers—

"Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of Thy wings."

Turn back again to Deut. 32 — "Keep me as

the apple of the eye" — that sensitive, delicate part of the eye that needs special protection—Deut. 32, verse 9:

"The Lord's portion is His people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance."

That is true not only of Jacob, but also of us in this our day.

"He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; He led him about, He instructed him, He kept him as the apple of His eye."

So there's the answer to it.

Now then—"Hide me under the shadow of Thy wings." Oh, my, look at this — they realized what it meant, did they not? They realized the value of His protection and care; and oh, how much more should we in days of darkness, in perilous times like these in which you and I are living.

Now turn over to the 57th Psalm — a few passages in connection with "wings". The first verse: "Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me; for my soul trusteth in Thee." Let's stop here a moment, and let each one just ask himself or herself the question, "Is that true of me?" Oh, friend, are you here tonight a trusting soul? "'Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus, just to take Him at His word." "Be merciful unto me—for my soul trusteth in Thee." Does your soul trust in Him? You will remember how the Psalmist in another place said in this connection, "I will trust and not be afraid."

That reminds me of a little incident when I was going from Tampa to Miami. I had a fellow-

passenger, a woman, sitting alongside of me, and, strange to say, she was quite a talker! and she began on this and that, and the rest of it. But then she began to say how fearful she was during that terrible hurricane that blew over Florida just a few weeks ago. "Friend," I said to her, "If you had only learned to put your trust in the One who has His way in the whirlwind and in the storm, you would not have had those fears." "Oh," she said, "I am a Jehovah witness, wouldn't you like some of my papers—they are so instructive!"

Sensing from what I had said that I must have some faith, she replied, "You simply can't get on without them in reading your Bible; they tell us all about the Armageddon." I said, "I really don't need those papers to instruct me in the Scriptures of truth, because I have a wonderful teacher—the Spirit of God." But I could hardly get a word in edgewise. I tried to show that woman her place, but she was trying to teach me. But when I got a chance to speak, I told her who my teacher was, that the anointing that I had received abode within, and I did not need the teaching she was offering. "My Bible tells me all about the Armageddon, but my Bible tells me about something also that I am waiting for — for the return of my Lord from heaven. I am more interested in that than I am in Armageddon." "Oh," she says, "He is not coming back again. He has been here; if He would come back again that would disrupt everything that He has done." "Oh, is He not coming back again?" I asked. "You should read

your Bible instead of those papers." "Oh, but He is not coming back in person," she replied. I quoted: "This SAME JESUS, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." Just about that time she reached her destination, and, without saying a word, right out the door did she go.

"My soul trusteth in Thee; and now, oh my soul, what wait I for?" The Armageddon? No, "my hope is in Thee!" The Christian hope, the Christian portion is so grand, so glorious! The Christian's portion is Christ Himself. The excellency of excellencies, the excellency of our acceptance—Christ Himself! Yes, "in the shadow of Thy wings will I make my refuge until these calamities be overpast."

Now again, Psalm 61, verse 1—

"Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer. From the end of the earth will I cry unto Thee, when my heart is overwhelmed; lead me to the rock that is higher than I. For Thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy. I will abide in Thy tabernacle for ever; I will trust in the covert of Thy wings."

Oh, how He delights to put His wings over us! He delights to have us underneath, so to speak, in the fullest confidence of trust, no matter what the circumstances may be.

Next in the 63rd Psalm—my soul trusteth in Thee. Well, if it does—verse 5:

"My soul shall be satisfied."

Oh listen to this friends, in days like these when

this old world of ours is handing out so much by way of attraction to men—

“My soul shall be satisfied with marrow and fatness, and my mouth shall praise Thee with joyful lips.”

Sometimes we get restless on the bed, and we can't sleep.

“I remember Thee upon my bed, and meditate on Thee in the night watches.”

What is the result of this meditation? We read elsewhere: “My meditation of Him shall be sweet.” Isn't it? “My meditation of Him shall be sweet”—

“because Thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of Thy wings will I rejoice.”

Just another in the 91st Psalm, verse 2—

“I will say of the Lord” (see if you can; if you can't, my friend, you are certainly missing something)

“I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress; my God; in Him will I trust.”

Verse 4

“He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust. His truth shall be thy shield and buckler.”

Oh, how much there is for us to muse on, to meditate upon, to make our own, as we think of Him; and all is ours in Him.

Let's go back again to Psalm 36—the exclamation “How excellent is thy lovingkindness.” How excellent is it? Oh, the excellencies of Christ—Thy lovingkindness !

Shall we turn back for an illustration to the book of Samuel. II Samuel chapter 9:

“And David said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake? And there was of the house of Saul

a servant whose name was Ziba. And when they had called him unto David, the king said unto him, Art thou Ziba? And he said, Thy servant is he. And the king said, Is there not yet any of the house of Saul, that I may shew the kindness of God unto him?"

The kindness of God to him! Oh, how excellent is Thy lovingkindness! What a picture we have here! David is a beautiful type of Christ—his name means "beloved"; he is the son of Jesse, the son of "him who is"; but look, he wants the opportunity to bestow lovingkindness on his enemies! Oh, friend, look at it—how excellent His lovingkindness; beautiful picture of Christ—that He might spare His enemies, God would not spare His Son. "Is there not any of the house of Saul, is the house of Saul wiped out entirely, is there not another one on which I can bestow the kindness of God?"

Is there one in this room tonight upon which the kindness of God can be bestowed? God's kindness is bestowed upon His enemies. "Ye that were alienated and enemies in your minds by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled." Isn't that sweet? Here I am, and there you are, fellow-Christian, once enemies of His — but listen to this, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son (all the way from heaven, friend) sent His Son to be the propitiation — the mercy seat—for our sins." Christ is the place where God and sinners meet; and tonight the heart of God is still going out to His enemies, that He might bestow His kindness upon them.

David is told that there is one survivor; he is told that his name is Mephibosheth—shame coming out of the mouth. But he is also told that he is lame on both his feet. What a picture! Because when you turn back to the fourth chapter of the book, you find that that lameness is a result of a fall. A picture of you and me, friend.

“He saw me ruined in the fall,
Yet loved me notwithstanding all;
He saved me from my lost estate,
His loving kindness, oh how great!”

The message is conveyed to Mephibosheth; he is in Lodebar, which has a double meaning—he is in a place of “no pasture,” and “not a word.” That is the picture of the sinner—not a thing to say in defense of ourselves. “Now we know that what so ever things the law saith, it saith to those who are under the law, that EVERY mouth might be stopped and ALL THE WORLD become guilty before God.” But oh friend, Jesus receives guilty sinners! If you are here as such tonight, He will welcome you. Yes He will!

But listen, he goes even farther than that:

“When Mephibosheth . . . was come unto David he fell on his face and did reverence, and David said, Mephibosheth, and he answered, Behold thy servant.”

“David said to him, Fear not, for I will surely show thee kindness for Jonathan, thy father’s sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father; and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually.”

Oh, how sweet—“Thou shalt eat bread at my table continually.” Mephibosheth bows himself—that is too much. “What is thy servant that thou

shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?" What is a dead dog? It speaks of impotence, helplessness, corruption — all that goes with it. Mephibosheth takes his place, but all the decrees of David must be carried out—the kindness of God must be carried out. My friend, "Oh, how excellent is Thy lovingkindness; therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Thy wings."

Well, it is a beautiful picture, beloved, of the story of that hymn we sing so often:

"Sinners Jesus will receive,
Sound this word of grace to all,
Who the heavenly pathway leave,
All who linger, all who fall."

Is there one such here tonight? Are you willing to confess yourself a "dead dog"? Are you? Let's turn over to the New Testament and see the advantage of it. Mark chapter 7, beginning with the 25th verse:

"For a certain woman, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of Him, and came and fell at His feet; the woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by nation; and she besought Him that He would cast forth the devil out of her daughter.

"But Jesus said unto her, Let the children first be filled; for it is not meet to take children's bread, and to cast it unto the dogs.

"And she answered and said unto Him, Yes, Lord; yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs."

I am willing to take the place of a dog to get the blessing my soul desires. My daughter is possessed with a devil. What a sad plight she was

in ! But this woman comes in faith ; if it was not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to the dogs, she will take the place of a dog and say the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs ! He said to her :

“For this saying go thy way, the devil is gone out of thy daughter. And when she was come to her house, she found the devil gone out, and her daughter laid upon the bed.”

Oh, but she might have stopped and reasoned—“I have just left home a little while ago—and she was overpowered by the devil ; I want you to come and do something.” That would have been quite like the human heart ; people like to see some display ; they are not willing for just the word itself to have its way, its effect. “Go thy way, the devil is gone out of thy daughter.” She goes her way, and when she was come to the house, she found the devil gone out and her daughter laid upon the bed.

Friend, will you acknowledge your true condition before Him ? Oh, the excellencies of Christ—all that He is, all that He has done, is yours for faith's acceptance. Do you want some visible sign ; do you want some manifestation of power ? She might have turned away ; but no, she didn't—she believed the word that He had spoken. So, my friend, salvation is yours, will be yours tonight through faith in the word of God. Is there not one to show the kindness of God to ? “How excellent is Thy lovingkindness ; therefore the children of men put their trust in the shadow of Thy wings.”

Just another verse or two in closing—Psalm 40 verse 11:

“Withhold not Thou Thy tender mercies from me,
O Lord; let Thy loving kindness and Thy truth
continually preserve me.”

In the 63rd Psalm, verse 1:

“O God, Thou art my God.”

Can you say that? It is grand to be able to say it !

“O God, Thou art my God; early will I seek Thee.”

“My soul thirsteth for Thee, my flesh longeth for Thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; to see Thy power and Thy glory, so as I have seen Thee in the sanctuary.

“Because Thy loving kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise Thee.”

The excellencies of excellencies of His Person; the excellencies of His work; the excellencies of the value of His blood that are made yours and mine through faith in Him !

Divine Intervention

(Continued)

DARKNESS

“And the Lord said unto Moses, stretch out thine hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, even darkness which may be felt.

“And Moses stretched forth his hand toward heaven: and there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days:

“They saw not one another, neither rose any

from his place for three days: BUT ALL THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL HAD LIGHT IN THEIR DWELLINGS," (Exodus 10:21-23).

Egypt is not unaccustomed to wind and sand storms and comparative darkness, more severe at one time than another, but this was a direct visitation of God.

During severe storms, "the inhabitants of the cities and villages shut themselves up in the lowest apartments of their houses and cellars; but the inhabitants of the desert go into their tents, or into the holes which they have dug in the ground. There they await, full of anxiety, the termination of this kind of tempest, which generally lasts three days. The roads during this time are entirely vacant, and deep stillness, as of the night, reigns everywhere." (Hartmann)

Du Bois Ayme says, "When the chamsin blows, the sun is pale yellow, its light is obscured, and the darkness is sometimes so great, that one seems to be in the blackest night, as we experienced in the middle of the day at Cene, a city of Said."

Denon writes, "On the eighteenth of May, in the evening, I felt as if I should perish from the suffocating heat. All motion of the air seemed to have ceased. As I went to the Nile to bathe, for the relief of my painful sensations, I was astonished by a new sight. Such light and such colours I had never seen. The sun, without being veiled with clouds, had been shorn of its beams. It gave only a white and shadowless light, more feeble than the moon. The water reflected not its rays, and

appeared disturbed. Everything assumed another appearance; the air was darker, a yellow horizon caused the trees to appear of a pale blue. Flocks of birds fluttered about before the clouds. The frightened animals ran about in the fields, and the inhabitants, who followed them with their cries, could not collect them. The wind, which had raised immense clouds of dust, and rolled them along before itself, had not yet reached us. We thought that if we went into the water, which at this moment was quiet, we should avoid this mass of dust which was driven towards us from the south-west; but we were scarcely in the river, when it began suddenly to swell as if it would overflow its banks. The waves broke over us, and the ground heaved under our feet. Our garments fled away when seized by the whirlwind which had now reached us. We were compelled to go to land. Wet and beaten by the wind, we were soon surrounded by a ridge of sand. A reddish dusky appearance filled the region; with wounded eyes, and nose so filled that we could hardly breathe, we strayed from one another, lost our way, and found our dwellings with great difficulty, feeling along by the walls. Then we sensibly felt how terrible the condition must be when one is overtaken by such a wind in the desert. On the following morning the same cloud of dust was driven in like circumstances, along the Libyan desert. It followed the mountain range, and when we believed ourselves free from it, the west wind

turned it back. Lightnings shot feebly through these dark clouds, all the elements appeared to be in commotion: the rain mingled with the lightning gleams, with wind and dust; everything seemed to be returning to chaos and old night."

"Other writers speak of the darkness as so appalling, that men not accustomed to it thought the last day had arrived.

"These, of course, were from natural causes, and were more severe at one time than another; whereas the plague was by direct visitation of God. It must have been made all the more appalling by the fact that the same God, Who was thus punishing the Egyptians, was giving light to His own people close by. A guilty conscience, too, dreads the darkness, not simply because of the darkness, but for the fear of what may happen during its continuance. What had now become of their god Ra, the sun? Jehovah had completely hidden him from their sight."*

"The heavenly bodies, so widely worshipped in Egypt, had hitherto not been dealt with by the plagues sent upon the land. The ninth plague, the completion of the number so important in connection with their deities, was to obliterate the host of heaven from the sight of their worshippers, and to put a stop to the chief religious ceremonies of the country. The temples were orientated to the sun, the moon, or to a special star, and their deities were connected with different

* "Egypt as seen in Scripture and on the Monuments."

heavenly bodies. The highest point of the religious ceremony in honour of the celestial deity, or personified orb, occurred at the moment when the particular heavenly body to which the temple was orientated, cast its first bright beam between the double rows of sphinxes and obelisks, through the great gateways and the inner entrances and their doors, and right into the narrowed recess at the extreme end of the building, where, in the sanctuary, the image of the emblem of the god was placed. At that moment, which occurred but on rare occasions during the year, the image shone brilliantly for some two minutes in the sun or star beam. All around was in deep shadow, and the incident of the shining of the image was called the 'manifestation' of the god. This was the supreme moment. Forth streamed the procession in honour of the deity, crowds of priests with their varied vestments and offices poured forth, incense-bearers, banner-carriers, uplifters of sacred emblems, supporters of shrines, musicians and singers, a throng of thousands, all combining to create a show of unrivalled religious pomp.

"In sun worship various deities were represented: for example, at the time of the plagues, in its rising the sun was called Horus, on the horizon; in its light and heat, giving life and animation to the universe, it was called Ra; in its setting, it was called Tum. 'I am Khopri in the morning, Ra at noon, Tumu in the evening' was the declaration of the god of his titles, according to the legend.

“The system of the Egyptian religion did not permit of any deity retaining its precise character through many human generations; there was a continuous evolutionary process at work, adding to and modifying, and changing the nature of the deity. Tum originally had no representation, that first known of him is merely the general idea of a god without an emblem, and this fact indicates clearly that ‘the hidden god’ had at one time a sound and definite signification. ‘The hidden god’ without a representation, being the most ancient of the Egyptian deities, points to days anterior to idolatry, but as hundreds of years elapsed, and the time of the Exodus approached, ‘the hidden god’ had assumed a variety of forms in many temples.

(To be continued, DV.)

The Purpose of God in the Old Testament

(Continued)

The name of “Zipporah” brings into evidence another proof that the grace of God could not be bound within the narrow limits of God’s chosen people, for the bearer of the name, we are told (Exodus 2:16), was the daughter of the priest of Midian and she became the wife of Moses while he was estranged from his brethren.

A writer has pointed out the difference between the two servants of Jehovah, Joseph and Moses, that in the case of Joseph there is pronounced enmity by his brethren against his person, for we

read, "They hated him, and could not speak peaceably to him" (Genesis 37:4), while, with Moses their taunt was "who made THEE like a prince and a judge over us?" Joseph was HATED by his brethren and Moses was REFUSED. Both were true of the great Antitype, for our Lord said to His disciples; "They hated Me without a cause" (John 15:25), and in the parables of the vineyard (Luke 20:9-18) where our Lord sets forth His position in relation to Israel we read, (verse 14) "When the husband-men saw Him, they reasoned among themselves saying, 'This is the HEIR: come, let us kill Him, that the inheritance may be ours.'"

As a type of Christ, Moses was separated from his brethren; he came to his own and they refused him (see Exodus 2:11-14). Stephen makes mention of this in his defense before the high priest of Israel (Acts 7:20-29). "He called his son 'Gershom' (viz: a stranger there) and adds 'I have sojourned in a strange land.' " The writer then adds an interesting note, viz: "Jethro presents to us the Gentiles among whom Christ and His glory were driven when He was rejected by the Jews."

This is the fourth "stranger" we would refer to, a stranger and a Midian we learn from Scripture, who, when Israel came up out of Egypt, though a priest of Midian, exercised priestly service in the presence of Aaron and was the one to give counsel to Moses and did priestly service in the presence of Moses and Aaron (Exodus 18:12).

Then too, there is an important difference between the bride of Joseph (Asenath), and the bride

of Moses (Zipporah), and these differences serve to give us the two fold position of the CHURCH in relation to our Lord.

Asenath became the bride of Joseph at the moment of his exaltation to power and glory, while Zipporah was a sharer with Moses in the path of desert loneliness (see Genesis 41:41-45 and Exodus 2:15; 3:1).

In whatever way we view our blessed Lord, whether it be in His exaltation (as Joseph) or, as unknown and unwanted, as was Moses at the time of his union with Zipporah, the assembly — the bride, is intimately linked with our Lord Jesus Christ.

Another* has said: "There is a difference between the type (Moses) and that of Joseph. The last named takes the position as being put into the pit (Genesis 37:24) of death but delivered out of it and exalted, so Jesus raised to the right hand of God takes the supreme throne, over the Gentiles, and in the end receiving his brethren from whom he had been separated. His children are to him a testimony of his blessing at that time. He called them Manasseh, 'because God', says he, 'hath made me to forget all the house of my father' and Ephraim 'because God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction.' "

*J. N. D.

—J. W. H. N.

Difficult Days

*"This know also, that in the last days
perilous (difficult) times shall come."*

—2 Tim. 3, 1.

Days of pressure for God's children,
Days of deep distress;
In a world of tribulation,
Where they find no rest.
Faster flows the tide of evil,
Sweeping men along:
Find we yet a firm foundation?
How can we be strong?

In a day of grave upheaval,
Conflict all around,
Comes a Voice above the tumult—
"Here thy help is found."
Upward fix the gaze on Jesus,
Our Forerunner He.
Love, that trod this way before us,
Doth the peril see.

'Tis to faith He gives the promise
(Nature cannot stand),
"Do the floodgates open near thee?
I will hold thy hand;
As thy day shall strength be given,
Trust thyself to Me."
Yea, Lord, we would fully trust Thee,
Thy salvation see;

Safely Thou dost keep Thy tried ones
In their hour of need,
This is strength indeed. —J. W.

The Grace of God

AN ADDRESS BY SAMUEL RIDOUT DELIVERED
AT BALTIMORE, MD, SUNDAY, JUNE 12, 1928.

“Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work, to speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness to all men. For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; That being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men” Titus 3:1-8).

It is very striking that in this epistle to Titus we have enshrined the two very beautiful messages given in connection with the very prosaic duties of life on the one hand, and the relation of Christians to their rulers, on the other. But these things, excellent in themselves, are not salvation.

Salvation is not in being a good servant, nor in being a good citizen, obedient to the law of the land. Those are fruits, but the power that produces the fruit is seen in the blessed gospel of God. What we have here sets before us in a full and striking way, first of all, our condition and need, and then the way in which that condition and need have been met. As in a jeweller's shop, jewels are laid on black velvet to bring out their lustre, so the blessed grace of God is here contrasted to all that we were by nature. Here are all the elements that go to make up the condition of the natural man. There is not an exemption in this company tonight, for "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Sometimes people say, I have a good heart, you know. But it is better to take God's word for it. Scripture says, "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool," and it also says, "Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him." Here we have a six-fold testimony as to the heart and mind of natural man. He includes himself, the apostle does, and if they had whereof he might trust in the flesh, Paul says, I more. He tells us how he was born of a religious family and then about all the circumstances connected with his early training, "circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless." But he includes himself in this six-fold arraignment.

Six is the number of man. Six is close to seven, the number of perfection, but doesn't get that far. Man is always striving after perfection and he thinks he has almost reached it. Alas, his six elements are but elements of evil and that is what God marks for us here. I am not going to dwell upon them at great length, but just look at them one by one, finding illustrations of each in God's perfect word.

The first one—"We ourselves also were sometime foolish." The natural man is foolish. The foolishness the word of God describes is senseless, without true wisdom. God says, "O that they were wise . . . that they would consider their latter end." What is true wisdom? "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Wisdom then consists of consideration of the future. "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." *No God!* A great deal is said today about progress, invention, etc. Man lays his hand upon earth, air and sea; he seems to be widening his dominion over all nature. Yet he leaves God out and where God is left out, everything will come to nothing. "The fool hath said in his heart." What a multitude of thoughtless, foolish people there are in the world. Our blessed Lord gives an illustration of this in that solemn and terrible picture of a successful business man, who had made such a success of farming that his barns could not contain their treasures. "What shall I do?"—"I will pull down my barns and build greater; and there I will bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul,

Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry." Wise provision for the future, is what people would say. Many another man who has a good salary, spends it as he makes it, but this man has a provision for a long, happy, leisurely old age. "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee; then whose shall those things be, which thou has provided?" The first indictment in God's arraignment of what man is, is that he is a *fool*. So is every one who lives for the present and is not rich towards God.

In close connection with folly is disobedience: "We ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient." A man who leaves God out, of course, isn't exercised as to obeying Him. But whose creatures are we? By what right are we living here, and for whom are we living? The description of our life is given here in that one word, "disobedient." This world is a sad world. On every hand, behold wretchedness! the brevity of life and how man goes down into the valley of the shadow and, worst of all, the absence of any hope. What made it a sad world? It didn't come so from God's hands. As He says in Isaiah, "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth"—the heavens and the earth are marked by subjection to Him Who brought them into being. Were those heavens released from subjection to the power that held them in place, they would rush together into chaos inconceivable. He calls to the whole heaven to witness against the one whom He has placed at the head of His creation — "I have nourished and

brought up children, and they have rebelled against me." All this misery came from one act of disobedience. We are told only one fact about the fruit of the tree of the tree of knowledge of good and evil in the garden of Eden, and that is that it was forbidden. Satan had promised that if they ate they should "be as gods, knowing good and evil." Knowledge of good they gained, alas! but by losing it and knowledge of evil by coming under its power.

Someone says, Yes, I quite admit I have been disobedient, but I have been deceived. So was Eve, but that didn't excuse her. Deception comes as a result of disobedience. First, foolish, then disobedient, *then* deceived. Of course, "the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not." "If our gospel be hid," says the apostle, in that connection, "it is hid to them that are lost," to those who have refused to bow to God.

Next we have the result of that. Man leaves God out of his life. See him disobedient and blinded by Satan and sin. He is living for himself. Look at the downward course. "Serving divers lusts and pleasures." One gets drunk. Another detests that sort of thing, but likes to enjoy himself in a little harmless pleasure. Another loves money for its own sake. Another likes it that he may squander it on one lust or another. You notice it isn't just one evil propensity; it is "serving *divers* lusts and pleasures." Notice, too, *self* is the object.

Then, "living in malice and envy." In every

one who doesn't serve Him there is malice and envy. How they grow out! People look at someone else, as did Haman, to whom Mordecai would not bow in the gate, and out flow the malice and envy. Haman's glory and power would not satisfy him unless Mordecai and his race perished. How all these link together! It isn't pleasant, nothing to fill the heart with complacency, but it is God's faithful delineation of every one born of Adam. "Foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another." There it is, the dark background.

But He doesn't give it to us in order to fill our hearts with hopeless despair, to drive us from Him. He shows what we are in order that He might bring out upon that dark background the lustre of a love no words of ours could describe. Have you learned the plague of your own heart? Have you learned to say, "I know that in me dwelleth no good thing"? That is what the cross of Christ declares; that is what His holy word reveals. There is the picture and on that background God brings out the blessed gospel of His grace. If I had been preaching man's gospel here, I would have said, Well, you have a hard proposition to handle here, a very difficult case. I would advise you to take up these things, one by one, and try to overcome them. See if you can't improve. You are hating somebody. Give up your grudge; try to love him; do your best and then, if you are envious, change your thoughts and feelings; and

if you have been indulging too much, try to curb your appetite; get a little mastery over yourself! That is man's poor, empty gospel. I used to live in——. When I go back I see marvelous changes. There is much attention paid to education here, indeed, that is true of the whole country, and people say: Tell *us* we haven't improved: look at those schools! But what are they teaching in those schools. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom"? Is that what they teach there? You have only to scratch beneath the surface in all of them to see God is left out, leaving men just as God has described them, educated, cultured men, it is true, but still "foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another." Education leaves the heart unchanged, hateful to God and man. What must be the end of all that which is man's gospel? What is God's gospel? He shows on the dark background of what man is the matchless jewel of His infinite love. What verdict would *we* pronounce after such an arraignment? *Guilty!* Destroy him from the earth, it is not fit that he should live, shut him up at least in the prison house of despair; give him up to inexorable judgment! That is what *man* would say. "*But* after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour towards man appeared." What poor, wretched man needs is the application of what God has revealed Himself to be in the gospel. Who but God could do that? Who but God could show kindness like that? You remember the beautiful

account of Mephibosheth, which just illustrates our subject. If ever there was anyone whose heart was filled with malice and envy, it was Saul, for even as Jonathan loved David as his own soul, so Saul hated him. And David asked, "Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness for Jonathan's sake?" Not for David's sake, but for Jonathan's sake. Then he goes on to speak of it as the kindness of God, "that I may show the kindness of God unto him?" He finds Mephibosheth at a distance, a cripple on both feet. He will never make a wise statesman; he will only be a cumberer of the king's bounty, and David says, If I were to get any benefit from him, it would be to my advantage to have him, but with those lame feet which cannot even hobble in my presence, much less fight my battles, he can only have connected with him one truth: There is a man who is a trophy of kindness. Beloved, here are those who are the trophies of the kindness of God! Kindness of God laid upon the hatred of men. Mephibosheth means "shame from the lips." It is as though he had to blush with shame whenever he spoke of himself. It suggested that repentance of sin, owning it and turning from it, implied in the publican's confession, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Where evil is brought out in all its hideous character, there shines His kindness and that kindness has all the stamp of eternity, as we have it in Ephesians, "that in the ages to come He might shew the exceeding

riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Jesus Christ."

The next word is philanthropy. The "love of God" is really the philanthropy of God, our Saviour. Mention philanthropy and you will be shown certain splendid institutions established by men of wealth. That is all very nice, but what is the philanthropy of God? I will give you the great philanthropic verse, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." That is philanthropy, the love of God towards men. Then there is another thing, the "love of God our Saviour." God is judge of all, God is righteous and holy and His every attribute must be maintained. He cannot deny Himself. Yet here we have put side by side with man in all the wretchedness of his fallen nature, the philanthropy of God! He is a Saviour God. Have you turned to this Saviour God in this, the day of His grace? How has He shown His character as Saviour God? What is the means by which He has effected blessing? God has not saved us by means of anything we have done. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us." Why? Because it would make heaven a praise for us instead of praise for our Saviour God. What could we do? Have you ever tried to do anything of righteousness and let the Spirit of God bring out the true character? What is the motive of all that? Self, living for self. Well, but that is the very essence of sin. How can living for

self ever produce anything for God? So it isn't by works of righteousness, "not the labour of my hands can fulfill the law's demands;" it isn't by works of righteousness, but "according to His mercy He saved us." Not He helped us, not He pointed us the way, not He showed me what to do, but "*according to His mercy He saved us.*" Therefore, "salvation is of the Lord." Jonah was brought into deliverance when he owned his helplessness and said, "Salvation is of the Lord." When the children of Israel came to the Red Sea and looked with utter despair upon the expanse before them and the enemy close behind, the word came to them, "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." So he says, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us."

What is God's method in this blessed work of salvation? We are told in the next part. "By the washing of regeneration, and by renewing of the Holy Ghost, which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour." You remember how our Lord said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Not an improved old man, not a sinner reformed and built up, but a *new man*, a life which has a new nature, growing out of the blessed ministry of God's Holy Spirit in the soul, "the washing of regeneration" of the Holy Ghost. And there is no stinting, but pouring out richly. God then works through His Holy Spirit and by the instrumentality of His Word, which the

Spirit ever uses, too, and the works in the production of a new life and gives to the new life new desires and affections, so that it is said, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature," the cross setting aside all that we were.

What comes next is the climax, the centre of the whole blessed gospel here. "The washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour." You will never in the Bible get far from the Son of God. "Shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour." A little while ago we were speaking of the "kindness and love of God our Saviour." Are there two Saviours? Beloved, they merge into one blessed Person. They reveal our Saviour as none other than God and show us how our God in all the fullness of glory is centered for us in the person of His beloved Son, Jesus Christ. So we have God our Saviour, Jesus Christ our Saviour as the one central blessed fact, all the fullness of the Godhead dwelling in Him, "by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself." Let us dwell on it a moment. Jesus Christ. "Thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins." Jesus Christ the Saviour. Jehovah the Saviour. He is the Christ. As Jesus Christ the blessed, holy Man; "He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross." Think of Him, the Babe in the manger, the "Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief," pouring out His soul in agony in the garden, then bearing His cross and led to a place called

Calvary, then nailed to the cross, the holy Man, Christ Jesus; hear His cry, "Why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Jesus, that blessed One. He was there on the cross to do the work of redemption, and God has now made Him Christ, the anointed One. Now, He is proclaimed Saviour, manifested in all His resurrection glory, seated there at the right hand of God, the One in Whom His holy heart has found eternal rest for the whole creation. Jesus tells of His perfect manhood. Christ tells of His glory on high, and Saviour tells us He is the Saviour God. Dwell on these three words. I have six things to say of myself, but three things, the divine perfections, to speak of another, *Jesus—Christ—Saviour*. How blessed! What a blessed remedy for all the wrack and ruin that sin has brought in is Jesus Christ our Saviour!

"That being justified by His grace." We have that enlarged upon in another verse in Romans. "Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Justified means not merely pardoned, but accepted before God in all the value of that which was not our own. Not by what we have merited but freely by His grace. Oh, what glorious redemption there is in Christ Jesus! "Therefore being justified by faith." Will you trust Him freely by His grace? He is offered to you; He says, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." Beloved, come, and welcome!

One last word completes the picture of grace. What a journey we have taken and where do

we start! "That being justified by His grace we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." How rich we are, rich with an endowment that isn't ours naturally. "Heirs with God and joint heirs with Christ." I suppose the prodigal (it was a name he had earned but he got another) thought he had a wonderful endowment. Man has wonderful gifts. He is a person with magnificent abilities, but the prodigal squandered all his endowment, and when he went back he had nothing but sin to tell his father. "Only sin to Him I brought; Only love in Him I found." But he had the Father's arms around him. He got a ring, a robe and shoes on his feet. He never got another endowment to squander. Thank God for that! Never again to waste an endowment in his sin and folly, but he has the Father's care. Suppose the Father said tonight: "I will send you forth with all your life to live over again." No, Father, oh, no. The kiss, the robe, the ring, Thy fellowship are far better to me than all this. Beloved, may this be the language of our hearts! He has given us more than that, a hope sustaining us, leading us on from the present, this brief life here, to the everlasting days over yonder. The horizon is enlarged to reach beyond the present life, beyond death, the few years we are here into the boundless future before every human creature. The hope of what? Eternal life. Eternal life is a present gift. "The gift of God is eternal life." Our hope is of what that eternal life will show or give to us in all its wonderful possibilities of

fellowship with the Father and with the Son. To be with Him never sullied by one thought of sin, *with* Him eternally on high! What a journey! And where did we start? Right where we are. So He asks you tonight, Will you let Me make a beginning with you?

Divine Intervention

(Continued)

“The sun in its varied characters was the mysterious and incomprehensible being to whom Egypt paid highest religious honour.

“Earth’s earliest idolatry arose out of the exaltation of the glories and movements of the heavenly orbs, and to our own day the greater part of mankind gives these bodies homage, or offers them direct worship. Israel in its day fell into the sin of turning to the east, and forfeited in consequence the glory-cloud of Jehovah’s presence. The plague of God-sent darkness over the land, for three days and nights, blotted out the host of heaven from the sight of the worshippers, and put a stop upon the services of the temples, and we may assume, that at the time of its occurrence some grand ceremony in honour of the celestial bodies was about to take place.

“At the bidding of Jehovah, and without a word of warning, Moses stretched forth his hand towards heaven, and at once a darkness that could be felt chained every Egyptian to his place. None moved; all were bound, as it were, in a prison of outer

gloom. For three days and nights, though the sun shone on high, and the moon and the stars gave forth their light, no ray penetrated the shroud that was swathed about Egypt. The darkness was the prelude to the coming death.

“This sign of divine displeasure ended where the Egyptians dwelt. There the line of demarcation was drawn by God’s omnipotent hand; the Hebrews had light in their dwellings. The divine intention in this must have been apparent to all. On the one hand there was darkness which was about to end in death, on the other there was light which was the prelude to life and liberty. God describes His people as the children of light, and those who are not, as of darkness. There was no shading off between the darkness and the light in the plague. And as it was, so it is, there is no twilight, and all are, therefore, shut up to the one or the other—to living in the light, or to living in the darkness.

“Divine judgments do not soften the human heart. Pharaoh called for Moses and said, ‘Go ye; serve Jehovah. Only let your flocks and your herds be stayed.’ But upon these terms being rejected he was enraged. He dwelt in the darkness, and was as dark as it. Even in earthly things, evil men do not become converted to that which is good and lovely by a term of imprisonment. Pharaoh remained unchanged. He would not humble himself. He had developed impiety upon impiety, and, though he fain would have spared him-

self further suffering, he was determined in his resistance to the divine word, and only said to Moses, 'Get thee from me; take heed to thyself; see my face no more, for in that day thou seest my face thou shalt die.'

"It will be well at this point to notice the process of heart-hardening which Scripture applies to Pharaoh. There are three words used in the Hebrew, which are rendered 'harden' in relation to the king. Seven times it is said, 'He hardeneth his own heart,' or 'His heart hardened itself' (chap. 7:13—where it should read, 'Pharaoh's heart resisted'—and vers. 14, 22; chap. 8:15, 19, 32; and chap. 9:7). After this sevenfold obduracy, and not till then, is it said, 'The Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart.' This is said four times (chap. 9:12, 34, 35; and 10:1), and on the last occasion the hearts of Pharaoh's servants are included in the judgment. It has been pointed out in this chapter how Pharaoh's court intervened when the locusts were threatened; they would not, however, yield to Jehovah, they preferred the favour of Pharaoh, so that this hardening of their hearts on that occasion is very striking. A definite and wilful obduracy is stamped upon Pharaoh's spirit, and a determined rejection of the divine warnings, becoming deeper and deeper with sevenfold intensity; after that climax he and his court, which also rejected God, were delivered over to their doom.**

(To be continued, D. V.)

** "Light from the Land of the Sphinx"

Short Papers on Church History

(Continued)

THE DAY OF PENTECOST FULLY COME

The Jewish feast of Pentecost may be called the birthday of the Christian Church. Fifty days after our Lord's resurrection the Church was formed — its history commenced. The Old Testament saints form no part of the New Testament Church. It had no existence in fact until the day of Pentecost.

All saints, from the beginning, have the same eternal life, they are the children of the same God and Father, and the same Heaven will be their home for ever; but the Old Testament saints belong to another dispensation, or to the different dispensations which ran their course before Christ came. Each dispensation has its own rise, progress, decline, and fall in Scripture; and will have its own reflection in Heaven. Neither persons nor dispensations will be undistinguished there. Hence the apostle in Hebrews 2, when speaking of the ancient worthies, says, "And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." Surely if God has provided a *better thing* for us, it must also be a *different thing*. Besides, our Lord, in Matthew 16, says, "On this rock I will build My Church." And at the same time, He gave the keys to Peter to open the doors of the new dispensation. *Then*, He had not begun to build His Church, and the doors of the Kingdom

were not opened. But the difference between the *old* and the *new* will be more distinctly seen when we speak of the great events of the day of Pentecost. We begin with the types of Leviticus, chapter 23.

The children of Israel were commanded to bring a sheaf of the first fruits of their harvest to the priest, that he might wave it before the Lord, to be accepted for them. This rite, we believe, shadowed forth our Lord's resurrection on the morning after the Jewish Sabbath, and the Christian's acceptance before God in the risen Christ. "Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then, ye shall bring a sheaf of the first fruits of your harvest unto the priest; and he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it" (see Matt. 28 and Mark 16).

Seven full weeks after the waving of the sheaf, the Feast of Pentecost was celebrated. The former was reckoned to be the first day of the harvest in Judea; the latter supposed the corn to be fully gathered in. Then they had a solemn festival of thanksgiving for "harvest home." Two loaves of bread, baked with the flour of new harvest characterised this festival. They were to be baked with *leaven*, and brought *out* of their habitations. Be this as it may, the *number* is significant. Two witnesses were necessary for a testimonial in Israel. The two loaves are adequate testimony of

the coming harvest. The leaven indicates, we doubt not, indwelling sin in the believer, and, of course, in the Church, viewed in its time condition.

With the wave sheaf—beautiful type of the risen Christ, pure and holy—sacrifices of a sweet savour were offered; but no sacrifice for sin. With the two wave loaves—types of those who are Christ's—a sin-offering was presented. Sin, being there, a sin-offering was needed to cover it. Though the one perfect sacrifice of Christ answered to God for both indwelling sin, and the many actual sins of the life; still, as a matter of fact and experience sin dwells in us, and will do so as long as we are in this world. All acknowledge this, though all may not see the completeness of the work of Christ. "The Christian has by one offering been perfected for ever, though he may humble himself and make confession to God for every failure."

The typical significance of Pentecost was remarkably fulfilled in the descent of the Holy Ghost. He came down to gather together the children of God that were scattered abroad (John 11:52). By this great event, the system of Judaism was set aside, and the new vessel of testimony—the Church of God — was introduced, though not fully understood till later. And now, observe the order of events. First,

THE RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION OF CHRIST

Incarnation, Crucifixion, Resurrection, are the great foundation truths, or facts, of the Church—of Christianity. Incarnation was necessary to cruci-

fixion, and both to resurrection. It is blessedly true that Christ died on the Cross for our sins; but it is equally true that the believer died in His death (see Rom. 6; Col. 2). The Christian's life is life in resurrection. The Church is built on the risen Christ. No truths can be more blessed and wonderful than incarnation and crucifixion; but the Church is associated with Him Who is risen and glorified.

In Acts 1 we have that which is connected with the Lord's resurrection and ascension; and also with the actions of the apostles before the descent of the Holy Ghost. The blessed Lord, though in resurrection, still speaks and acts by the Holy Ghost. It was "through the Holy Ghost" that He gave commandments unto the apostles whom He had chosen. This is worthy of special note as teaching us two things:

1. The character of our union with Christ; the Holy Ghost in the Christian, and in the risen Lord, joins them together. "He that is joined unto the Lord is one Spirit." By the "one Spirit" they are united.

2. This important fact points out the blessed truth of the Holy Ghost dwelling and acting in the Christian also after he is actually in resurrection. Then He will not—as He has now—have the flesh in us to contend against, but will, ungrieved and unhindered, lead us on to the full joys of Heaven—the happy worship, the blessed service, and the whole will of God.

The risen Lord next exhorts the apostles to wait

in Jerusalem for "the promise of the Father, which, saith He, ye have heard of Me." "For John truly baptised with water, but ye shall be baptised with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." It is no longer a question of temporal promises to Israel; that field must be left till a future day. The Father's promise of the Holy Ghost was an entirely different thing, and widely different in its results.

Several things "pertaining to the Kingdom of God" having been spoken of between the Lord and His apostles, He ascends to Heaven, and a cloud receives Him out of their sight. The Lord's return is also most plainly and distinctly taught at the same time. "And when He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly towards Heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into Heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into Heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into Heaven." It is quite evident from these words, that He ascended *personally, visibly, bodily*, and that He shall so come again in like manner—that He will again appear beneath the heavens, and be manifested to people on the earth, personally, visibly, and bodily, but then it will be in power and great glory.

The apostles and disciples had now learnt two things:

1. That Jesus was taken up out of this world

into Heaven.

2. That He was coming back again into this world. On these two great facts their testimony was founded. But Jerusalem was to be the starting point of their ministry, and they were to wait for power from above.

We now come to the second great event, important beyond all others, with respect to man's condition in this world—the gift of the Holy Ghost. Now, it is to be, not only God *for* us, but God in *us*. This took place on the day of Pentecost.—A. M.

(To be continued, D. V.)

Faith

I will not doubt, though all my ships at sea
Come drifting home with broken masts and sails;
I will believe the hand which never fails,
For seeming evil worketh good for me:
And though I weep because those sails are tattered,
Still I cry, while my best hopes lie shattered,
“I trust in Thee.”

I will not doubt, though all my prayers return
Unanswered from the still, white realm above;
I will believe it is an all-wise love
Which has refused these things for which I yearn;
And though at times I cannot keep from grieving,
Yet the pure ardor of my fixed believing
Undimmed shall burn. —Sel.

Gleanings

GOD BEHIND THE SCENES

God's ways are behind the scenes; but He moves all the scenes which He is behind. We have to learn this, and let Him work, and not think much

of man's busy movements: they will accomplish God's. The rest of them all perish and disappear. We have only peacefully to do His will.—J. N. D.

CARES AND PRAYERS

Learn to entwine with your prayers the small cares, the trifling sorrows, the little wants of daily life. Whatever affects you—be it a changed look, an altered tone, an unkind word, a wrong, a wound, a demand you cannot meet, a sorrow you cannot disclose—turn it into prayer, and send it up to God. Disclosures you may not make to man you can take to the Lord. Men may be too little for your great matters; God is not too great for your small ones. Only give yourself to prayer, whatever be the occasion that calls for it.—Selected.

FAITH IN GOD

There is always strength in looking to God, but if the mind rests upon the weakness otherwise than to cast it upon God, it becomes unbelief. Difficulties may arise, God may allow many things to come in to prove our weakness, but the simple path of faith is to go on not looking beforehand at what we have to do, but reckoning upon the help that we shall need and find when the time arrives. It was no matter to David whether it was the lion, the bear, or this giant of the Philistines; it was all one to him, for in himself he was as weak in the presence of one as in the other, but he went on quietly doing his duty, taking it for granted that God would be with him. *This is faith.*—J. N. D.

“Discouraged Because of The Way”

Numbers 21:4

Pilgrim of earth, who art journeying to heaven
Heir of eternal life! child of the day!
Cared for, watched over, beloved and forgiven,
Art thou discouraged, because of the way?

Cared for, watched over, though often thou seemest
Justly forsaken, nor counted a child;
Loved and forgiven—though rightly thou deemest
Thyself all unlovely, impure, and defiled.

Weary and thirsty—no water-brook near thee,
Press on, nor faint at the length of the way;
The God of thy life will assuredly hear thee,
He will provide thee with strength for the day.

Break through the brambles and briers that obstruct thee,
Dread not the gloom and the blackness of night,
Lean on the hand that will safely conduct thee,
Trust to His eye to whom darkness is light!

Be trustful, be steadfast, whatever betide thee,
Only one thing do thou ask of the Lord—
Grace to go forward wherever He guide thee,
Simply believing the truth of His word.

Still on thy spirit deep anguish is pressing—
Not for the yoke that His wisdom bestows,
A heavier burden thy soul is distressing—
A heart that is slow in His love to repose.

Earthliness, coldness, unthankful behavior—
Ah! thou may'st sorrow, but do not despair:
Even this grief thou may'st bring to thy Saviour;
Cast upon Him e'en this burden and care!

Bring all thy hardness: His power can subdue it:

How full is the promise! the blessing how free!

"Whatsoever ye ask in My name, I will do it";

"Abide in My love, and be joyful in Me."

—Sel.

Holiness

(Heb. 12:1-14)

Two things characterize the way of holiness. One is the attractiveness of Christ in glory, and of the purpose of God as set forth in Him, which puts us in the race and maintains us there, and the other is the chastening of the Lord, by which we are disciplined and freed from things which are not according to God's holiness. The first thing we need is to be assured that we are in the right path, and then it is a great cheer to know that whatever opposition comes in the way is discipline for us, and is "for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness."

A man does not run very fast when he is not quite sure that he is in the right road. He is apt to be looking aside or behind, and every unexpected obstacle raises a doubt in his mind. When you are sure you are in the right road, the more difficulties there are in it the more anxious you are to shorten the journey, so you run. The Spirit of God calls upon us to "run with endurance the race that is set before us." Many are glad enough to escape hell who are not at all anxious to get away from earth. They settle down and go to sleep instead of running.

Of course no one would run to a place he did not want to reach, but if we are partakers of the heavenly calling and know the Heavenly Priest our hearts are attracted to heaven; we have obtained links with heaven, and heaven is an attractive place to us, and to everyone whose affections are set upon Christ. This race is not, as some suppose, the race of life; it is a moral journey—a race from earth to heaven, and those who are in it have turned their faces to heaven, and they want to get morally away from the earth and nearer to heaven.

The first indication that one has entered upon this race is the discovery that certain things are a hindrance to us; we begin to feel the "weights." Some believers do not seem to have any weights; you never see them laying anything aside. The fact is, they have not made a start in the race. A man who was sitting still might have a heavy weight in his pocket without being conscious of it, but if he began to run he would soon feel it and want to lay it aside. The longer and faster you run the more sensitive you become to "weights."

There is a close affinity between "weights" and "sin," but still there are things which we could hardly speak of as "sin," which may be serious weights. For example, I could not say that to be on friendly terms with a half-hearted or worldly believer was exactly a sin, but it might become a heavy weight to any one who really wanted to get

on. So far as I have seen, companionship with undecided and half-hearted Christians is as spiritually injurious as friendship with unconverted people. "Go from the presence of a foolish man, when thou perceivest not in him the lips of knowledge." I have known many Christians who have discovered that a tobacco pipe was a "weight," and I have not yet met a believer who felt that he had been helped heavenward by reading the newspaper. Wordly literature is a heavy weight to many. There is nothing in it to attract the heart to Christ in glory; it drags the mind and heart down to the earth.

Then sin is to be laid aside. It is represented as a garment ever ready to entangle the feet. Sin is that which is contrary to the will of God, and if we allow it our feet are entangled, and we cannot run. This is a very solemn and practical thing. There must be decision of heart to part company with that which is not according to the will of God. It is sometimes said that things will "drop off," and this is made the excuse for a good deal of self-indulgence. They have to be "laid aside." Let me exhort my younger brethren to be uncompromising in this matter.

The Blessed One who is here presented to us as "the Author and Finisher of faith" could say, "I have set the Lord always before Me." (Psalm 16:-8.) He ever found His object and motive in God. He was here altogether for God—moving in absolute divine perfection over the whole course of faith, so that there is not a step in faith's path-

way which His feet have not trodden, and this at all cost to Himself. For not only did He endure the "contradiction of sinners against Himself" all through His course, but He did actually resist "unto blood striving against sin." Nothing could move Him from that path which,

"Uncheered by earthly smiles,
Led only to the cross."

He would give up His life, He would give up the earth, but He would not give up the will of God. His heart was glad, and His glory rejoiced, even in prospect of being cut off and having nothing here. For "the path of life" lay through death, and "fulness of joy" and "pleasures for evermore" were set before Him in resurrection. He gave up the earth where Jehovah had nothing, and His heart was set on that bright and blessed scene where everything reflected the glory of God. In view of this He endured the cross and despised the shame, and He is now set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

The "path of life" involves death here—it involves being nothing here. It is a very great thing to be so under the attraction of Christ and of the place where He is, that we are prepared to accept death here—prepared to become nothing here.

You may depend upon it that this is not an easy path for the flesh. Indeed, the word here translated "race" is generally rendered "conflict" or "fight." It is a path in which all kinds of opposition will be met. And let me say, for the sake

of young believers, that it is always the next step which seems most difficult. The enemy concentrates all his power at the point where the Spirit of God is seeking to lead you on. Satan's great object is to discourage us so that we may turn aside and be hindered in our spiritual progress. He will put darkness and difficulty around the next step, but if you press on you will find that three-fourths of the difficulties will melt away as you advance, and the remaining fourth will be turned by the grace of God into helpful discipline for you.

"Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take:

The clouds ye so much dread

Are big with mercies, and shall break

In blessings o'er your head."

—C.A.C.

Short Papers on Church History

(Continued)

THE DESCENT OF THE HOLY GHOST

The time was now fully come. Redemption was finished—God was glorified—Christ at His right hand in Heaven, and the Holy Ghost come down to earth. God inaugurates the Church; and this He does in a way suitable to His own wisdom, power, and glory. A mighty miracle is wrought, an outward sign is given. The great event is thus recorded:

Acts 2. "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from

Heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." It may be well here to pause for a moment and note a few things connected with the descent of the Holy Ghost and the display of His power on this important day.

There was, in the first place, the accomplishment of the Father's promise; the Holy Ghost Himself was sent down from Heaven. This was the great truth of Pentecost. He came from above to dwell in the Church—the place prepared for Him, by the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. There was also the fulfilment of the Word of the Lord to the apostles, "ye shall be baptised with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." Not that the disciples then knew the meaning of this word, but the fact was now accomplished. The full revelation of the doctrine of the "one body" awaited the ministrations of Paul; as he elsewhere says, "For by one Spirit are we all baptised into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit" (1 Cor. 12).

But further, besides the various gifts dispensed for the work of the Lord, we have something most blessedly personal, and quite new on the earth. The Holy Ghost Himself came down to dwell, not in the Church only, but also in each individual who

believed in the Lord Jesus. And this most blessed fact is as true to-day as it was then. He dwells now in every believer who rests on the finished work of Christ. The Lord had said, looking forward to this day, "For He dwelleth *with* you, and shall be *in* you" (—John 14:17).

These two grand aspects of the Spirit's presence were fully accomplished on the day of Pentecost. He came to dwell in each Christian and in the Church. And now, blessed truth, we know that God is not only *for* us, but *in* us, and *with* us.

When "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power," He appeared in the form of a dove—beautiful emblem of the immaculate purity, of the meekness and lowliness of Jesus. He was not to make His voice heard in the streets, or break the bruised reed, or quench the smoking flax. But in the case of the disciples who were waiting at Jerusalem, it was altogether different. He descended on them in cloven tongues—tongues of fire; and sat upon each of them. This was characteristic. It was the power of God in testimony—a testimony that was to go forth, not only to all Israel, but to all the nations of the earth. The Word of God was also to *judge* all that came before it—it was as *tongues of fire*. God's judgment on man because of sin had been judicially expressed in the Cross, and now the solemn fact is to be made known, far and wide, by the power of the Holy Ghost. Nevertheless, grace reigns—reigns through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Christ Jesus. Pardon is proclaimed

to the guilty, salvation to the lost, peace to the troubled, and rest to the weary. All that believe are, and ever shall be, blessed *in* and *with* a risen and glorified Christ.

The astonishment and consternation of the Sanhedrim and the Jewish people must have been great indeed, at the reappearance, in such power, of the followers of the crucified Jesus. They had doubtless concluded, that as the Master was now gone, the disciples could do nothing of themselves. For the most part, they were plain, uneducated men. But what must have been their amazement, when they heard that these plain men were preaching boldly in the streets of Jerusalem, and making converts by thousands to the religion of Jesus. Even historically viewed, the scene is full of the most thrilling interest, and has no parallel in the annals of time.

Jesus had been crucified; His claims to be the Messiah, in popular estimation, had been buried in His grave. The soldiers who guarded His sepulchre had been bribed to spread a false report as to His resurrection; the popular excitement had no doubt passed away, and the city, and temple worship, had returned to their former course, as if no great event had taken place. But on God's part, things were not to be thus quietly passed over. He was awaiting the appointed time to vindicate His Son, and to vindicate Him in the very scene of His humiliation. This took place early in the morning on the day of Pentecost. Suddenly, and unexpectedly, His scattered followers reappeared

in miraculous power. They boldly charged the rulers and the people with the guilt of His apprehension, trial, and crucifixion—that they had killed their own Messiah; but that God had raised Him up, to be a Prince and a Saviour, and to set Him at His own right hand in Heaven. “Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound” (Rom. 5:20).

The sentence of Babel was reversed on that wonderful day. In the different languages to which man had been doomed, in God’s just displeasure, salvation is proclaimed. This mighty, marvelous work of God attracts the multitude. They are amazed and speculate as to this strange thing. Each one, in the language of the country whence he came, hears from the lips of poor Galileans the wonderful works of God. The Jews who dwelt at Jerusalem, not understanding these foreign languages, mocked. Then Peter stood up, and declared to them in their own tongue, and proved from their own Scriptures the true character of what had taken place.

PETER’S FIRST APPEAL TO THE JEWS

Thus we read: “And there were dwelling at Jerusalem, Jews, devout men, out of *every nation* under Heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were

born? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pámphylia, in Egypt, and in parts of Libya about Cyrene and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues and wonderful works of God. And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this? Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine. But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: for these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day:" or, as we should reckon, nine in the morning — the hour of prayer in the temple.

Thus Peter takes the lead, and explains to the Jews that the wonderful things they had seen and heard that morning were not the result of excitement, but rather that which ought to have been looked for according to their own prophetic Scriptures. "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel." But mark the *ground* on which Peter stands and preaches with such boldness. He stands on the ground of the *resurrection* and *exaltation* of Christ. This is carefully to be noted, as showing the foundation on which the Church rests, and when and where her history commences. This was the first day of her existence, the first page of her history, and the first triumphs of God's ineffable gift to man. "This Jesus hath God raised

up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the Heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto My Lord, Sit thou on My right hand until I make Thy foes Thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."

We quote the words of another, on the blessed effects of Peter's first sermon, and of the presence of the Holy Ghost on the earth.

"It was not merely a moral change, but a power which set aside all the motives which individualised those who had received it, by uniting them as one soul, and in one mind. They continued steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine, they were in communion with each other, they broke bread, they spent their time in prayer, the sense of God's presence was powerful among them; and many signs and wonders were wrought by the hands of the apostles. They were united in the closest bonds; no man calling anything his own, but all divided their possessions with those that needed. They were daily in the temple, the public resort of Israel for religious exercises, whilst having their own apart, breaking bread at home daily. They ate with joy and gladness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people around them. Thus the Assembly was formed, and the Lord added daily to

it the remnant of Israel, who were to be saved from the judgments which should fall on a nation which had rejected the Son of God, their Messiah. God brought into the Assembly—thus owned of Him by the presence of the Holy Ghost—those whom He spared in Israel. A new order of things had commenced, marked by the presence of the Holy Ghost. Here was found the presence and the house of God, although the old order of things still existed until the execution of the judgment.

“The Assembly was formed, therefore, by the power of the Holy Ghost come down from Heaven, on the testimony that Jesus, Who had been rejected, was raised up to Heaven; being made of God both Lord and Christ. It was composed of the Jewish remnant who were to be spared, with the reserve of bringing in Gentiles whenever God should call them.”*

This, then is the Church of God; a gathering together of those whom God has called to the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of God. Love rules and characterises the newly formed Assembly. The mighty victories which grace achieved on that memorable day fully attested the power of the exalted Lord, and the presence of the Holy Ghost on earth. Three thousand souls were converted through one sermon. Those who had been the avowed enemies of the Lord, and who had participated in the guilt of His murder, agonised under the power of Peter's word. Alarmed at the awful thought of having killed their own Messiah, and that God, in whose presence they now were, had

exalted Him to His own right hand in Heaven, they cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" The Lord, in a certain sense, had sent the rod of His strength out of Zion; He was ruling in the midst of His enemies, and His people were made willing in the day of His power (Ps. 110).

Peter now seeks to deepen the good work in their souls — he seeks to humble the once proud and scornful Jews. "Repent," he says, "and be baptised every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." He does not say simply, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and ye shall be saved;" though, of course, faith and repentance must go together wherever the work is genuine. But Peter, in this case, presses repentance. Their guilt had been great, and a deep moral work in the conscience was needful for their humbling. They must see their guilt in the sight of God, and receive the remission of their sins at the feet of Him Whom they had rejected and crucified. Nevertheless, all was grace. Their hearts were touched. They sided with God against themselves — they truly repented, were pardoned, and received the gift of the Holy Ghost. Now they are the children of God and have eternal life: the Holy Ghost dwelt in them. The reality of the change was made manifest by a complete change of character. "Then they that gladly received His Word were baptised: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in

breaking of bread, and in prayers.”

Baptism on the confession of faith, the Lord's supper, the fellowship of saints, and prayer, were their distinguishing observances. For the moment, the Lord's prayer, “that they all may be one,” was answered, as we read in chapter 4, “And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.”—A. M.

“Synopsis of the Books of the Bible.” J. N. Darby. Vol. 4, p. 8.

(To be continued, D. V.)

The Purpose of God in the Old Testament

(Continued)

The next in order of distinguished persons from among the Gentiles whose names bear honorable mention in the Old Testament scriptures is Rahab, and since the word of God never flatters or hides the reprehensible, we read in Joshua 6:25 the designation “Rahab, the harlot.”

Here, the sovereignty of God shines out in a remarkable way. What a rebuke to the pride of man! What a testimony to the sovereignty of God! And this is accentuated in the New Testament, for there we find her name among the illustrious personages, through whom (after the flesh) Christ came. Here, is grace indeed, sovereign grace on the part of our ever blessed God. What

a rebuke to the pride of man! It has been tritely remarked by a well known writer,* "If Abraham believed God, when as yet there was not a people, Rahab identified herself with God's people, when they had nothing BUT GOD."

May we not say, that this marked her conversion? She certainly—when the test came, viz: would she still continue an associate of sinners doomed for destruction, or seek refuge in the God of Israel; made a wise choice, and her faith wrought by her works and for this, we have the authority of Scripture, since we read in James 2:25, "Was not Rahab the harlot, justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and sent them out another way." Again, another has remarked* "Thus, in the midst of heathenism, this poor simple woman, a bad, despised member of an accursed race, doomed to destruction, is saved; and her name is a testimony to the grace and glory of God. Her house recognized by the sure mark, the line of scarlet thread, becomes the refuge and security of all who seek shelter therein."

*J.N.D.

The next, in order of the Scripture record, is JAEI—the wife of Heber, the Kenite. It is interesting to notice, that we find in Exodus 3:1; Judges, Chapter I-16, and Chap. 4:11, that the father of Zipporah Jethro, is spoken of as "priest of Midian" (evidently Priest or Prince of the Midianites).

These people traced their ancestry to Abraham

and Hagar, whose son Ishmael was destined by God to be head of a great nation (Genesis (17:20)). What grace is evidenced then, in taking up this "stranger" to become the source of deliverance from the enemies' power—the record of which we find in Judges 4:18-24. Her praise is expressed in the words, "Blessed above women shall Jael, the wife of Heber be, above women in the tent." (Judges, 5:24.)—J.W.H.N.

Light In Our Dwellings

(Continued)

But there was one to whom the garden of the Lord, with its happy human inmates, amidst that blissful scene of light, peace, love, and harmony, was an eye-sore, for it reminded him of a still brighter, higher and happier place, which he had forfeited. Through his own wicked error he had fallen from his own steadfastness. And ever since his character had been to envy and hate everything that was of God, and therefore good, and to try and defile and destroy everything which God had established in and for blessing. He determined to blight that fair and happy scene and its inmates with his poisonous breath of sin, and not only so, but to dislodge Adam from his seat of supremacy, and to usurp his place as the prince of the world, by making man to obey him, and to disobey God, and to believe him who made God a liar. And when the sun was shining, through the verdant branches, on the golden fruits of the trees of the

Paradise, and upon the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, that was in the midst of the garden, the serpent made its noiseless approach, and began the attack upon the weaker part: the woman taken out of man. The very first word ("yea") implied a *suggestion*, and the very first sentence a suggestion and suspicion against God's *goodness*, until it waxed bolder and made God a liar, man not only permitting it, but acting upon it. Alas! the old tale is ever new, and will be, to the end of the chapter.

The woman was deceived; instead of being Adam's *helpmeet*, she lent herself an instrument to Satan, to make her husband share in her transgression. It was done step by step. She *listened* to Satan—she *spoke* to Satan—she *believed* Satan—she *looked* at the forbidden tree—she *lusted* after its fruit—she "*took* of the fruit thereof"—"and did eat"—"and gave to her husband and he did eat."

Lust had conceived and brought forth sin, and sin, when it was finished, brought forth death.

Satan, whose constant aim it was and is, to defy and frustrate the counsels of God, seemed to have succeeded. He had dethroned Adam, and substituted himself as the prince of the world. But the moment of his triumph is always the moment of his defeat, for the greater glory of God. No sooner is the first Adam brought to fall, then the last Adam appears, in the promise of the "woman's seed" who was to bruise the head of the serpent, that was to bruise His heel. The greatest of God's

glories, the glory and the riches of His grace in redeeming love, is brought to light, through Satan's instrumentality; and God's great plan: "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times He might gather together in one, all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in Him," instead of being frustrated by Adam's fall, that fall, sad as it was, only becomes, in God's hand, the first stepping-stone for its accomplishment. (Comp. Ps. 8 and Heb. 2). It was the same at the Cross. When Satan seemed to triumph over the last Adam, having put him to death, slain by wicked hands, it was only to find himself, like Goliath, beheaded with his own sword, when He, who had taken part of flesh and blood, through death destroyed him, that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and spoiled principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly, triumphing over them by it (i. e. the Cross.) That same Cross, where Satan and his satellites appeared to triumph, when their shout of derision arose, "Aha! so would we have it," became, according to God's wondrous counsels, not only the gate of heavenly glory in a heavenly Paradise, with the blessed *last Adam*, with Whom the dying thief went in company straight up to that Paradise; but in that wondrous 22nd Psalm, which opens with the cry of the Forsaken One upon the Cross, we find the Cross, at the end, to be also the gate for ever widening blessing flowing from and through it, as the entrance for the earthly blessings in the millennial paradise for God's earthly people, "when the meek

shall eat and be satisfied; when they shall praise the Lord that seek Him," and their soul "shall live forever," until, at last, all the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Him." "For the kingdom is the Lord's, and He is the *governor* among the nations."—(the true *Joseph*.) "All they that be fat upon earth, shall eat and worship, all they that go down to the dust, shall bow before Him, and none can keep alive his own soul." Then, the Son of Man, Who, in the days of His humiliation, as Jesus of Nazareth, was made a little lower than the angels, and Whom the eye of faith *now* sees crowned with glory and honour, will, "in the dispensation of the fulness of times, appear as the last Adam, the glorified Man, coming from His heavenly paradise (where the marriage-supper of the Lamb has just been celebrated), on the white horses of victory, setting out with His bride, for His earthward journey towards a millennial paradise, His head encircled with many crowns, as "KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS." Then, after His enemies have been made His footstool, the counsels of God, as foreshadowed in the first Adam, will be accomplished in the Last. Then Israel, His earthly people, after their night of sorrow will see Him, Whom they pierced, and their tears of deepest contrition and repentance, will change into tears of joy; "weeping endureth for a night and joy cometh in the morning," and the great Coronation Shout will arise, when their Deliverer's feet shall tread on the Mount of Olives:

"Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord!" Then God's plan, as to man's dominion over the earth not only, but over the higher creation, will be fully realized in Christ, the Second Man, Who is the Lord from heaven.

"What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou hast made him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet. All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas. O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth!"

But though the heart loves to look onward to that happy time, when God's blessed counsels as to man, all of which centre in that ever Blessed and ever Perfect Man, Jesus of Nazareth, Who alone could accomplish and has accomplished them by the blood of His Cross, will be fulfilled, we must recall ourselves from our digression, to our present humbling and sorrowful subject—man's fall amidst the abundance of an earthly paradise.

Sin had entered into the world. Satan had succeeded in dethroning man and taken his place as prince of this world. The kingdom of darkness began. The young creation, scarcely sprung into existence, had been nipped in the bud by the withering blast of sin, and under the poisonous blight that had fallen upon it, the first bloom of its young

beauty died away. Created things, though still pleasant, now began to bear death's stamp, and instead of the sweet tone of peaceful harmony, that had pervaded the whole, the groan of sorrow and pain went up to heaven from the suffering creation, that had become subject to vanity and to the bondage of corruption for man's sake.

Man, fallen and dethroned, became an exile for ever from his former happy home, driven out from the garden of Eden by a merciful God, lest he should eat also of the tree of life, and thus perpetuate his misery on the cursed ground of the earth. The paradise, and the befitting garment* of innocence had been lost, never to be recovered. The *second* garment (in Gen. 3),—man's own outfit and stitchwork—had only discovered his nakedness and shame, instead of concealing it. But God did not expel Adam and his wife from the garden of Eden, without clothing their nakedness with the third, i. e., the garment of His own make and provision, the very character of which was, at the same time, the typical expression of that great gospel-truth, which, like Rahab's scarlet line, runs through the whole Word of God, from Abel's sacrifice, until the Book of Revelation, that is: "*Without shedding of blood is no remission.*" Its very material was thus the practical illustration, as it were, of the first gospel, announced by a merciful God Himself—not *unto* Adam (for he had not only sinned, but attempted to excuse himself, nay, to accuse God Himself, in an indirect way), but in Adam's *hearing*, (for God is both *holy* and gracious, bless-

ed be His Name!) and in the form of judgment upon the serpent.

“Soon as the reign of sin began,
The light of mercy dawn’d on man;
When God announced the blessed news;
The woman’s seed thy head shall bruise.”

True and righteous, indeed, are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! Grace and righteousness are perfectly combined, may it be in government, or in redemption. By the *woman’s* instrumentality the serpent had introduced sin into the world and ruined man; and “**the woman’s seed,**” was to bruise his head and to rescue fallen man. But *grace* must reign *through righteousness*. *Righteousness* and *peace* were to *meet*, *mercy* and *truth* to *kiss each other* one day upon the Cross, where the same, Who clothed Adam and Eve, and announced the first glad tidings in their hearing, was to die, the Just for the unjust, to bring a fallen and hostile race back unto God, by faith in His blood, and reconcile them by the blood of His cross.

*If we may use this word (“garment”) here in the sense of mere *attire*, not of a *covering*, for there was nothing to *cover* in the state of *innocence*.—J. A. Von P.

(To be continued, D. V.)

Gleanings

GATHERED FRAGMENTS

God intends that His people should find out that

the world is a place of trial and difficulty in order to wean them from it; and that their hearts may be tested as to where their confidence lies.

Circumstances may be trying, but He would have them to be joying in Himself, who is not effected by the circumstances, that they may prove what He is for them under the pressure, so that every resource but Himself may be abandoned. Well, indeed, if when the pressure comes they are found going on with Him, satisfied with His love, His care, and His sufficiency.

For in no way does He so fully reveal Himself the only stay and strength for the heart as when He is conducting us through circumstances of a testing and trying character (only fully known to Himself). Then it is we are learning the meaning of that word, "We also joy in God."

We are passing through our education under His tuition, who is training us for eternity and with eternity in view, our school term drawing to a close, soon to end in glory and rest with Him who is there resting now.

Then, and not till then, shall we understand what wondrous objects of interest we have been down here! As sinners the objects of God's sovereign grace, as saints the objects of the Father's love, the Shepherd's care, and the Spirit's guidance. What more can we have, what more do we need?—J.N.D.

The Word of God

We all believe the Bible to be the inspired word of God, the only guide through this world, and the only means of sanctification. But is it not a pertinent inquiry, how much use do we make of this precious Book? Do we read it *daily*? Do we read it systematically? Are we growing in our knowledge of its contents? Above all, do its precious truths lay hold of our souls and keep us in abiding communion with God through the Holy Spirit?

We may be sure the enemy will do all in his power to make us neglect this precious Word. There will be so little time; in the morning we must hurry off to work; in the evening we are so fatigued. Thus, before we know it, the week slips by and our Bibles have been neglected. Let us be on our guard that he does not rob us of that which is "more than our necessary food." Let us set our faces like a flint, determining that if it be a choice between our daily food and the word of God, we will do without the food. Ah, very soon we would find that there was time enough for both.

"They (the Bereans) received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so." Acts 17:11.

—Contributed

Divine Intervention

(Continued)

THE DEATH OF THE FIRSTBORN AND THE PASSOVER

The last plague brought upon Egypt was the death

of the firstborn, "from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maidservant that is behind the mill; and all the firstborn of beasts. And there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it any more. ..But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast; that ye may know how that the Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel." Exo. 11:5-7.

The hour of divine judgment had finally come. Jehovah Himself was about to go through the land of Egypt, destroy its pride, and fill every house with deepest grief and lamentation. No power could arrest the decree nor alter the sentence. There was no hope, no escape.

When the controversy began with Egypt, God had warned Pharaoh that if he would not let Israel, His **firstborn**, go, then He would slay his son, even his firstborn (chapter 4:22, 23). Pharaoh obstinately refused the warning, despised the opportunity, and now the day of repentance was past.

"There is no consideration for the human heart more solemn than that of coming judgment. Right through the history of man, God has linked disobedience with punishment, and His judgments, though delayed, have ever fallen as foretold, upon the guilty and the rebellious. And what has been will be. Indeed, as is frequently observed, there seems in the foretelling of the book of Revelation,

an echo of the fulfilling of the judgments which fell on Egypt in the day of Israel's exodus from that proud and serpent-worshipping land. In the end it will be found that the only shelter for man is the blood of the Lamb and the shadowing wings of Jehovah, which protect all who obey Him."

Mark the words well: **"In the end it will be found that the only shelter for man is the blood of the Lamb and the shadowing wings of Jehovah, which protect all who obey Him."**

Before the final blow fell upon Egypt, preparations had to be made for the exodus of His people. A lamb, a male of the first year, had to be slain by each family (Exo. 12:21) and by "the whole assembly of the congregation" (vs. 6); and its blood was to be sprinkled upon the two side posts and the upper door post of the house. In that sacrifice and in nothing else was safety. "Whether rich or poor, whether having mingled in the idolatries of Egypt, or having rejected them at all cost, whatever the character of the life or the habit of any, all found in the blood of the lamb, and in that alone, their safety. Jehovah was about to pass through Egypt, and His angel would look, not within the house, but outside it—not at the class of people within, but for the proof of their obedience, as written upon lintels and doorposts without. The express word was, 'when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you'." (vs. 13). These words were the story of Israel and have been the peace-giving portion of thousands since. The blood was "for a

token" yet it was outside the house, unseen by those within, but seen by the eye of Jehovah and when He saw it, He passed over the house.

Alas! it was not so for the Egyptians. All seemingly was well, when suddenly the blow fell and as suddenly the awful awakening—death was in every house! "Pharoah's palace rang with the cries of lamentation; his firstborn was dead. And the woe and terror of the king were the woe and terror of all his people, for Jehovah 'smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the first-born of cattle.' One common anguish was upon every heart.

"Even Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron in the night and they heard his pitiful words as he bade them be gone, children, flocks, and herds, and they listened to his prayer to them for a blessing on himself also

"The customs of the country gave an intensity to the woe. Even in our own times, a 'great cry' arises in parts of Egypt when death enters a house: the wail is taken up by the friends of the bereaved, and loud lamentations borne upon the still air can be heard afar off. In those old days, on death entering a house, the members of the family would rush into the streets, cast dust upon their heads and beat their breasts as they uttered piercing cries. Friends and relatives joined the melancholy throng, and added to these were the professional mourners,

uttering their shrill screams. Such services would not be required, even if they were rendered, on the night of the Passover, for grief and terror, only too real, were in every house and prevailed in every street.

“To add intensity to the dismay, the hand of Jehovah was heavy also upon ‘all the gods of Egypt.’ This act of His in executing judgment upon their dieties—probably the living emblems of their gods—must have wrought terror in every temple. The divine vengeance falling upon the dieties of the land evidenced Jehovah’s supremacy over ‘all’ powers men worshipped, and explains to the Christian the real significance of the Egyptian religion. There was not one god in the land who was not opposed to Jehovah, not one sacrifice or prayer offered in any temple, or before any shrine, through any priest, that was not rendered to a demon! King, priests, and people were alike utterly confounded. Besides, the discriminating hand of Jehovah in smiting the firstborn only, whether of man or of cattle, showed forth His power in such a way that all Egypt dreaded death, and, to save themselves, besought Israel to be gone, lest all should die as the firstborn had died.”*

(To be continued, D. V.)

*The editor is greatly indebted to H. Forbes Witherby’s “Light from the Land of the Sphinx” for much of the detail regarding Egyptian customs and manners. This book has been out of print for many years and we are glad to share some of its valuable information with our readers.

Short Papers on Church History

(Continued)

We will now turn, for the sake of connection, to Chapter 10.

THE CALLING IN OF THE GENTILES

Cornelius, the centurion, a devout man, and those that were with him, are now received into the Assembly of God. Peter had proclaimed their call in his first discourse. He is now summoned of God in a special way, and with special indications of His purpose, to open the door to those God-fearing Gentiles. Up to this time the Church consisted chiefly, if not solely, of Jews. But God dealt tenderly with His ancient people, considering their national prejudices. "Cornelius was a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always." They could have no objection, personally, to receive such a one. Thus God is gracious, tender, and merciful. But no doubt was left on Peter's mind as to the Divine will. God graciously silenced his reasonings, and overcame his unwillingness, with the mild reproof, "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common" (Acts 10:15).

Peter now proceeds, though slowly; it was a new kind of work for him. But nothing seems more surprising to Peter than that the Gentiles should be brought into blessing, without either becoming Jews, or submitting to any Jewish ordinances. This, to Peter, to the Gentiles, and in

itself, was an immense step. It strikes at the very root of Popery, Puseyism, Apostolic Succession, and every system of ordinances. In this fact a flood of light is shed on the character of the present dispensation. "Then Peter opened his mouth and said, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted of Him." Clearly, it was no longer necessary to become a Jew, or submit to external rites and ceremonies, in order to enjoy the richest blessings of Heaven. Without the imposition of apostolic hands— though Peter himself, in Divine power and authority was present—and before being baptised with water, they were baptised with the Holy Ghost. While the Word of God was falling from Peter's lips the Holy Ghost fell on all who heard it.

SPIRIT BAPTISING THE GENTILES

Notice, then, this important fact connected with the bringing in of the Gentiles—they receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, simply through the preaching of the Word. At Jerusalem the Jews were baptised before they received the Holy Ghost. At Samaria the Samaritans were not only baptised, but had the apostles' hands laid on them, with prayer, before they received the Holy Ghost. But at Caesarea, without baptism, without the laying on of hands, without prayer, the richest Christian blessing was given to the Gentiles; though the **doctrine** of the Church as the body of Christ was not yet revealed.

The grace of God, thus shown to the Gentiles, at the commencement of the dispensation, has characterised it ever since. We are Gentiles; we are neither Jews nor Samaritans. Therefore, God's ways in grace, and His order of things with the Gentiles, have a special application to us. There is no instance recorded by the inspired historians of one being baptised without professing faith in Christ. The case of Cornelius stands at the very head of our dispensation; it was the first direct expression of grace to the Gentiles; and surely it ought to be a model for Gentile preachers and disciples. When the Word of God which was *then* preached to Cornelius is *now* believed, the same effects, as to peace with God, we may rest assured, will follow.

Preaching, believing, the reception of the Holy Spirit, baptising in water, is the Divine order of things here. God and His Word never change; though "times change," as men say, and "human opinions change, and religious observances change," but the Word of God—**never**.*

Jews, Gentiles, and Samaritans *professed* faith in Christ before they were baptised. Indeed baptism supposed eternal life *possessed* through faith, not *communicated* by its observance, as Anglicans teach. "Grace is communicated, life is communicated, by sacraments," they say, "and is

* The author's views on baptism are not necessarily ours. Nor do we accept the Anglican doctrine. For further help on the subject we commend, "The Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven" by F. W. Grant, to be obtained from the publisher at 20c per copy.—Ed.

only effected through these means; irrespective of any exercise of the intellect on the part of the person brought into union. Holy baptism is the means of conferring on the recipient a new and spiritual life." Such notions, we need scarcely say, are utterly opposed to Scripture. Baptism, we affirm, *confers* nothing. It does not make Christians, it marks them. *Life* is conferred by other means, as the Scriptures plainly teach. Conversion, or "being born again," is effected, in all cases without exception, by the Holy Spirit. As we read in 1 Peter, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in *obeying the truth through the Spirit* unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." Here, the truth of the Gospel is viewed as the *means*, and the Holy Spirit as the *power*, in conversion. Christ, or God in Christ, is the new object of the soul. It is by the Spirit and truth of God that this blessed change is effected. Those who trust to *water baptism* as the means of effecting it, trust, alas, to a great delusion—a fatal delusion.

But what was the Word, some may inquire, that Peter preached, which was accompanied with such remarkable blessing? He preached peace by Jesus Christ, as Lord of all. Christ risen, exalted, and glorified, was the grand object of his testimony. He sums up with these words: "To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His Name ~~who~~soever believeth in Him shall receive remission of

sins." The blessing follows. The Jews present were astonished; but they bow, and own God's goodness to the Gentiles. "While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them that heard the Word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then Peter answered, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptised, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded that they should be baptised in the Name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days." This marked fellowship. Had Cornelius and his company refused to be baptised, we cannot imagine the apostle consenting to tarry with them.

We now retrace our steps a little way, and notice some of the leading events, which, in order, precede Acts 10. We first notice in Acts 7 the remarkable death of

THE FIRST CHRISTIAN MARTYR

Stephen, the deacon and evangelist, is the first to receive the crown of martyrdom for the Name of Jesus. He stands at the head of "the noble army of martyrs." He is perfect as a type—as the *proto-martyr*. Firm and unwavering in his faith; bold and undaunted before his accusers; pointed and faithful in his defence before the Sanhedrim;

free from malice in his strongest statements; full of charity towards all men, he seals his testimony with his blood, and falls asleep in Jesus.

In some respects, Stephen resembles the blessed Lord Himself. "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," is like, "Father, into Thy hands I commit My spirit;" and again, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge," resembles, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do;" only Stephen does not plead their ignorance.

Already we see that troubles both within and without assail the young Assembly. True, the Word of God increased, multitudes were converted, and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith. But the Grecians, or Hellenists (Jews of Greek origin), murmured against the Hebrews (natives of Judea), because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. This led to the appointment of seven deacons (Acts 6). From their names here given it would appear that the seven chosen were "Grecians"—all from the side of the murmurers; thus the Spirit of God ruled in grace. Stephen was one of the number; and in his case the word of the apostle was exemplified: "Those who have used the office of a deacon well, purchase to themselves a good degree and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 3:13). He was full of faith and power, and did great wonders and miracles among the people. The energy of the Holy Spirit was especially manifested in Stephen. There were different synagogues in Jerusalem appropriated to the

different races of Jews. It was the synagogue of the Libertines, Cyrenians, and "them of Cilicia," among whom very probably the young Cilician, Saul of Tarsus, was included, etc., that opposed Stephen. But "they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake." Then followed that which has usually been the case with the confessors of Jesus in all ages; unable to answer him, they accuse him before the Council. "False witnesses are suborned, who swear that they had heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and against God; and that Jesus of Nazareth would destroy this place, and change the customs delivered to them by Moses." The case was now before the Sanhedrim—the trial commences. But what must his judges have thought when they saw his face radiant as the face of an angel?

We have the noble address of Stephen to the heads of the nation before us. To them it was convincing, perplexing, overwhelming. Doubtless it was the testimony of the Holy Ghost to the Jews, from the mouth of Stephen; and all the more humbling to the proud Jews, to hear their doom from the lips, of a Hellenist. But the Spirit of God, when unhindered by man's arrangements, works by whomsoever *He* will.—Andrew Miller.

(To be continued, D. V.)

Light in Our Dwellings

(Continued)

But, though God is love, He is also *light*, i. e., He is *holy* and *true*. Therefore, after having an-

nounced those first glad tidings, in fallen man's hearing, in His crushing judgment upon the serpent, as the author and root of all evil, He proceeds to pass His righteous sentence upon Adam and his wife: first upon the *woman*—for she was the first to sin; nay, she had also persuaded her husband into it, which appears to be evident from the words the Lord spoke to Adam; "Because thou hast *hearkened unto the voice* of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree," &c. Therefore sentence is first passed upon her. How invariable, from the very first, are God's eternal principles in judgment, as in all His ways! His solemn sentence runs thus:—"I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children: (what a difference to His first words to Adam and his wife in the 28th verse of the first chapter of Genesis!) and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee."

True and righteous, indeed, are His judgments! Where she had sinned, there she was punished. Her lust had conceived and brought forth sin; therefore her sorrow and conception was greatly to be multiplied, and in sorrow she was to bring forth children; she had forgotten her place as Adam's "*helpmeet*," and taking the *lead*, had misled him into that terrible first sin of *disobedience* against God, and thus ruined his and her own happiness forever! Therefore God's just sentence is — "Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and *he shall rule over thee*."

Was then Adam's guilt attenuated by his wife's

sin? Far from it! On the contrary, the very thing he alleges as an excuse ("the woman, whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat,") God pronounces to be the *reason* for Adam's judgment, "*Because* thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it; cursed is the ground for thy "not for *her*" sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread, till thou return unto the ground, for out it thou wast taken, for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

Thus we see, that the responsibility of the *man's* guilt, instead of being shifted on the *woman*, or, at the least *shared* by her, because of her having taken the initiative, only falls with its full, yea, redoubled weight upon Adam, because he had permitted her to do so. If the man Adam failed to maintain his place as the head of the woman, which he was from a creatural reason, (comp. 1 Cor. 11) even before sin had come in, this only increased his guilt, as said already, instead of attenuating it. ("*Because* thou hast harkened to the voice of thy wife," etc.) The commandment, not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, had not been given to the *woman*, but to the *man*, before the woman had come into existence. Therefore the full weight of responsibility rested upon Adam in every sense. The brighter and higher his position

had been, as head of the lower creation, and as head of the woman, the darker was his sin, and the deeper his fall. "Because *thou*" (not *you*) "hast eaten of the tree," and "Cursed is the ground for *thy* sake," etc. (Comp. Rom. 5:12-19).

Then, under the weight of that solemn sentence of God, the fallen man and his wife took their tearful leave of that beautiful garden of the Lord, lost for ever to them through their folly and sin. But the weight had been relieved through God's merciful promise. For the same Divine Voice, that had said to Adam: "Cursed be the ground for thy sake," had also spoken to the serpent, "Thou art cursed," etc., and "The woman's seed shall bruise thy head."

That gracious promise had not been lost upon Adam's ear, and they took the relief it gave to their souls, with them, on entering upon a world and life of sorrow and care. Adam, no doubt, by faith in that promise, called his wife "Eve," (Heb. "Chavah") i. e., "*living*," "because she was the mother of all living."

And after his faith had begun to be answered, in the temporal sense, by Eve having borne children to Adam, and they had thus entered upon the second family-relationship, provided by a merciful God, the happy but responsible relationship of **parents** and **children**; do you not think, Christian reader, that both parents, when they, resting from the toil of the day, under the shelter of their poor abode, told their growing sons, along with the solemn and humbling tale of that lost paradise, and

the cause of its loss, and the effect of it, as a warning to their young consciences, also told them of those words of God's gospel-promise, which they had been permitted to listen to, before they as exiles, had to enter upon their new existence of sorrow and toil? Those words had sunk down into the ears of Abel and his sacrifice, to which God had respect, and by which he obtained witness, that he was righteous, and by which he, "being dead yet speaketh," showed, how deeply the words he had heard from his parents, had been lodged in Abel's conscience and heart. It was otherwise with Cain, alas! He was Eve's first-born, and she said, "I have gotten a man from the Lord." How far motherly pride and natural affection may have influenced the training of the child, and thus prevented the good seed falling into good ground, is a question we cannot enter upon here.

We must leave now the sorrowful abode and family of our first parents, the exiles from a lost paradise, to turn to a brighter and happier abode; I mean the Christian's Family and Household.

Though still amidst a world of toil and sorrow, yea, of evil increasing everywhere; yet what a privileged, bright and safe abode is that of the Christian family and household! Ah! beloved fellow-christian! That word of God's Gospel-promise, pronounced in the paradise, has been fulfilled more than 1900 years ago. "The woman's seed **has bruised** the serpent's head." For unto us also, though once sinners of the Gentiles, "**strangers**

from the covenant of promise, having no hope and without God in the world," yet partakers of the unconditional gospel-promise, pronounced by a merciful God in fallen Adam's hearing:—unto us also "a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful,—Counsellor,—The mighty God,—The Everlasting Father—The Prince of Peace." He, Who came, and will come a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of His people Israel, has made peace by the Blood of His Cross, and given unto us His Spirit, whose mind is life and peace, and whose fruit is "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance," all of them qualities that characterize the atmosphere, and form the only *true adornment* and comforts of a Christian household and family. But let us now turn to a closer consideration of the first of those christian family-relationships, with which the Holy Spirit deals in our chapter. (Eph. 5).

"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church, and He is the saviour of the body." (v. 22, 23).

"Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord." (Col. 3:18).

In the preceding chapter I have entered fully into the difference between *submission* and *obedience*, and the meaning of the expression: "*in the fear of Christ.*" And I can but trust and pray to

God, that those few remarks I have ventured to offer, however imperfect, may have been according to the Lord's mind, and profitable to the souls of my readers and to my own. For that verse (21) forms the true threshold for entering upon our meditations on our Christian family relationships. They can only be profitable, if we enter upon them with a mind, hallowed and impressed by those words: "*Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of Christ.*"

The first word, that follows after "wives" in both the above passages of scripture, is "submit." It is the same in the Epistle of the Apostle Peter. Those two words thus closely connected by the Spirit, express the mind and will of God as to the "wives" character and position. *Subjection* and *submissiveness*, indeed, form the character of every truly godly woman, especially of those in the sacred and blessed relationship of marriage. As I have spoken extensively on the meaning of the word *submission*, and the difference between *submission* and *obedience*, I only say once more, that, though *submission* and not *obedience*, is given in Eph. and Col. as the prominent Christian feature of the wives, from the reasons already mentioned, yet *obedience* forms no less an essential part of the Divinely required demeanour and character of the Christian "*wife*," as we shall see presently in the passage from 1 Peter 3 previously alluded to. How, indeed, could any contrary thought be admitted into the mind of any, with the words of that solemn sentence of the Lord God,

to which we have just listened, still ringing in our ears, as it were.—J. A. von P.

Letters To Young Christians

PRAYER FOR GUIDANCE

My Dear Young Friends,

The Lord Jesus taught that “men ought always to pray, and not to faint” (Luke xviii, 1). Many persons begin well enough but do not “continue (persevere) in prayer” (Col. iv. 2). Christian prayer is a normal habit not an occasional experiment. The believer is engaged in an unending spiritual conflict, and one of the most potent weapons in his spiritual armory is the habit of “praying at all seasons, with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit” (Eph. vi. 18).

The truth is that we need God’s help and direction at all times. We do not know what lies before us; we do not understand rightly the circumstances in which we are; and we are not able to measure our own ability to face the facts. Because of this ignorance and infirmity, we need to be told exactly what we are to do, and which is the way God would have us take. In prayer we come to God Who is our Omnipotent Father and All-wise Friend for the wisdom and staying power needed day by day in our struggles. To such prayers, God bends a listening ear, and if our own inclination is to turn away to the right hand or the left, we shall hear a voice behind us saying, “This is the way, walk ye in it” (Isa. xxx. 21). Thus we find out by prayer God’s way, which always is the right way and the best way.

You may learn many useful lessons from the life of David concerning the need of divine guidance. When he was a fugitive from the hand of his great enemy and also when he sat upon the throne of Israel, David made many terrible blunders and fell into many grievous sins. He was guilty of these errors because he neglected to inquire of the Lord and made his plans out of his own head or

listened to the advice of evil counsellors. He often went astray, but God brought him back to the right way. Study David's biography from this standpoint, and it will help you. In the Psalms, he often sings about the importance and blessedness of God's way in contrast with man's. For instance, in Psalm xxv, he says in prayer-language, "Make me to know Thy ways, O Jehovah; teach me Thy paths. Make me to walk in Thy truth, and teach me, for Thou art the God of my salvation; on Thee do I wait all the day (or, every day)" (vers. 4, 5). After this petition for guidance into the divine way and the divine paths, he says, "The meek will He guide in judgment, and the meek will He teach His way. All the paths of Jehovah are loving-kindness and truth" (vers. 9, 10). Again, in another place the psalmist wrote, "Teach me Thy way, Jehovah, and lead me in an even path, because of mine enemies" (Ps. xxvii. 11). I am sure you also desire most deeply to be directed into ways approved and appointed of God.

In connection with this topic, I will quote from the little notebook I mentioned in a recent letter to you. The extracts are from a letter received by X concerning obedience to the will of God in the affairs of daily life. This is the advice: "I think it is a cardinal principle in life that you should not act according to the exigencies of the moment, while endeavouring to take as long a view as possible of the future. Make the best plans that you are able to make for the coming days, but always be prepared to abandon them if something better comes in sight. By 'better' I of course mean more evidently in accordance with God's will, to which every true believer seeks to conform.

"It is important to remember always that the Great Commander makes His own selection for His service, appoints a special duty to each servant, and undertakes in detail the dispositions of each and all of them in His world-wide campaign. Train yourself, therefore, to be a good soldier of Jesus Christ; equip yourself with a knowledge of the truth as it is in Him; maintain yourself in a state of preparedness for action; but also remember that

the precise moment of your advance and the nature of its objective should be entirely of your Commander's appointment. He, not you, is in charge of all Christian service.

"The recollection of these primary truths should not act as a discouragement much less as a deterrent, to activity on your part. They are, indeed, a form of self-discipline, which, as you know, is an indispensable preparation for the display of a Christ-like obedience by any believer. I have known some Christian enterprises undertaken with much devotion and self-sacrifice and they were attended with striking initial success; but they soon deteriorated and eventually ended entirely in a cloud of disaster. Looking back, one can now see what was not apparent at the time; they lacked that ultimate purpose and supreme direction of the Holy Spirit which always mark progress in the campaign of the Great Captain of our salvation.

"In view of the liability to such discreditable failures, it always appears to me to be absolutely essential that a servant of the Lord should take the utmost pains not to mistake his own predilections for his Master's will. It requires much exercise of soul to distinguish between the two. Ruthlessly condemn the former, but patiently wait for the latter. And let your daily motto be, Obedience is better than sacrifice or service."

You will have seen already, I expect, how this extract which X made from his father's letter leads up to the subject of my letter to you, viz.:—The necessity for continual prayer to God for His guidance. Do not fail, therefore, to adopt the simple, fervent supplication of the Psalmist, "Teach me to do Thy will" (Ps. cxliii. 10). Guard all your thinking and planning for the future with this proviso, "If the Lord will" (Jas. iv. 15).—The Bible Monthly.

The Lord's Day

There is a growing tendency, even among the professed people of God, to despise the Lord's day.

They urge that we are not under the law, and therefore every day is alike. To the spiritual mind this is on a par with sinning that grace may abound. Were there no other reason to deter us from carelessness as to the Lord's day, it would be sufficient that no offence should be given to the world. *It* very easily appraises the man who seeks his own pleasure on that day. But there are higher reasons. All the week we are compelled to devote the most of our time to secular work. What an unspeakable privilege it is to drop all that, and devote to our blessed Lord the day that recalls His resurrection. We meet together to remember Him; we engage in His service, looking after His own, reading His word and carrying His gospel to the unsaved. What a reproach it is for a child of God to seek relaxation in some worldly recreation, or to devote the precious hours to *merely* social visiting. Should we not exercise more conscience as to our conduct on the Lord's day. May there not also be a need for the busy housekeeper to consider? It is not a day of feasting, particularly if this should prevent the housekeeper from attending the meetings of God's people. A little prudent management and forethought on Saturday will enable her to have nearly everything in readiness, nothing will then interfere with the true objects of the day. Members of the family too should guard against slothful ease on that day, thus keeping back the needful work. Let us show that we do not need law to keep us from despising this precious privilege. We will thus resume the routine of earthly

concerns with spirits refreshed, conscience clear, and affections bright.

The Christian Home

What can be happier than a Christian home, where the Lord is known, loved, and obeyed? There is light in the dwelling—the light of heaven. It is a profitable study to go through the Scriptures and see God's thoughts as to the family. We find that His grace reaches out to all the members of the household, is offered to all. "Come thou and all thy house into the ark." "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." (Gen. vii. 1; Acts xvi. 31). We also find that His claims for obedience are upon the entire family, and the parents are responsible to bring up the children in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph vi. 4). A man's faithfulness is shown by the order he maintains in the house. "I know him that he will command his children and his household after him" (Gen. xviii. 19; 1 Tim. iii. 4). Nor does this mean that gloom and sadness will pervade the home, but exactly the reverse. God's own joy and light, where He is known in grace, will fill each heart, so that even the little ones will share in it. Home thus becomes the most attractive of all places, the happy asylum from the worry and care of business, the nursery for the tender little ones, and the busy beehive of Christian industry. May our God make more such homes.

Private and Family Prayer

“Behold he prayeth,” was a mark of Paul’s conversion, and it is the sign of life toward God. A prayerless Christian means a backsliding one, who will soon show in public that he is away from God. Secret prayer, O brethren, let us abound in this. Let there be no unused closets. May our God stir us up to constant, believing prayer.

There are some who unquestionably pray in secret who do not have a family altar. How can you expect your children to walk in God’s ways if this badge of discipleship is not upon the home? There can be nothing sadder than a prayerless home. Let nothing prevent it. Some fathers may have to leave home too early in the morning to have the family together. But if not then at least in the evening, as all are gathered at the table, let there be a few minutes given to reading God’s word and prayer. The evening portion might be read in this way. Christian reader, do *you* neglect prayer in your family?—Sel.

Nothing To Do With To-morrow

I have nothing to do with to-morrow,
My Father will make that His care;
Should He fill it with trouble and sorrow,
He’ll help me that sorrow to bear.
I have nothing to do with to-morrow,
Its troubles then why should I share?
Its grace and its strength I can’t borrow,
Then why should I borrow its care?

"The Man That Died for Me"

Some of the last words of J. G. BELLETT.

My pilgrim days are waning—
The voice of Him I love
Has called me to His presence
In my Father's house above.
Long, long by faith I've known Him
But now I'm going to see
The One that lives in glory—
"The Man that died for me."

But ere I left the desert
I longed that I might know
What joy His blessed presence
Could give me here below.
These few last fleeting moments
I consciously would be
With Thee, my loving Saviour,
"The Man that died for me."

He gave me all I asked for,
And more than I can tell;
He filled my heart with rapture,
With joy unspeakable.
The loving hand of Jesus
Seemed gently laid on me;
I had for my companion
"The Man that died for me."

The glories of the kingdom
Are coming by and bye,
And I shall see the brethren—
Be crowned with them on high.
I know that I shall reign;
But before it all for me
There's a time alone with Jesus—
"The Man that died for me."

To be at home with Jesus—
 'Tis Him I think of now;
To be for ever with the Lord,
 Before Himself to bow.
Oh, yes! with Him who stayed
 To call Zaccheus from the tree,
Who gave His life upon the cross—
 "The Man that died for me."

To have a time with Jesus,
 Himself to gaze upon;
To see the Man we read about
 In chapter 8th of John.
To change this scene of sadness,
 Oh! it's wonderful to me,
For the sweetness of His presence—
 "The Man that died for me."

I'm going to be with Jesus,
 Who in this world of pain
Gave back the widow's only son
 Outside the gates of Nain.
His heart was filled with pity,
 His Word caused Death to flee
Oh! now to see Him as He is—
 "The Man that died for me."

It is the Man Christ Jesus,
 With whom I'm going to dwell,
The very Man of Sychar,
 Who sat upon the well;
Whose matchless love filled that heart
 And gave her eyes to see
That He was God's anointed—
 "The Man that died for me."

To leave this world that cast Him out
 And to be with Him there,

Before the kingdom's glories
Or the many crowns appear.
Oh! the very Man of Sychar,
It is Himself to see,
The One that sits in heaven—
"The Man that died for me."

**An Address Given By Mr. J. S. Hall, at Dunkirk,
N. Y., Sunday Night, August 26, 1945**

It pleases God to use a man to speak of the Man of Calvary. Luke calls the place of crucifixion Calvary; the place of a skull. The place where man's wisdom came to an end, in order that God's wisdom might be introduced. So God has made Christ for us Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, Redemption. All that we need God has provided for us in the Man of Calvary. If any one wishes more than that they will have to go on to a lost Eternity without having their wishes gratified. The Man of Calvary.

I've chosen as our subject this evening, one little word of four letters—SIGN.

I remember the first time coming to this country. It was in 1922. Of course we crossed the ocean then by boat. These days we are blessed with plane service, which is very much more rapid. I had never been in any other city in the world except the city of Nassau. When the evening came for me to take a walk out with my nephew and his wife, with whom I lived, we went out on Flagler street. Maybe some here have been in the city of Miami. As we turned the corner of the avenue, and reached the street, I saw what I had never seen before. It was just about the time that Coral Gables was being developed. Those men, whose business it was to reach their fellow creatures in the hope that they do business with them, had all sorts of signs displayed. I thought if we just removed the "G" what would be left? Well, there was plenty of it in the city of Miami, and there's plenty of it

wherever you go. S-I-N-S. The "G" is out. Well, God puts the "G" in, so that He might speak to us of S-I-N-S.

Now I'd like us to turn to the 7th chapter of Isaiah's prophecy: verse 10. "Moreover the Lord spake again unto Ahaz, saying, "Ask thee a sign of the Lord thy God." Here's the request of the Lord of a king, whose name means "Possessor." The Word of God informs us that this king of Judah was a man who did wickedly, in the eyes of Jehovah. So when he was asked by Jehovah to ask a sign, he refused. He refused. I want us to see that not only did Jehovah ask him to ask the sign, but he was definite furthermore in the way that the sign would be asked. "Ask it either in the depth or in the height above." I verily believe that we have brought before us in the height above and the depth beneath, Eternity. Ahaz knew nothing of Eternity, therefore, he refused to ask the sign.

Now let me ask the question here, What do we know of Eternity? The most we can know is something about the Eternal God. Indeed is it a mercy to us that He allows us to know that much. The Eternal God—the One who inhabits Eternity.

As we are passing through this scene and soon to pass out of it, there is the great beyond whither we go. The question might be raised, Why are we going to Eternity? Because we are made in the image and likeness of an Eternal God. We are creatures of time for Eternity. Don't forget that. We are not creatures of Eternity. We are creatures of time for Eternity. Who can paraphrase on that word "Eternity"?

The brother's subject this evening out on the bluff had as its theme, "The End." Eternity cannot end, because it never began. It existed with the Eternal God. And since man was made in His image and likeness that's the reason why he is going on to Eternity. Now there's one question which can be readily and easily answered: "Why do we go on to Eternity?" There's another question which might be asked, which cannot be answered: "when will we reach

Eternity?" That is known only to the Eternal God. But the third question raised and answered, Where will we be in Eternity? Thank God, there are many here this evening who can readily answer, "In the Glory with Christ." In the Father's house to enjoy for all Eternity, what the Father in His love provided for us.

So here is God asking Ahaz, whose name means "Possessor." Every person is a possessor. Those who have trusted Christ—a possessor of Eternal Life; those who have not trusted Christ—a possessor of sins, which deserve God's judgment and which will certainly receive it. It doesn't delight the heart of God to judge the sinner. We do not know the heart pangs of God when He entered into judgment, because of sin, with His blessed Son. The only thing which God allows us to know of the throes of Calvary during the three hours of darkness was "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me." What have I done to you. Nothing at all, but we were the aggressors. Here's God's way of meeting man's need. And here's this king, who refuses to ask a sign, then does God become a volunteer.

I'm going to show you a sign, I'm going to give you a sign, says God. That's a second prophecy from the lips of God, in connection with the coming of His blessed Son into this world. When we turn to John's Gospel, we find Christ presented as the Son of God. The opening verses of that first chapter of John's Gospel brings before us the Son of God as Creator. "Without Him was not anything made that was made."

When we go back to the opening chapters of Genesis we find the Eternal God speaking to one of His creatures—speaking to Satan, in the form of a serpent, or to the serpent energized and used by Satan, might be a better way of putting it. What does God say to him? He utters a prophecy in connection with the gift of His Son. I'm going to read it. Chapter 3, verse 15, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and

her seed. It shall bruise thy head, thou shalt bruise His heel." God, the first prophet—He had to be because none but Himself knew what His eternal purpose was. Therefore, He opens His mouth and He speaks concerning the Christ who was to come.

Now since that prophecy was uttered, there must be fulfillment. Remember, every prophecy of God will be fulfilled. There are those people in the world today who are expecting certain fulfillment of certain prophecies before the Lord returns. We who have learned otherwise, learned that nothing is to transpire before that event. Much, it's true, has preceded; much is going to succeed. We who know the truth of God's Word are not looking forward to any one particular thing before the Lord comes. He might come before this meeting is over. We'll get a little word, I trust, later on, in connection with that. So ask of me a sign; No! Genesis one gives us something about that which is above and that which is beneath, doesn't it? In the second day's work of restoration, we get God speaking. God said, "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, let it divide the waters from the waters. God made the firmament, divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament, and it was so." That's the dividing line there. What is it, we ask? I verily believe that it's the cross of Christ. That's the dividing line; the center of two Eternities. Jesus went forth bearing His cross; there they crucified Him, on either side a thief; Jesus in the midst. There's the dividing line.

I'm sure you've noticed in reading Genesis 1, that in connection with the other day's work of restoration, we get "good," and so on, later on "very good," then it is "not good"; but here we don't get mention of the word "good." The Holy Spirit doesn't mention it. Isn't there a reason? We were saying this morning, that the reticences of Scripture are as much inspired as their utterances. The work of Calvary is certainly good in God's sight, but that

which necessitated it, isn't. God could take no pleasure in sin. God is angry with the wicked every day. That's the reason why God entered into judgment with Christ, His blessed Son, in order that sinners might escape the judgment which sins deserve.

So when we turn to Isaiah 7, we get God volunteering to give the sign. It says, "Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign." Verse 14, "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel." Here's the second prophecy, so to speak, uttered by God Himself in connection with the coming of Christ. Now when we turn to Luke's Gospel, we find the prophecy fulfilled. Surely they must be fulfilled if God had uttered them. Here is the lowly virgin of Nazareth, to become the mother of the Son of God. There are those who like to speak of Christ as the child of Mary or as the Son of Mary rather. Christ was Mary's child, but, He was God's Son. When we turn to the book of the Revelation, in connection with the address to the church at Thyatira, it's the Son of God who is speaking. "Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given." I'm sure you've noticed that Jesus never called Mary, mother; and doubtless you've noticed that she never called Him son. There is a scripture or there is a verse in the second of Luke, "When having sought for Him, and finding Him in the temple after three days, she said, Son, Why hast Thou dealt thus?"

Although Son is used in the chapter—Luke 2—yet in the original text the word is "Child." So we see that Mary never called Him "Son," nor did He ever call her "Mother."

When He had occasion to speak to her, it was "woman." You remember when the wine became exhausted at that feast in Cana of Galilee; she was there. Maybe she thought that of all present, she had a right to bring to His notice the needs which existed. So she said, "They have no wine." His reply was, "Woman what have I to do with thee, mine hour is not yet come." But there's one thing the Holy Spirit has put down in the favor of the

mother of Jesus, and it's this, "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it." There's a word for our hearts as God's people. Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it. The one who is authoritative—"God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past to the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us in His Son." Whatsoever He sayeth unto you, do it. "Behold a virgin shall conceive." So when we turn to Luke's Gospel, chapter 2, we find the fulfillment there of that prophecy. Verse 7, "She brought forth her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn." There are those who believe that Mary remained the ever virgin. They not only believe it but they teach it. Here is a scripture which refutes any such thought or expression as that. The firstborn son. Whenever we make mention of the firstborn, there certainly must be a secondborn. We might have one without having two, but if we make mention of the first there certainly must be the second. You know when God said that He was going to pass through the land of Egypt, and there was death forthcoming for the firstborn, if they were not sheltered by the blood. He said nothing in connection with the secondborn. The secondborn is immune, you see. Nothing mentioned in connection with that; it's the firstborn. So it was the firstborn of Egypt which was slain. The firstborn was exposed to death. The Lord Jesus Christ, as man, He's the firstborn of the woman, and He died. "He died that we might be forgiven. He died to make us good; that we might go, at least, to heaven, saved by His precious blood." Christ died for the ungodly.

There is a dear old brother, who is now in the glory—Ben Tink Demerritt, Key West, Fla. He's passed on and passed in, but he being dead yet speaketh. You might wonder how. If you ever go to Key West and visit the cemetery there, look up his grave. You'll find a tombstone there. The epitaph is very simple. The name is there—Benjamin H. Demerritt, then in double inverted commas, "Christ died for the ungodly." He being dead yet speaketh.

He was the firstborn, so He died. Now those of us who have trusted Him; we're the born again ones. So you see we're immune to death and judgment. There are lots of people who don't believe that, although they confess to the truth of the new birth.

You know a story is told of a company of young men in Canada, who decided to go out on the big hunt. They formed a party and they were all birds of a feather—young men inexperienced. They knew nothing of a big hunt. One of them was a little more wise than the rest and he said, Look here, is there any one in our party who knows anything about what we are going to undertake; ever been on a big hunt before? Well, it went around the circle and they all said, No, no, no, no! Well, he says, it's foolish for us to set out like this. If trouble comes we won't know what to do. Well, that was agreed upon. One of them said, Well, I'll tell you what, we'll just break our rules and carry with us one experienced person. After all they didn't need any more. One experienced man in the company was sufficient. So they sought a certain man, who they knew was experienced along those lines. They said to him, Will you go with us? They explained everything to him. Why, he said, Yes, I'll be glad to go. The day came when they set out. They weren't out on the prairie very long before there was a prairie fire. They had never seen a prairie fire before and they didn't know what to do. This experienced man did and he waited—did the man, until they were almost stifled by the smoke. They could almost feel the heat. They were panic stricken. Well, the man was just as cool as he could be. He had seen prairie fires before. He knew how to cope with the situation. So he put his hand in his pocket, took out a match safe, from which he took a match, scraped it and put it down in the dry grass at his feet. Well, I needn't tell you what happened. The same wind which was bringing the fire down on them, carried a fire from them. When an area sufficient had been burned he turned to them and said, "You men, stand on the burnt ground and defy the flames." So they did; they stood on

the burnt ground. All the fuel for feeding the fire had been burned toward the direction of the fire and as the fire came down and met the burned margin, it went out. Those young men were safe. So is every sinner who is standing on the burnt ground. The Lord Jesus Christ passed through the flames of God's judgment in order that sinners might be saved. Abraham of old learned the truth of it and he opened his mouth and cried to God; he acknowledged that he was but dust and ashes. All the incinerators of the world couldn't burn one atom of dust, and the ashes show that fire has already done its work. So the believer is fireproof, because he is in Christ, who passed through judgment.

So here is the prophecy fulfilled. The firstborn is brought forth, put into a manger. Think of that! The Son of God cradled in a manger; no room for them in the inn. See the Word of God distinctly emphasizes that little pronoun "them." No room for "them" in the inn. It doesn't say that there was no room in the inn, but no room *for them*. Joseph, the husband of Mary, couldn't pay the price of the room in the inn, and so the next best was the stable. Think of it! That's the One whom God offers to sinners as the Saviour. That's the Saviour whom lots of people refuse to have. God's Son; the Firstborn, Mary's Firstborn; the Firstborn among many brethren; the First-begotten from the dead.

Now when we turn to Matthew's Gospel, we find something else. Chapter 12, "Then certain of the Scribes and of the Pharisees answer, saying, Master, we would see a sign from Thee. But He answered and said unto them, An evil and an adulterous generation seeking after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas." The people asked for a sign. Faith never seeks after signs. God has spoken and that is sufficient for Faith. Here are these people and they were just in God's sight as Ahaz was. The Scribes and Pharisees answered saying, "Master we would see a sign from thee." "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign." So the

Lord Jesus Christ just tells them in few words the story of Jonah. A story which so many people do not believe and will not receive; a fish story they say. But it is true. The only one to corroborate what Jonah himself wrote was the Lord Jesus Christ, and I'll tell you, beloved people, we couldn't have a greater authority, than the One who gave us what He knew concerning it. Just four short chapters of Jonah tells us his own story. After he has written the four short chapters he passes off the scene; nothing more is said in connection with him until Christ comes, and these people want a sign. Well, now, He says if it's a sign you want, history is going to repeat itself. As Jonah was so must the Son of Man be. Those two little words in the English language, which are closer than twin sisters or brothers—as and so. If we use the one we must necessarily use the other. “As Moses lifted up the serpent in wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up.” And so the Lord Jesus says, you've had your sign; you know the story of Jonah; as Jewish people you should know the stories of the Jewish prophets. Doubtless they did and that's why the Lord Jesus Christ could refer to it. In referring, you see, to the story of Jonah, He just in short spoke to those people of two things true of Himself, and those two things—death and resurrection. So Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. That's Paul's word to the Corinthian saints. He's writing to believers now and he can say, “Christ died for our sins.” When Paul writes the story he says, “Christ died for the ungodly.” It is only when a sinner realizes that Christ took his place in death, that he furthermore realizes the truth as given by Peter, Who himself bear our sins in his own body on the tree. So here's the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ brought before us in the word concerning Jonah. As Jonah was so must the Son of Man be—down into the bowels of the great fish as a result of disobedience—down to the depths of woe Christ came to set me free as the result of obedience. Now there's something in itself a paradox. We can quite understand why disobedi-

ience should be followed by death. By one man sin entered the world and death by sin, so that death passed upon all men for that all have sinned. By the disobedience of one many more were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. I'm going to tell you something; I'm stating it because I believe it to be the truth, and it is this. The most unreasonable thing with which you or I could come in contact is the death of Christ. Why God should enter into judgment with His blessed Son for my sins is something I can't understand. If I sat down and started to satisfy myself on the ground of reason, I'd never get any place, would I? Why, the further I sought to reason the further I would diverge, and I'd be plunged into the depth of dilemma, as a result of my reasoning. It's an unreasonable thing, but when Paul speaks to the Roman saints, he tells them what should be true of them as saints of God by calling; he says this is your reasonable service. It's reasonable that we should live for the One who died for us. Very reasonable indeed. So here is the death of Christ in the going down of Jonah, but with this difference; Jonah went down because of disobedience; Christ went down because of obedience. Now we know the story of Jonah, how that after the awful bitter experience, he says, "Salvation is of the Lord." That's the prayer he prayed; Jonah prayed. Prayer you know speaks of dependence. Often times we pray to be taken out of trouble, but had we prayed earlier we would have been kept out. It's better for us to be kept out than to be taken out. Prevention is better than cure. I'm going to tell you a little experience of mine in one of the islands connected with the people of the Lord there. There was a man in our fellowship who went out on the commonage and felled a certain area for his farming purposes. A poor dear dumb fellow there; as deaf as dumb; he went out and saw it and thought he would just take it. He took the piece of ground away from him, so he went and ask him, in the sign language, if it was he. He said, yes. Well, don't you plant it now, he said. Now there was a

man with whom he couldn't reason; he couldn't understand an argument; couldn't hear; couldn't speak back. When the time came, this man, the dumb man, utilized the piece of ground which the fellow thought really belonged to him, for it was commonage. Well, he threatened to beat him, which he did. He came to see me. It happened to be on a Prayer Meeting night. I had my things on ready for Prayer Meeting when he came to the door. He said, Brother Hall, I'd like to have a word with you. All right, come in and have a seat. I said, Wife you go on and I'll follow as soon as I can. So he told me the story. I've come to you for advice, he said. Well, now, I said, if it's advice you want I'll tell you what I think you ought to do; I'll tell you what I would do. He sat there with his hand under his chin. I thought he was taking in what I was saying, and when I was all through he arose and said, "I'll beat him if they hang me." I said "Good-night, brother, I'm going to Prayer Meeting." That was Thursday evening. At twelve o'clock on Saturday his threats were executed. The whole town was in alarm because of it. The commissioner was his friend and he thought because of that he would not be arrested, but the Commissioner arose to the situation; wrote the warrant of his arrest; put it into the hands of the Constable who went on and executed it. The next morning, Lord's Day morning, I went in to see him in the prison. His hand was tremendously swollen. I said, What ails your hand. Oh, he said, that's what happened yesterday when I was hit with a box. "Well," I said, "brother, you came to me for advice; I gave it to you and you said you were going to beat him and you've done it. So here you are." Well, I went home and brought in my little remedies, because I saw he was in for blood-poison if something wasn't done. I fixed him up. Now then, brother Hall, will you stand my bail. I said not a bit of it; not a bit of it. If one half-penny would keep you out of jail, you'll go there as far as I'm concerned. I'll not identify myself with evil. Then he told the story that brother Hall wouldn't take him out of jail. The one who

told me, I said, Did he tell you that brother Hall tried to keep him out. No, he didn't tell that. I said, "Well there you are. I strove to keep him out, but he was bent on going in, and in he went." Jonah went down and he went down, for we believe that God allowed him to. Had he prayed, I verily believe he would have been kept out of such an experience. He prayed to be taken out and the same God who heard that prayer would have heard the prayer to keep him out. What I'm always amazed at is this, How did Jonah know the direction of the temple when that great fish was swimming along with him. As a Jew, you see, he must face Jerusalem when he prayed, and so he says I'll set my face toward the temple. There's a vast difference between him and Daniel. Daniel could look out of that open window which was never closed. He wasn't a defiant man; his window being opened toward Jerusalem. I verily believe had his window been closed he never would have opened it; he would have prayed in secret, but his custom was to pray with his window opened, that's why his enemies could see him on his knees agonizing with his God. Had Jonah been a praying prophet instead of a fleeing prophet, he would have been kept out of trouble. But now being in, he prays to be taken out of trouble, hence his cry—Salvation is of the Lord; that's Jonah's faith. God speaks to the great fish and he vomits him out on dry land. So in Jonah's going down, we get the picture of Christ in death; there's the sign; and his being vomited out by the great fish on dry ground is a beautiful picture of the resurrection of Christ coming up. So Christ died for our sins; Christ died for the ungodly. Now when we preach the death and resurrection of Christ, then we are giving to the world the whole story as God would have it given. But now, something more, what is it? Matthew 24, verse 29, "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man, in heaven; and then shall all the

tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory." Here's another sign. The coming of the Son of man. He came down when the fulness of time was come to be the Saviour of the world. The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins. "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." Now that's the best news that ever could be uttered. We all take up the newspapers every day and we look for the headlines, and often times certain things appear in the newspapers which are not true, and yet the world is after the news. What's the news? Here's trusty news. "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." That's the news from a far off country. Well now, having been here, He is despised and rejected of men. You notice when Isaiah prophesies concerning Christ in the 53rd chapter, he doesn't say he was despised. Do you notice when he prophesies concerning the birth of Christ he says, "Unto us a Child is born." He used the present tense of the verb for the future happening; 750 years, as chronology gives us, Isaiah's prophecies were fulfilled in connexion with Christ's coming, and yet he says, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given." In that famous 53rd chapter, which brings before us the person of the Christ before the eyes of God his Father in this scene, the tender plant, but before the eyes of the world a root out of a dry ground; that's what the world thought of him. Nothing of Him, yet He is despised and rejected of men. Although Isaiah spoke in that way in connection with a future happening, it's the present day truth today, that Christ is despised and rejected of man. A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Now the world is talking peace. Peace; thank God there is peace. There is peace in the heart of every sinner who has trusted Christ. Peace! The angels said or praised God saying, at His birth, Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will toward man. Ask

of me a sign. The height above or the depth beneath; the two extremes The Lord Himself shall give you a sign. The virgin conceived and brought forth her Firstborn Son. Where? On earth. Now here are the three places, so to speak. The height above, the depth beneath, and here is the earth, the middle place. So the Son of man has come. He came to this earth and He came down as the One whom God had sent to establish peace. Men refused Him, they wouldn't have Him. He came unto His own and His own received Him not, but unto as many as received Him to them gave He the right (not the power). There isn't a sinner who has ever had the power to become a child of God. Not by works of righteousness, which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us. But God gives the right; and I'll tell you every person has a right to accept a gift. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." And so the angels praised God saying, Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace. But when we turn to Luke 19, we find another story. Will you turn and let's see it together, because it's just the relative side of things, I believe. Luke 19, verse 37, "And when He was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, (we had a little about it this afternoon), the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice, for all the mighty works that they had seen; Saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord; peace in heaven, and glory in the highest." Angels praised God when He came to earth; men praise God when He goes back. God sends peace to this earth in the person of His blessed Son; the world wouldn't have Him, and so God says, Since the world has rejected and will not have you, I'll take you back up here, and He's up there. Glory to God in the highest, peace in heaven. Faith points to the right hand of God, and seeing Him there, a risen glorified Saviour, says, He is our peace. But He's coming back; the sign of the Son of Man. He's coming to judge

this world. And He's going to judge it in righteousness. Revelation chapters 4, 5 and 6 gives us three thrones. Chapter 4 gives us the throne of Christ as the Creator. Creation was for God's pleasure. Just how long God received pleasure out of creation, I couldn't tell you. But we know that when sin came in, then God manifested His grace in the redemption through Jesus Christ, and therefore, He redeems man to His glory. So chapter 4 is the throne of the creator. Chapter 5 is the throne of the redeemer. Chapter 6 is the throne of the Judge. So you see the importance of the person of the Christ. God trusted Him to create all things. He knew Him; He knew His work and, therefore, He committed the work of creation to His blessed Son. He knew that He was equally able to redeem and so the work of redemption did God commit to His blessed Son. "The Father judgeth no man but hath committed all judgment into the hands of His Son." God is so satisfied with the integrity of His blessed Son, Jesus Christ, that He's going to allow Him to judge the world. There we get the sign of the Son of man coming and every eye is going to see Him. I wonder if there's one with us this evening who will see Him as the judge. You know, Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, and the Jews came, and they weren't concerned so much about Jesus, but we want to see Lazarus; we want to see that man who was dead and buried for four days and here he is now sitting alive at the table; we want to see Lazarus, not Jesus so much. The Word of God is very plain in connection with that. That's the Jew, but when the Greeks came up they said, We would see Jesus. We want to see that man who possesses the power of life; we want to see Jesus. And so behold He cometh with clouds and every eye is going to see Him. Someone asked me not very long ago in Cat Island about this. Every eye shall see Him. I said, yes, God says so. They couldn't understand it. Well, I said, the time will come when the Lord Jesus Christ will come for His saints and then every eye of the redeemed is going to see Him; and then He'll come back to judge the

living nations and He's going to be seen then; and He'll come back at a later date still to judge the dead small and great and they are all going to see Him. The world, as we know, will know nothing of the second coming of Christ, when He comes for His own. The world will know nothing about it, but when He comes back with them; to be admired in all His saints; and oh, to think, beloved people, that we who deserve Eternal death, we'll be the means of admiration by the world of the Son of God. Those things are surely coming to pass. His death and resurrection are accomplished facts; His ascension at the right hand of the Father is an accomplished fact. There He ever liveth to make intercession for us. When He comes in the clouds of heaven, clouds of glory, it will be to execute judgment.

When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with His mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, we're going to be identified with Him, and His bride, His wife, the redeemed of the Lord. In closing I'd like to say, Christ was God's love-gift to the world; the Church is the Father's love-gift to Christ. Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it. So as we're passing through this scene, soon to pass out of it, our one object, as the people of the Lord, should be to live to please Him and to serve Him. That's what the Thessalonian saints did. They turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven. May we follow that example. Amen.

Light in Our Dwellings

(Continued)

Now, there are three reasons in Scripture for the *subordinate* place, in which it has pleased the Lord God, to place the *woman*:

1. On Creation ground

2. On governmental ground
3. On Church ground.

The first of them the Spirit of God gives us in 1 Cor. 11 where the divine injunction for the woman to have a "*cover*" *on her head* (as a sign that she is under authority), is connected, not with her being the first in the transgression, but with her position in creation, before sin had entered the world. Verses 3 to 9 in connection with verse 10 show this clearly. But we had better read the whole passage:

"But I would have you know that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God. Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head. But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth, with her head uncovered, dishonoureth her head, for that is even all one, as if she were shaven. For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered. For a man, indeed, ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man. For this cause ought the woman to have power" (or, as the margin says a *covering*, in sign, that she is under the power of her husband) "on her head, because of the angels. Nevertheless, neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord. For as the woman is of the

man, even so is the man also by the woman; but all things of God."

Thus we see, even from the *natural* point of view, God expressing His mind in most unmistakeable language, and branding with the mark of *shame* every woman who, even if only in her garment, disowns the place in which the Lord has put her. I can but refer to what has been said already on this subject in Ch. 2, when speaking on the principle of divine order.

I am afraid, that in some places on the continent these divine injunctions, as to the woman's attire, are not regarded as they ought to be. We know that national habit and attire have a great deal to do with this irregularity (if it can be called by such a mild name), and therefore Christians in those assemblies are accustomed to see women make their appearance *bareheaded* in the "House of the living God," or, as is often the case, removing the head cover, on entering, as if a decent attire in the street were of more importance than in the presence of God. But national habit and attire cannot be admitted in divine matters, especially in the church of God, as a plea for a custom, which constitutes a flat and standing contradiction to the distinctly expressed will of God, announced by His Spirit in the above passages to Christian women of all times and nations. The plea, that no offence is given to their brethren there, by their doing so, fails entirely. For the divine injunction, given by the Spirit, is not because of their brethren, but "because of the angels." And

are those pure heavenly attendants at the Divine courts above, whose very character it is, to *do His commandments, hearkening to the voice of His word*"; are those blessed and devoted "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation," and who "desire to look into these things," less to be regarded than our fellow Christians? To me, when reading those words: "*because of the angels*," it always was and is a solemn and yet most happy thought, that besides Himself, Whose presence alone is light, life and happiness, those blessed, pure, holy, heavenly messengers are present at the assemblies of God, to study the manifold wisdom of God in His Church with adoring hearts, and with their devoted and tender interest in everything that is passing there, because it concerns the glory of God and the welfare of His saints.

Truisms, such as: "a cover on the heart is better than a mere cover on the head," will not avail to cover *outward* disobedience; for where there is *inward* obedience and submission, it will be sure to appear outwardly too; and where the heart is under the power and authority of the word of God, the "*power*" on the *head* will not be refused. I feel quite sure, that this is done unintentionally, from a want of spiritual understanding of the bearing of that important and so much neglected portion of divine truth (I mean 1 Cor. II), but neglect or carelessness can be no excuse for disobedience to divine injunctions, just as little as the concluding words of the Apostle: "But if any

man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God," could be used as an encouragement for disregarding the injunctions just given by himself, as inspired by the Holy Ghost. Those words are merely added, by the grace of God in the writer, to put a check upon the contentious spirit of the Corinthians, and guard them against undue legal pressure upon the consciences of their sisters in Christ; as this, after all, could never be made a matter of church discipline. Therefore the Apostle does not speak here the authoritative language of an apostle of Jesus Christ, as in that case of the flagrant evil (1 Cor. 5), but he appeals to their own judgment; "*Judge in yourselves: is it comely, that a woman pray unto God uncovered.*" But to any godly woman under the sense of divine grace and truth, the apostle's speaking thus in grace, would not, in the least weaken, but, on the contrary, serve to increase her solemn sense of responsibility as to the divine truth, taught and insisted on in the above important passage of Holy Writ.—J. A. Von P.

(To Be Continued, D. V.)

How the Day was Spoiled

It was strange: we looked forward to having a bright, busy, happy day, but night has closed upon it, leaving us with bitter regrets, and well-nigh ashamed to turn to our God with confession of our failure. What was the cause?

1. Did we begin the day with prayer, a *felt* need for guidance and grace?

2. Did we **take** time for daily reading God's word, not as a form, but to feed upon it?

3. Did we remember to watch against the wiles of the devil, ever ready to deceive us?

4. At the first failure, did we turn at once with heartfelt confession to God?

5. Did we remember that "none of us liveth unto himself," and so seek unselfishly the happiness of others, and above all the glory of our Lord?

6. Did His love satisfy, so that no other object was allowed to usurp the first place in our heart?

Answer such questions as these, and you will likely find the reason for the spoiled day. Do you have many such?

—Sel.

**"MY GOD SHALL SUPPLY
all your need
according to HIS RICHES in glory by
CHRIST JESUS."**

(Phil. 4:19.)

"Friend, dost thou in thine inmost heart believe this word?
Then trust—yea, wholly trust thy *loving Lord*.
Trust *Him* each day, each hour, and thou shalt see
Each need supplied, *Christ's riches* used for thee."

A SURE CURE FOR WORRY

“Be careful, or anxious, for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus” (Phil. iv. 6, 7).

Through His wise and loving purpose
Clearly now thou mayest not see,
Still believe, with faith unshaken,
All shall work for good to thee:
Therefore when thy way seems darkest,
And thine eyes with tears are dim,
Straight to God thy Father hastening,
Tell thy sorrows unto Him.

— Sel.

Correspondence

Ques.—Will you give your thoughts as to Christmas celebrations—Christmas trees, etc? Are those things right for Christians?

Ans.—It all depends on the purpose of the heart. Generally speaking, the day is used as a public holiday, for feastings and pleasures in which our blessed Lord Jesus has no place. It were far better in such case that Christ's holy name were not associated with it. On the other hand, a large number *do* think of Christmas as a celebration of our Saviour's birth, and associate innocent pleasures with it for the children, such as a green tree hung with lights and little presents, often accompanied with suited hymns. Let us not condemn such, though thankful when the joy takes more spiritual forms.

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