Things New and Old

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

Volume No. 16

1948



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Published by ERIE BIBLE TRUTH DEPOT
912 French Street
Erie, Pa.

Printed in U. S. A.



"Then said He unto them, Therefore every scribe instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven, is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure THINGS NEW AND OLD." (Matt. 13:52).

VOL. XVI JANUARY, 1948 NO. 1

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Publishing Office:

ERIE BIBLE TRUTH DEPOT

30 East Ninth Street, Erie, Pa., U. S. A.

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All communications for the Editor should be addressed to F. B. TOMKINSON, 30 East Ninth St., Erie, Pa.

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The New Year

O, year by year we well may be
Deep exercised in soul to see
Just what is chaff and what is wheat,
As valued at the Judgment seat!

Look DOWN into the deep dark pit,
Whence we were digged—O think of it!
Look BACK—we only render praise
For Grace attending all our ways.

Look OUT upon the fields so white—
The gladsome harvest just in sight!
Look UP—the objects of God's love
Are fed with manna from above.

Look ON—for Glory is in view,
And Jesus waits to welcome you!
But do not ever look WITHIN,
Upon the wretched source of sin.

How bright the coming days would be,
If only souls from self were free,
And had the mind and heart absorbed
With CHRIST alone—Their Glorious Lord!

—E. J. C.

Twelve Months of Grace

As the New Year opened, a friend referred to it as "Twelve months of grace!" saying that in reflecting on the year which has just ended we do well to show our gratitude to Him who spared not His own Son, but who gave Him up for us all and with Him gave us all things. Thanksgiving rising from redeemed hearts must be pleasing to our God, yet how far our praise falls short when we think

of the greatness of the love of God shown to us in Christ Jesus! And not least of the proofs of His great love is that He accepts the poor praises we give. The angels excel in praise, yet they are not as dear to His heart as are those He names "His own." (John 13:1).

But if during the past twelve months the divine mercy has been manifested in such a touching way towards us, how many are the opportunities lost by us. The opportunities of twelve months lost! Do you think of that my brethren?

How often have we seen our neighbors wounded on the road and we have passed by!

What of Lazarus lying at our gate and we have failed to give him the crumbs of our abundance! We had good intentions of giving to him, but it was always put off until Lazarus would turn from his self-seeking and negligence to the way of love.

How often we have heard the command, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel," and we have quietly remained at home.

"Lay not up treasure on earth" and we use three-quarters of our time doing precisely the contrary.

"Love not the world" and we live exactly as others in pride, in luxury using our goods or our knowledge for the selfish enjoyment of our fleshly desires.

We say we are "strangers and pilgrims" nevertheless we settle ourselves in the world as if going to live in it forever.

The masses perish around us and we deplore it, but what do we do to save men from eternal perdition?

And what of unhappy child life? We pity the lot of all those little ones neglected and brought up in vice, and to calm our conscience we give a few dimes to a work of mercy.

The poor and sick of whom Christ said they were in prison, do we visit them and give them to eat?

Who will add up all the things we have left undone during the year? We are aware of some of them, but of others and the things we left undone, what is the grand total?

May the Spirit of God give us eyes to see the extent of our negligence!

That is past beyond recall, but what will be the sum of these things at the end of another year if we are given another year of earthly life? Will it be a repitition of last year's omissions and sinful negligence to make as great return as we may be able to?

"Love so amazing, so divine."

What does such love demand? Do we not often sing "demands our soul, our life our all?" Do we mean it, or have we been terrible hypocrites in singing such words?

O beloved, is it not the moment to awake from such a state of things? The shadows grow darker and the days of our service are becoming fewer. We live in a world full of difficulties and perils, in the midst of which there is little ear for the

divine message. Drawn into the vortex of business and pleasures, of the clash of opinions and of interests, the mad crowd has no ears for the voice of God, notwithstanding that for them it is a question of life or death. The choice is "Turn or burn!" Who of us will join our voice with that of the heralds of the Lord and without looking back, will enter into the conflict for souls? Who will this day consecrate himself to the service of God and will sound the trumpet, "For God and for Gideon?"

When we look back on the past, our coldness in witnessing for God appears as the greatest of our sins. Not to love Him when we do not know Him is not surprising, but to remain cold or indifferent after having tasted His love; what pain it must cause our blessed Lord!

O Lord Jesus, may we not love Thee in words only, but may it be in deeds and in truth; not with divided heart, but with all our being; not in any uncertain way, sometimes hot and sometimes cold, but constantly and with fervour in no limited or grudging manner but which is given without reserve and with joy! O Lord, always so full of grace towards Thy children, hear their prayer and say again to them in the language of former days: "Fear not, I have called thee by thy name, thou art Mine." (Isaiah 45:1).—Contributed by Arthur F. Pollock.

The Lost Crown

Among my early acquaintances in my Christian course was a young man, who was very zealous for

the honor of God upon earth, and also for the salvation of souls. But after a time, the interest of a young family, and his success in the world as a man of business, gradually drew his attention from eternal things to the cares of this life: and often, when those with whom he usually met in Christian fellowship were assembled together for worship, and speaking to each other of the things of God, he was to be found at home with his ledger, attending to his accounts, and arranging what must be done on the morrow.

This went on for several years, not, however, without many warnings from the Lord, and admonitions from his brethren, till he was nearly forty years of age, when consumption set in, and gradually he was reduced to almost a skeleton. Still his business absorbed his attention as long as he was able to be about. But the time came when he was laid aside entirely, and then he saw his sin and folly; and more than once when I have been with him in his last hours he has spoken to me in language as follows:

"O, how unwise and wicked I have been to do as I have done, to neglect the things of God for the cares of this life, and to prefer what I thought was my duty to my family, to the society and communion of His people. Although my conduct before men has been blameless, yet the last twelve years of my life are lost, quite lost. It would have been better for me had they never been given me, because I have used them for myself, and not for

the Lord. I have been careful about my own things, and not the things which are Jesus Christ's. I shall blush when I see His face. (1 John 2:28). I shall hold down my head as I go into His presence, for I have deprived Him of the joy He would have had in saying to me, 'Well done, good and faithful servant'; for how can He do so, when I have been so unfaithful?

"I know He has forgiven me, but O, what a loser I have been in my own soul! and I shall also be a greater loser, in that day of glory when the Lord Jesus will give to every one according to his works. (Rev. 22:12). I shall see others come forward in that happy day and take their crowns of reward, and their positions of honor in the glory for faithful service done to Him while they were upon earth; but I shall have none to receive, because I have allowed this present world to rob me of them. I shall rejoice to see others receive that which I have for ever lost through my unfaithfulness. (Rev. 3:11; 1 Cor. 3:15; 2 John 8).

"I am thankful that I know I am saved through His death. The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth from all sin, and I know I shall form a part of that favored company which will surround His throne in the glory, and join in singing that happy song, saying, 'Thou are worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, and hast made us unto our God kings and

priests, and we shall reign on the earth.' But where will be my honors of reward for faithful service done to the Lord in this world? (John 12:26; 1 Thess. 2:19). I shall have none; **I have lost my crown."**

(The reader will be careful to distinguish between the prize crown, or garland, given by the Lord Jesus to His people, for service done to Him while He is away (1 Pet. 5:24; Rev. 2:23), and the crown which all believers will have as kings and priests unto God; this crown is as sure and unalterable as eternal life).

"O, how foolish I have been to make such an exchange, to neglect that which is eternal for the things of this world, which are perishing with the using, and which I must now leave forever.

"How I have dishonored Him Who bought me with His own blood; and made me His forever. How unlike in my walk have I been to the apostle Paul, who, when speaking of the things which were gain to him, those he counted loss for Christ, and said, 'Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for Whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ.' (Phil. 3:7, 8).

"But how very different to this have I been, and because I have been so unlike him in my walk through life, I am unlike him now in my last moments. When he was about to leave this world he could say, 'I have fought a good fight, I have

finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me in that day.' (2 Tim. 4:6, 7, 8).

"But with me, it has been just the opposite to this: for instead of my having fought the good fight, I have been gathering of this world's goods, and seeking to enrich my family, and make myself comfortable and at home in this scene, which has crucified my Lord and Master. And therefore instead of finishing my course with joy, I am cut off in the midst of my days, and am full of sorrow and regret. Neither have I kept the faith, for I have been very unfaithful, and have not obeyed the voice of the Lord Jesus, when He said, 'If a man serve Me, let him follow Me.' This I have not done; I have not followed Christ through this world, therefore I know there is no crown of righteousness laid up for me, as there was for Paul. I have not loved His appearing; and the time for service which was given me is past, it is gone forever. The Lord in His great mercy is now taking me away from the earth, because He knows the longer I am left here, the more I shall be taken up with the things of this world. I own His goodness and love, and bow with thankfulness because it is His own hand which is doing it.

"O, dear Mr.—, let my loss be your gain, and let me entreat you to use faithfully every moment of time which is given you in this world and everything you possess, for Christ, and I shall have the

delight of seeing you in that day, have an 'abundant entrance in the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.' It will please me very much to see you receive from His hands, your crown and place of honor in the glory, while I shall take a much lower position, because I have lived to myself and not to Him who died for me and rose again."

To this I could make no reply, because I knew he had lived to himself; he had attended the meetings of God's people on the Lord's day, but in a cold, formal way, with but little enjoyment in his own soul, or help to others; and I was glad to hear him make such a full and beautiful confession before he left the world; and it has not been without its good effect upon my own soul; for when I have felt disposed to absent myself from the meetings of those who love and follow Christ, or to turn aside from the path of separation from the world, I have remembered the **lost crown,** and it has helped me to break the snare.

But the night in which he died was still more solemn. There were two or three Christians in the room with him, when he asked them why they had put out the light, they told him they had not done so, the light was burning as usual. He then knew his sight was gone, and therefore his end was very near. Then after lying quiet for a short time, he all of a sudden raised himself up in the bed with great amazement and delight, and lifting up both his hands said, "O! O! there is something going

to take place. The Lord Jesus is just about to leave His Father's throne, and come in the clouds to call His saints up to meet Him in the air. DON'T SLUMBER, NOR SLEEP." He then laid himself back on the pillow, and breathed his last.

This is the dying testimony of one who belonged to Christ and it very solemn not only as it regards the near approach of the Lord Jesus to gather up His saints to meet Him in the air; but also as to our faithfulness to Him during His absence. It also shows the great desire this dying brother had, that we should not do as he had done, but that we should be watchful and sober; and though I know that this is not the time for revelations, but believing the written Word of God, and yet many times since, when I have felt my eyes drowsy and myself tired of watching, I have remembered his dying words, and they have helped to quicken my steps onwards, to run with patience, the race set before me, looking unto Jesus; and surely whatever will help to do this in such days as these is very valuable when everything around us is so calculated to make us grow weary and faint in our minds, and hide that day of glory from our view; and when so many whom we believe to have eternal life through believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, yet like this young man, are allowing themselves to be deceived by present things, thinking they can make the best of both worlds, as if the Lord Jesus had not been down here, rejected and crucified.

Not that our salvation depends on our doings, but on what the Son of God has done for us, and those who are saved must hate iniquity; it cannot be otherwise. But Scripture tells very plainly that believers are saved by grace, through faith, and that not of themselves, it is the gift of God, "not of works, lest any man should boast, for we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Eph. 2:9, 10). And we are also told that God "hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. But it is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." (2 Tim. 1:9, 10). But it is also very clearly revealed in Scripture that those who are thus saved, may, through carelessness of walk, become blind and not see afar off, and forget that they were purged from their old sins. (2 Pet. 1:9). They are not able to look back to the cross, or on to the glory, with clearness and certainty, therefore they are not living in the enjoyment of that which is really true of them, and are great losers, both here and in that coming day. (1 Cor. 3:13-15; Phil. 4:4).

We are told over and over again in God's Word that the Lord Jesus will give to those that are saved, different positions in the glory, according to their

works. (Rev. 2:23; 21:12). They who have sown sparingly shall reap also sparingly, and they who have sown bountifully shall reap also bountifully. (2 Cor. 9:6). We read of some having that which they have been building, burnt up, but they themselves saved, yet so as by fire. (2 Cor 3:15). Others again will have an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (2 Pet. 1:11). The white stone, the new name, the hidden manna, are all marks of special favor for those who have been faithful to the Lord Jesus upon earth during His rejection. And O, how solemn the thought, that we who are linked up there with Him at God's right hand, should seek to please ourselves down here in this world where He is still despised and rejected; knowing too that He is coming soon, coming in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and before another twinkle we may see His face, and hear His voice, and be with Him for ever. How very important therefore it is, that God's people should ever remember that beautiful exhortation, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not **in vain in the Lord.**" (1 Cor. 15:58).—Beams of Light from the Book of Books.

Short Papers On Church History

PAUL APPEARS BEFORE FELIX

The accusers of Paul were not long in finding their way to Caesarea. "And, after five days,

Ananias, the high priest, descended with the elders, and with a certain orator named Tertullus, who informed the governor against Paul" (Acts 24.) In a short speech, full of flattery and insinuating art, Tertullus accuses Paul of sedition, heresy, and the profanation of the temple.

Felix then signified to Paul that he had an opportunity of answering for himself. And now, we may say the apostle of the Gentiles is once more in his right place. However humiliating his circumstances, he is still God's messenger to the Gentiles, and God is with His beloved servant. The Jews were silent; and Paul, in his usual straightforward manner, met the charges.

Not many days after this, Felix entered the audience chamber with his wife Drusilla, and sent for Paul. They were evidently curious to hear him discourse "concerning the faith of Christ." But Paul was not the one to gratify the curiosity of a Roman libertine and a profligate Jewish princess. The faithful apostle, in preaching Christ, spoke plainly and boldly to the conscience of his hearers. He had now an opportunity in his bonds which he could otherwise scarcely have obtained. "And, as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled." And little wonder. If we are to believe the historians of his own day, Josephus and Tacitus, a more unprincipled or dissolute couple never sat before a preacher. But, though conscience-stricken, Felix remained impenitent. Fearful condition! "Go thy way," said he, "for this

time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." But that convenient season never came. "But after two years, Porcius Festus came into Felix' room; and Felix, willing to shew the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound."

PAUL APPEARS BEFORE FESTUS AND AGRIPPA

Immediately after the arrival of Festus in the province, he visited Jerusalem. There the leading Jews seized the opportunity to demand Paul's return. Their plea, doubtless, was that he should be tried before the Sanhedrim, but their real purpose was to kill him on the way. Festus refused their petition. He invited them, however, to go down with him to Caesarea and accuse him there. The trial took place, and resembles that before Felix. It is quite evident that Festus saw clearly enough that Paul's real offence was connected with the religious opinions of the Jews, and that he had committed no offence against the law; but at the same time, being desirious to ingratiate himself with the Jews, he asks Paul whether he would go to Jerusalem to be tried there. This was little better than a proposal to sacrifice him to Jewish hatred. Paul, being well aware of this, at once appealed unto Caesar—"I appeal unto Caesar."

Festus was no doubt surprised at the dignity and independence of his prisoner. But it was his privilege as a Roman citizen, to have his cause transferred to the supreme tribunal of the Emperor at Rome. Then Festus, when he had conferred with

the council, answered, "Hast thou appealed unto Caesar? unto Caesar shalt thou go" (Acts 25:12).

So far as the eye of man can see, this was Paul's only recourse under the circumstances. But the hand and purpose of the Lord were in it. Paul must bear witness for Christ and the truth in Rome also. Jerusalem had rejected the testimony to the Gentiles; Rome, too, must have its share in rejecting the same testimony, and in becoming the prison of the witness. But in this Paul is highly favoured of the Lord. His position resembles that of his blessed Master, when He was given up to the Gentiles by the hatred of the Jews; only the Lord was perfect in it all, and He was in His true place before God. He came to the Jews—that was His mission: Paul was delivered **from** the Jews—that was the difference. Christ gave Himself up, as we read, "Who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God." Part of Paul's commission runs thus: "Delivering thee from the people and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee."

PAUL APPEARS BEFORE AGRIPPA AND BERNICE

It happened about this time that Agrippa, king of the Jews, and his sister, Bernice, came to pay a complimentary visit to Festus. And as Festus knew not how to state Paul's case to the Emperor, he took the opportunity of consulting Agrippa, who was better informed than himself on the points in question. The Jewish prince, who must have known something of Christianity, and had no doubt heard of Paul

himself, expressed a desire to hear him speak. Festus readily acceded to the request. "Tomorrow," said he, "Thou shalt hear him."

The apostle is now to have the privilege of bearing the Name of Jesus before the most dignified assembly he has ever addressed. Jewish kings, Roman governors, military officers, and the chief men of Caesarea assembled "with great pomp" to hear the prisoner give an account of himself to Agrippa. It was no mean audience, and it is perfectly clear that they regarded the prisoner as no mean person. Festus, having acknowledged the difficulty in which he found himself, referred the matter to the better knowledge of the Jewish king. Agrippa courteously signified to Paul that he was permitted to speak for himself. We have now come to one of the most interesting moments in the whole history of our apostle.

The dignity of his manner before the judges, though he stretched out a hand that was chained to a soldier, must have deeply impressed his audience. The depth of his humiliation only manifested more strikingly the moral elevation of his soul. He thought neither of his chain nor of his person. Perfectly happy in Christ, and burning with love to those around him, self and circumstances were completely forgotten. With a dignified deference to the position of those who surrounded him, he rose, in the honest declarations of a good conscience, infinitely above them all. He addressed himself to the **conscience** of his audience, with the boldness and

uprightness of a man accustomed to walk with God, and to act for Him. The character and conduct of the governors are thrown into painful contrast with the character and conduct of the apostle, and show us what the world is when unmasked by the Holy Ghost.

Paul addresses King Agrippa as one well versed in the customs and questions prevailing amongst the Jews; and he so relates his miraculous conversion and his subsequent career as to act on the conscience of the king. By the clear and straightforward narrative of the apostle he was not far from being convinced; his conscience was awakened; but the world and his own passions stood in the way. Festus ridiculed. To him it was nothing more than wild enthusiasm—a rhapsody. He interrupted the apostle abruptly, and "said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad." The apostle's reply was dignified and self-possessed, but intensely earnest; and, with great wisdom and quickness of discernment, he appeals to Agrippa.

"I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness. For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner." Then, turning to the Jewish king, who sat beside Festus, he made this direct and solemn appeal to him; "King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest. Then

Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian" (Acts 26:28).

For the moment the king was carried away by the power of Paul's address, and by the sharpened sting of his appeals! Then Paul made his reply—which stands alone. It is characterized by godly zeal, Christian courtesy, burning love for souls, and great personal joy in the Lord. "And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am, except these bonds."

With the expression of this noble wish, the conference closed—the meeting was dissolved. Agrippa had no desire to hear more. The appeals had been too pointed, too personal; and so mingled with dignity, affection, and solicitude, that he was overcome. Then "the king rose up, and the governor, and Bernice, and they that sat with them." After a brief consultation, Festus, Agrippa, and their companions came to the conclusion that Paul was guilty of nothing worthy of death or even imprisonment. "This man," said Agrippa, "might have been set at liberty if he had not appealed unto Caesar."

This was the Lord's care of His beloved servant. He would have his innocence proved and acknowledged by his judges, and fully established before the world. This being accomplished, the king and his companions resume their places in the world and its gaities, and Paul returns to his prison.

—A. M.

(To be continued, D. V.)

The Offerings of the Twelve Princes

(Numbers 7)

In reading this very long chapter, the question naturally is asked, Why is there so much apparently needless space given to offerings the same in every particular in the case of each of the twelve princes? The simple facts might have been stated in one-twelfth the space, and not one item have been omitted. But we well know that here, as everywhere else, all is perfect; and, if we have eyes to see, the very repetitions—never in God's Word, "vain repetitions,"— convey to us lessons in a way more striking and forcible than could have been done by any other means.

The position of this chapter is noteworthy. In the first chapter of the book, we have Israel ranged around the tabernacle in due order,—each tribe numbered and associated with its appropriate companions; next, we have the evil excluded from the camp; then, positive consecration, in the Nazarite; finally, as the crown upon it all, the consecrated offerings of the twelve princes. All this has much that is simple in its application to ourselves. The proper centre is Christ; round Him, in God's eyes, even if we fail to manifest it before the world, we are gathered. Each one numbered,—not one forgotten or left out. "He calleth His own sheep by name," —none so insignificant as to be needless. Each, too, is in his proper position, associated with those to whom he ministers and from whom he receives that which is lacking in each—thus tempered together,

"fitly framed together," no part lacking, the "whole body maketh increase unto the edifying of itself in love." Equally simple and important is the exclusion of defilement,—whether defiled persons, as in I Cor. v., or defiled things, as in Col 3., I Pet. 2. Resulting from this putting off the deeds of the old man is the full consecration, in a threefold measure, of the Nazarite, who shows us what the separation of Christ was,—"For their sakes I sanctify Myself," which is the example for us, "that they also might be sanctified through the truth." Now comes the presentation of offerings, acceptable and well-pleasing, because in their proper position, springing out of proper relationships and conditions of heart.

The material of the offerings, whether of utensils or sacrifices, spoke of Christ. The bowls and chargers were of silver—the white metal of redemption,—in itself suggesting both the price paid and the effect wrought. This was the first part of the offering of each prince. God begins with redemption: it is for Him the ground upon which He can have to do with us in grace. He would have us remember this, and in our approaches to Him to have the same thoughts. These silver utensils were filled with fine flour mingled with oil. The flour reminds us of Him who, as a perfect Man, walked here for God. Subjected to the grinding force of circumstances and trials, it only the more clearly manifested the fine flour of a perfect humanity. The oil mingled with the flour speaks of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit who was with Him, in

Him from the moment of His conception. Here, then, we have the person of Christ. The gold was typical of divine glory, and so of Him who perfectly glorified God in what He was and what He did. He was the brightness — the effulgence of His glory, the express image — the character, the imprint of His person. "I have glorified Thee on the earth." Fitly following the silver of redemption and the meal of His perfect humanity is this gold which tells how perfectly God was manifested and glorified. The incense was, to God, fragrant of Christ, all of whose garments smell of myrrh and cassia and aloes. "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." God has found His delight in Him. "His name is as ointment poured forth." Let us ever remember that Christ is inexpressibly dear to God. And how beautifully appropriate is it that the gold of divine glory should contain the incense of a precious Christ! It is so all through. When we see God's glory manifested, we will find the sweet savor of Christ present. Whether we look back at creation, —nay, before that (Prov. 8), or at the incarnation, or up into those regions where all is gold, we will find that this gold—this manifestation of glory is, as it were, the receptacle for sweet incense, the means of presenting to us the value of Christ in God's eyes.

Next come the sacrifices, beginning with the burnt-offering. "One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the first year." Unity seems to be suggested here, in the one, diversity in the three kinds

of animals. There is but one burnt-offering; it is enough, and it is complete. The bullock, the animal of strength and service, shows us Christ in the perfection of His strength, in the full submission of His service, yielding Himself up wholly to God in death. The ram speaks of consecration—that obedience unto death which could stop at nothing short of that full measure of devotion. The lamb, again, reminds us of that meekness which could say, "Not as I will, but as Thou wilt." Blessed Lord! All, all was laid willingly upon the altar. "I delight to do Thy will" was the language of Thy heart; as the bullock in perfect strength, the ram in devotedness, the lamb in meekness, Thou didst lay down Thy life for God's glory!

For the sin-offering, there is but the single kid of the goats. One there must be, or the view of Christ's work would be incomplete; more than one was not needed, for here the single thought of judgment against sin, borne fully, was presented. There is no multiplication of the sin-offering. It was not a sweet savor unto God, it was a solemn reminder of our sins, and of penalty borne and debts paid; but this thought, while present, does not dominate God's view of Christ, nor should it our worship of Him.

Lastly come the peace-offerings, beginning with two, which would seem to remind us of God—food for both,—and then three series of fives—God with man perfectly manifested. What variety is here! The ox, as we have seen, means service, strength.

God calls us to share with Him in that view of Christ's work which is for us as well as for Him. "Five rams" gives us our share in a devotedness which, while it was to God, was for us. The goats are not here sin-offerings, but sweet savors to God, yet of those animals were ordinarily used for sin-offerings. He who was made sin for us was also most perfectly well pleasing to God—never more so than when made sin. He is also our food. How these twos and fives and threes tell us that God would have us "eat, — yea, drink abundantly"! The peace-offerings are not limited — their very numbers tell us this. "God with us" is the only measure of communion.

Such, imperfectly, is the character of these offerings of the twelve princes. Have we not seen, in going over them, why God could repeat each offering over in full at each presentation? Christ is the subject, and He never becomes tedious to the Father. He dwells with delight upon each aspect of the Lord's person and work. He lingers over their descriptions, He goes back to them with fresh delight. He makes no general summary including all, but enters with keen delight into each detail.

Does not all this speak to our conscience and heart? If God thus protracts the enumeration of the oft-repeated excellencies of His Beloved, shall we not learn to imitate Him, and never grow weary of dwelling upon them and of speaking of them to one another. It is unfamiliarity with the subject which leads one to weary of it. The enthusiast never tires

of thinking of what absorbs him,—the painter, his art,—the merchant, his business. So let it be with us. Let us learn, from those eighty-nine verses, to be such enthusiasts in regard to our blessed Lord,—so absorbed with Him, that we can truly say.

"Jesus, of Thee we ne'er would tire."

Notice, too, that these princes have in their offerings a point of resemblance. Differing in name, each one significant of some special truth needed by their tribe; differing in tribe, each one with special weakness needing special grace; they meet in a common point, and that is Christ. Here the need, whatever it may be, has been fully met: the grace, whatever it may be, is "the grace that is in Christ Jesus." They are linked together, and covered over, as it were, by their offerings. How simple the lesson! Around Christ, occupied with Him, all His people find all their needs met, and themselves knit together by that which occupies them.

But, lastly, in this twelvefold repetition of the offerings, we see how God regards individual devotedness. The offerings of each one is noted by itself. This shows us that we are individuals. Our service, our trials, our worship, is viewed separately, and "in that day," every man shall have praise of God." H. and F., 1892.

Letters to Young Christians

THE CUP OF BLESSING

My Dear Young Friends:

I feel sure that you have already understood from Scripture that "the cup" must be included in the Lord's Supper. And you know that unless you "drink the cup" as well as "eat the bread" you do not "shew" forth or "announce" the death of the Lord in the manner required by the Word of God (1 Cor. 11:26).

Let me, nevertheless, talk to you briefly about "the cup." Only a moment's consideration will shew you why the cup is as necessary as the loaf. So soon as you recollect that the Supper was instituted by our Lord as a memorial or remembrance of death, the reason for the loaf being followed by the cup must be apparent at once. The former speaks of His body, but the latter of His blood, which is an undoubted figure of His death.

Taking the bread, the Lord said to His disciples, "This is My body" (Matt. 26:26), and then taking the cup, He said, "This is My blood" (Matt. 26:28). He appointed two separate emblems, one to denote His body and the other His blood. The two, taken together, are significant of the Lord giving Himself as a sacrifice to God for us, and laying down His life for us.

But by the cup the blood of Christ is represented apart from the body, and therefore it most clearly points to the death of the Lord. While blood is in the body, it is said to be its life (Lev. 17:14), but when out of the body, it is the evidence that the body is dead. Hence, in order to proclaim the Lord's death, we must drink the cup, which is a figure of Christ's blood shed or poured out for us (Luke 22:20), as well as eat the bread.

On this account, you see for yourself what an important part in His Supper the Lord has given to the cup. And I am very glad if you do see this, and I hope that others may see it also. I am writing about it because

there are a great many (Roman Catholics and others) who think that eating the bread is sufficient and that drinking the cup is not necessary. You ought to be ready to help such persons, if you encounter them.

Probably it would at once occur to you to say to them that the bread alone does not set forth the sacrificial death of Christ. Only a part of His great work upon the cross is shown by the loaf, for it is by the blood of Christ that propitiation was made (Rom. 3:25). And you would remind them of the Lord's own words, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood." (Luke 22:20), and this short sentence should be conclusive.

Moreover, the fact that we are all enjoined to drink the cup ought to be sufficient, even if we are not able to give a reason for this injunction. Referring to the cup, the Lord said to His disciples, "Drink ye all of it" (Matt. 26:27), and in another Gospel we read that "they all drank of it" (Mark 14:23). The cup was evidently passed round to every one present that all might drink.

Also, in the Lord's later instructions about His Supper, given specially to Paul, we read twice over of "eating the bread" and also of "drinking the cup" (1 Cor. 11:26-28.) Such plain words should settle the matter for us once for all. They prove that it is not the Lord's revealed will that the cup should be denied to all His own or be reserved for a few of them only.

I expect you have noticed the striking recurrence of the word, "cup," in the four accounts of the Lord's Supper. The cup was, of course, the drinking vessel which the Lord handed to the apostles at the paschal table in Jerusalem. The contents of the cup are not directly specified, though we know from the Lord's own words that it contained "the fruit of the vine," of which He Himself had drunk previously (Luke 22:18).

You will remember that in our ordinary speech the word, "cup," is used to mean whatever it may contain. When we speak of "the cup that cheers," we mean the con-

tents rather than the container. And when Scripture says, "As often as ye . . . drink this cup," we know that the reference is to the contents of the cup, of which we drink.

A similar usage is found in other parts of Scripture. The psalmist sang, "My cup runneth over" (Ps. 23:5); he meant that blessings were poured so bountifully into his cup that it overflowed. So, in Nathan's parable, the prophet said that the little pet lamb of the poor man "did eat of his own meat and drank of his own cup" (2 Sam. 12:3); it shared the food and drink of its owner. And so when we "drink the cup" we drink of what is in the cup.

At the Lord's Supper, the cup containing "the fruit of the vine" was distributed by our Lord to all present. This act of sharing the cup is known in Scripture as an act of communion or fellowship. The whole company partook of the contents of the cup; it was a united action, in connection with the blood of Christ. So the apostle writes, "**The cup of blessing** which we bless, is it not the communion (fellowship) of the blood of Christ?" (1 Cor. 10:16).

This passage is an important one, bearing as it does on the subject of communion or fellowship, and it requires to be considered separately. But I can only now find space for a few remarks on the name given to the cup. It is called here, "**the cup of blessing** which we bless."

The cup is also called "the cup of the Lord" in two places, (1 Cor. x. 21; 11:27). This term stresses our solemn responsibility by partaking of the cup. But why is it called "**the cup of blessing**"?

There are more reasons than one, but I will only mention the simplest and most obvious: because it is a contrast with the cup of wrath, which is the inevitable portion of those who are not cleansed from their sins by the blood of Christ. We read of such a cup elsewhere (Ps. 11:6; 75:8; Isa. 51:17; Jer. 25:15-18; Rev. 14:10; 16:19). The Lord, too, had a terrible cup to drink (Matt. 26:42; John 18:11). But at the Lord's Table we have a cup which is reminiscent

of the great volume of blessing procured for us by the death of Christ. He drank the cup of wrath; He gives us the cup of blessing, and it is very full and very sweet.

The words, "which we bless," are added. We "bless" when we give thanks. Thus Matthew and Mark say the Lord blessed for the bread, while Luke and Paul say He gave thanks. Matthew and Mark say He gave thanks for the cup, while Luke and Paul say He did the same for the cup as for the loaf, that is, He gave thanks.

So when we "bless" we do not thereby consecrate or hallow the cup, but we give thanks for the cup, because it is "the cup of blessing." Its holy memories awaken the silent thanksgiving and praise of our hearts, and before we "drink the cup," one gives thanks, speaking aloud to the Father and the Son on behalf of the whole company of believers present.

Much more might be said about the cup of blessing, but consider carefully and prayerfully what has already been said, and may the Lord give you understanding in all things.

—Bible Monthly.

We eat the loaf, Thy body given
Our sins to bear away,
We drink the cup, we show Thy death,
And thus Thy Word obey.

The Lord has kept us another year—
Trusting in Him we have naught to fear.
If it pleases Him, He may add many more
Years to our lives—while the best is in store
For us, and all, who belong to Him,
When we shall see and serve Him without sin
In our hearts, and to His pleasure be—
With Him, and like Him, eternally.

—J. F. P.

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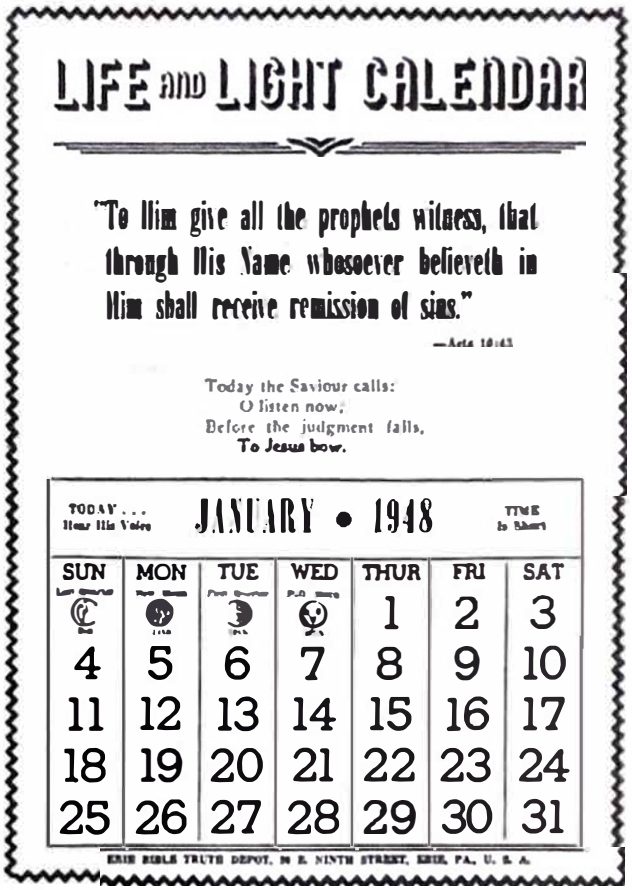
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"Then said He unto them, Therefore every scribe instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven, is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure THINGS NEW AND OLD." (Matt. 13:52).

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Publishing Office:

ERIE BIBLE TRUTH DEPOT

30 East Ninth Street, Erie, Pa., U. S. A.

Editor's Notes

All communications for the Editor should be addressed to F. B. TOMKINSON, 30 East Ninth St., Erie, Pa.

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He Leadeth Me

He leadeth me.
In pastures green? No, not always.
Sometimes He Who knoweth best
In kindness leadeth me in weary ways
Where heavy shadows be;
Out of the sunshine warm and soft and bright,
Out of the sunshine into darkest night.
I oft would yield to sorrow and to fright
Only for this: I know He holds my hand.
So, whether led in green, or desert land
I trust, although I cannot understand.

He leadeth me.

Beside still waters? No, not always so.
Oft times the heavy tempests round me blow,
And o'er my soul the waves and billows go.
But when the storm beats wildest, and I cry
Aloud for help, the Master standeth by
And whispers to my soul: "Lo, it is I."
Above the tempest wild I hear Him say:
"Beyond the darkness lies the perfect day;
In every path of thine I lead the way."

So, whether on the hilltops, high and fair
I dwell, or, in the sunless valleys, where
The shadows lit—what matter? He is there.
And more than this; where'er the pathways lead
He gives to me no helpless, broken reed,
But His own hand, sufficient for my need.
So where He leads me I can safely go.
And in the blest hereafter I shall know
Why in His wisdom He hath led me so.

—Sel.

Russia's Destiny
in the
LIGHT OF PROPHECY

Editor's note:

As this booklet has been out of print for many years, and believing that the subject will be of intense interest to our readers, especially since Russia is so prominently in the news, we purpose, D. V., reprinting the article in our magazine, in serial form.

May the prayerful study of prophetic Scriptures turn the heart more heavenward while we wait for God's Son from heaven, our Deliverer from the coming wrath.

The events now transpiring around us in the political world cannot fail to awaken an interest in every thoughtful mind. We are living in critical times, and the eyes of nations are necessarily turned to the East.

We cannot too strongly impress upon the reader that Palestine is the prophetic centre of the earth. Prophecy has to do with the **earth**, and the destiny of all nations of the earth is in connection with the nation of Israel; for "when the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is His people; Jacob is the lot of His inheritance." (Deut. 32:8, 9.)

Scattered to the winds, and dispersed amongst all the countries of the world, as the Jews have been and are—down-trodden, despised, oppressed, and persecuted as they have been, and, to a great

extent, still are—nevertheless they exist today a standing and living witness to the truth of God's Word, who is pledged to fulfill the promises made unto the (Jewish) fathers.

These promises are yet to be fulfilled, for "it is impossible for God to lie," and if "blindness in part is happened to Israel," it is only "until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in," and then "all Israel shall be saved as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer ,and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." (Rom. 11: 25, 26.)

The affairs of the Jews, then, and matters concerning the land of Palestine, are the key to the Eastern problem, and the destinies of nations can alone be learnt in connection with that land and people. The Jewish people—and by this term we include the ten tribes now lost, but soon to be gathered again—are the earthly people of God, and none can meddle or injuriously treat them except at their own peril. Heavy judgments at the hand of God, "the God of Israel," will be poured upon those nations that more immediately concern themselves in their affairs, according to the words of the prophet, which are yet to be fulfilled: "Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem. And in that day I will make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces," etc. (Zech. 12:2-9.)

In a very special way, we believe, will Russia's destiny be bound up with the future history of Palestine and the Jews. It is clear, from Scripture, that in the last days of this world's struggle, immediately preceding the millennial reign of Christ, a great **northeastern** power will be in existence, and that this power will be the last to be dealt with on the mountains of Judea after that Israel is dwelling safely in the land of Palestine. (See Ezek. chaps. 38 and 39.

In the following pages we purpose examining the various prophetic scriptures that speak of this power, convinced that we are bordering on the times when these things, long since foretold, are about to be accomplished.

Our readers are no doubt familiar with the history of the Jewish people as presented to us in the Books of Kings and Chronicles—a history of departure from Jehovah their God, and declension from the beginning to the end. In the palmy days of Solomon's reign the throne of the Lord had been at Jerusalem (1 Chron. 29:23), and though, after that, the Lord bore with much patience the idolatry and iniquities of Israel and Judah, the time at length arrived when their rebellion and apostasy from Jehovah reached a climax, and in the days of Zedekiah (B. C. 610) large numbers were carried captive into Babylon. "Zedekiah . . . did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord his God, and humbled not himself before Jeremiah the prophet speaking from the mouth of the Lord . . . Moreover, all the

chief of the priests, and the people, transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen; and polluted the house of the Lord which He had hallowed in Jerusalem . . . They mocked the messengers of God, and despised His words, and misused His prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against His people, till there was no remedy. Therefore He brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword . . . He gave them all into his hand. And all the vessels of the house of God . . . all these he brought to Babylon. And they burnt the house of God," etc. (2 Chron. 36:11-22.) From this point the throne of the Lord was removed from Jerusalem, and power was committed to the hands of the Gentiles.

The times of the Gentiles (Luke 21:24) commenced at the Babylonish captivity, in the days of Nebuchadnezzar, when God wrote upon His people the solemn word, Lo-ammi—"not my people" (Hosea 1:9); and that sentence will remain upon them until the time of their glorious restoration to their own land, under their own Messiah, still rejected, but ere long to be recognized by them as the One "whom they have pierced." (Zech. 12:10.)

It will greatly assist the reader to remember that it is these "times of the Gentiles" that are described in the Book of Daniel, starting with Nebuchadnezzar and terminating with the coming of the Son of Man in glory, when the last of the Gentile powers, risen up in the blasphemous rebellion against God, shall have its dominion taken away, to give place

to the everlasting kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ. The great image of Daniel 22 presents to us the course of these Gentile empires as **one whole,** rather than in their separate or successional form.

—A. H. B.

(To be continued, D. V.)

Confidence and Suspicion

How beautiful is that condition among the people of God when they have the fullest confidence in one another; when dark suspicion is absent. Power, peace, love—all the sweet fruits of the Spirit are exhibited then, unhindered by that which must check. We look up into God's face with the confidence of simple faith: no cloud of suspicion hides His love from us. We look into our brother's face in confidence too—confidence in his character, his uprightness, his love; no suspicion casts its shadow on our thoughts of him. How lovely is such a state! How is it brought about? what is its basis?

For all true confidence must have a solid basis upon which to rest. That which has not is mere blindness or weakness, not the fruit of the Spirit of God. It is mere stagnation which, like a sluggish pool, hides beneath its quiet surface possibilities of corruption and disease. Such a negative state is always dangerous; it is like the calm which precedes the storm. The form of confidence without its reality is worse than worseless. Nor can it be said that this is a danger which does not frequently

threaten the people of God. If the confidence be a real one, resting upon a scriptural basis, why should it be so often shattered or replaced by lurking suspician? Let us then see what is the scriptural basis of true confidence and what are its characteristics.

Putting it negatively, we might say that it is not "confidence in the flesh." If I am ever to have confidence in my brother, I must first of all have none in myself. "I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing" (Rom. vii. 18). The abiding knowledge of this opens the way for deliverance from the "law of sin and death" through the "law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (Rom. viii. 2). The soul is brought out into an atmosphere of light and truth,—of love too, we may say—where we can have perfect confidence in Christ, because self is seen as it truly is. Self has been judged; the old nature has been learned, and, after the sharp pain of a hopeless struggle, we have accepted the sentence of death—"our old man was crucified with Him"—and passed out into the rest, peace and joy which are the portion (did they but know it) of all the people of God. "Christ is all." In the light of His love there is no room to have confidence in ourselves, no room to have suspicion of Him. Confidence thrives in such an atmosphere. The roots of suspicion — pride, selfishness, self-occupation — are judged and kept down. Our confidence in the Lord gives tone and character to the whole life. It is a characteristic of the new nature to trust.

But neither is this confidence based upon the flesh

in another. That which has been judged in ourselves is the same in our brethren. No flesh can glory in God's presence. "Let no man glory in men." How often do we need to be reminded of this. We instinctively desire to think well of others. It is humiliating to think that "no confidence in the flesh" has to be applied to our brethren as well as to ourselves; that they have the same nature as ourselves —the same weaknesses, the same temptations. We can understand how Cornelius looked upon Peter as one who was more than a man, and would do him reverence; and we, equally with Cornelius, are taught by the words of Peter, "I myself also am a man."

Instead of checking confidence however, this humbling discovery gives it true liberty. We are turned to Christ to see our brother in Him—and as we remember with all confidence our blessed Lord, we can trust Him for the work of grace, He has wrought in our brother. Was not it something like this which led the apostle, who had just said to the Galatians, "I am afraid of you" (Gal. 4. 11), to comfort himself with the words, "I have confidence in you through the Lord" (Gal. v. 10)? Looking at them as men in the flesh, seeing their legalism, their self-righteousness—he stood in doubt of them, did not know what to think of them; looking at his and their Lord whose work had been begun in their souls, he had confidence in them, **through Him,** that they would even yet extricate themselves from the fearful snare into which they had fallen. How blessed is

this! Our confidence in the Lord gives us confidence in His work in His people!

But it is **His** work in which we have confidence—the work of His Spirit upon the heart and conscience. The Spirit of God—the Spirit of truth—ever uses the word of truth, the word of God. The word of God does its work not merely upon the mind—"knowledge puffeth up"—but upon the conscience as well. That is ever the mark of the work of the Spirit of God. When we see one whose conscience is under the power of the word of God, we have confidence in him, because of the Lord's work in him. This is the basis of confidence. Here we have one who is judging himself and his ways by the word of God. We can trust God's work. How beautifully this is seen in the case of the Thessalonians: "But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil. And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you" (2 Thess. 3:3, 4). He was to put their obedience to a severe test—to command them to withdraw from brethren who were walking disorderly—but with the word and Spirit of God controlling their consciences, he had no fears for them. Here then we are at rest. Is there subjection to the word of God?—not merely its letter but its spirit—then we can trust one another.

What a safeguard we have here against the evil all about us. Satan's messengers may be clothed as angels of light — they usually are; good words and fair speeches easily deceive the hearts of the

simple. A gracious, pious manner may cover most deadly error. How shall we be on our guard against such? "If there come any unto you, and bring not this **doctrine**"—We look not at the man merely, but the doctrine he brings: is that according to the word of God? Though he were an angel from heaven (Gal. i. 8) we are to reject both him and his doctrine, if it is not. We have no doubt that there is a need for the people of God to be reminded even of these extreme cases of evil, "For many deceivers are entered into the world" (2 John 7-11).

It is evident that there may be degrees of confidence, varying according to the amount of subjection to, and knowledge of the word of God. Here is one whose conscience is sensitive as to what is termed moral evil. He is quick to detect and refuse the grosser forms of sins: we trust his moral character. On the other hand he may not have seen the truth that we are crucified with Christ to the world; hence he is not fully detached from it; he still seeks something here,

"Where naught can lasting joy afford."

Now where questions arise involving the pilgrim character of the Christian, calling for distinctions in spiritual judgment, and where perhaps no direct quotation from Scripture can be given, as "Thou shalt not steal,"—the brother cannot be trusted, for his life is not under the power of these truths.

Again, the brother may be under the power of much divine truth as to his individual walk, and we can have confidence in him personally; but suppose

he has never learned those truths of the word of God which relate to the Church of Christ, its nature and its responsibilities; suppose he not only ignores but refuses the scriptural principles which are to inform our consciences upon this most important subject, so closely affecting our Lord's honor: it necessarily follows that our confidence in him could not extend to his position on Church questions. The reader will easily think of other illustrations—all proving that the basis of true scriptural confidence is the subjection of a person to the word of God.

We might add, as growing out of this, that confidence can abide only so long as this subjection abides. It is sad, but perhaps necessary to remember that should one depart from this place of subjection, our confidence in him must depart also. Here is where the people of God are being constantly tested. We dare not follow any man blindly; our eyes must be ever upon the Lord. We shall then be able to appreciate our guides, for we will ever test them by the word of God.

Conversely, our confidence may grow, as we see knowledge of and obedience to the Lord's word increase. How blessed it is when such is the case! What joy there must be when lost confidence has been restored in a scriptural way. It was to the Corinthians, whose state had been so wretched, that the apostle writes, "I rejoice therefore that I have confidence in you in all things" (2 Cor. 7:16). But through what exercises did the saints have to pass before the apostle could say this—what carefulness,

what clearing of themselves, what vehement desire (vers. 10-15). They had been puffed up: they were now lowly and subject to God: his confidence is therefore restored.

And how fully can confidence be restored! Peter recovered to the Lord, was trusted as he never could have been before. Deliverance from error, when real and thorough puts one on a more solid footing than before. The past is forgotten, or remembered only to thank God for the change, and to remind us of our weakness.

In the epistle to Philemon we have a beautiful illustration of the power of confidence. Onesimus had defrauded his master and then run away from him. God had laid hold on him at Rome, and the grace which had rescued him was now to lead him back to his master to "adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour." It was a delicate matter. The master's feelings were naturally outraged; his resentment against his servant might be strong. But he has had confidence in the apostle, who therefore throws himself upon that confidence. Beautifully too does the apostle make use of his own confidence in Philemon, "Having confidence in thy obedience I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say. But withal prepare me also a lodging: for I trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you" (vers. 21, 22). How human is this and yet what divine grace is also exhibited in it.

Turn for a moment to that dark word, Suspicion. Is it not hateful as we look at it in the holy light of

what has been before us? It springs from a mind out of communion with God, ready to listen to the whisperings of the devil. It is he who sows the seeds of suspicion—of God, of our brethren, of all except ourselves. He would always make us have confidence in ourselves. What wreck has come in where suspicion has found a lodgment. Whisperings, backbitings, envy, take the place of love, joy, and peace. The Spirit is grieved and Satan triumphs. The worst construction is put upon what is done or said: the charge of falsehood is readily given, and even where the word of God is at work on the conscience, its efficacy is marred and hindered by wretched suspicion. Let us ever judge it as an evil thing to be put out of our hearts. Lack of confidence, loss of confidence, there may be—sometimes there **must** be, if we are to go on with the truth of God. But let us ever abide in the quiet, holy place —in His presence, "in all lowliness and meekness." Truth there must be, firmness there must be, patience too there must be; but let us cast suspicion from our hearts, as a thing hated of God.

—H &F. 1896.

Short Papers on Church History

PAUL'S VOYAGE TO ROME

A. D. 60

Acts 27. The time was now come for Paul's journey to Rome. No formal trial of the apostle had yet taken place. And, no doubt, wearied with the un-

relenting opposition of the Jews—with two years' imprisonment at Caesarea—with repeated examinations before the governors and Agrippa, he had claimed a trial before the imperial court. Luke, the historian of the Acts, and Aristarchus of Thessalonica, were favored to accompany him. Paul was committed to the charge of a centurion named Julius, of the imperial band; an officer who, upon all occasions, treated the apostle with the greatest kindess and consideration.

It was then "determined" that Paul should be sent, along with "certain other prisoners," by sea to Italy. The voyage, the storm, the shipwreck, and deliverance are recorded in full in Acts 27. Their deliverance was as complete as Paul had predicted it would be.

PAUL at MELITA — NOW MALTA

Acts 28. The inhabitants of the island received the shipwrecked strangers with no small kindness, and immediately lighted a fire to warm them. The sacred historian gives us a living picture of the whole scene. We see the persons described moving in it. The apostle gathering sticks for the fire—the viper fastening on his hand—the barbarians first thinking him a murderer, and then a god, from the sting being harmless. Publius, the chief man of the island, lodged them courteously three days; and his father, who lay sick of a fever, was healed by Paul laying his hands on him and praying for him. The apostle was enabled to work many miracles dur-

ing his stay on the island; and the whole company, for his sake, were loaded with many honours. We see God is with His beloved servant, and he exercises his accustomed power among the barbarians. As the concluding part of Paul's journey to Rome is so prosperous, that scarcely any incident in it is recorded we will only notice it briefly.

After a three months' stay, in Malta, the soldiers and their prisoners left in a ship of Alexandria for Italy. They touched at Syracuse, where they tarried three days; and at Rhegium, from which place they had a fair wind to Puteoli. Here they "found brethren," and while they were spending a few days with them, enjoying the ministry of brotherly love, the news of the apostle's arrival reached Rome. The Christians at once sent forth some of their number, who meth Paul and his friends at Appii Forum and the Three Taverns. A beautiful instance and illustration of the fellowship of saints. What must have been the feelings of our apostle on this first introduction to the Christians from the Church of Rome. His long-cherished desire was at last accomplished; his heart was filled with praise; "He thanked God," as Luke says, "and took courage."

PAUL'S ARRIVAL AT ROME

Along the Appian Road, most probably, Paul and his company travelled to Rome. On their arrival, "the centurian delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard: but Paul was suffered to dwell by himself with a soldier that kept him." Though he

was not released from the constant annoyance of being chained to a soldier, every indulgence compatible with his position was allowed him.

Paul was now privileged "to preach the Gospel to them that were at Rome also;" and proceeded without delay to act upon his divine rule—"to the Jew first." He sends for the chief of the Jews and explains to them his true position. He assures them that he had committed no offense against his nation, or the customs of the fathers; but that he was brought to Rome to answer certain charges made against him by the Jews in Palestine: and so unfounded were the charges, that even the Roman Governor was ready to set him free, but the Jews opposed his liberty. In fact it was, as he said, "for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain." His only crime had been his firm faith in the promises of God to Israel through the Messiah.

The Roman Jews, in reply, assured Paul that no report to his prejudice had reached Rome, and that they desired to hear from himself a statement of his faith; adding that the Christians were everywhere spoken against. A day was therefore fixed for a meeting at his own private lodgings. At the appointed time many came, "to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening." But the Jews at Rome, as at Antioch and Jerusalem, were slow of heart to believe. "And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed

not." But how earnestly and unweariedly he laboured to win their hearts for Christ. From morning till evening he not only preached Christ, but sought to persuade them concerning Him. What a lesson and what a subject for the preacher in all ages. Persuading men concerning Jesus from morning till evening.

The condition of the Jews is now set before us for the last time. The judgment pronounced by Esaias was about to fall on them in all its withering power—a judgment under which they lie to this day—a judgment which shall continue until God interpose to give them repentance, and to deliver them by His grace to the glory of His own Name. But in the meantime, "the salvation of God is sent to the Gentiles, and they will hear it;" and, as we know, blessed be His Name, they have heard it; we ourselves are witnesses of it. "And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came unto him; preaching the Kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him" (Acts 28:30, 31).

These are the last words of the Acts. The scene on which the curtain falls is most suggestive—the opposition of Jewish unbelief to the things which concerned their soul's salvation: suggestive, alas! of what soon befell them. And here, too, ends the history of this precious servant of God, so far as it has been directly revealed. The voice of the Spirit of Truth on this subject becomes silent. Our

further knowledge of Paul's subsequent history must be gathered almost exclusively from his later epistles; and from these we learn more than mere history; they give us a blessed insight into the feelings, conflicts, affections, and sympathies of the great apostle, and of the condition of the Church of God generally down to the period of his martyrdom.—A. Miller.

(To be continued, D. V.)

Discipline

(Heb. 12:5-11,)

(Thoughts for the sick chamber.)

The more precious and valuable the fruit the more constantly does the gardener care for the tree. He prunes with a more careful hand, and is desirous of removing everything that would prevent the development of the fruit he esteems.

The more precious and valuable the metal is, the more intently does the refiner watch the process of refining (Mal. iii. 2, 3). He sits, he watches, until the fire separates all the dross and he can see his own likeness in the gold or silver. He then is satisfied, yea, delighted with his own work.

What a cheer this is; what a comfort to the child of God when upon a bed of languishing he can rest satisfied, remembering his Father knoweth. — He **loveth,** He **careth,** and it is **He** that is "pruning." It is He that sits as a refiner, and "whom the Lord

loveth He **chasteneth.**" So to the tried, the weak, the afflicted, we would say, just remain passive in such a wise, tender, yet all powerful Hand. The knife, although sharp, will only remove the things the Husbandman knows would hinder the "fruit," "the more fruit," "the much fruit," He so much prizes and seeks after. (John xv. 2, 5.) The fire, although hot and testing, is meant only to melt the precious metal, and purge away the dross; and then, —what joy and pleasure—it reflects His image!

But at such a time and in such a place as the sick chamber, His promises are ever true. "The Lord will strengthen him upon a bed of languishing: thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness" (Ps. xli. 3), and adds in the language of the New Testament—"My grace is sufficient for thee." The Father knows well, as He watches the child, when the lesson is learnt, He knows when to remove the book, and lay aside the rod. "He maketh sore and bindeth up, He woundeth, and His hands make whole" (Job. 5:17-18). Could we, then, at such a time, afford to be without the lessons? What prayer, what dependence, what true devotion, yea, what joy, what praise, characterize His people! Here, the Husbandman already sees the tender buds, the blossom, the fruit; the Refiner sees His likeness in the object of His toil. Here the Master sees the pupil making progress in his lessons; and here the Father sees the exercise of heart and mind in His child which will fit him for some future and important work.—A. E. B.

Cain, Seth, and Their Posterity

In the Scriptural account of Cain's punishment for the murder of Abel, his subsequent history, and that of his descendants, we have, I believe, a divine outline of the course of the natural man. It is my purpose to consider, so far as I am able, some of the characteristics which prophecy and history attribute to man away from God. Connected with this somber picture is the contrasting one of Seth and his seed, which, if omitted, would deprive us of God's gracious provision for the sinner.

Cain's punishment bears some similarity to Adam's. Like Adam a curse is pronounced because of his foul murder of his brother, with this difference: the curse is pronounced upon him rather than the earth. Cain is to till the ground without result and shall be a vagabond in the world. But where Adam listened to Eve, Cain is described as "of the wicked one" (1 John 3:12). The lawlessness of the father bears fruit in the violence of the son. Cain goes forth from the presence of the Lord bearing a mark "lest any finding him should kill him" and with the assurance that "whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken seven-fold." In the land of Nod he builds a city named for his son Enoch.

Ever since that day the natural man has been marked by the same characteristics. He has exercised his abilities in the land of Nod* ("wandering")

* The meanings of the names have been taken from "Scripture Proper Names" by J. B. Jackson.

away from the presence of God. Like the prodigal he attempts to establish himself far from the Father's house with those resources over which God has made him a steward. Like Cain among his fellows, so man is marked out among the creatures of God. The ground yields a capricious and grudging harvest to his greatest efforts so that he must seek the association of others for their mutual benefit, as the founding of a city implies. The violence and deceit of the natural man in his relation with God and his brethren after the flesh prove conclusively that he is of that Wicked One whom our Lord describes as "a liar and murderer from the beginning" (John 8:44). Like Cain he (natural man) is a despiser of God's way of salvation and becomes angry when it is personally presented to him. And finally, as his prototype, he attempts to placate God's wrath with the fruit of his own cursed labor expended on a cursed source.

The parallel between Cain's career and that of the Jews, in their rejection of Christ, although familiar, is sufficiently striking to merit mention. The nation which should have been to the praise of God (Jew is derived from Judah which means "praise") slays the Man who is the Lord of life, because it prefers to offer its own works to God rather than accept His provision. Driven out of their land they wander, a marked and fugitive people, in the Aceldoma (field of blood) which they have so dearly purchased when they cried, "His blood be upon us and upon our children." Nevertheless, they are protected from

extermination by the Providential vengeance wreaked on those who would destroy them.

Once established in the land of Nod, Cain strives to simulate, so far as he is able, those blessings of God which he has forfeited through his conduct. "He builded a city, and called the name of the city, after the name of his son, Enoch." God has promised us "a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." (Heb. 11:10). As Cain's city is connected with the name of his son we know there is an intimate relation between the city of God and His glorious Son. "The throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it." But in contrast with the city of Cain, we read "And there shall be no more curse." (Rev. 21:3). We are reminded, too, that in that city of God "His name shall be in their foreheads." (Rev. 21:4). Triumphant grace alone has erased the mark of Cain and replaced it with His name.

Alas, only those who are willingly deceived can mistake the city of Cain (maker) for the city of God, the Divine Maker.

The meaning of Enoch is "dedicated." Here we see a further similarity to proper Christian walk. Natural man can point to those who are dedicated to religious duties with an apparent zeal equal to that of the most exemplary Christian. How cunningly Satan counterfeits our profession and privileges!

The opposition manifested by Pharoah's magicians to the miracles of Moses is an outstanding sample of Satan's methods. In Exodus we read that they

imitated his miracles. Paul tells us they withstood him (2 Tim. 3:8). This resistance by imitation is further illustrated in the Antichrist. The primary meaning of "anti" is "instead of", an exact description of his opposition. He will assume the place of Christ and in this way reveal his enmity to Him. All such counterfeitings emanate from Satan who transforms himself into an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14).

The son of Enoch is Irad ("wild ass"). The efforts of man to dedicate himself to the service of God are quickly proved a failure. No set of regulations, God-made or man-made, has ever been more than a witness to his complete breakdown in his effort to serve God apart from Christ. Rather, every additional restraint only excites the lust of the unregenerate heart, God declares flatly that, "Sin is lawlessness" (1 John 3; 4, N. T.) and every effort to curb or divert the natural rebelliousness against all authority is doomed to failure. The wild ass is a fitting symbol of the untamable nature of the flesh. "A wild ass alone by himself" (Hosea 8:9) is the figure used by the prophet to indicate the willfulness and illogic of Israel's rebellion against God.

Mehujael, the son of Irad, illustrates a further departure from God. This means "blot out that Jah is God." The boldness of this blasphemy at such an early period is startling. It gives some idea of the swiftness of man's descent down that awful road which Paul describes in Romans 1. He

says, "They did not like to retain God in their knowledge." Our times witness to the persistence of Satan's efforts to blot out that Jah is God. Under his guidance, science, higher criticism, and indifference unite to assure us that there is nothing supernatural in the Scriptures or the universe. But divine wisdom has long ago described such leaders, "Professing themselves to be wise they became fools." (Rom. 1:22).

Methusael, son of Mehujael, means "they died inquiring." This development is perfectly consistent with the Devil's methods of duping his victims. Having succeeded in persuading man to blot out that Jah is God he utilizes the pride of man in his own mental abilities to seal his own doom. Now that man has rejected all divine light on the existence of God and the dependence of the creature, he will gravely investigate the whole question in most approved scientific spirit! It would be strange indeed if he made any progress in his search under such conditions. Sadly enough, but true in fact, he dies before any results can be obtained. In 2 Tim. 3:7 Paul describes such deluded ones as "Ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." We can see about us this same strange perversity—man with his back to God, walking in his own shadow, professing to seek Him.

Lamech, the next in line, means, "why thus with thee?" What a searching question! The race of Cain can make no reply except a confession of its sin in going its own way. God had undoubtedly

pleaded with them long and patiently, but with no effect. Now he would have them review their whole course and explain their downward path. Should not such an examination bring them to themselves, and therefore to God?

Can we not apply the history to ourselves in a measure? Dedicated, (Enoch) to God we surely should be, "For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." (1 Cor. 6:20), yet how many times we have discovered the spirit of the wild ass (Irad), the old nature, strong within us. Have we not, too, taken the direction of our course into our hands, and in that measure denied God's overruling (Mehujael) claims? In sorrow and affliction as we sought to account for our condition, have we not looked everywhere for the explanation, (Methusael), except within our own hearts? May our God and Father awaken us to the need of self searching as in His presence! (Lamech).—W. F. P.

(To be continued, D. V.)

Letters to Young Christians

THAT TEMPER OF YOURS

Many people, of all ages and conditions, find it difficult to gain the mastery over quick and fiery temper. With bowed heads and sorrowful hearts, they afterwards confess: "I lost my temper." Many such have written or spoken to us; and every Chris-

tian worker of any experience, who has the confidence of his fellows, has probably heard sorrowful tales of lost joy and marred testimony from this cause.

The Christian is a man of feeling; and there is such a thing as righteous indignation. But his feelings should be always under control. Temper of the right kind is good both in a blade and in a man or woman. Indeed, it is one of God's gifts, and is of such value that it should never be lost! An Army officer who lost his temper repeatedly was reproved by a chaplain, who reminded him that he would not so forget himself in the presence of the King. Though sore at the reproof he came next day to the chaplain and said, "If you see me again in danger of losing my temper, remind me of the presence of the King."

I am told that the word translated "meekness" in the Bible is the same Greek word as is found in Xenophon's Anabasis for "the training of horses." The Christian is not an automaton. We are, so to speak, in the chariot, and the steeds may be beyond our control. We cannot restrain them: we try, and fail. Then we cry to the Lord for help. With swiftness and certainly He comes to our aid, and takes control.

"The fruit of the Spirit is . . . meekness" (Gal. 5:22). "The man Moses was very great" (Exodus 11:3); "The man Moses was very meek" (Num. 12:3). "Thy gentleness hath made me great" (2 Sam. 22:36). Meekness, then, is being GOD-CON-

TROLLED; and every power He has given me, every power of thought, speech and action, is to be always under His control and ready to be used in His service.—P. T. S.

Correspondence

QUES.—What does withdrawing from a brother in 2 Thess. iii. mean? Would it be the same as 1 Cor. v. 13 "put away from among yourselves"?

ANS.—The withdrawing in 2 Thess. is from disorderly persons—not working and being busy-bodies. The connection shows how such idleness could result from an *abuse* of the truth of the Lord's coming. Persons thus disorderly were to be admonished and withdrawn from. This does not go to the extreme of putting away, though a disorderly walk if unjudged may result in wickedness. It is rather the faithfulness which would prevent the other. It is rather individual than by the assembly as a whole. How much recovery there might be if the Lord's people were in a state to carry out this scripture. "Faithful are the wounds of a friend," and where love is in exercise it will frequently be best shown (where there is need) by avoiding those whose walk is not according to God. Such persons might still go on in the assembly, but would be under reproof, and if truly exercised would be blessed by the firm treatment. Let us guard against covering malice or pride under the plea of faithfulness; *that* would be truly evil; but love may lead to refuse the hand to or, if not going so far, to avoid the company of a brother whose walk is disorderly. Of course, putting away is the extreme, and when it must be resorted to, there should be no intercourse with the one thus dealt with.

—H. and F. 1896.

Gleanings

I do believe that the light of the glory will dissipate the fears and griefs of many who now mourn

over some who seem to them as lost and who are dear to them as Joseph was to Jacob. Even now faith in God (for He is faithful who hath promised) is what should sustain in the darkest days of unanswered prayers. "Thou and thy house" was what was said to the jailor at Philippi. "Thou and thy house" is what the Lord is now saying to us. Similar comfort shines from that word "Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it." May the Lord give obedience and faith and comfort to the heart of anyone who is saying with tears "Oh that my children may live before Thee!"

—"Brides of Scripture."

Do thou for me. (Psalm 109:21).

The psalmist does not say what he wanted God to do for him. He leaves it open. So this most restful prayer is left open for all perplexed hearts to appropriate according to their several necessities. And so we leave it open to God to fill up in His own way. Only a trusting heart can pray this prayer at all; the very utterance of it is an act of faith. We could not ask anyone whom we did not know intimately and trust implicitly to do for us without even suggesting what. —F. R. H.

We leave it to Himself
To choose and to command;
With wonder filled, we soon shall see
How wise, how strong His hand.

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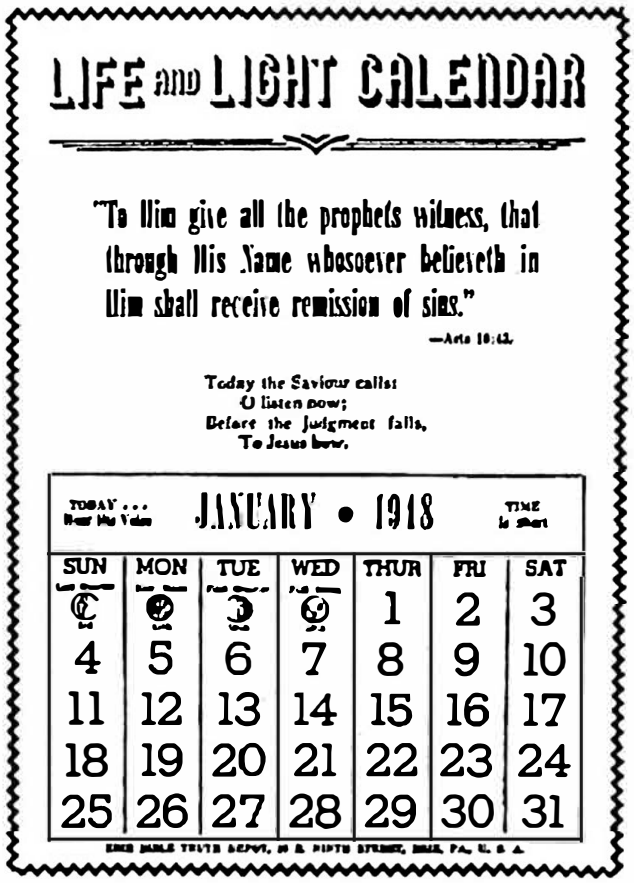
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"Then said He unto them, Therefore every scribe instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven, is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure THINGS NEW AND OLD." (Matt. 13:52).

VOL. XVI MARCH, 1948 NO. 3

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Publishing Office:

ERIE BIBLE TRUTH DEPOT

30 East Ninth Street, Erie, Pa., U. S. A.

Editor's Notes

All communications for the Editor should be addressed to F. B. TOMKINSON, 30 East Ninth St., Erie, Pa.

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A Song in the Night

(Job 35:10; Ps. 42:8)

When will the sighing be over?
When will the groaning be done?
When will the sorrow and weeping,
And all of earth's trials be gone?

When will God's saints be united?
When will their schisms all cease?
When will their love flow unhindered
In rivers of unruffled peace?

When will the sinning and failing?
When will the wanderings cease?
When will the strife and division,
And all roots of bitterness cease?

When will the deep tribulations,
When will afflictions be gone?
When will the parting and dying
And sadness and anguish be done?

When will "our hope" be obtained?
When will "our faith" merge in sight?
When will the living "be changed"?
And dead saints raised into light?

When Jesus our Lord shall return,
The things that are not shall then be.
The things that are now shall have vanished
When "caught up" His glory to see.

Then let us keep "watching" and "praying",
And "waiting" that glory to share,
"Be steadfast" whilst on earth staying,
For Him we'll soon "meet in the air."

So. Boston, May 26, 1892. —J. W. M.

Russia's Destiny
in the
LIGHT OF PROPHECY
(Continued)

We shall not here enter into any detailed exposition of this interesting passage. We merely refer to it now to point out that it represents to us as *one whole* the four great Gentile empires that were to exist upon the earth—that terrible "man of the earth" which is destined no more to oppress. (Ps. x. 18). The four parts of the image represent the four great Gentile kingdoms—Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Grecian and Roman. But there is also a *fifth* kingdom, represented by the "little stone." We must not imagine that this little stone falling upon the toes of the image and breaking the whole image to pieces is a description of the kingdom of *grace.* Far from this; it is the coming of Christ in *judgment* who will smite the image and establish *in its stead* His own kingdom of righteousness upon the earth, when He will "reign from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth." A glorious prospect indeed, but one which can be realized only when the terrible judgments of the Lord have removed "out of His kingdom all things that offend," etc. (Matt. xiii. 41.)

In Daniel vii. the same Empires are described, but in their separate and successional form—one replacing the other. While this is so, and though each *succeeds* the former as an *empire,* we are not to suppose that any of the nations that compose these

different empires cease to exist. A verse in this very chapter (ver. 12) shows that during the time that the fourth Beast (*i. e.*, the Roman Empire) flourishes, the lives of the others are prolonged; and from other parts of the prophetic word we learn that they are yet to be dealt with in the judgments that will fall upon the living nations, in the final crisis of this world's history.

We have elsewhere shown that the Roman Empire is yet to revive. Whatever men may think or say to the contrary, the Word of God upon this point is clear. "The Beast that was, and is not, and *shall be*" (Rev. xvii. 8), is none other than the *fourth* Beast of Daniel vii., or, in other words, the Roman Empire, which was in the days of our Lord, which is not today, but which shall ascend out of the bottomless pit prior to the coming of the Lord in judgment, when it shall "go into perdition"—awful doom! This Roman Empire will be the great Western confederacy of the European nations. In its last form it will consist of ten kingdoms, which, contrary to all precedent, will agree together and unite under one common head "the little horn" of Daniel vii. Proof of all this has been given in *The Future of Europe*. We allude to it again in order to emphasize the thought that *the chief of the Roman Empire is not the Antichrist*. Many have thought it, and still do, but we are persuaded that it is not so. The Antichrist will be the false King of the Jews who will be reigning at Jerusalem—of whom our Lord Jesus spoke in saying: "I am come in My

Father's name, and ye receive Me not; if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive" (Jno. v. 43), whereas the chief of the revived Roman Empire will be located at Rome, the city of the seven hills (Rev. xvii. 9.)

Nor must the Roman Empire be confounded with the Romish Church. The Roman Empire will be a *political* system, gathered under one imperial head; this is clear from a careful study of Daniel vii. and ix., and Rev. xiii. and xvii. There will also be an ecclesiastical system, which *at first* will control the Beast or Roman Empire, but which at length will be rendered desolate by the ten kings of Western Europe, confederate under the Beast.

Let it be distinctly remembered that we are now writing about events that will take place *after* the coming of the Lord into the air to remove His true Church from the scene where all the judgments detailed in the prophetic scriptures are to take place. Every believer in Christ will be "caught up" in the twinkling of an eye "to meet the Lord in the air," and so to be for ever with Him. After that, and *not until then,* will prophecy, strictly speaking, begin to be fulfilled. Meanwhile the student of Scripture, observant of the state of things around him both politically and religiously, may discern rapid strides being taken in the direction of preparation for the accomplishment of God's revealed plan; but prophecy itself has to do *not* with the Church, but *with Israel* and the nations of Christendom and the earth at large.

Prophecy has to do with the *earth*, and not with *heaven*: the Church belongs to heaven, and not to the earth; far-reaching principles of practice are contained in this simple truth, ignored by so many in the present day. This day of grace, during which God is gathering out from all nations of the earth the members of Christ's body—the Church which is to share Christ's *heavenly* glory and to reign with Him over the nations, and to appear with Him in glory when He comes in judgment—this day of grace *began* at the Cross, and will *end* at the coming of the Lord into the air *for* His saints. (1 Thess. iv. 13 to end.) This period is entirely outside all question of dates; it is a *parenthesis* in God's dealings with the earth; during it *prophetic time is not reckoned.* The seventy weeks of Daniel's prophecy were interrupted after the rejection of Messiah at the end of the sixty-ninth week (Dan. ix. 24-27); then comes the present long parenthesis of already more than 1900 years, to be followed by the last or seventieth week (*i. e.*, seven years) *after the removal of the Church.*

It is during this last week of seven years that the Beast or Roman Empire will exercise its blasphemous and wicked sway. For further and fuller details on this subject we refer the interested reader to *The Future of Europe*, etc.—A. H. B.

(To be continued, DV)

What the Gospel Does and Does Not Do

I was staying at a place at which were other

Christians and every morning we met together to read and study the word of God.

A Christian man who had not been able to attend these gatherings came to me one day and the following conversation took place: "I am told that you do not believe that the world will be converted by the preaching of the gospel."

"You have been rightly informed."

"Well that surprises me. I have been brought up to believe that the world would be converted by the preaching of the gospel and then the Lord would come and set up His kingdom on the earth."

"How long have you been a Christian?"

"More than thirty years."

"Well, you know what sort of a world it is now. Is it better or worse?"

"I should say about fifty per cent worse."

"Then the gospel is not making much progress."

"It does not seem to be in this land, but have you got Scripture for what you say?"

"Yes, I have. 'Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also that pierced Him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him' (Revelation 1:7). If the world is to be a converted world when the Lord comes, why should all kindreds of the earth wail because of Him? Would they not rather receive Him with joy and songs of praise?"

"I had not thought of that before, but can you give me another Scripture?"

"Yes, I can. 'And the kings of the earth, and the

great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and the rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of His wrath is come: and who shall be able to stand?' (Revelation 6:15-17). If the world is a converted world when the Lamb appears, why should He be wroth? and why should men seek hiding places from His face? And why should there be scores of passages that tell us that the Lord is coming as the Judge, such as Acts 10:42; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10; Jude 14.15; Revelation 19:11?"

"Well, those Scriptures are certainly convincing; but if the gospel is not to convert the world, what is it for?"

"James tells us in his speech at the first great Christian conference held at Jerusalem. He said, 'Simeon hath declared how God at first did visit the Gentiles *to take out of them a people for His Name*' (Acts 15:14). And from that day to this that is what the gospel has been doing. The Lord Jesus said to His disciples, 'I have chosen you *out of the world*' (John 15:19). We read, 'Our Lord Jesus Christ gave Himself for our sins that He might *deliver us from this present evil world,* according to the will of God our Father' (Galatians 1:4). And the Redeemed in heaven sing, 'Thou hast redeemed us to God, *out of every kindred, and tongue and*

people and nation' (Revelation 5:9). The gospel is calling a people out of the world and every one that obeys its call becomes a part of the church of God. The word translated 'church' in our authorised version is *ekklesia*—the out-called ones. And all such are *not of the world* even as Christ Himself is not of it (John 17:16)."

"Then you don't think that the church's work is to convert the world?"

"No, it is to be in the world as the Epistle of Christ, 'written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God' (2 Corinthians 3:3); and those who compose it are to be in the world 'shining as lights' and 'holding forth the word of life' (Philippians 2:15), and shewing 'forth the praises of Him who hath called them *out of darkness* into His marvellous light' (1 Peter 2:9). They are to be zealous in seeking the blessing of men, for it is not the will of God that any should perish. God's own compassion for sinners must be in their hearts, as Jude tells us: 'Others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh' (Jude 23). The church has been left in the world throughout the centuries as a witness for Christ, and to show the grace and mercy of God; but if true to its heavenly calling it walks in separation from the world pressing on to its great destiny in heaven, which destiny is to be the wife of the Lamb (Ephesians 5:25-27; Revelation 19:7-9)." Note: The song of the Redeemer in Revelation 5:9 is not exactly about themselves, but is in praise of the Lamb

who will secure multitudes out of the world for God, before the judgments fall.

"You make a great distinction between the church and the world."

"The Scriptures make the difference; the church is of God, and Christ is the Head of it, while 'the whole world lieth in the wicked one' (1 John 5:19 N.T.). Satan is the prince and god of the world. The church has 'that blessed hope' of being caught up to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17), while the judgments of God await the world as such."

"But why do we pray, 'Thy kingdom come'?"

"His kingdom will surely come and it will be one of universal blessing and peace, because righteousness will reign. The Lord is the Sun of righteousness and the Prince of peace, but judgment will precede the coming of His kingdom. 'He shall come down like rain upon the *mown* grass' (Ps. 72:6). The blessing follows the judgment, the scythe of judgment first sweeps the field and then the blessing descends."

"While the Christian waits and watches for the coming of the Lord it is his privilege and responsibility to preach the word and to say to all men, 'Let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will let him take the water of life freely' which is God's last gospel appeal."—Sel.

Cain, Seth, and Their Posterity

(Concluded)

The timeliness of the question, 'Why thus with

thee?" is readily apparent. As the seventh from Adam, one would expect some climax in the development of the race, some indication of the completeness and perfection of which the number speaks. On the contrary, the name "Lamech" implies the hopelessness of its plight. The despairing question it voices reveals a position beyond all possibility of recovery.

Lamech's low moral state is shown by his taking two wives. He is the first to practice polygamy, one of man's many inventions to satisfy his lusts. (Ec. 7:29). But corruption goes hand in hand with violence as Lamech demonstrates. He says, "I have smitten a young man for my wound, even a young man for my stripe. If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech, seventy and seven." Lamech pleads self-defense for his murder and as he was so much more justified than Cain in his crime, so any action against him would be more severely punished.

The excuse of self-defense—which is closely allied to that of expediency—is a most plausible one to man. The writer of Proverbs warns us against such specious reasons by showing us the end of such paths. "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." (Prov. 14:12). But the New Testament brings home the same lesson with great force. There we see Caiaphas using the same line of reasoning to justify the crucifixion of our Lord and Saviour. "Ye knew nothing at all, nor consider

that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not." (John 11:49, 50). Blessed Lord! Who can use the reasonings of wicked men to bring to pass His purposes of grace!

In Lamech, his wives, and his offspring, we have the full flowering of all man's boasted civilization. In Adah, "ornament," we see the attractiveness of its society, art, and general culture. Zillah, "shadiness," the comparative comfort of its existence shielded, by the inventions later noticed, from the rigors of climate, plague, and famine. So completely self-protected is man that he scorns the "Man" who "shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." (Isa. 32:2).

The exquisite accuracy of Scripture in the order of these names should command our closest attention. Beginning with Jabal, we have a correct chronological development of man's so-called progress. From the keeping of cattle (Jabal) — a nomad's life — to the settled condition as shown in harp and organ (Jubal) through the period of the use of metals (Tubalcain) to introduce comforts undreamed of in other days, we have a sketch of man's existence which only Omniscience could draw.

The names give the moral qualities appropriate to the details of the inspired history. Jabal means "stream," normally a word of good Scriptural con-

nation. But Ezekiel 29:3 gives us a verse which illustrates its applicability to man away from God. "My river is mine and I have made it for myself." Pharaoh having built canals to control and distribute the Nile viewed his work as of such transcendent importance that God's grace and ownership are completely ignored. So man, often God's channel of blessing, in his fallen pride considers himself the source and owner, as well as the instrument of good.

In Jubal, "he will be carried," is displayed the intention to be master of creation in a different sense from that shown in Eden. There, man was an husbandman, an active worker. Here, he will be a monarch after the Eastern style. Free from the necessities of labor through his many inventions he will be carried through life—and into hell—in the luxury which gives full opportunity for his corrruptness to be manifested.

Tubalcain, "thou wilt be brought of Cain," morally closes the history from God's side. His name proves the folly of man's flattering thought of self-improvement. As the eighth of the line—a number which speaks of a new beginning—he is only what Cain would bring forth. There is no evolution manifested here; no change to indicate the betterment of man which is so optimistically forecast by the leaders of infidelity. Instead, this name alone is God's complete and sweeping condemnation of the whole race. It is the Old Testament illustration of our Lord's flat statement, "That

which is born of the flesh is flesh." (John 3:6).

Naamah, "pleasantness," the last name of the list, fully reveals man's objective. He desires not righteousness, nor assurance that he is in God's path, nor anything that looks beyond the present. When he has achieved an environment comparable to that of the rich fool of Luke 12:19 he is willing to stop there. Whatever his profession may have been in times of stress, prosperity quickly unmasks him. Paul describes all such in a few words in 2 Tim. 3:4, "Lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God." N.T.

Prosperity is as much a test of man's heart as adversity. And how few there are who successfully emerge from its seductiveness! Scripture warns us of its dangers by both precept and example. In the Old Testament, Solomon tells us, "The prosperity of fools shall destroy them." (Prov. 1:32). In Ps. 106:15, commenting on the history of the children of Israel, the Psalmist says, "And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul." David, who had grown spiritually under Saul's persecution, tragically fails in victory. At the time when kings go forth to battle, he tarried still at Jerusalem, where he quickly succumbed to his lusts. (2 Sam. 11).

In the New Testament, Ananias and Sapphira, among the saints, show that the desire for this world's goods can still be a compelling urge. Paul, in his first epistle to Timothy, warns those that are rich in this world that they be not high-minded

nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God who giveth us all things richly to enjoy. (1 Tim. 6:17-19).

Happily, the section does not end here. When man's weakness and perversity have been completely exposed, God brings in One in whom He can express His unmeasured approval. Paul sums up the whole course of man's history to the Roman saints in these words, "When we were without strength in due time Christ died for the ungodly." (Rom. 5:6). So in our chapter, when it is clear that Cain can only reproduce his own image—evolution to the contrary notwithstanding—God brings in Seth. Eve tells us that he (Seth) is appointed another seed instead of Abel whom Cain slew. So Abel lives in Seth, as clear a picture of resurrection as the limitations of imagery permitted. His son's name is Enos, which means "frail" or "mortal". At first glance this seems a strange meaning, but further consideration reveals its propriety. Our relation with Christ is only on resurrection ground, "Except a corn of wheat fall in the ground and die it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." (John 12:24) is conclusive. Now what brings us into this relationship? Is it not the acknowledgement that we are sinners, that is, servants of sin through weakness? We know what is right, but have no power to keep ourselves in the path which is pleasing to God. Therefore, we are subject to death. Once we realize that our weakness has His strength to lean on, we begin to

call on the name of the Lord. Fittingly then, this part of the book closes with the statement that in the days of Enos "began men to call on the name of the Lord."—W. F. P.

Correction: p. 67, last line, read "connotation."

Short Papers on Church History

THE BOOK OF THE ACTS TRANSITIONAL

But here we must pause and contemplate for a moment our apostle as a prisoner in the imperial city. The Gospel had now been preached from Jerusalem to Rome. Great changes had taken place in the dispensational ways of God. The Book of the Acts is *transitional* in its character. The Jews, we see, are now set aside, or rather they have set themselves aside by their rejection of that which God was setting up. The counsels of His grace towards them, no doubt, abide for ever sure; but in the meantime, *they* are cast off, and others come in and take the place of blessed relationship with God. Paul was a witness of God's grace to Israel; he was himself an Israelite; but also chosen of God to introduce something entirely new—the Church, the body of Christ, "Whereof I was made a minister . . . that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ" (Eph. 3:7-9). This new thing set aside all distinction between Jew and Gentile, as sinners and in the *oneness* of this body. The hostility of the Jews to

these truths never abated, as we have fully seen; and the results of this enmity we have also seen. The Jews disappear from the scene entirely; and the Church becomes the vessel of God's testimony on the earth, and His habitation by the Spirit (Eph. 2:22). Individual Jews, of course, who believe in Jesus, are blessed in connection with a heavenly Christ and the *"one body"*, but Israel for a time is left without God, and without present communication with Him. The Epistles to the Romans and the Ephesians fully set forth this doctrine; especially Romans, chapters 9, 10, 11. We now return to:

PAUL'S OCCUPATION DURING HIS IMPRISONMENT

Though a prisoner, he was allowed the freest intercourse with his friends, and he was then surrounded by many of his oldest and most faithful companions. From the epistles we learn that Luke, Timothy, Tychicus, Epaphras, Aristarchus, and others, were with the apostle at this time. Still, we must remember that he was, as a prisoner, chained to a soldier and exposed to the rude control of such. Owing to the long delay of his trial, he was in this condition for two years; during which time he preached the Gospel and opened up the Scriptures to the congregations which came to hear him; and wrote several Epistles to Churches in distant places.

Having fully and faithfully discharged the duty which he owed to the Jews, the favoured people of

God, he addressed himself to the Gentiles; though not, of course, to the exclusion of the Jews. His door was open from morning till night to all who would come and hear the great truths of Christianity. And in some respects he never had a better opportunity; for being under the protection of the Romans, the Jews were not allowed to molest him.

The effects of Paul's preaching, through the Lord's blessing, were soon manifest. The Roman guards, the household of Caesar, and "all other places" were blessed through his means. "I would ye should understand, brethren", he writes to the Philippians, "that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the Gospel; so that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace (or, Caesar's court, *margin*), and in all other places". And again, the apostle says, "All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Caesar's household" (Phil, 1:12, 13; 4:22). The blessing appears to have been first manifested in the praetorium, or amongst the praetorian guards. "My bonds in Christ are manifest in all Caesar's *court*"—the quarters of the guards and household troops. The glorious Gospel which Paul preached was heard by the whole camp. Even the kind prefect Burrus, with his intimate friend Seneca, Nero's tutor, may have heard the Gospel of the grace of God. Paul's courteous manners, and great abilities, both natural and acquired, were well fitted to attract both the statesman and the philosopher. And being there two whole years gave them many op-

portunities.

With nearly the whole of the troops, we may say, he must have been personally acquainted. With every change of guard, the door for the Gospel opened wider and wider. Being constantly chained to one of the soldiers as his keeper, and with what love and earnestness, and burning eloquence, he must have spoken to them of Jesus and of their need of Him. But we must wait till the morning of the first resurrection to see the results of Paul's preaching there. The day will declare it, and God shall have all the glory.

The apostle gives us also to know that the Gospel had penetrated into the palace itself. There were saints in Caesar's household—Christianity was planted within the imperial walls; "and in all other places". Yes, in *"all other places"*, says the sacred historian. Not only was Paul thus labouring within the imperial precincts, but his companions, whom he styles his "fellow-labourers," were no doubt preaching the Gospel in "all other places", in and around the imperial city; so that the success of the Gospel must be ascribed to the efforts of others, as well as to the unwearied exertions of the great apostle in his captivity.

PAUL'S PRISON EPISTLES

There can be no reasonable doubt that the Epistles to Philemon, to the Colossians, to the Ephesians, and to the Philippians were written towards the latter part of Paul's imprisonment at Rome. He refers to his *"bonds"* in them all, and

repeatedly to the expectation of his release. (Compare Philemon 22; Col. 4:18; Eph. 3:1; 4:1; 6:20; Phil. 1:7, 25; 2:24; 4:22). Besides, he must have been long enough at Rome for the news of his imprisonment to have reached his affectionate Philippians, and for them to have sent him relief.

The first three are supposed to have been written some time before that to the Philippians. An immediate issue of his cause is more distinctly spoken of in his Epistle to them. "Him therefore I hope to send presently, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me. But I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly" (Phil. 2:23, 24). The first three may have been written about the spring of A. D. 62, and sent by Tychicus and Onesimus; and the last in the autumn, and sent by Epaphroditus.

The Epistle to the Hebrews is also supposed by some to have been written about the same time, and every consideration leads to the conclusion that Paul was the writer. The expression at the close of the Epistle, "they of Italy salute you", seems decisive as to where the writer was when he wrote it. And the following passages seem decisive as to the time: "Know ye that our brother Timothy is set at liberty: with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you". Compare this with what Paul wrote to the Philippians—"I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you . . . so soon as I shall see how it will go with me. But

I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly". We can scarcely doubt that these passages were written by the same pen about the same time, and that they refer to the same intended movements. But we do not press this point. One thing, however, is evident—that the Epistle was written before the destruction of Jerusalem in A. D. 70, as the temple was standing, and the temple worship going on undisturbed. (Compare chap. 8:4; 9:25; 10:11; 13:10-13).

(To be continued, D. V.)

For Young Christians

"SINCERE MILK"

Scripture compares the young convert to a newly-born child and exhorts him to thirst for the "SINCERE MILK of the Word" (1 Peter ii. 1, 2). He is to feed on the pure, unadulterated truth of the Gospel, without admixture of human error, the world's philosophy and useless or harmful subtleties. True teaching is most essential in the early stages of the Christian life, for it is then that the principles of a lifetime are being formed. Hence the young believer is urged to feed on the pure soul food of the Word of God.

In 1 Corinthians iii. 2, we have milk referred to in a different connection, and with this passage we might link another verse in the same Epistle (xiv. 20). The Corinthian church was exceptionally gifted. Some of the gifts were unusual and transient, such as the gift of "tongues." And the Corinthians demonstrated their intellectual childishness by preferring the sensational to the ordinary. "It is characteristic of the child to prefer the amusing to the useful, the shining to the solid." The Corinthians were acting as childish people, though we need not suppose that, like cer-

tain "children" today; they were fond of waving their handkerchiefs in their meetings, or of producing a kind of spiritual intoxication by the interminable repetition of a chorus. They may, however, have made the mistake of thinking that crowd-emotion was spiritual power. The childish intelligence exposed them to envy, backbiting, pride, wounded self-love, sectarianism, strife and censorious judgments.

The childish adult is marked by a lack of reflection and discrimination. He does not realise the difference between what he OUGHT to do and what he MAY do. In his outlook there is a want of balance and of discernment as to the relative importance of things. Where whims and fancies sit in the seat of judgment a man's opinion is worth so much wind. A healthy sense of proportion and a willingness to see the other side would prevent many petty quarrels among believers.

Although pithy sayings cannot be accepted in their entirety, there is a measure of truth in the dictum: "The more you know, the less you are sure." Of course, the converse is equally applicable, as has often been illustrated by would-be "prophets," the dogmatism of whose pronouncements was in proportion to their ignorance, and who seemed lamentably lacking in the historical sense.

In view of the worldliness and immature intelligence of the Corinthian Christians, the apostle had to feed them with "milk" rather than with solid food. "Milk" is used in a similar way in Hebrews v. 12-14. The professing Christians to whom that epistle was addressed were in danger of going back to Judaism; they were filled with the legal spirit and were marked by dullness in spiritual things. They needed the exhortation to GO ON towards spiritual maturity.

A child needs "sanctions," such as the fear of punishment, the desire for reward, the thrill and incentive of competition, to cause him to learn his lessons. And in the earlier stages of Christian growth there is room for rules

and regulations. But spiritual progress means advance from the cramping authority of rigid rules to the freedom of godly principles. Our Father wishes that we should exchange the bondage of the schoolmaster for the holy liberty of the sons and daughters of God. God is the Teacher of His children. For His task of training them He uses the Bible, prayer, self-examination, self-discipline, obedience, suffering—in fact, all the circumstances of life can be ground into material for Christian progress. Christian progress demands moral and spiritual labour, conflict and "exercise." Those who have toiled are no longer children. Augustine declared that he heard Christ speaking to him and saying: "I am the Food of full-grown men; be a man and thou shalt feed on Me."—E. A.

Correspondence

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF TITUS 3-10?—

A man that is a heretic after the first and second admonition reject.

There is no doubt whatsoever that the Apostle means not a holder of blasphemous doctrines, (which is the point in John's Epistle) but one who endeavours to make a party. If any Christian, pretending to spiritual intelligence, count this a light sin, they are themselves to be pitied, warned and prayed for. What is self will but sin against God, and what self-will in one professing to love Christ is worse than despising the Church of God, by essaying to form a church of his own on views of his own? All saints are ignorant more or less; and the Church of God contemplates them all, save in the case of excision for wickedness in doctrine or practice, which all are responsible to judge. To go out

and set up in themselves, apart from the assembly of God on earth, is rebellion against God, and that in what is nearest to God save His own Son. To make light of the sin or sympathize with it, is to trifle with God, and His Church, and expose oneself to the same, however confident one may be in strength or wisdom to keep out of it. It is meanwhile sparing oneself and one's friends at the expense of God's Word. Which it is evil unbelief to count over severe. Some think of a worse class, even blasphemers of Christ, "Otherwise Estimable." Let us beware.—Bible Treasury.

QUES.—How do you explain the first clause of 1 Cor. x. 17, with the last clause of verse 16—"The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? for we being many are one bread and one body"? And what force has the "for" that seems to connect the two clauses? Has not the bread (one loaf) a double significance in this passage?

ANS.—The general meaning of the passage is quite plain. Just as Israel was a partaker of the altar because of eating the sacrifices, so he who ate at an idol's table would have fellowship with the idol. We partake of the one loaf because we are one body and exhibit our oneness by so doing. It would seem that the "for" links very closely the two clauses, and it would be scarcely possible to think of the loaf without thinking not merely of our blessed Lord, but of His people for whom He died to gather them into one. In Lev. xxiv. 5-9 we have the show bread, evidently type of Christ the food of His people (who are now all priests). Because it is in relation to Israel these are twelve loaves, representing the national unity—the twelve tribes. So the loaves represent not only Christ, but His people as identified with Him. Does not this correspond with the one loaf now?

The Church is one, not twelve, and while we see in the loaf Christ's body given for us, of which we partake, we are at the same time reminded of our oneness in Him? Once and again in this epistle the apostle identifies the Church with Christ. "Is the Christ divided" (1 Cor. i. 13). "As the body is one, and hath many members . . . . so also is the Christ" (1 Cor. xii. 12) (See J. N. D's. version). The use of the figure of the loaf the second time shows that there were not two loaves but one, type of Christ's body given for us, and at the same time (amazing grace!) representing His Church one in Him. Is there not instruction in this—the close and intimate link of our Lord with His people? In the feast that presents Himself before us constantly, we are ever reminded of the one body, the Church for which He died.

Beloved brother,—I have just read the first few pages of an article on "Hannah and Eli: A Contrast," in Help and Food,* which is, I believe, very timely. But there is one thought which I wish to suggest in connection with Eli's failure: a thought which the experiences of the last twenty years among brethren, or, perhaps more correctly, with my brethren, have intensified in my own soul, to such a degree, that if you consider it worth anything, I should like to give it to others of your readers.

And I will first introduce the thought by a quotation from "Collected Writings," J. N. D., on "God is Light." "There is nothing more dangerous than to use the Word when it has not touched my conscience. I put myself into Satan's hands if I go beyond what I have from God, what is in possession of my soul, and use it in ministry or privately. There is nothing more dangerous than the handling of the Word apart from the guidance of the Spirit. To talk with saints on the things of God beyond what I hold in communion is most pernicious. There would be a great

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* August, 1892.

deal not said, that is said, were we watchful as to this, and the Word not so used in an unclean way. I know nothing that more separates from God than truth spoken out of communion with God; there is uncommon danger in it."

I would like to emphasize these lines and repeat them! and underscore them and repeat them again: and double underscore them and add a voice—shall I say of thunder, earthquake, fire, and hail and tempest: or of the still small voice which goes home to the conscience with divine power, or both; for sometimes thunder is God's instrument to open the ear; and without an open ear, the conscience is never reached. Beloved, I only wish this truth could be emphasized in the soul of every one who reads these lines as it has been in my own. There can be no doubt but that the writer of these lines felt and realized the importance of the sacredness of *sacred things?* He could not have intensified the thought as he has in this brief quotation, if it had not been a divine reality in his own soul. Let me appeal to my reader: Have you, in your soul a proper regard for sacred things? Now, don't be offended at the direct appeal? I speak as before God. Let us face the question, "For the word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight; but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." (Heb. iv. 12,13.)

If we cannot face it now, how shall we face it when we meet Him, "whose eyes are as a flame of fire?" Beloved, how little we realize what it is to stand in the presence of the living God, *with unshod feet!* (Ex. iii. 1-6.) Compare also with care the nineteenth chapter of Exodus, also Heb. xii. 18-29. But do you say, "Oh, that was the ground of law, and a God of judgment; but we are on the ground of grace?" Yes, thank God we are, but is a God of grace any the less holy than the God of judgment? And are we not

in danger of "turning the grace of God into lasciviousness?"

Think a moment, my brother, how do you handle sacred things? Do you say, "Not at all." Think again! Who is it that does not handle them at all? Are you a member of the body of Christ? Are you indwelt by the Holy Ghost? Are you linked up with a risen and glorified Christ in heaven, and thus "made a king and a priest unto God?" And have nothing to do with sacred things? To say that you do not handle sacred things is to betray your lack of heart for your birthright, like Esau.

Beloved, I believe the root of the sin of Christendom is the *confounding of sacred and profane things;* and the result is the complete loss of conscience, even in religious people, many times. And there are no people in greater danger as to this than ourselves—myself and yourself.

Undue familiarity with sacred things, if not consciously in the Lord's presence, is most hardening.

This was the key to the sad failure of Eli; he had lost the sense of sacred things in his own soul; and hence had lost all power to restrain his sons; and this same failure may be read in the atmosphere and deportment of many a household.

Depend upon it my brother and my sister, if sacred things have not power to control you in the presence of your household, Satan will have power to control it and you. It is Christ to be honored or dishonored, just as you will have it: first, in your heart, then in your home, then out among men. Sacred things as herein contemplated are the things of Christ, not the things of religion: sacred things in religion, where the Holy Ghost is ignored and Christ is left out, are but superstition, and have power in the Cathedral and at the confessional, and it is the power of Satan; hence the Priest and the Prayer-book are held in authority, while Christ and the Word of God are left out, and Protestantism is hastening in the steps of her mother.

But to bring this question home once more in practical

power for our own hearts. For there is one place above all others where we shall betray our lack of a proper sense of, and care for, sacred things, and is, *at the Lord's table!*

My reader, have you ever been there? And who did you meet? Your brethren? Yes. And what would you have done if none of your brethren had come? Would you have gone to the window to look out for some one coming, or have gone out to find them? Or would you, on entering the room, in a quiet and careful manner, have gone to your seat, as though in the presence of the King of glory, the blessed Lord Jesus Christ, to receive His recognition of your presence and joy as one who would "keep His word and not deny His name?" and is this a divine reality to you? and from which you could not afford to be absent, unless your responsibility to Him required your absence? Sickness in the family, faithfulness as a servant, or relieving distress of others, where the will of the Lord was plainly indicated, might be just as acceptable to Him and just as precious to you, if taken up in faith. But never to entertain company. To stay away from the Lord's table on account of company, shows a very sad lack of respect for the Lord Himself, and that you are willing to grieve the blessed Lord Jesus to please your company.

But let us take still another view. Did you ever on entering the room sit down or stand and talk awhile with this one or that one, not realizing that your first and best respects belong to Him who is Lord of the feast? Or would you sit down as indifferently as you would in a hotel while waiting for your dinner? Or interest yourself very diligently in studying your Bible or Hymn-book?

Now, my dearly beloved, don't let any of these questions bring you into bondage; but, if there is a needs be, let them wake you up to look carefully after your deportment in the presence of the Lord of glory.

Let them search you out as regards your care for sacred things, and your regard for the Lord's honor. Surely, He cannot be indifferent as to how we behave ourselves in His

presence, and not only at His table, but always everywhere He is with us.

Yes, beloved, our estimate of Himself, the value we put upon His company, will surely form our manners on the road. For we always behave the best toward those we love the most.

"The End of All Things is At Hand"

The day of God's long-suffering is rapidly drawing to a close, and the day of wrath is at hand. The wheels of divine government are moving onward with a rapidity truly soul-subduing; human affairs are working to a point. There is an awful crisis approaching; precious souls are rushing forward along the surface of the stream of Time into the boundless ocean of Eternity. In a word, "the end of all things is at hand" (1 Peter 4:7). "The days are at hand, and the effect of every vision." Now, seeing these things are so, let us ask each other: How are we affected thereby? What are we doing in the midst of the scene which surrounds us? How are we discharging our fourfold responsibility to the Lord, to the Church, to perishing sinners, to our own souls?—Sel.



CONFERENCES

Minneapolis, Minn.

It is purposed, DV., to hold the annual Bible Conference in Minneapolis, June 18, 19 and 20, 1948. The Conference will open with prayer, Thursday evening, 7:45 P. M., and continue over Lord's Day. Provision will be made for those coming from a distance. Please advise Mr. Herman Block, 4817 Oakland Ave., So., Minneapolis 7, Minn. Remember the meetings before the Throne of Grace that God will grant us a rich season of blessing as we study the Word together.

St. Maries, Ida.

The annual Bible Conference for the study and ministry of the Word, will commence, (D. V.) Friday, 9:30 A. M., July 2nd, and continue over July 4th. 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.

Waverly, Iowa

The Iowa Bible Conference will be held again (D. V.) at Wartburg College in Waverly, Iowa, August 18, 19, 20, 21, and 22nd. Those planning to attend please communicate with Carlyle Miller, Clarksville, Iowa, or Frank Hoel, Greene, Iowa, so that proper arrangements may be made.

Dunkirk, N. Y.

The annual Bible Conference will be held (D. V.) at the Dunkirk Conference Grounds, two miles east of Dunkirk, N. Y., on Route 5, August 28th to September 4th.

For further information, address:

F. B. TOMKINSON ,
30 East Ninth Street, Erie, Pa.

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"Then said He unto them, Therefore every scribe instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven, is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure THINGS NEW AND OLD." (Matt. 13 52).

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Prophetic Issue

Believers in the imminent return of the Lord Jesus Christ for the Church, will be interested in a series of articles beginning in this issue entitled, "Surely I Come Quickly!" It is a Scriptural and detailed reply to Alexander Reese's "The Approaching Advent of Christ" which teaches that the Church will go through the tribulation.

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TION FUND

This Fund exists for the purpose of sending copies of the Magazines to Chaplains and men in the Armed Forces; world-wide Missionaries and other Workers, who would not otherwise get them. Encouraging letters are received continually from those who receive copies through this Fund, and these appear in THE HARVEST FIELD, a sample copy of which will be sent, gratis, to any enquirers. (Although the war has ended, there is still a demand for literature in this country and for the Armies of Occupation.)

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Five Little Pebbles

(1 Samuel 17:40).

Five little pebbles lay in a brook,
Five little pebbles hid in a nook.
"What are we good for?" one said to the other.
"Little or nothing, I'm thinking, my brother."
Wearing away, day after day,
It seemed that for ever those pebbles might stay.

If they were flowers, ever so gay,
Doubtless someone would take them away;
Or if they were big stones that builders could use,
Perhaps then some builder those stones would choose.
Wait, little pebbles, rounded and clean,
Long in your loneliness, lying unseen,
God has a future a-waiting for you,
Five little pebbles, sturdy and true.

Five little pebbles hid in a brook,
David came down and gave them a look,
Picked them up carefully out of the sand;
Five little pebbles great in his hand.
"Hark!" there is shouting, there's fighting today,
Boldly these pebbles are borne to the fray;
One of them chosen and put in a sling—
Could we have thought that a stone could thus wing?

Onward it sped, with a might not its own,
Onward it sped, by the shepherd boy thrown;
Swift as an arrow, straight as a dart,
For the whole nation that stone played its part,
Striking the giant's great terrible head,
Laying him low—a mighty man dead.

Five little pebbles lay in a brook,
Mentioned with honour in God's Holy Book.
Be thou a pebble, contented and low,

Ever kept clean by His mercy's pure flow,
Hidden and ready till Jesus shall look,
And choose **you**, and use **you**, a stone from the brook.

—C. J. B. C.

"Surely I Come Quickly!"

FOREWORD

The "blessed hope" of the Lord's return from heaven is a fact that has animated the hearts of millions since the promise was first given by the Lord Himself.

The **reality** of His return is contained in His own words: "I will come again" (John 14:3)), confirmed by angelic authority (Acts 1.:11) and also by apostolic authority (1 Thess. 4.:13-18).

The **rapidity** of His return is found in 1 Cor. 15:52, "The twinkling of an eye," and the **result** of it, as to the Lord Himself:

(a) "He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied" (Isa. 53:11). As to the believer:

(b) "For our commonwealth has its existence in the heavens, from which also we await the Lord Jesus Christ (as) Saviour, who shall transform our body of humiliation unto conformity to His body of glory, according to the working of (the) power which He has even to subdue all things to Himself" (Phil. 3:20, 21 N. T.). As to the creation:

(c) "For the creature has been made subject to vanity, not of its own will, but by reason of Him who has subjected (the same) in hope that the creature itself also shall be set free from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans together and travails in pain together until now. And not only (that), but even we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, we also ourselves groan in ourselves, awaiting adoption, (that is) the redemption of our

body" (Rom. 8:20-23 N. T.) And lastly, as to the unbeliever:

(d) "Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen" (Rev. 1:7).

* * *

In the following series of papers, the writer shows from Scripture, not only the pre-millennial, but also the pre-tribulation return of the Lord for His church. By "pre-tribulation" we mean before the "hour of Jacob's trouble" which embraces the last week of Daniel's prophecy of seventy weeks, or 490 years, 483 of which have been fulfilled, leaving one week of seven years still unfulfilled and which immediately follows the translation of the church to heaven.

Events now transpiring in Europe and the east are casting their shadows across the course of time and indicate that the coming of Christ is imminent.

We would call the attention of all our readers—especially the young—to Mr. Pindell's papers. They are of vital significance, not only in the examination of the book under review, but also in setting before the believer the certain and near return of the Bridegroom for His bride.

May each one be as those "that wait for their Lord" with loins girded about with truth and with lights brightly burning. "Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when He cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that He shall gird Himself, and make them sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them." (Luke 12:35-37).

—Editor.

—★—

Introduction

Any series of articles dealing with such familiar themes as the events of the end times requires, it seems to me, an introductory word to justify their appearance.

Because of the firm and widespread belief of the Lord's imminent return for His church, it will hardly seem necessary to defend such teaching against attack. Familiar as we are with such ideas, we do not see how men could attempt to support any other doctrine from Scripture.

Moreover, our affections can testify to its solace in the same measure as our minds assent to its truth. It is a hope, like a beacon in the night, which lights our path and rejoices our hearts. We feel its propriety as well as appreciate its comfort.

Now it is just this teaching that is challenged. Mr. Reese's book, "The Approaching Advent of Christ," subtitled, "An Examination of the Views of J. N. Darby and His Followers," is an open effort to rob the children of God of this blessed hope. According to his theory the church goes through the tribulation. Beyond a brief statement in the first pages of the views he holds, and a few additional details scattered throughout the book, he confines himself to a point-by-point refutation — as he believes — of the teaching that the church can Scripturally look for the coming of the Lord at any moment.

His reasons for so doing, in his own words, are:

"These prophetic theories have often been examined, but usually in tracts and booklets of an adventitious character, which have generally been ignored, or not taken seriously. It has been like bowling to Bradman, or pitching to 'Babe' Ruth with a ping-pong ball, and against the wind. The time seems to have come for a more congruous effort." (p. 12, Preface).

"If any reader thinks that I have dealt with the subject in too great detail, I may as well confess that my own view is decidedly the same. It would be fortunate if Christians could reach agreement in a few leading aspects of the Second Coming, instead of stirring up disunity by prophetic speculation on many others that call for patience and tolerance. Nevertheless, I must decline to make any change in the form of presentation. The only possible hope of reaching a decision in the debate is by paying Darbyists the compliment of answering with thoroughness all their principal arguments. Their long reign has been due to the fact that no one has ever attempted this before." (p. 13, Preface).

One might question if the difference in the two views is of sufficient importance to justify the attention it receives. The answer is an emphatic affirmative. However, to grasp its importance we must understand something of the character of the world. Not every one is aware that there abides in it an enmity against God, undiminished by its much-heralded progress in mechanics and culture, even though the greater part of organized society boasts of a tolerance — superficial though it be — in the realm of the spirit.

But there has been, comparatively recently, a shift in its tactics. Instead of attempting to blot out the testimony of God by violence, it seeks to neutralize the church's witness by the wiles of deceit. In Scriptural terms, we no longer have the conditions of Smyrna, where the world persecutes the church, but of Pergamos, where the church dwells at Satan's seat. By such methods, then, both the world and Satan exert every effort to extinguish the steadfast hope of the Lord's

momentary return, that great practical barrier to worldliness among the saints.

Any teaching, therefore, which would interpose prophesied events between the present and the Lord's return should be unsparingly condemned with the reasoning of the evil servant who said in his heart, "My Lord delayeth His coming." Such considerations as these seem ample justification for answering Mr. Reese.

Since Mr. A. J. Pollock in his excellent booklet, "Will the Church Go Through the Great Tribulation?", has already examined this book, the question may be properly raised as to whether there is any need for further consideration of its teaching. Mr. Pollock's statement, "We purpose briefly answering Mr. Reese's book. To do it in the compass of a pamphlet means that in the space at our disposal we can only fasten upon the salient points of the enquiry, and leave much matter unanswered that could be replied to," (p. 4) makes it perfectly clear that he has made no effort to answer the book in all its ramifications. From personal experience, slight as it is, I have acquired the conviction that nothing less than a detailed reply to the arguments Mr. Reese advances will adequately meet this recent and aggressive presentation of an ancient error.

Since his criticisms will be met in their proper place, I say nothing more of them now.

Before turning to them, it will not be amiss to notice the tone and form of the book as a whole.

Although Mr. Reese disclaims being either a theologian or a serious scholar of the original languages, the book wears the formidable aspect of a learned work. Its many footnotes, the profuse quotations from the "great exegetes" of Europe and Britain, the use of foreign expressions, and the very phraseology are reminiscent of the weightier tomes of theology. The simple Christian, accustomed to commentaries which appeal to Scripture for support rather than the opinions of men or the works of scholars may well be taken aback by the impressive learning enlisted in the attack.

Now there is no denying that scholarship has its place in rendering the Word of God from the Greek and Hebrew into our own language. But it is hardly a decisive one, since there are not a large number of key words or phrases whose meanings cannot be ascertained in the standard lexicons. The controversies concerning the Lord's return lie largely in the field of interpretation rather than translation. Let us by all means give scholarship its due weight without being awed by its authority, especially when it strays from its proper province of translation into the wider domain of interpretation.

I am not aware of any originality in the views expressed on the church and the tribulation. However, since we desire truth, the lack of novelty is not necessarily a defect. I do urge that every statement be tested by the "Scripture of Truth" as illumined by the one infallible teacher, the Holy

Spirit. Coming in this attitude of heart to the inerrant Word of God, who can doubt that He will honor His promise, who said, "If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God"?



Chapter I

THE CHURCH AND THE TRIBULATION

In the opening pages of this book, "The Approaching Advent of Christ," Mr. Reese lists seven points outlining the scheme of the prophetic future which he seeks to defend. This interpretation is not new. Rather, it is the one held by those, prior to the time of Mr. Darby, who believed that the Lord's Coming will precede, not follow, the millennium.

Before going further, let us look at his ideas on the subject.

"1. The approaching advent of Christ to this world will be visible, personal, and glorious.

"2. This Advent, though in itself a single crisis, will be accompanied and followed by a variety of phenomena bearing upon the history of the Church, of Israel, and the world. Believers who survive till the Advent will be transfigured and translated to meet the approaching Lord, together with the saints raised and changed at the first resurrection. Immediately following this Antichrist and his allies will be slain, and Israel, the covenant people, will repent and be saved, by looking upon Him whom they pierced.

"3. Thereupon the Messianic Kingdom of prophecy, which, as the Apocalypse informs us, will last for a thousand years, will be established in power and great glory in a transfigured world. The nations will turn to God, war

and oppression cease, and righteousness and peace cover the earth.

"4. At the conclusion of the kingly rule of Christ and His saints, the rest of the dead will be raised, the Last Judgment ensue, and a new and eternal world be created.

"5. No distinction was made between the Coming of our Lord, and His appearing, Revelation, and Day, because these were all held to be synonymous, or at least related terms, signifying always the one Advent in glory at the beginning of the Messianic Kingdom.

"6. Whilst the Coming of Christ, no matter how long the present dispensation may last, is the true and proper hope of the Church in every generation, it is nevertheless conditioned by the prior fulfillment of certain signs or events in the history of the Kingdom of God: the Gospel has first to be preached to all nations; the Apostasy and the Man of Sin be revealed, and the Great Tribulation come to pass. Then shall the Lord come.

"7. The Church of Christ will not be removed from the earth until the Advent of Christ at the very end of the present Age; the Rapture and the Appearing to take place at the same crisis; hence Christians of that generation will be exposed to the final affliction under Antichrist."

The great point of difference between the above views and those of Mr. Darby is immediately apparent to those with any knowledge of his teaching. In direct opposition to Mr. Reese, he held that the church does not go through the tribulation, but is raptured to heaven before its occurrence. As I have noted in the "Introduction," Mr. Reese attempts throughout the book to refute in detail this teaching as a means of restoring the older view to favor once more.

Since Mr. Reese neither gives us the Scriptural

basis of his outline of prophetic events nor contends directly for it, there is no need to devote attention to these statements now. However, they will all come before us in one form or another as we consider his efforts to discredit our own views. I have given his programme of prophetic happenings so that we might have before us what he would substitute for the views he attacks.

After an impressive list of the fathers, scholars, preachers, and expositors who hold this scheme of things, he launches into numerous and lengthy quotations from Mr. Darby, Mr. Kelly, Mr. Trotter, and Mr. Mackintosh to give a clear picture of their, to him, novel and incorrect teaching. As the quotations fairly represent their position, I see no reason to linger over them. I should rather briefly summarize the coming events, with particular attention to those features which establish the contention that the church will not go through the tribulation.—W. F. P.

(To be continued, DV)

Russia's Destiny

in the

LIGHT OF PROPHECY

(Continued)

We have before observed that all the nations composing each of the four great Gentile powers, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome, are yet to come up for judgment in the end; Ezekiel and the minor prophets leave no room for doubt on

this point to any mind subject to the Word of God. But, while this is so, those amongst them that are more closely concerned in the future of Israel receive special notice.

For this reason it is that so much is said both in Daniel and Revelation on the subject of the resuscitated *Roman* Empire. But not only is this, the *fourth,* Beast to revive, but the *third,* or *Grecian,* will likewise have its representative in the last conflict of the nations with the Lord Jesus Christ. Indeed, this representative of the Grecian Empire, according to prophecy, will meet his doom *after the destruction of the Beast* (or, Roman Empire) *and the false prophet* (or, Antichrist), described in Revelation 19.

It is with this *third* Beast of Daniel 7 that Russia's destiny is concerned. Alliance between Russia and France cannot last. For France will be a part of the Roman (or *fourth*) *Empire,* whereas Russia will be the supporter of the last "King of the North" (Dan. 11), who will be the representative of the Grecian (or, *third*) Empire in the last days—days which we believe are near at hand. It is plain from Scripture that the policy of these two powers ("the Beast" and "the King of the North") will be distinctly opposed the one to the other.

Turning to Daniel 8, we find that the first three of the four Gentile Empires are mentioned. It is during the reign of Belshazzar, King of Babylon, that Daniel wrote. The Ram is explained to

represent "the Kings of Media and Persia (ver. 20); and the He-goat is "the King of Grecia" (ver. 21). Thus we have Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Grecia.

Deeply interesting as this chapter is, we cannot do more than point out one or two matters in connection with the He-goat. The Spirit of God in this chapter, as well as in chapter 11, inspired the prophet to describe, in brief but striking language, the course of events *three hundred years before they took place.* Any one acquainted with the history of the Grecian Empire during and after the times of Alexander the Great, cannot fail to be struck with the *perfect accuracy* of the brief outline given by Daniel: yet Daniel lived and wrote about *three centuries before* Alexander's time. Can any *external* evidence of inspiration be more complete? A mere scholar, apart from any appreciation of the spiritual power of the Word of God upon heart and conscience, must be struck with this.

There can be no doubt that "the *great* horn" (Daniel 8:4-9) typifies Alexander the Great, who was the first King of the Grecian Empire, and who led his victorious armies against the realm of Persia; indeed, verse 21 puts this beyond question. Prophecy here informs us of certain facts that history confirms, namely, that on the death of Alexander his kingdom was split up into four parts (ver. 8), and that out of one of these parts "a little horn" should arise. (ver. 9).

This little horn must not be confounded with

the little horn of the previous chapter. In Daniel 7 the little horn proceeds from the fourth or Roman Empire, whereas here the little horn springs from the third or Grecian Empire. Just as there will be at the close a representative of the Roman, so also will there be one of the Grecian Empire; but they are not the same.

Prophecy makes known to us that three awful individuals are to arise, and that each one of them shall play a most important part in the future and closing scenes of this world's history, before the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of Man in judgment. These are (1) the Antichrist, (2) the chief of the Roman Empire, and (3) the King of the North. Let the readers carefully bear in mind the difference between the coming of the Lord to remove His saints in the twinkling of an eye, and His return with them in manifested glory; *it is the latter of these two which is spoken of as "the coming of the Son of Man."* We are now writing about the events which will take place upon the earth between His coming into the air *for* His people (I Thess. 4) and His coming to the earth *with* His people. (2 Thess 1 and 2; Zech 14, etc.)

But let not the study of prophecy, interesting and important as it is, dim the hope of Christ's coming for the Church! He might come this very day; the Church will be removed before the earth becomes the scene of the desolating judgments which the prophetic word so solemnly and plainly describes.

Reader, we are living in serious days. The people now alive may, with their own eyes, see the things take place of which we are now treating. Are you a part of that blood-redeemed company that will be "caught up to meet the Lord in the air," or a part of that Christ-rejecting and Gospel-refusing world, that shall witness the awful events that will follow upon the earth?

Having already written on the Antichrist and the chief of the Roman Empire, we shall now pass to the third great prophetic character, viz., the King of the North. The "little horn" of Daniel 8 is said to wax "exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land." ver. 9.) "The pleasant land," we need hardly say, is the land of Palestine; and how beautiful it is to see the faith of Daniel rising above all the desolation and ruin of that land, resulting from the failure of the people of Israel, and speaking of it according to God's estimation thereof. He entered into the spirit of those words, "The Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates," etc. "A land which the Lord thy God careth for: the eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year." (Deut. 8:7-9; 11:12.) Though at the time at which Daniel wrote Palestine had been desolated, the temple defiled, and large numbers of the people

deported to heathen lands, yet to faith it was still "the pleasant land."

This little horn was to arise from one of the four divisions of Alexander's kingdom. History and prophecy are here in perfect accord. History tells us that after his death his kingdom was divided amongst four of his generals, *not* his sons. Daniel, writing by inspiration three centuries before, tells us that "*four* notable horns" (8:8) came up in place of the one great horn (Alexander); and, further (11:3, 4), that upon the breaking up of this kingdom of the "mighty king" it should be divided towards the *four* winds of heaven, but "not to his posterity," that is, *not* to his sons.

Two of these divisions came into special conflict with each other; and the land of Palestine which lay between them, cruelly suffered from them both; and their representatives are to do likewise in the future. They are called the "King of the North" and "King of the South" in Dan. 11. We would observe again that everything is described according to its relation to the land and people of Israel. These kings are spoken of as the kings of the *north* and *south* for the simple reason that the territories over which they rule were, and will be, one of them north, the other south, of Palestine. In other words the King of the North occupied Syria and Asia Minor, or that district which is now called Turkey in Asia, and the King of the South ruled over Egypt. According to prophecy, a king of great importance in the future of the world, and especially of the

Jews, is yet to arise in that part of the world now occupied by the Sultan, in Asia. No one at all acquainted with what God has revealed in His Word in connection with this individual can fail to be deeply interested in the movement now taking place in reference to Turkey.

Believing, as we surely do, that we are rapidly nearing the time of the fulfilment of these things, we have little doubt that the agitation now going on will have a far-reaching effect in the preparation of those lands for the part that they are to play, according to Scripture, in the near future.

—A. H. B.

(To be continued, DV)

Short Papers on Church History

PAUL'S ACQUITTAL AND RELEASE

After fully four years' imprisonment, partly in Judea and partly at Rome, the apostle is once more at liberty. But we have no particulars as to the character of his trial, or the ground of his acquittal. The sacred historian tells us that he dwelt two whole years in his own hired house; but he does not say what followed at the close of that period. Was it followed by the apostle's condemnation and death, or by his acquittal and liberation? This is the question, and the only certain answer to this question must be gathered chiefly from the Pastoral Epistles. The First to Timothy and that to Titus appear to have been written about the

same time; and the Second to Timothy somewhat later.

It is now admitted, we believe, by nearly all who are competent to decide on such a question, that Paul was acquitted, and that he spent some years in travelling, at perfect liberty, before he was again imprisoned and condemned. And though it is difficult to trace the footsteps of the apostle during that period, still we may draw certain conclusions from his letters, without encroaching on the domain of conjecture. Most likely he travelled rapidly and visited many places. During the lengthened period of his imprisonment much mischief had been done by his enemies in the Churches which he had been the means of planting. They required his presence, his counsel, and encouragement. And from what we know of his energy and zeal, we are assured that no labour would be spared in visiting them.

PAUL'S DEPARTURE FROM ITALY

1. When writing to the Romans, before his imprisonment, Paul expressed his intention of passing through Rome into Spain. "Whensoever I take my journey into Spain," he says, "I will come to you." Again, "When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will come by you into Spain" (Rom. 15:24, 28). Some have thought that he did go to Spain immediately after his release. The principal evidence adduced in favour of this hypothesis is supplied by Clement, a fellow-labourer, mentioned in Philippians 4:3

who was afterwards Bishop of Rome. This writer speaks of Paul as having preached the Gospel in *the east and in the west*—that he had instructed *the whole world;* meaning, no doubt, the Roman Empire: and that he had gone to the *extremity of the west,* meaning *Spain.* As Clement was Paul's own disciple and fellow-labourer, his testimony is worthy of our respect; still, it is not Scripture, and therefore not in itself conclusive.

2. From Paul's more recent letters, he seems to have altered his plans, and to have given up the idea of going to Spain, at least for a time. This we gather chiefly from the Epistles to Philemon and to the Philippians. To the former he writes, "But withal prepare me also a lodging: for I trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you" (v. 22). He here gives Philemon to expect that he may soon be with him in person. To the Philippians he writes, and speaking of Timothy he adds, "Him therefore I hope to send presently, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me. But I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly." Again, "But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort when I know your state" (chap. 2:19, 23, 24). The intended movements of the apostle and his beloved Timothy seem quite clear from these passages. It was evidently the purpose of the apostle to dispatch Timothy to Philippi as soon as the trial was over, and to remain in Italy himself until Timothy returned with the report of

their state.

3. It may reasonably be expected that Paul fulfilled the intention which he so lately expressed, and that he visited the Churches in Asia Minor, some of which had not as yet seen his face in the flesh. Having accomplished the objects of his mission to Asia Minor, some have thought that then he may have undertaken his long-meditated journey into Spain; but of this we have no reliable information, and mere conjecture is of no value.

4. Another theory is, that he went straight from Italy to Judea, and thence to Antioch, Asia Minor, and Greece. This scheme is founded chiefly on Hebrews 13:23,24. "Know ye that your brother Timothy is set at liberty; with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you . . . They of Italy salute you". It is also supposed that while waiting at Puteoli for embarkation, immediately on the return of Timothy, tidings reached the apostle that a great persecution had broken out against the Christians in Jerusalem. This sad intelligence so filled the heart of Paul with sorrow, that he wrote at once his famous letter to them—THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS. Shortly after this Timothy arrived, and Paul and his companions sailed for Judea."*

PLACES VISITED BY PAUL DURING HIS LIBERTY

Having stated these different theories for the

*For particulars of the persecution referred to, see Josephus, Ant. 20, 9, 1.

reader's examination, we will now notice the places mentioned in the epistles as visited by Paul.

1. At some time after leaving Rome, Paul and his companions must have visited Asia Minor and Greece. "As I besought thee still to abide at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine" (1 Tim. 1:3). Feeling it may be, somewhat anxious about his son Timothy, and the weight of the responsibilities of his position at Ephesus, he sends him a letter of encouragement, comfort, and authority from Macedonia—THE FIRST EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY.

2. Some time after this, Paul visited the island of Crete in company with Titus, and left him there. He also, very soon after, sent him a letter of instruction and authority, THE EPISTLE TO TITUS. Timothy and Titus may be considered as temporary representatives of the apostle. "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city as I had appointed thee" (Titus 1:5).

3. Paul was intending to spend a winter at a place called Nicopolis. "When I shall send Artemas unto thee, or Tychicus, be diligent to come unto me to Nicopolis, for I have determined there to winter" (Titus 3:12).

4. He visited Troas, Corinth, and Miletum. "The cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, when

thou comest bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments . . . Erastus abode at Corinth; but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick" (2 Tim. 4:13, 20).—A. M.

(To be continued, D. V.)

The Look of the Lord

"And the Lord turned and looked upon Peter . . . And Peter went out and wept bitterly" (Luke 22:61,62).

In this solemn and touching history of Peter is recorded the manner of the Lord's dealing with *conscience* and *heart*, and in all true restoration there is an action on both. How blessed to diligently mark His own perfect ways of grace with His people! The root of Peter's failure was *self-confidence*, but of what nature? Not, I judge that self-opinionated estimation of himself in a general way which is so often to be found among the saints and servants of Christ. It was of a more particular kind, and of a more subtle form. The blessed Lord had really laid hold of Peter's affection, so that he really and truly, though after a natural way, loved his Master. Herein is the most solemn element of his fall—he denied the One his heart loved most!

The root, then, of Peter's denial of Christ was the confidence he had in *his own affection for his Lord;* the way of the Lord's love with restored Peter, in John 21, makes this manifest: "Simon,

son of Jonas, lovest thou Me more than these?" went to the root-principle of Peter's fall. The Lord had said, before the hour of testing, that the sifting time would come, had announced Satan's desire to have *them all given up into his hands,* but that Peter was the special object of His intercession: "I have prayed for *thee* that thy faith fail not". Peter, in no wise arrested by such words from his Lord, reveals the folly of his heart by replying thus: "Lord, I am ready to go with Thee both into prison and to death"; and then the Lord declares what would be; but all was lost on Peter: he loved Christ, and that truly and genuinely; he had full confidence in his love; let who will deny or forsake, he never should, he would die with Him rather than deny Him. How strange to say, herein was Satan's power over Peter; the power of the enemy was in the fact that the servant loved his Master, *and was resting in that as his security.* No doubt this was Peter's confidence, his shelter and stay, as the hour of testing and moment of sifting was announced; his love, so genuine, so true, so devoted, would repel the wildest assault of the enemy in the hour of fiercest battle.

We have said that Peter truly loved his Master, and that Satan found his opening for his will in that. Peter was also *impetuous,* and Satan wrought through *that* as well! he found in both *occasion* and *opportunity for his attack.* This has its solemn voice for us all.

The steps which led to the fall of Peter may

also profitably occupy us. We shall see how blinded he was by the confidence he reposed *in his love* for Christ, for each step *down* might have arrested him, had he been within reach of the warning voice.

The first step is recorded in Luke 22:45, compared with Mark 14:37: "Simon, sleepest thou?" What words from His lips in the midst of His agony and bloody sweat! How much they contain! Alas! they were lost on Peter.

The next we have in Luke 22.54: "Peter followed *afar off*." Having slept during the agony of the Master, in common with the other disciples, he fled, having forsaken Him, and then is found *"far off"*. Was that the extent of the boasted love that would follow Jesus to prison and to death?

Next, we read of Peter sitting down at a fire *among the enemies of Jesus*: "When they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were set down together, *Peter sat down among them*". What! Peter *"afar off"* from his Master's side, *"among"* the servants of Pilate, warming himself, in company with haters and rejectors of Christ! What a picture of, alas, too many of His own saints even now!

There is one other thought in connection with this which I would solemnly press upon the hearts of all who read these lines; it is this—how quickly a *position* such as this familiarises the mind to what is of the world; the *thoughts, habits* and *language* of the age become natural and easy to us; we do not feel strange, or out of our true element, and

soon become inured to such climate; and then, in a wrong position and our eye off Christ, a small thing will lead to a full denial of Him.

In Peter's case, the mere taunt of a maid, the assertion of a man, and the confident affirmation of another, bring out the complete, repeated denial —"Man, I know not what thou sayest". Then comes the signal foretold by the Lord: "And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew". This it was that awakened his conscience, by bringing to his remembrance "the word of the Lord". The action of the Lord's warning voice, *now* remembered, is very striking, his confidence in his affection had so blinded him, that when the Lord warned Peter of the coming storm, it was not only unheeded, but *refused*. How well the skilful love of Christ knew how to bring that warning word freshly back upon the conscience—the crow of the cock awakened memory, conscience is smitten as the word of Jesus is brought to mind. Alas! how often it is so with us, the Lord's warning voice and words are so often forgotten, until He Himself, by some simple agency —as here—brings them back, as it were, to our consciences.

But there was something else, full of deep and tender solicitude for His poor child—even the Lord's *look*; "the Lord *turned*, and *looked* upon Peter". How affecting this unchanging, blessed love, which never gives us up! With all His freshly gone through agony, the subject of the heartless treachery of a Judas, in the rough and rude hands

of His enemies, the Lord can remember His own poor wandering child. What true and real comfort is here for us! That look of Jesus had a double effect—it broke Peter's heart, yet it placed him in company with his Lord. Think of those bitter tears: "Peter went out and *wept bitterly*". It was the grace and tenderness of that look which broke up the fountains of Peter's heart. Conscience and Christ are both set forth in this dealing with Peter —the word, brought to mind acted on conscience, but the look of Christ acted on the heart.

There was, moreover, in that look comfort as well as sorrow, for Peter lived upon that look until he saw his Lord in resurrection; that visage, more marred than any man's, and that look, lived in his heart, and were engraved in its memories, and kept him, until that bright and blessed morn when Jesus rose triumphant, and appeared to him first of all of the twelve, and that alone. Such are the blessed ways of His grace and unchanging goodness towards us. May our hearts deepen in confidence as we retire from our so-called affection, to rest in His love, who never wearies of, or forgets His own.

—Sel.

Letters to Young Christians

BUSINESS LIES

"Do you think it is a sin to tell business lies?" The question was asked by a young milliner who had just been converted. Rather startled at the strange question, the Christian lady to whom it was put paused for a moment, then quietly said "All lies are sinful, whether told in business or otherwise; and God's Word says—"lie not one to

another" (Col. 3:9.)

"Yes, I see clearly now," said the young milliner, "but it was only yesterday that I began to consider and look into God's Word about it."

"You do not mean that you have been in the habit of telling lies since you became a child of God, do you?" asked the lady, in surprise.

"To my shame and sorrow I have," replied the girl, "and I'll tell you how I learned to do it. When I first went to business I was perfectly amazed at the cool, unconcerned way in which the girls told lies to the customers to induce them to buy. I am sorry to say that I soon acquired the habit myself, and got so accustomed to it that it became like a second nature to me. Indeed I would never have got on, as folks say, if I had not done as the rest did. It was only last night, when sitting all alone, that I became uneasy in my conscience about it, and began to search the Scriptures to get help. I see now that I have been sinning against God, and have confessed it to Him, and will seek grace to renounce the vile habit and speak truthfully and honestly in the future, let the consequences be what they may."

"And what would you call business lies?" asked the lady.

"Well, for example, a lady comes in and asks for a Parisian hat and there are several which I have received instructions must be sold. I know they are not French, but in order to sell, I tell the lady they are. Or, again, that a certain cloak is the very newest, when I knew it had been on hand for a while, and we wanted to get rid of it. Yesterday, a lady was looking at a mantle which I had been asked to make a special effort to sell as the season was nearly over. She asked for another pattern, and I told her we had not got it although I knew we had, because I knew if she saw it she would not take the other. I am indeed thankful that God has troubled me and shown

me the evil of it and now, by His grace, I will stop lying, even should I lose my situation by it."

There are many besides the young milliner who have acquired the habit of telling business lies. It would seem that this form of lying is counted somewhat more respectable than the ordinary black lies, of which the devil is the "father" (John 8:44). But they are all alike in the sight of God, be they business lies, or any other. It may be the custom, in the world's way of doing business, to resort to lying in order to "get on," but it is a shame for a child of God to be found conniving at so disgraceful a habit.

It may be argued that "we should never get on in business unless we do as the world does in these things." This is very plausible but extremely weak on a Christian's lips, and rotten to the core as to its morality. To name such a thing betrays a deplorable condition of soul, a fearfully hardened state of conscience, and utter ignorance of the Christian position. Scripture says that believers are to be "a peculiar people, zealous of good works" and that they are to walk "not as other Gentiles walk" (Titus 2:14; Ephes. 4:17).

Make sure you have no parley with this kind of work. See to it that your hands are clean and your conscience pure. It matters not who else may tell business lies, make up your mind before God that you will have no share in misrepresenting articles to deceive others. Rather lose your situation than sin against God. A situation is not worth having and is clearly not of God, where such conduct is necessary. Much of the blighted testimony and spiritual wreckage constantly occurring amongst believers in business, has this for its prime cause. God does not help or befriend those who dishonour Him thus. He leaves them to reap what they sow. Let it be your aim in business, and in every department of life to please God. In serving an earthly master you serve the Lord. You will lose nothing

by honoring God. He will look after you, and care for you, for He says, "them that honor Me I will honor."—Sel.

Gleanings in Many Fields

What Did You Pray For?

We once heard an eminent and saintly preacher come abruptly on a company of Christians that had just risen from prayer, with the question: "What did you pray for?" After a pause he continued: "If God should demand to be told what you prayed for, you could not tell Him to save your life what the prayer was that has just died upon your lips."—Selected.

Hold It Up

Dr. Morrison, when a young student, was once taking breakfast with Caesar Malan at Geneva. Hearing that he was preparing for the ministry, Mr. Malan said: "Well, my young friend, see that you hold up the lamp of truth to let the people see. Hold it up, hold it up, and trim it well. But remember this, you must not dash the lamp in people's faces. That would not help them to see." Dr. Morrison, relating the incident, said, "How often have I remembered his words! They have often been of great use to me."

The Bell and the Bamboo

A very valuable and heavy bell was sunk in an Eastern river and unavailing efforts were made by various engineers to raise it. At last a clever native priest asked permission to make the attempt,

on condition that the bell should be given to his temple. He then had his assistants gather an immense number of bamboo rods.

They were taken down by divers, one by one, and fastened to the bell at the bottom of the river. After many thousands of them had thus been securely fastened, it was noticed that the bell began to move, and when the last one had been added the buoyancy of the accumulated rods was so great that they actually lifted that enormous mass of bronze to the surface of the stream.

Every whisper of believing prayer is like one of the little bamboo rods. For a time they seem to be in vain, but it was the one rod more, the last featherweight of power, that made all the others effectual and brought the consummation.

The Man and the Mortar

A traveller, standing outside Cologne Cathedral, was speaking to a friend of its beauties. "Yes," said the workman who overheard him, "it is a fine building, and it took us many a year to finish it."

"Took you!" exclaimed the tourist, "why, what had you to do with it?" "I mixed the mortar," was the modest but proud rejoinder. It does not matter how humble our task may be, or how lowly our position, so long as we are faithfully serving our Master. We certainly cannot all be great architects, but we can all help to "mix the mortar." We cannot all preach sermons that will stir mul-

titudes, but we can all preach sermons by our lives. We can at least help to make the path smoother for some weary pilgrim.

Unconfessed Sin

The work of God was held up in Korea. The missionaries prayed for months, but there was no break. During a special week of prayer they believed that God would surely break forth in power. It came to the last meeting of the last day. They began to despair. Then their chief leader broke down before God and said, "I am holding up the whole cause of God. I robbed a widow of one hundred dollars a year ago. When her husband was dying, he said 'Elder, I wish you would undertake to manage my affairs after I am gone.' I did, and used a hundred dollars of her money, and God has cursed us. I am going to restore that money tomorrow morning." The meeting which had started at seven that evening did not end until two next morning. All the while dozens of people were waiting for their turns to confess. One man, like Achan, held up the whole place. As soon as he was ready to fulfil God's conditions and make the sacrifice—the sacrifice of a broken and contrite spirit—God swept over Korea with waves of blessing. Fifty thousand that year turned from darkness to light. That man is one of the most powerful leaders in Korea. He fulfilled God's conditions, and God blessed him exceeding abundantly. Do we want to walk in his steps, or rather, in the Master's

steps, and go higher still?—J. Goforth.

A Shining Face

The speaker had an attractive face, and somehow one was reminded of the Master by his gentle, gracious bearing as he ministered the Word, and we were all edified. At the close of the meeting an elderly Christian lady, who was deaf, expressed her disappointment at not having been able to hear the address. Then, with a bright smile, she added: "But it was worth while coming, if only to look at his face!" This was a compliment indeed to the speaker. It is said of Stephen that they "saw his face as it had been the face of an angel" (Acts 6:15). The next chapter (7:55, 56) lets us into the secret. We are told that (1) he was full of the Holy Ghost; (2) he looked up steadfastly into heaven, and (3) he saw the glory of God and Jesus. The vision was reflected in his face. Is it because we know so little of Stephen's experience and spend so little time in looking up and seeing, that somehow, at times, the speaker and his heavenly message do not seem to blend?—W. E. Earl.

God Is Faithful

Melancthon said: "If I had no care, I should have no prayer." Spurgeon said: "Sometimes God sends His love letters in black-edged envelopes." He allows us to taste the bitterness of want and the desolation of bereavement. If you have lived many years, you have passed through the narrows. We

have all been there, and it is not always easy to see the Divine control. It looks as if things have got out of hand and as if, somehow or other, we have been forgotten. When there is no one at hand to say it to you, say it to yourself: "God is faithful, who will not suffer the pain to exceed the measurement of my endurance."—J. Macbeath.

"So Should We"

The camel at the close of day
Kneels down upon the sandy plain
To have his burden off
And rest to gain.
My soul, hie thou too to thy knees
When daylight draweth to a close,
And let thy Master lift thy load
And grant repose.

The camel kneels at break of day
To have his guide replace his load,
Then rises up anew to take
The desert road.
So thou should'st kneel at morning's dawn
That God may give thee daily care,
Assured that He no load too great
Will make thee bear.

—Sel.

CONFERENCES

Amsterdam, N. Y.

All-day meetings Lord's Day (Decoration Day) will be held, D.V., May 30, at No. 1 Hewitt St. The meetings will begin with prayer, Saturday, 8:00 P. M., May 29th. Any coming from a distance please notify Mr. Raymond Engel, 20 Finlay St., Amsterdam, N. Y.

Minneapolis, Minn.

It is purposed, DV., to hold the annual Bible Conference in Minneapolis, June 18, 19 and 20, 1948. The Conference will open with prayer, Thursday evening, 7:45 P. M., and continue over Lord's Day. Provision will be made for those coming from a distance. Please advise Mr. Herman Block, 4817 Oakland Ave., So., Minneapolis 7, Minn. Remember the meetings before the Throne of Grace that God will grant us a rich season of blessing as we study the Word together.

St. Maries, Ida.

The annual Bible Conference for the study and ministry of the Word, will commence, (D. V.) Friday, 9:30 A. M., July 2nd, and continue over July 4th. 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.

Waverly, Iowa

The Iowa Bible Conference will be held again (D. V.) at Wartburg College in Waverly, Iowa, August 18, 19, 20, 21, and 22nd. Those planning to attend please communicate with Carlyle Miller, Clarksville, Iowa, or Frank Hoel, Greene, Iowa, so that proper arrangements may be made.

Dunkirk, N. Y.

The annual Bible Conference will be held (D. V.) at the Dunkirk Conference Grounds, two miles east of Dunkirk, N. Y., on Route 5, August 28th to September 4th.

For further information, address:

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Publishing Office:
ERIE BIBLE TRUTH DEPOT
30 East Ninth Street, Erie, Pa., U. S. A.

Editor's Notes

All communications for the Editor should be addressed to F. B. TOMKINSON, 30 East Ninth St., Erie, Pa.

For the benefit of all our readers, each article appearing in this magazine will have, by initials or otherwise, some indication of its origin, except in the case of those by the Editor.

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This Fund exists for the purpose of sending copies of the Magazines to Chaplains and men in the Armed Forces; world-wide Missionaries and other Workers, who would not otherwise get them. Encouraging letters are received continually from those who receive copies through this Fund, and these appear in THE HARVEST FIELD, a sample copy of which will be sent, gratis, to any enquirers. (Although the war has ended, there is still a demand for literature in this country and for the Armies of Occupation.)

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Keep Thy Heart

"Keep thy heart with all diligence . . . Put away from thee a forward mouth . . . Let thine eyes look right on . . . Ponder the path of thy feet."

—Proverbs 4:23-28.

"Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."—Ps. 119:105.

Fellow-pilgrim, keep thy heart
With all diligence;
Let thy Master rule and guide.
This is thy defense—
Peace, thou canst not understand,
Will thy subject heart command.

Put a guard upon thy lips,
Many a hurt and smart
This will spare thee by the way—
Many an aching heart.
Teach thee wholesome self-control,
Many a humbling spare thy soul.

Let thine eyes look straight ahead
To the glorious end.
Though through window dimly now,
Faith doth comprehend.
Faith from heavy burdens frees us,
Links us with the risen Jesus.

Ponder o'er the way He leads thee,
Seek to know His will.
Turn not from His gracious guiding,
For He surely will
Give thee brightness more and more,
Till thy pilgrim journey's o'er.

Heart and lips and eyes and footsteps,
All in sweet accord.
Subject to His gentle leading
By His holy Word.
Thus Lord, if we follow Thee,
We shall never barren be.

—H. McD.

"Surely I Come Quickly!"

(Continued)

CHRIST'S COMING FOR HIS SAINTS

Our starting point is John 14:2. "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."

There is little room for argument that the Lord is speaking in general but clear terms of a life for His own beyond this world. Notice that it says He will come to take us with Himself to that place He has prepared*; He has not come to set up a kingdom on earth. When He will come is not stated. Indeed, His coming is not even a subject for calculation, for in Acts 1:7 He tells us, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power." However, our lack of knowledge of the precise moment of His return is not to be used as an excuse for indifference towards it, but as a stimulant to watchfulness, as we shall see.

*The preparation, no doubt, referring to the Cross.—Ed.

First the question might be raised, "Is there any event which must take place before we can look for His advent?" So far as I am aware, there is just one event, now long past, which was to occur before the Lord's return for His own could take place. It is recorded in John 21:18. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee (Peter), When thou wast young, thou girdest thyself, and walkedst where thou wouldest; but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee where thou wouldest not. This spake He signifying by what death he should glorify God." From this Scripture it is evident that Peter was to pass through death to his Lord rather than meet Him in this life.

That the Lord's coming was a proper hope in those early days, however, is demonstrated in passages referring to both John and Paul. In the same chapter in which Peter is addressed, the Lord Jesus says to him, "If I will that he (John) tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" (John 21:22). Notice that the statement is made as a possibility, not as a promise. John, we see, was not denied the hope of His return any more than we are today.

Paul's testimony is most explicit. He unequivocally classes himself with those who could be on earth at Christ's return. "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent (precede) them which are asleep. 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. 4:15-17).

Evidently when Paul says, "We which are alive", he knew no Scriptural reason which would prevent the Lord's coming in his lifetime. The later revelation in 2 Tim. 4:6 that he was to pass through death is an evidence of God's familiar intercourse with His servant but doesn't change the principle in the slightest.

But the passage does more than display Paul's expectation of being taken from the earthly life directly to glory. It gives us the details of the execution of the promise made in John 14:2,3. Compare the expressions, "I will come again and receive you unto Myself that where I am there ye may be also", and "the Lord Himself shall descend... and so shall we ever be with the Lord". Isn't the conclusion irresistible that one Scripture describes the fulfilment of the promise made in the other?

Now let us sum up our progress to this point; we have seen in the Scriptures (1) the promise of the Lord's return for His own, with nothing but Peter's death indicated as a landmark in the interval between promise and fulfilment; (2) the Lord's own statement that they were to know nothing of the times and seasons which would permit calculation of the period to elapse until He came; (3) fin-

ally the testimony of Paul that he could look for that bright prospect as a legitimate hope in his own day.

Since I Thessalonians 4 will come before us in a succeeding chapter, I forbear further comment until then. Now I desire only to emphasize the imminence of the Lord's return. As an event which could occur in their own day, Paul interposes nothing between the present and the shout of the Lord which shall arouse the dead and thrill the living ones in Christ. May we unwaveringly hold this truth!

CHRIST'S COMING WITH HIS SAINTS

Our next group of Scriptures is connected with the Lord's coming *with* His saints rather than *for* them. The existence of these two classes of Scriptures, one speaking of our looking for His coming and the other of our coming with Him, forces us to recognize that He comes first to take us out of the world and then reappears with us when He comes to judge the world. The controversy before us concerns the lapse of time, if any, between the two parts of His coming.

Paul tells us definitely, "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory". (Col. 3:4). Evidently resurrection is past, since the saints are glorified. It is to be observed that His coming for the saints does not bring the Lord within range of earthly vision since it distinctly says, "When Christ shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory". Until He

appears in glory with us, then, He remains unseen by the world.

Without question, this appearing and its related events are described in Matthew 24. "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". (Matt.24: 30). Since this verse is the climax of the chapter, let us glance at the preceding verses which describe the earthly conditions just prior to His coming. Certainly they should illuminate the question of the church's presence or absence in the world at this period. Here the Lord warns those addressed of false Christs, (v. 24), of the abomination of desolation in the holy place, (v. 15), and an unequaled tribulation, (v. 21), terminated by His coming in power and judgment. He tells them to pray that their flight might not be on a sabbath day (v. 20), and promises that those who endure until the end should be saved (v. 13).

Such words must arouse surprise and terror in the heart of the simple Christian who reads them for the first time. Can such a communication be addressed to His church? The context shows decisively that it is not. In reply to the Lord's statement that the temple, glorious and massive as it was, would be completely destroyed, they question Him as to "When shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the age?" (Matt. 24:3). The question, "When shall

these things be?", is not answered here nor is any reference made to it. (The Lord answers it in Luke 21:20-24). Understanding that the prophecy given here is a reply to the question, "What shall be the sign of Thy coming?", asked by disciples whose hearts are still centered on the glorious kingdom of the Messiah as revealed in the prophets, will help us to grasp its bearing.

It is evident that we have here a picture of Jews, who, whatever their personal piety, are subject to all the rigors of the law and the ordinances of temple worship. The references to the sabbath restriction and the temple are conclusive, for the church knows nothing of such observances. Can we imagine that those addressed here could be part of that body which is explicitly told, "we are not under the law, but under grace", (Rom. 6:16), where "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus?" (Gal. 3:28). And again, can we reconcile the statement, "He that shall endure to the end shall be saved", with "He that hath the Son hath life?" (1 John 5:12). Could the admonition against false rumors that Christ is in the desert or in secret chambers be directed to those who, as instructed by 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17, await His shout from the skies? But these instructions in Matthew 24 are perfectly consistent with the absence of the church which has been raptured to glory and the renewing of God's work among His earthly people, the Jews.

THE SEVENTY WEEKS OF DANIEL

The Spirit of God has given us a connection between this prophecy in Matthew and the book of Daniel which is of material help in understanding these last times. "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand;)". (Matt. 24:15). The first passage related to the expression, "abomination of desolation", is Daniel 9:27. "And for the overspreading of abomination he shall make it desolate". It occurs at the end of the well-known prophecy of seventy weeks. "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness". (Dan. 9:24) These seventy weeks (not actually weeks, but weeks of years, as we shall see) are divided into three periods as follows: seven weeks during which the walls are built in troublous times; sixty-two more at the end of which "Shall Messiah be cut off, but not for Himself" (better, "shall have nothing"); and a final week ended by bringing in the everlasting righteousness mentioned in verse 24.

The starting point for the counting of the seventy weeks (of years) is given in Daniel 9:25. "Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks." To find the historical account of this work, we must

turn to Nehemiah 2. There (Neh. 2:5) we find Nehemiah, the Jewish cupbearer, saying to Artaxerxes, his master and ruler of the Medo-Persian Empire, "Send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it". Having been granted his request, (v. 8), Nehemiah proceeds to Jerusalem (v. 11) to execute his commission. The first verse of this chapter, Nehemiah 2, tells that this request for authority was made and granted in the twentieth year of the reign of Artaxerxes. From this date until Christ was crucified ("shall Messiah be cut off" in the text) is very accurately 69 weeks of years, altogether 483 years.*

There is a gap, incalculable in length, between the cutting off of Messiah at the end of the sixty-ninth week and the beginning of the seventieth week. Although this interval contains the church period and has continued more than nineteen centuries, only one event in it is mentioned in Scripture —the destruction of Jerusalem. "The people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city (Jerusalem) and the sanctuary". (26). Not the prince who shall come, note, but his people shall destroy the city. Unquestionably we have here the prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans under Titus in 70 A. D. Since the people who destroyed the city are the Romans, it follows that "the

* Any one interested in the details of this calculation will find them discussed in Sir Robert Anderson's, "The Coming Prince," Appendix II.

prince* that shall come" must be the head of the Roman Empire.

Now we come to the last week. "And he (the prince that shall come) shall confirm a covenant with the many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate". (Dan. 9:27). A more accurate and intelligible rendering of the last clause is "Because of the protection of abominations, there shall be a desolator". Leaving the question of what is meant by the "protection of abominations" until we look at II Thessalonians 2, it is evident that the head of the Roman Empire makes a covenant with "The many", a re-established Jewish nation. It is observing its ancient ritual to the extent of offering a daily sacrifice until it is stopped in the middle of the week through the flagrant breach of treaty by the Roman prince. Since this last half of the seventieth week is spoken of in two other ways, we are able to show conclusively that each day of the seventy weeks stands for a year. In Daniel 12:7 this last half-week is referred to as "a times (two years), time (year), and a half" (half-year); that is three and a half years by actual count. Revelation 11:3 mentions 1260 days, evidently speaking of the same period. Since there are 360 days in a prophetic year, it is a simple calculation to show that this period is exactly three and a half actual

* He is the first beast of Rev. 13.

years.

Now let us summarize what we have found in these two passages. (1) Through this comparison of Daniel's prophecy and our Lord's discourse in Matthew 24, we are now able to place precisely the great tribulation in its proper sequence of prophetic times. Daniel shows us the abomination of desolation set up in the middle of the seventieth week. Christ refers to this same event as marking the beginning of the great tribulation. (Dan. 9:27, Matt. 24:15, 21). Therefore it is beyond question that the great tribulation occurs in the last half of Daniel's seventieth week. (2) Since these events are within the prophetic framework of times and seasons, we are further confirmed in our belief that the church has no part in them. For Acts 1:7 has told those who look for His coming in this period that it is not given to them to know times and seasons. (3) On the other hand, the references to temple worship and the sabbath, place indisputably before us a Jewish people once more in the land and observing their ancient ritual.—W. F. P.

(To be continued, D.V.)

Russia's Destiny

In the

LIGHT OF PROPHECY

(Continued)

In the past there was a notorious individual, Antiochus Epiphanes by name; he was a specially

wicked man, and took a fiendish delight in ill-treating the Jews in every conceivable manner. He even went the length of penetrating into the holy place and there offering up a sow upon the altar in impious and blasphemous mockery. This Antiochus was a type of the future and last King of the North, and is, we believe, the one mentioned in verse 11 and the first half of verse 12.* He defiled the sanctuary, and caused the daily sacrifice to cease for a time. It is thought by some, and we incline to think it too, that the 2300 days of verse 14 had their fulfillment at that time.

But from verse 17 to the end of the chapter the prophet treats of the last and yet future representative of the northern division of Alexander's kingdom, him of whom Antiochus, bad as he was, was only a type. "*At the time of the end* shall be the vision" (ver. 17)—"I will make thee know what shall be in *the last end of the indignation*" (ver. 19)—and again "In *the latter time of their kingdom,* when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up". (ver. 23.) But though the power of this king will be mighty, it is added that it shall not be "by his own power". (ver. 24.) We call the reader's earnest attention to this

* Observe the change of the pronoun in these verses from "it" to "he": the whole verse 11 and down to the word "transgression" in verse 12 is a parenthesis, alluding, we believe, to what has had its fulfillment in the days of Antiochus.

point. At the back of this fierce and powerful king will be another power greater and mightier than his, supporting him in his evil and self-willed course. In other words, he shall be a vassal of some other great power; and we believe that prophecy distinctly implies that *Russia* will be this mighty power supporting and strengthening the last King of the North. This we shall look at more fully presently.

Though in this pamphlet we are principally concerned with what the prophetic word has foretold in connection with these matters, we cannot help pointing out in passing how the events now transpiring in the political world are surely and rapidly paving the way for the fulfilment of prophecy. Who can close their eyes to the enormous influence that Russia has lately been gaining in the management of European affairs on the one hand, and the vast extension of her power in the Far East?

What times of thrilling interest are these in which our lot is cast! Revival of the truth of the Lord's coming in the past century, and the earnest study of the prophetic scriptures, led some to conclusions as to these matters which at that time seemed far from probable, if even possible, but which through the last few years have approached a startling likelihood of accomplishment. And to what end have these things been revealed? Are they merely to interest our minds in prophecy in the same way as others might be in mathematics or science? Nay, verily. When God made known

to Abraham, His friend, the awful judgment that was soon to befall the guilty cities of the plain, it was not merely a mark of friendship—precious as it was to be thus admitted into God's confidence—still less was it that he might have some subject of curious and fruitless speculation. It brought Abraham into close communion with the Lord, and set him in the attitude of prayer and intercession for those who had no anxiety about themselves. In penning these pages it is our earnest desire that the like spirit of communion and intercession be awakened in every heart that shall read and believe these solemn truths!

This "little horn", then, "shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practice, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people" (ver. 24.) —that is the Jews, when restored to their own land. But he will carry his fierce and iniquitous designs too far, for he shall "stand up against the Prince of princes (i. e., Christ) ; but he shall be broken without hand". (ver. 25.) Some have thought that this little horn of Daniel viii. referred to the Mohammedan scourge of the East, whilst the little horn of chapter vii., denoted the Papacy in the West. We are persuaded that both these thoughts are incorrect. Once it is seen that the object of the Spirit of God in Daniel is *not* to describe matters concerning the Church, or the *heavenly* people of God, but concerning ISRAEL,or the *earthly* people. our understanding of the prophecy becomes amazingly clear.

It is evident that we are on Jewish ground in this chapter, for the little horn waxes "great toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land". (ver. 9.) It describes a power situated north of Palestine, and whose evil designs are all directed against that land, the temple or sanctuary (ver. 11), the Jewish people (ver. 24.), and, finally, the Messiah Himself when He shall have appeared at the very darkest hour of the Jews' great tribulation in the future.

At the time of the King of the North's final attack upon Palestine, the Beast or Roman Empire, and the False Prophet or Antichrist, will already have been destroyed (Rev. xix., 19, 20) the Jews will be dwelling peacefully in their own land (Ezek. xxxviii.) and Christ Himself, the Prince of princes, the Deliverer of His earthly people, will have come to Zion.

This King of the North is elsewhere spoken of as the Assyrian. The Assyrian of the past, Sennacherib, was but a type of the Assyrian of the future. The Assyrian is not done with yet; Isaiah x. and xiv., along with many other Scriptures, make this evident. The Assyrian of the past was the rod of Jehovah's anger (Isa. x. 5), by means of which He chastised His unfaithful people. But when the Lord shall have performed His whole work upon Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, *and not until then*, will He "punish the fruit of the stout heart of the King of Assyria". (ver. 12). Has the Lord finished His whole work on Mount Zion and Jerusalem?

Clearly not; then the judgment of the Assyrian is yet to come.

If we turn to the prophecy of Micah we shall find this confirmed. Let the reader open his Bible at chapter v.—"They shall smite the Judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek". (ver. 1.) Here we have the rejection of Christ, the Messiah, in the past. The next verse is a parenthesis, quoted in Matthew ii. 6 as being fulfilled in the birth of our adorable Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who combined in His own glorious Person perfect humanity and Deity, for He is here presented in His manhood as "Ruler in Israel", and in His Godhead as the One "whose goings forth have been from of old, FROM EVERLASTING." Verse 3 describes the present rejection of Israel on account of their rejection of their Messiah, but also their future restoration after their great tribulation. But verse 4 tells us that when this takes place "He", their Messiah, will be in their midst, and shall be the peace when the Assyrian shall come into their land. (ver. 5.) The Assyrian is yet to tread in their palaces (ver. 5), but the restored remnant of Jacob will be delivered from him, and he himself will be destroyed "in the land" by the presence of the Lord.

The prophet Isaiah bears the same testimony —"Through the voice of the Lord shall the Assyrian be beaten down, which smote with a rod... For Tophet is ordained of old; for the king also* it is

* This is the correct translation.

prepared; He hath made it deep and large: the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it". (Isa. xxx. 31-33.) "The King" mentioned in this passage is, we believe, the same as the one spoken of in Daniel xi. 36, namely, the Antichrist.

A. H. B.

(To be continued D.V.)

Short Papers On Church History

(Continued)

PAUL'S SECOND IMPRISONMENT AT ROME

It is supposed by some that the apostle was arrested at Nicopolis, where he intended to spend the winter, and thence carried a prisoner to Rome. By others, it is supposed that after wintering at Nicopolis, and visiting the places above mentioned, he returned to Rome in a state of personal liberty, but was arrested during the Neronian persecution and thrown into prison.

The precise charge now made against the apostle and for which he was arrested, we have no means of ascertaining. It may have been simply on the charge of being a Christian. The general persecution against the Christians was now raging with the utmost severity. It was no longer about certain questions of law, and under the mild and humane prefect Burrus; but he was now treated as an evil-doer—as a common criminal. "Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil-doer, even unto bonds."

And very different from the bonds of his first imprisonment, when he dwelt in his own hired house. Alexander—of Ephesus, we believe—had evidently something to do with his arrest. He was either one of his accusers, or, at least, a witness against him. "Alexander the coppersmith," he writes to Timothy, "did me much evil"—"exhibited much evil-mindedness towards me." Ten years before this he had stood forward as the open antagonist of the apostle in Ephesus (Acts 19). He may now have sought his revenge by laying information against the apostle before the prefect. That it was the same Alexander of Ephesus seems clear from the charge to Timothy, "of whom be thou ware also" (2 Tim. 4:14, 15.)

During the apostle's first and lengthened imprisonment, he was surrounded by many of his oldest and most valued companions, whom he styles "fellow-labourers and fellow-prisoners." By means of these, his messengers, though chained to a single spot himself, he kept up a constant intercourse with his friends throughout the empire, and with Gentile Churches who had not seen his face in the flesh. But his second imprisonment was a perfect contrast to all this. He had parted from all his ordinary companions. Erastus abode at Corinth; Trophimus had been left at Miletum sick; Titus had gone to Dalmatia; Crescens to Galatia; Tychicus had been dispatched to Ephesus; and the lukewarm Demas had forsaken him, "having loved this present world."

The apostle was now almost entirely alone. "Only Luke is with me," he says. But the Lord thought of His deserted and solitary servant. A bright beam, as from the fountain of love, shines amidst the darkness and dreariness of his prison. There was one faithful amidst the general defection, and one was not ashamed of the apostle's chain. How peculiarly sweet and refreshing to the heart of the apostle must the ministry of Onesiphorus have been at this time! It can never be forgotten. Onesiphorus and his house—which Paul links with himself—shall be held in everlasting remembrance, and shall reap the fruit of his courage and devotedness to the apostle for ever and for ever. "I was in prison, and ye came unto me." (Matt. 25: 31-46).

Concerning the circumstances of Paul's trial we have no certain information. Most probably in the spring of A. D. 66 or 67, Nero took his seat on the tribunal, surrounded with his jurors and the imperial guard; and Paul was brought into the court. We have reason to believe that the large space was filled with a promiscuous multitude of Jews and Gentiles. The apostle stood once more before the world. He had again the opportunity of proclaiming to all nations that for which he had been made a prisoner. "That all the Gentiles might hear." Emperors and senators, princes and nobles, and all the great ones of the earth must hear the glorious gospel of the grace of God. All that the enemy has done becomes a testimony to the Name

of Jesus. Those who were otherwise inaccessible hear the Gospel preached with power from on high.

Fain would we dwell for a few moments on this wonderful scene. Never before had there been such a witness, and such a testimony in Nero's judgment hall. The wisdom of God in turning all the efforts of the enemy into such a testimony is most profound; while His love and grace in the Gospel shine ineffable and alike to all classes. The apostle himself commands our devout admiration. Though at this moment his heart was broken by the unfaithfulness of the Church, he stood forth, strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Though he had been forsaken by men, the Lord stood by him and strengthened him. He boldly confronted his enemies; pleaded in his own cause, and the cause of the Gospel. He had an opportunity to speak of Jesus, of His death and resurrection, so that the heathen multitude might hear the Gospel. His age, his infirmities, his venerable form, his fettered arm, would all tend to deepen the impression of his manly and straightforward eloquence. But, happily, we have an account from his own pen of the first hearing of his defence. He writes thus to Timotheus immediately after: "At my first answer (when I was first heard in my defence) no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and *that all the Gentiles might hear*; and I

was delivered out of the mouth of the lion." (2 Tim. 4:16, 17).

"Look, now, and see Christ's chosen saint
In triumph wear his Christ-like chain;
No fear lest he should swerve or faint;
His life is Christ, his death is gain."

THE MARTYRDOM OF PAUL

Although we have no record of the second stage of his trial, we have reason to believe that it soon followed the first, and that it ended in his condemnation and death. But The Second Epistle to Timothy is the divine record of what was passing in his deeply exercised mind at this solemn moment. His deep concern for the truth and Church of God; his pathetic tenderness for the saints, and especially for his beloved son, Timothy; his triumphant hope in the immediate prospect of martyrdom, can only be told in his own words. "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing" (2 Tim. 4:6-8).

The tribunal of Nero here fades from his sight. Death in its most violent form has no terror for him. Christ in glory is the object of his eye and of his heart—the source of his joy and of his strength. His work was finished, and the toils of

his love were ended. Though a prisoner and poor —though aged and rejected—he was rich in God; he possessed Christ, and in Him all things. The Jesus whom he had seen in glory at the commencement of his course, and who had brought him into all the trials and labours of the Gospel, was now his possession and his crown. The unrighteous tribunal of Nero, and the bloodstained sword of the executioner, were to Paul but as the messengers of peace, who had come to close his long and weary path, and to introduce him into the presence of Jesus in glory. The time was now come for the Jesus that loved him to take him to Himself. He had fought the good fight of the Gospel to the end; he had finished his course; it only remained for him to be crowned, when the Lord, the righteous Judge, appears in glory.

"In all things more than conquerors
Through Him that loved us—
We know that neither death, nor life,
Nor angels, rulers, powers,
Nor present things, nor things to come
Nor even height, nor depth,
Nor any other creature-thing,
Above, below, around,
Can part us from the love of God,
In Jesus Christ our Lord."

We have the concurrent testimony of antiquity that Paul suffered martyrdom during the Neronian persecution, and most probably in A. D. 67. As a Roman citizen he was beheaded in place of being

scourged and crucified or exposed to the frightful tortures then invented for the Christians. Like his Master, he suffered "without the gate."

There is a spot on the Ostian Road, about two miles beyond the city walls, where it is supposed his martyrdom took place. There the last act of human cruelty was executed, and the great apostle was "Absent from the body, and present with the Lord" (2 Cor. 5:8). His fervent and happy spirit was released from his feeble and suffering body; and the long cherished desire of his heart was fulfilled—"To depart and to be WITH CHRIST; which is FAR BETTER" (Phil. 1:23).—A. Miller.

(To be continued, D.V.)

Letters to Young Christians

OUR COMPANIONSHIP

Let us think of the subject of companionship as it relates to the Christian. It is a very practical subject, for it bears upon the diverse relationships of our daily lives. Companionship is by choice; we choose our companions, the responsibility rests with us. It is like communion, we can choose it or may refuse it. Mary chose that good part—for her there was true companionship and communion in being with Jesus. It is one thing to be called to communion or fellowship, another to enter into it.

First, then, companionship is a matter of our choice for which we will be held responsible in

that day when we shall be reviewed in the presence of Christ.—2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:10-12. Secondly, companionship to be real must be characterized in general by three things—mutual objects, mutual interests, and mutual activities. Thirdly, the person we account our chief companion will be the factor determining all other companionship. We recognize this to be true in natural things, and it is true also in the spiritual realm. It may well be recognized as a general principle for the Christian. Let him determine who is his chief companion, then fix all else in relation to that choice, and he has a sure guide for his path.

Who, then, is marked as the Christian's chief companion? "We are become companions of the Christ if indeed we hold the beginning of the assurance firm to the end."—Heb. 3:14, N. T. Sweet and holy thought! But what does it mean? Companions share common objects, interests and activities. If real, the spirit of it is having all things common. Think of it—WITH CHRIST! Does your soul yearn to know what that means? To enter into this garden of delight in the fragrance of which all the perfume of this world's choice flower is but as the odor of noxious weeds, and it leads the soul to count all loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord? Then read and ponder well those rich unfoldings of the Lord on the night of His betrayal, (John 13-17), as He spake with His own in the upper room and upon the last walk after supper to the garden, and

tell me then who you choose as your chief companion. "PART WITH ME" is the keynote of these last conversations which follow, or rather, should I say, are introduced by the institution of the supper in which our part with Him as resulting from the wondrous death it symbolizes is so touchingly set forth, "My body given—My blood shed—FOR YOU". We could not be His companions in doing that mighty work, but we are in the glorious fruits of it. Blessed Lord and Saviour! His love, His grace all revealed in death for us!

"O ever homeless Stranger!
Thou dearest Friend to me!
An outcast in a manger,
That with us Thou might 'st be!

O Love that bare our burden
On the accursed tree!
O Heart, that granted pardon
And set the sinner free!

O day of mighty sorrow!
Day of unfathomed grief!
When Thou didst taste the horror
Of wrath without relief!

O Lord, Thy wondrous story
My inmost soul doth move!
I ponder o'er Thy glory,
Thy lonely path of love!"

But listen further as He speaks "to His own—to us." The wonder of it all will grow upon us. He is going to sanctify Himself in the glory, set

Himself apart to service, which He shows to them in figure as He girds Himself to wash their feet, that we may have "part with Him." What this means He goes on to make known. In these brief pages I can only suggest an epitome of His blessed thoughts for us, but even this may give some idea of what it means to be His companions, His friends. It is part with Him in love's service to one another, patterned after the example of His own ever loving and tender service for us.—John 13:13-17, 34-35. It is part with Him in the Father's house.—John 14:1-3. It is part with Him in the fellowship of the Divine Persons.—John 14:15-27. It is part with Him in fruitfulness.—John 15:8. It is part with Him in His love.—John 15:9-17. It is part with Him in rejection.—John 15:18—16:4. It is part with Him in glory.—John 17: 20-24. He speaks of "My peace."—John 14:27; 16:33. "My love."—John 15:9-10. "My joy."—John 15:11; 17:13. "My glory."—John 17:22-24, and we are to find our part in all. He is a companion who holds nothing back from those who through grace and by faith are made His companions. But with all this blessed intimacy open to us, we are never to forget that He is the Lord of glory—our Lord unto whom we are to do all things, and for whom we are henceforth ever to live.—Col. 3:23; 2 Cor. 5:15.

This is our Chief Companion, dear Christian reader. He is the fairest of the fair, the chiefest among ten thousand, the altogether lovely One.

Our Saviour, Shepherd, Friend, our Lord, and our God. Shall we allow aught to displace His blessed supremacy in our hearts, and His loving authority over all our ways? Shall not His place, His things, His interests, His activities be our chief concern and so give us the standard by which to judge all else? Shall our place be such that we would not have Him with us? Shall our things be such that He could not share them with us? Shall our interests be such that we would not like to bring Him into them? Shall our activities be such as to bear no relation to His? Shall we think, or speak, or act as we would not if He was visibly near? "Let your moderation be known of all men. The Lord is NEAR."—Phil. 4:5, N.T.

What is His place? As to the world, an outcast; as to heaven, received and glorified. The cross here, the throne there. The thorn-crown here, crowned with glory and honor there. And what is yours, dear Christian? "If therefore ye have been raised with the Christ, seek the things which are above, where the Christ is sitting at the right hand of God; have your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are on the earth; for ye have died, and your life is hid with the Christ in God."—Col. 3:1-3 N.T.

What are His things? They cannot be of this world which is not of the Father. When here it was only the Father's will, and work, and Word which engaged Him, and as to the things of this world He had not where to lay His head, nor money

to pay the tribute. He promised that the Spirit of Truth would take of His things and show them to us. And His things are the Father's.—John 16:13-15. The Spirit of God has come, and ministered these things to us in all their fullness. "Search the Scriptures," they are there, and they are able to thoroughly furnish us.

What are His interests? We might think they are the same as His things, but I am thinking rather of what engages His affections and thoughts in the glory. Could we say the self-culture and civilization of man, carried forward according to the wisdom of this world, is one of His interests? Is it of interest to Him? though, of course, as being God He takes cognizance of it. When here did He make it part of His interests? Was His life interwoven with the social, political, or religious interests of His day? He was a stranger to His brethren, an alien to His mother's children.—Ps. 69:8. "I am like a pelican of the wilderness. I am like an owl of the desert, I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the house top."—Ps. 102:6-7. "He has left us an example that we should follow in His steps." What then are His interests, in whom and what do they centre, that we may make them ours, and be His companions in them? Read and meditate upon Psalm 16 and John 17. Let the Spirit, His Spirit, which breathes through these Scriptures fill us, and we will enter upon His interests as our own. Consider Him in His temptations and see how in opposition to Satan's inter-

ests—he who is the prince and god of this world—His interests lie along the line of God's Word, God's ways and God's honor.

What are His activities? Never directed to aid man in building his world-system, that is sure. Could we think of Him joining Cain in building his city, or men in building Babel? He builds His Church. He nourishes and cherishes it. He sanctifies it. He is going to present it fully glorified. He has sanctified Himself in the glory for service to us. He is Advocate, Intercessor, and High Priest for us. We are His people, He found us in a desert land, in the waste, howling wilderness, He has compassed us about, He instructs us by the way, and keeps us as the apple of His eye.—Deut. 32:9-11. And as His activities are about us, are ours centered about Him?

The Lord Himself is our great Companion! Let us purpose in our hearts that we will not do, or say, or be where we would not like Him to be with us, hear us, or see us. "The Lord is near." Let us visualize Him, daily, yea hourly in all our ways. Let His Word dwell in us richly, and this means we must feed upon it, assimilate it for ourselves. Who, like Him, will prove an ever loving, true and faithful Companion?—Sel.

Gleanings

The wretched tendency of the nature of man, to whom the testimony of God is committed, is to in-

vest himself with the importance of the message with which he is charged. That God may so invest him in His grace we see in the history of that grace; that the man who bears the message should do so is but pride and vanity. The result with such is, that they cannot bear with the grace that God exhibits towards others, nor with any communication of His mind or nature through any other means than their own, even although it should be in grace. It is they who must do the thing themselves; it is they who must have the glory of it; and thus all their thoughts of God are limited to their own point of view—to the portion committed to them of God's message. Compare that which we have seen in the case of Moses and of Elijah, those eminent servants of God. The sense of that supremacy in God which can pardon is too much for the heart; it cannot be borne. The self- renunciation that seeks only to do the will of God, be it what it may, leaves God all His glory; and, if He glorifies Himself by shewing grace, can bless Him for it most heartily. Without this we shall like to wield the sword of His vengeance—a thing more in harmony, alas! with our natural hearts, and more adapted to increase our own importance.

"Wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, as Elias did?" is the natural expression of the heart. For vengeance is the manifestation of power. Grace leaves sinful man to enjoy mercy—not bring in power, but spares those against whom power might have been exercised. On the

other hand, it is God alone who can shew grace.

The threat of vengeance is connected in the mind with the man who has received authority to announce it—the truth of God pleases us when we can invest ourselves with it for our own importance. Thus it was with Israel.

Let us here remark, that the principle we are speaking of is always true. If those to whom God in His grace has committed a testimony, do not employ this testimony in behalf of others according to the grace that bestowed it, they will soon become unfaithful in their own walk before God. If they truly acknowledge God, they would feel bound to make known His name, to impart this blessing to others. If they do not own His glory and His grace, they will assuredly be unable to maintain their own walk before Him. God, who is full of grace, being our own strength, it cannot be otherwise.

—Synopsis of the Books of the Bible.

"It is a woeful mistake to measure difficulties by what we are. The question is what God is; then the difficulties that appear like mountains looming through the mists of our unbelief are but the occasion for the display of His power."—Sel.

"The soul of a Christian may be distressed or cast down, that is not sin, but sin will come in if there is distrust of God."—Sel.

"My faith looks up to claim the touch divine,
Which frees me from this fatal strength of mine
And leaves me resting wholly, Lord, on Thine,
Yet make me such an one as Thou canst bless,
Meet for Thy use, through very helplessness,
Thine, only Thine, the glory of success."

—Sel.

Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from trouble. Prov. 21:23.

Speak not evil one of another, brethren. James 4:11.

Should anyone speak evil of his brother, bearing a tale against him in his absence, ask from him an answer to this question, "What good have you done your brother by bearing this tale against him?" and wait for the answer. Ask again, "What good have you done yourself by this?" The answer to each will probably be, "No good at all." Then solemnly address him (or perhaps you may have to thus address yourself) "What glory have you brought to God?" If we find fault without endeavoring or intending to mend, we do Satan's part. He is the accuser of the brethren.

Our tongues should spread the Saviour's fame,
Whose grace we daily prove,
For since our souls have known His name,
His banner hath been love.



CONFERENCES

Amsterdam, N. Y.

All-day meetings Lord's Day (Decoration Day) will be held, D.V., May 30, at No. 1 Hewitt St. The meetings will begin with prayer, Saturday, 8:00 P. M., May 29th. Any coming from a distance please notify Mr. Raymond Engel, 20 Finlay St., Amsterdam, N. Y.

Minneapolis, Minn.

It is purposed, DV., to hold the annual Bible Conference in Minneapolis, June 18, 19 and 20, 1948. The Conference will open with prayer, Thursday evening, 7:45 P. M., and continue over Lord's Day. Provision will be made for those coming from a distance. Please advise Mr. Herman Block, 4817 Oakland Ave., So., Minneapolis 7, Minn. Remember the meetings before the Throne of Grace that God will grant us a rich season of blessing as we study the Word together.

St. Maries, Ida.

The annual Bible Conference for the study and ministry of the Word, will commence, (D. V.) Friday, 9:30 A. M., July 2nd, and continue over July 4th. 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.

Waverly, Iowa

The Iowa Bible Conference will be held again (D. V.) at Wartburg College in Waverly, Iowa, August 18, 19, 20, 21, and 22nd. Those planning to attend please communicate with Carlyle Miller, Clarksville, Iowa, or Frank Hoel, Greene, Iowa, so that proper arrangements may be made.

Dunkirk, N. Y.

The annual Bible Conference will be held (D. V.) at the Dunkirk Conference Grounds, two miles east of Dunkirk, N. Y., on Route 5, August 28th to September 4th.

For further information, address:

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VOL XVI JUNE, 1948 NO. 6

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Publishing Office:
ERIE BIBLE TRUTH DEPOT
30 East Ninth Street, Erie, Pa., U. S. A

Editor's Notes

All communications for the Editor should be addressed to F. B. TOMKINSON, 30 East Ninth St., Erie, Pa.

For the benefit of all our readers, each article appearing in this magazine will have, by initials or otherwise, some indication of its origin, except in the case of those by the Editor.

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This Fund exists for the purpose of sending copies of the Magazines to Chaplains and men in the Armed Forces; world-wide Missionaries and other Workers, who would not otherwise get them. Encouraging letters are received continually from those who receive copies through this Fund, and these appear in THE HARVEST FIELD. a sample copy of which will be sent, gratis, to any enquirers. (Although the war has ended, there is still a demand for literature in this country and for the Armies of Occupation.)

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"He Walked With God"

He "walked with God!" Could grander words be written?
Not much of what he thought or said is told:
Not where or what he wrought is even mentioned;
He "walked with God"—brief words of fadeless gold!

How many souls were succoured on his journey,—
Helped by his words, or prayers, we may not know;
Still, this we read,—words of excelling grandeur,—
He "walked with God," while yet he walked below.

And, after years, long years, of such blest walking,
One day he walked, then was not, God said "Come!
Come from the scene of weary sin-stained sadness!
Come to the fuller fellowship of Home!"

Such be the tribute of thy pilgrim journey
When life's last mile thy feet have bravely trod,—
When thou hast gone to all that There awaits thee.
This simple epitaph—"He walked with God!"

—J. DANSON SMITH.

"Surely, I Come Quickly!"

(Continued)

THE ANTICHRIST AND THE APOSTASY

There remains another Scripture, II Thessalonians 2, to place beside these passages from Daniel and Matthew. Here the apostle tells the Thessalonian saints that the day of the Lord* (not day of Christ) will not come until the man of sin has been revealed who "as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God". (v. 4.).

---

* The distinction between "Day of the Lord" and "Day of Christ" will come before us later.

It is in connection with this "man of sin" we should notice the "abomination" of Daniel. As 2 Kings 23:13 shows us—it refers to Ashtoreth as the abomination of the Zidonians—"abomination" is the Old Testament characterization of a false god. Clearly, then, when Daniel tells us that "because of the protection of abominations, there shall be a desolator" he is referring to the worship of a false god in the midst of the newly formed Jewish nation. In II Thessalonians 2:4 we have the same time, place, and circumstances described so unmistakably that we may accept this Scripture as the counterpart of the one in Daniel.

This passage furnishes us with information regarding the period after the church's departure which is not revealed in either Matthew or Daniel. In the latter we are told of the destiny of the Jews without even a casual notice of what must be a numerically larger group, apostate Christianity. However, in II Thessalonians 2 the reverse is the case. There is no mention of Israel; rather, the Holy Spirit traces the course of apostasy, the falling away from the Christian revelation, to its climax in its worship of the Antichrist and his destruction at the appearance of the Lord.

Before going further in our chapter, let us note what is said about the Antichrist in other parts of the Word. The Lord Jesus said, "I am come in My Father's Name, and ye receive Me not; if another come in his own name, him ye will receive". (John 5:43). In his first epistle John says, "Who is *the*

liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son". (1 John 2:22). The first part of the verse gives us the Jewish form of the denial. They have refused to accept Jesus as the Christ or Anointed One and will accept another coming in his own name. The second part of the verse shows that Antichrist will set aside, too, the distinctly Christian revelation that Jesus is the Son of God, the Revealer of the Father. So the Antichrist embodies both Jewish and Christian unbelief.

The terms used in II Thessalonians 2 confirm this idea, although the word "Antichrist" is not used. That he is the Antichrist is shown by the daring blasphemy of sitting in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. (v. 4). He is called "the son of perdition", a characterization applied elsewhere only to Judas (John 17:12). As Judas was an apostate from Christ in his time, so is the Antichrist from Christianity in the coming day.

The spectacular rise to power of Antichrist is not an isolated phenomenon, completely detached from the past. Paul assures us that the "mystery of iniquity doth already work: only He who now letteth (hindereth) will let (hinder) until He be taken out of the way". (II Thess. 2:6). The only reason advanced for this delay in the manifestation of the forces of evil is the presence of One who hinders such a display. However, this shall not always be the case; He shall be taken out of the way. Is there any one who fits such a description, ex-

cept the Holy Spirit? Coming down at Pentecost to indwell the church, He returns with it to glory having fulfilled His mission, like Abraham's servant of old who was sent to bring back a bride for Isaac. (Gen. 24). After He leaves the world with the church, evil bursts forth unsuppressed and rapidly culminates in the Antichrist.

Another related point traced out in the chapter is the fate of the rejectors of Christ now that the day of grace has closed. Because they have rejected the truth, God sends them a strong delusion that they might believe a lie, that they might be damned. (2 Thess. 2:10-12). This condign punishment is appropriate to the time and class. Having spurned the importunities of God's pleading they are beyond the reach of the preaching in that time. They receive no second chance for salvation.

We cannot fail to mark the incongruity of such Scriptures with this day of God's grace. The word for today is, "Behold now is the accepted time; Behold now is the day of salvation". There is no class from which this offer can properly be withheld as there will be then.

Before leaving this chapter, let us summarize what we have gathered from it. Once again the temple is the center of attention, showing the identity of this scene with those we have surveyed in Matthew 24 and Daniel 9. But here the temple and its blasphemous occupant are linked with apostate Christianity rather than the Jews. Since the Holy Spirit has been taken out of the way and the truth

of God has been rejected, evil has its way unmolested. The coming of Christ in judgment ends the deliberate defiance of God's rebellious creatures.

Do we need to be reminded again as to the complete incompatibility of these events with the presence of the church on earth? How could one be baptized into the body (the church) by the Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13) when He has departed? This point alone is decisive as to the necessary absence of the church from the scene during this epoch.

REVELATION

Although the scriptures referred to are sufficient to establish the fact that the church does not go through the tribulation, the book of Revelation gives further support. It is divided into three parts by the Lord Himself: "The things which thou hast seen, the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter", or better, "the things that are about to be after these". (Rev. 1:19). "Things which thou hast seen" refers to the Lord walking among the candlesticks as in chapter 1; "the things which are" refers to the history of the seven churches given in chapters 2 and 3; "the things that are about to be after these" refers to the events which occupy the remainder of the book, beginning with chapter 4.

In the history of the seven churches we have clearly a history of professing Christendom from the earliest times until the Lord comes again. There are at least three convincing reasons for believing

this. (1) The direct statement of the Lord who describes the churches as "The things that are". (2) A comparison between the addresses and the history of the church. (3) The inconsistency, with the scope of the book as a whole, of any interpretation which narrowed their application to the local churches to which they were addressed.

In the address to Philadelphia there is a promise. "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". (Rev. 3:10). It would be difficult to conceive a stronger text for our position than these comforting words. I shall leave them without comment until the objections to their natural application come before us.

After the threat to Laodicea to spue it out of His mouth, the church is never mentioned again as on earth. Is not this precisely what we would expect if it is raptured to heaven at the end of the third chapter?

The fourth chapter, "The things that are about to be after these", opens with the transporting of John in spirit to heaven. There he sees twenty-four elders enthroned around a central throne. Do we not find here the saints of the rapture? We shall look at the detailed reasons for believing so later on.

In the fifth chapter we are shown a Lamb as it had been slain, who takes the book out of the hand of Him that sits on the throne. But what is His

title? The Lion of the Tribe of Judah! Explain it consistently based on His relationship to the church we cannot. But recognizing that God is beginning afresh His work with Israel who nationally are, in the present day, "as concerning the gospel, enemies for your sakes" (Rom. 11:28), all becomes clear.

The seventh chapter confirms the Jewish character of this period of tribulation. John hears the number of those sealed, "144,000 of all the tribes of Israel". (Rev. 7:4). Remembering that the church has gone, and with it the testimony to God on earth, we can understand the darkness which the sealed ones are to dispel, no doubt by preaching "the everlasting gospel", as Rev. 14:6 terms the command to worship God because the hour of His judgment is come. Isaiah substantiates this picture of darkness before the Lord comes to set up His kingdom. "For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people". (Isa. 60:2).

That those Israelites who turn to God are not added to the church is placed beyond doubt by Micah 5:3. "Therefore will We give them up (Israel) until the time that she which travaileth hath brough forth; then the remnant of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel".

Passing over the intervening chapters, which will come before us in some measure later, we find the strongest sort of evidence in the 19th chapter for the conviction that the church is in glory during the tribulation. The scene is laid in heaven (v. 1) and we see "the marriage of the Lamb..., and

His wife has made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the white linen is the righteousness of saints". (Rev. 19:7, 8). There can be no question that we have here the church. Paul says, addressing the church of God, "For I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ". (2 Cor. 11:2). How then do we find her in heaven before the end of the tribulation, if she must go through it?

The following verses prove beyond all gainsaying that the appearing to judge the world *follows* the marriage of the Lamb. We see heaven opened and its armies, clad in fine linen following The Word of God to the combat in which the beast (the Roman prince of Daniel) and the false prophet, (the Antichrist) are destroyed. (Rev. 19:11-21). The fine linen, the righteousnesses of the saints, identifies the armies with those who have formed the bride.

Since this Scripture brings us to the close of the tribulation period, I leave the consideration of the 20th chapter of Revelation until another time.

THE MORNING STAR AND THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

In concluding this summary of events directly connected with both phases of His coming, let us glance at the two symbols of His advent: the Sun of Righteousness and the Morning Star.

The closing chapter of the Old Testament contains this prophecy: "But unto you that fear My Name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in His wings." (Mal. 4:2). To comfort His earthly people He presents His coming under the apt metaphor of the rising of that glorious orb whose rays bring light and life to this world.

Similarly, the last chapter of Revelation also speaks of His return, but it uses a different, and significantly different, image. He says, "I am . . . the Bright and Morning Star." (Rev. 22:16). Although it is not expressly stated that these words refer to His coming, the reply of the Spirit and the bride is convincing proof that such a meaning is unmistakably implied: "And the Spirit and the bride say, 'Come'." (Rev. 22:17). This promise of His early return, explicitly confirmed in the words used as a title for these papers (v. 20), is made to the church as shown by her response. Thus to His heavenly people, and strange it seems, He figures His advent with a phenomenon of minor importance in comparison with sunrise.

But why the difference of the symbols in the two Testaments? To dismiss it as inconsequential is to disregard the exquisite accuracy of Scripture. On the other hand, to give free reign to fancy and read into it some wild conjecture, unsupported by other Scriptures would be a greater blunder. The proper explanation of the figures, then, must be one which is sanctioned by and consistent with the general teaching of the Word and at the same time

reveals the reason for the employment of the different images.

There is in this case no difficulty at all in satisfying all the requirements of our standard for interpretation. We note first that there is a definite time relationship between the occurrence of the two events. Now that is exactly what we should expect, based on our examination of the Scriptures regarding the two aspects of His return. The Morning Star, His revelation of Himself to the bride, appears before the Sun of Righteousness. His return in glory to judge the enemies of His earthly people and establish them in their inheritance. Just as the morning star is seen above the horizon while thick darkness covers the earth, so Christ comes for His own who are in a sin-blackened world. Moreover, the morning star does not relieve the darkness; it is simply the sign that it will soon be routed. Likewise, the removal of the church leaves evil apparently unaffected. But it is a portent of soon coming judgment and a herald of the day.—W. F. P.

(To be continued, D.V.)

Russia's Destiny

in the

LIGHT OF PROPHECY

(Continued)

An awful judgment awaits the three wicked men of whom the prophetic word speaks, namely, (1) the Beast, the chief of the revived Roman Em-

pire; (2) the Antichrist; and (3) the Assyrian, or King of the North. At the coming of the Lord into the air all the saints then alive on the earth will be caught up *without dying* into glory, "changed in a moment"; but those three men, exceptional in their wickedness and blasphemous rebellion against God, are reserved for this awful and exceptional judgment—they pass to their eternal doom *without dying*.

The next chapter likewise speaks of this Assyrian—"Then shall the Assyrian fall with the sword, not of a mighty man; and the sword, not of a mean man, shall devour him." (xxxi. 8, 9.) That is, unlike the mere ordinary results of human warfare, where one army may have to flee from a stronger, the Assyrian of the future will flee from "the Lord, whose fire is in Zion, and His furnace in Jerusalem."

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God," therefore each part is in perfect consistency with every other. Hence, if we now turn to Daniel 11, we shall not be surprised to find the same consistent testimony in reference to this King of the North. The whole chapter is one of the deepest interest, and will repay a close and careful study. Space will not admit of more than a very brief notice of its earlier verses. The more we examine it, the more are we filled with wonder and worship. It is one of the most perfect answers to the infidelity that would reject the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures. Higher Criticism quails before it.

Hence the strenuous efforts from the days of Porphyry, the heathen opponent of Christianity of the second century, down to the Higher Critics of our days, to disprove the early date of Daniel.

The account given in Daniel 11:1-36 is such an accurate description *prophetically* of what has since taken place *historically*, that nothing short of inspiration in the fullest acceptation of the term could account for the miracle. We cannot here dwell upon this point, but every reader of that part of Grecian history immediately following the break-up of the empire upon the death of Alexander the Great, cannot fail to be impressed with the remarkable exactitude of Daniel's language—a fact which can alone be accounted for by remembering that the prophet spake as he was "moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Peter 1:21).

A notable change takes place at verse 26. Up to that point in the chapter all has had a most accurate accomplishment; but the things described from this verse to the end of the chapter have had no parallel in history. In other words, at the time at which Daniel *wrote* all was prophecy from verse 2 to the end of the chapter; but at the time at which we *read* all up to verse 36 has passed into history, while from that point onwards is prophecy still unfulfilled. Unless this is seen, the chapter will not be understood.

We commend this chapter to the careful and prayerful consideration of every one who desires a clear, God-given, and yet most solemn understand-

ing of the course of events upon the earth after the coming of the Lord.

The King of the North mentioned throughout the chapter is of course not the same *individual* all through. The King of the North is a title, just as we might speak of the Czar of Russia;indeed, during the last one hundred years there have been several different Czars of Russia.* In like manner throughout this chapter there are several successive Kings of the North. It is generally admitted that the particular King of the North spoken of in verses 21-35 was Antiochus Epiphanes, whom we have already mentioned.

But in verse 36 another king altogether is introduced—"the King." This king we believe to be Antichrist, who will be reigning at Jerusalem as the false King of the Jews at the time of this attack of the last King of the North. If the reader will carefully compare verses 36-40 with 2 Thess. 2:4, we believe he will be struck with the similarity of the language. Without doubt this wilful king is *in the land of Palestine*—he divides "the land" for gain. What land? The land which is the centre of all God's interests, and the focus of all His dealings in the last days—*Palestine*. Then, too, he will not regard the God of his fathers, *i. e.* the Jehovah of Israel (which implies that he will be a Jew); "nor the desire of women," that is, the Messiah—the long promised Seed of the woman.

*Bolshevism dethroned the Czars. Russia is now ruled by a dictator.

But "at the time of the end"—that time so near at hand, that time which will begin very soon after the removal of the Church—"shall the King of the South push at him." The King of the South is that power that will be ruling in Egypt, whoever at that time it may be. At the same time the King of the North shall come down upon him from the north. This king, then, becomes the point of attack from both north and south. This shows that he is a third and different king from the Kings of the North and South.

We cannot proceed without once again calling the reader's attention to the marvellous way in which the Spirit of God has here entered into detail concerning these closing scenes of this world's history. And is it not a fact that the thoughts of all the world are rapidly centering upon these very lands? Russia, Turkey, Egypt, and the East are today absorbing universal attention.

O reader, the times are moving quickly! The coming of the Lord draweth nigh. The nations are falling into line; all unknown to themselves, they are forming themselves into the very attitude long since foretold by Him who "worketh all things after the counsel of His own will," and whose irreversible decree it is to "head up in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth." (Eph. 1:9, 10). Yes, "the dispensation of the fulness of the times" is at hand, and Christ shall reign in righteousness and peace; but first must

there be unparalleled judgments on this guilty world.—A. H. B.

(To be continued, D. V.)

Short Papers on Church History

(Continued)

ROME AND HER EARLY RULERS

As our two great apostles Peter and Paul suffered martyrdom during the First imperial persecution, it may be interesting to many of our readers to know something of the particulars which led to this cruel edict.

But here, however, reluctantly, we must turn from the sure Word of God to the uncertain writings of men. We pass, just at this point, from the firm and solid ground of inspiration to the insecure footing of Roman historians and ecclesiastical history. Nevertheless, all historians, both ancient and modern, pagan and Christian, are agreed as to the main facts of the burning of Rome, and the persecution of the Christians.

In the month of July A. D. 64, a great fire broke out in the Circus, which continued to spread until it laid in ruins all the ancient grandeur of the imperial city. The flames extended with great rapidity, and Rome being a city of long narrow streets and of hills and valleys, the fire gathered force from the winds, and soon became a general conflagration. In a short time the whole city seemed wrapped in one sheet of burning flame.

Tacitus, a Roman historian of that day, and considered one of the most accurate of his time, tells us: "Of the fourteen quarters into which Rome was divided, four only were left entire, three were reduced to ashes, and the remaining seven presented nothing better than a heap of shattered houses half in ruins."

The fire raged furiously for six days and seven nights. Palaces, temples, monuments, the mansions of the rich, and the dwellings of the poor, perished in this fatal fire. But these were nothing compared with the sufferings of the inhabitants. The infirmities of age, the weakness of the young, the helplessness of the sick, the wild screams and lamentations of women, added to the miseries of this dreadful scene. Some endeavoured to provide for themselves, others to save their friends, but no place of safety could be found. Which way to turn, or what way to go no one could tell; the fire raged on every side, so that numbers fell prostrate in the street, embraced a voluntary death, and perished in the flames.

The important question as to how the fire originated was now discussed everywhere. That the city was set on fire by incendiaries, and by the orders of Nero himself, nearly all believed. It was certain that a number of men were seen extending instead of extinguishing the flames, and they boldly affirmed that they had authority for doing so. It was also generally reported that while Rome was in a blaze, the inhuman monster Nero stood on a

tower where he could watch its progress, and amused himself by singing the fall of Troy to his favourite guitar.

Many will no doubt wonder what object he could have in burning down the greater part of Rome. His object, we believe, was that he might rebuilt the city on a scale of greater magnificence, and call it by his own name. And this he attempted immediately in the grandest way. But everything he did failed to restore him to popular favour, or remove the infamous charge of having set the city on fire. And when all hope was gone of propitiating either the people or the gods, he fell upon the plan of shifting the imputation from himself to others. He knew enough of the unpopularity of the Christians, both with the Jews and the heathen, to fix on them as his sin-bearers. A rumour was soon spread that the incendiaries had been discovered, and that the Christians were the criminals. Numbers were immediately arrested, that they might be brought to condign punishment, and satisfy the popular indignation. And now we arrive at

THE FIRST PERSECUTION UNDER THE EMPERORS

But here we may pause for a moment, and contemplate the progress of Christianity, and the state of the Church in Rome at this time. At a very early period, and without the aid of any apostle, Christianity had found its way to Rome. It was, no doubt, first carried thither by some who had

been converted under Peter's preaching on the day of Pentecost. Amongst his hearers we have expressly mentioned, "Strangers of Rome, Jews, and proselytes" (Acts 2:10). And Paul, in his Epistle to that Church, thanks God that their "faith was spoken of throughout the whole world" (Rom. 1:8). And in his salutations he speaks of "Andronicus and Junia," his kinsmen and fellow-prisoners, who were chief men among the apostles, and whose conversion was of an earlier date than his own. But great wonders had been wrought by the Gospel in the course of thirty years. Christians had become a marked, a separate, a peculiar people. They were now known as perfectly distinct from the Jews, and bitterly disclaimed by them.

The labours of Paul and his companions during the two years of his imprisonment, were no doubt blessed of the Lord to the conversion of great numbers. So that the Christians were by this time no secret or inconsiderable community, but were known to embrace in their numbers both Jews and Gentiles of all ranks and conditions, from the imperial household to the runaway slave. But their present suffering, as we have seen, was not for their Christianity. They were really sacrificed by Nero to appease the popular fury of the people, and to reconcile their offended deities.

This was the first legal persecution of the Christians; and in some of its features it stand alone in the annals of human barbarity. Inventive cruel ty sought out new ways of torture to satiate the

blood-thirsty Nero—the most cruel Emperor that ever reigned. The gentle, peaceful, unoffending followers of the Lord Jesus were sewn in the skins of wild beasts, and torn by dogs; others were wrapped in a kind of dress smeared with wax, with pitch, and other combustible matter, with a stake under the chin to keep them upright, and set on fire when the day closed, that they might serve as lights in the public gardens of popular amusements. Nero lent his own gardens for these exhibitions, and gave entertainments for the people. He took an active part in the games himself; sometimes mingling with the crowd on foot, sometimes viewing the awful spectacle from his chariot. But, accustomed as these people were to public executions and gladiatorial shows, they were moved to pity by the unexampled cruelties inflicted on the Christians. They began to see that they suffered, not for the public good, but to gratify the cruelty of one man. But fearful as their death was, it was soon over; and to them, no doubt, the happiest moment of their existence. Long, long before the lights were quenched in Nero's garden, the martyrs had found their home and rest above—in the blooming garden of God's eternal delights. This precious truth we learn from what the Saviour said to the penitent thief on the Cross: "Today shalt thou be with Me in Paradise" (Luke 23).

Although historians are not agreed either as to the extent or the duration of this terrible persecution, there is too good reason to believe that it

spread throughout the empire, and lasted till the end of the tyrant's life. He died by his own hand, in utter wretchedness and despair, in A. D. 68, about four years after the burning of Rome, and one year after the martyrdom of Peter and Paul. Towards the end of his reign, the Christians were required, under heaviest penalties, even that of death, to offer sacrifices to the emperor and to the heathen gods. While such edicts were in force the persecution must have continued.—A. Miller.

(To be continued, D. V.)

Hannah and Eli: A Contrast

EDITOR'S NOTE:

As there is an interest in the letter which appeared under "Correspondence" in the March 1948 issue of "Things New & Old," we are publishing herewith, the full paper, "Hannah and Eli: A Contrast," on which the writer in "Correspondence" is commenting.

Eli enjoyed the greatest privilege in Israel—the place of greatest nearness to God, and occupation with His service. As high-priest, all the hallowed associations of the sanctuary, its sacrifices and other worship, were matters of daily even hourly familiarity with him. Nor does it seem that this was lost upon him: a real attachment to the things of God, and in a sense a zeal for His glory are marked in him, together with a submission to His will under government. Nor was the privilege for Eli alone; his family shared with him in the near-

ness, the hallowed occupation with the things of the sanctuary. Had there been a state of heart in Hophni and Phinehas answering to the place of outward nearness which they occupied, they would have been men of marked and intelligent piety. But, alas! outward privileges do not change the heart, natural descent does not mean regeneration. Israel as a nation are proofs of this: descended from Abraham, the man of faith, they have shown by the hardness of their hearts that they are not children of Abraham. It is just as true for the sons of godly parents as for those utterly ignorant of God, that "Ye must be born again." Without this, outward blessing only proves a curse. Occupied with holy things, these men instead of being elevated, degrade those things. They made the Lord's offering to be abhorred. Those whose worship they should have guided, they degraded, and all this with the knowledge of their father, Eli.

Look on the other hand at Hannah. A woman, and so representative of the feeble; barren and despised, how could she, in the eyes of the Israelites, to whom a barren womb was a curse, glorify God? All seems to be against her according to nature; but this only drives her to one unfailing refuge. Even at the tabernacle and in its worship she could find comfort in prayer and tears, rather than in praise, and Eli the priest of God, who should "have compassion on the ignorant," fails to understand her. Alas! his eyes, so long closed to his sons' waywardness, fail to discern the dif-

ference between one of a sorrowful spirit and those who had been debauched by the priests. He is severe where nothing but sympathy is called for. He can admonish an outsider, where none is needed, while in his own house all manner of evil is allowed. There is nothing sadder in Eli than this evidence of loss of discernment and of power. His own weakness at home has made him incompetent to deal with matters in connection with God's house. He is not alone in this. The apostle in giving the requirements for one to be a ruler in God's house writes, "One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (for if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God)." (I Tim. iii. 4, 5.) Doubtless, many cases of mistaken discipline, needless severity, and want of wisdom in general, may be directly traced to the fact that Elis are trying to do in God's house what they have failed to do in their own, and, like the one of whom we are speaking, only manifest their lack of wisdom and power. Surely this is a most pungent truth for parents to consider. How unspeakably solemn is Eli's position, a wearer of high-priestly robes, with two ungodly sons. How incongruous! But it may be said, Eli rebuked his sons. Yes, and allowed them to go on in their sins. His very rebuke only hardened them, for it showed that with full knowledge of their course he allowed them to continue in the priests' office. How different was this from Phinehas in the time of Baal Peor!

No rebuke is sufficient to arrest the flood-tide of evil, and he sends forth his spear, not to speak, but to act—to act for God at whatever cost, and blessing follows. Surely, parents should admonish and instruct their children, but words alone, unaccompanied by power, are of no avail. How did these sons of Eli grow to manhood with such habits? Was it carelessness on the part of their father, a spirit of indulging his children, another name for self-indulgence? Parents are told to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and these two words mean all that is needful, spiritual food and spiritual correction, administered in power. If parents seek in dependence upon God to carry out this instruction with reference to their children, surely God will give His blessing. Eli is forced to hear the doom pronounced upon his house, because of his own unfaithfulness. "His own sons made themselves vile and he restrained them not." It did not come in with that authority given to him from God,—given to every parent to restrain, yes, by force if necessary, his children. Eli had much in him to commend, doubtless; but he seems to be one of those easy-going people who will not sacrifice ease to duty, who do not hearken to the wholesome words in Proverbs, "Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying." The Revised Version renders the latter clause, "And set not thine heart on his destruction." This surely is done by those who for the sake of sparing the

tears caused by wholesome chastening will allow self-will in the child, which will surely bring it to destruction. With the example of Eli before them, let no parent excuse himself for carelessness in the training of his children. He will reap what he has sown, and the after sorrows will far, far outweigh all the present pain of being firm and faithful with those whom God has placed under his care. For proper correction and discipline at the right time and in the right spirit does not take up the larger part of the parent's intercourse with his children, nor color the whole life. Correction is the exception, not the rule: a uniform firmness, tempered with love, is far better than oft-repeated chastisement.

But let us return to Hannah. Her child is one given in direct answer to prayer, and before its birth it is dedicated to God. He is to be a Nazarite —one separate unto God from much even that passes for good. Let us notice the one point which makes the great difference between Hannah and Eli. Hannah is in communion with God about her child. She asks him from God, she dedicates him to God. The sanctuary is to be his home. But it might be said, Children ought to be happy, not tied down or made religious. Wait until they get older before putting a yoke upon them. Hannah's way with Samuel is the answer. She might say to any who objected to her giving up her son to God, "In His presence is fullness of joy, at His right hand are pleasures for evermore." Can there be greater

joy for children, as for all, than to know God? It is Satan who would keep parents from thus fully dedicating their children to God, and from acting upon it. Like Pharaoh, he would allow the parents to go on pilgrimage, provided the children are left behind in Egypt.

It is just here that great mistakes are made. Under the pretext of allowing for youth, and childish pleasures, associations, habits, and practices are allowed which are of the world. What is the result? The children grow up in the world. The bodily food that is good enough for the parent suffices for the child: so the spiritual food is good alike for both. Milk for babes indeed, but milk does not mean poison. It means elementary instruction in the same truths upon which the parent feeds. The question might be asked, 'Are harmless sports, etc., to be forbidden? Surely not; yet there is a way of enjoying these, and at the same time taking them from a Father's hand, that will make the child a worshiper. How important, then, to begin where Hannah did. The child belongs to God: it shall be brought up for Him: it shall be a Nazarite. God answered her faith. Her son was all she expected him to be—all that she asked for him. It is needful to notice this precious fact: God does hear believing prayer for children, He does honor the faith that honors Him. But this includes the practical carrying out of the dedication. Hannah carries Samuel up to the Lord's house. It was not enough that in her affliction she

vowed to do so; she accomplished her vow. Many parents are constant, and in a sense believing, in their prayers for their children; yet when action is needed—practical separation unto God, they fail. Some may say, Children are not converted, have not the tastes of the new man, and therefore it would make them legal to require them to act upon principles a Christian alone can understand. To this it is enough to reply, first, Who can say how early in life a child may be regenerated and the new man require proper food? Secondly, the Word is the appointed means to this end, and should therefore be freely, persistently, and faithfully used. Thirdly, the children have a responsibility for walk apart from the question of their new birth. All this is intimated in two points in the child-history of Samuel: he was weaned, and yearly his mother brought him a little coat, when she came up to the Lord's house to offer sacrifice. The meaning would seem to teach that breaking of the will without which little or nothing can be done for the child. Its desires are curbed, its wishes are checked effectually, begetting a subdued spirit before unknown. How needful it is that children should be taught to surrender their wills! Obedience, absolute, immediate, and cheerful, is the first lesson to teach them. Once effectually learned, it stays with the child through life: partially learned, it crops up again and again in acts and ways of willfulness. But who can truly command obedience but the one who is obedient? Only those themselves as weaned

children in God's presence can expect the subject spirit in their own children. How can children honor those who do not command it by their lives? This obedience need not be unintelligent. Of course, a reason cannot be given for every command, and children must be taught to obey unquestioningly. But conscience should also be instructed, so that as the children grow, they may learn to obey, not with eye-service merely, but from principle.

Next, Hannah sees to the clothing of Samuel. Clothing, in Scripture, seems to mean those principles and habits according to which a person acts. Thus a garment of mixed texture—woolen and linen—was forbidden, as indicating mixed principles and habits—"neither cold nor hot." The woman was forbidden to wear a man's clothing, and the man that of the woman,—neither was to act in a manner unbecoming the sex. Leprosy in the garment had to be either torn out or the whole burned,—defilement in habits was to be purged away. The garment spotted by the flesh is in contrast with that pure religion which keeps itself unspotted from the world; while, in glory, the fine white linen in which the saints are clothed is their "righteousness"—righteous acts. Thus the care for the clothing typifies that care for the habits, principles, and acts which go to make up the outward appearance of the child. Hannah could not change Samuel's heart; she could see to his outward appearance. Because parents are helpless as to regeneration, there is no reason why they should not

be careful as to the conduct of their children. But mark the occasion when Hannah took the new garment to her child. It was when she went to offer sacrifices. As the precious truths of the atonement are set forth in these, so the effects of it are shown in the garment. Doubtless she sought to have the child enter with her into the precious meaning of the sacrifices, and thus he could appreciate that holiness which becometh God's house. So now, parents should ever connect in their own minds, and in the instruction of their children, these related truths. Constant care as to the behavior, apart from the blessed truths of Christ's redemption, would result in making the child either a self-righteous moralist or drive it to the opposite—extreme looseness and indulgence; while linked with the constraining power of Christ's great love, filling and overflowing the heart, behaviour becomes but the natural outcome of that love, seen, believed, and received. For will not God bless His gospel in thus saving and keeping the children of believers?

We come now to see the contrast in these two examples of the parent as last seen. Eli hears the doom of his house from the Lord, still allowing his sons to go on in their course. They are slain in battle, carrying the ark upon their shoulders, thus showing that God will never link His holiness with sin,—that His ark had better fall into the hands of enemies than be defended by defiled priests. Eli, as he hears the message of his own bereavement, but worst of all what had befallen the ark, falls

from his seat and dies. How sad the ending of a life which had such opportunities! And when we ask why, our answer must be, in the words of Scripture, "Because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not." We know this marked an epoch in Israel's history, but we are speaking now of the simple but intensely solemn individual application for all parents. Hannah celebrates with a song God's goodness to her, and passes from her own personal joy to the complete victory God would soon secure in the earth. It is a song of triumph, sung by one who had passed through the darkness into the "large place" of deliverance. And what spirit can be so strong to deal with the difficult and real trials of bringing up a child for God as the spirit of exultant praise?—God has triumphed; He will do so still. And so the last we see of Hannah is thus praising God, still enjoying His blessing, and yearly going up to the house of God to offer sacrifices and see to the apparel of her child. How simple, how happy her life! And what was the key to it all? She took God into her thoughts, plans, and actions for her child.

Of the importance of this subject it is needless to speak. Every Christian parent with an awakened conscience has often thought and prayed about it. Many have the joy of seeing their prayers answered and their children growing up to be a comfort to them and an honor to God. Many, alas! are seeing the reverse, and their hearts are crushed with grief as they think of the ruin that has

come into their own homes; and multitudes of others are going on with unconcern, their children growing up in the world and of it. For these latter, surely some word of earnest warning is needed. Will they bring dishonor on God and the blessed name of the Lord Jesus? Will they imperil the souls of their children by allowing in them habits or associations which can only bring damage? But what can be said to those who have failed and are conscious of it? It is easy to point out the cause of the ruin, but is there not, in some measure at least, recovery for Eli? The example of Jacob is an encouragement. His sons had made his name to stink among the Gentiles; but God calls him back to Bethel,—back to the place of meeting God, of seeing self in all its helplessness and God in His all-sufficiency. Under the power of that call, Jacob can speak to his family and be obeyed by them. There must be a bowing under God's hand, and owning His chastening. There must also be a thorough restoration in one's own soul to God,—the first love regained, and then taking up the broken and scattered threads of responsibility, the recovered soul is to seek, in God's fear and by His help, to regain that authority over, that respect in, the children which had been lost. God blesses every sincere turning to Himself, though He does not pledge Himself to undo our misdoings. His holiness,—nay, our own needs require that we should taste some of the wholesome bitterness of that cup which a Father's love hands to us—"Whatsoever a

man soweth, that shall he also reap." May our gracious God stir up the hearts of Christian parents to a firm faith in His power to save early in life their children, to a sense of responsibility in bringing them up for God, not for themselves. Were there this spirit of humiliation and prayer, how soon would weeping give place to joy, and Hannah's song be on many lips!

—*"Help and Food,"* 1892.

For Young Christians

THE SHEPHERD'S LAMBS

I am a young believer, aged twenty. I composed these lines one day while thinking about my Sunday School class. The words seemed to come to me from the Lord, to dispel the doubts which occasionally arise, as to whether such work is of any use. I have often felt discouraged when thinking of my lack of ability as a teacher, but now the Lord has turned my eyes from myself to Himself, in His light to think of His lambs, not one of whom He would have to perish.

Do you hear the Saviour saying "Seek My lambs;
Many little ones are straying; seek My lambs,
For the way is cold and dreary, rough and steep;
Many little ones are weary, nigh asleep."

Do you hear the Saviour saying: "Feed My lambs"?
Are you ever thinking, praying, for His lambs?
For the Bread of life they're dying; won't you take
Bread to feed the hungry, trying for His sake?

Do you hear the Saviour saying: "Bring My lambs"?
Can you listen, no heed paying His commands?
Bring the little ones to Him for Him to keep,
For the tender Shepherd loves us, lambs and sheep.

—M. N. S.

I thank Thee, Lord, that I MAY live
A simple life of childlike trust;
Believe, obey, receive, and give,
Because I MAY, not that I must.

—J. C.

Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, me, and know my thoughts. (Psalm 139:23).

How few there are without some secret corner in their heart which they would not like to have searched out by Him! That corner **must** be searched out, for He must be a Saviour after His own fashion; and if we would not have it searched, we can have little apprehended the fullness and reality of His salvation. Not alone does He save from wrath — He saves from sin. It is in subjection to His yoke that we must find rest. God grant it to us for His name's sake even now. —F.W.G.

Search all my thoughts, the secret springs,
The motives that control
The chambers where polluted things
Hold empire o'er my soul.

CONFERENCES

Minneapolis, Minn.

It is purposed, DV., to hold the annual Bible Conference in Minneapolis, June 18, 19 and 20, 1948. The Conference will open with prayer, Thursday evening, 7:45 P. M., and continue over Lord's Day. Provision will be made for those coming from a distance. Please advise Mr. Herman Block, 4817 Oakland Ave., So., Minneapolis 7, Minn. Remember the meetings before the Throne of Grace that God will grant us a rich season of blessing as we study the Word together.

St. Maries, Ida.

The annual Bible Conference for the study and ministry of the Word, will commence, (D. V.) Friday, 9:30 A. M., July 2nd, and continue over July 4th. 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.

Waverly, Iowa

The Iowa Bible Conference will be held again (D. V.) at Wartburg College in Waverly, Iowa, August 18, 19, 20, 21, and 22nd. Those planning to attend please communicate with Carlyle Miller, Clarksville, Iowa, or Frank Hoel, Greene, Iowa, so that proper arrangements may be made.

Dunkirk, N. Y.

The annual Bible Conference will be held (D. V.) at the Dunkirk Conference Grounds, two miles east of Dunkirk, N. Y., on Route 5, August 28th to September 4th.

San Francisco, Calif.

The San Francisco Bay area assemblies purpose, the Lord permitting, having a conference beginning Saturday, September 4th and ending Monday, September 6th (Labor Day).

Those coming from a distance will please communicate with Henry Cerrina, 747 Maud Avenue, San Leandro, Calif.

For further information, address:

F. B. TOMKINSON, 30 East Ninth Street, Erie, Pa.

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"Then said He unto them, Therefore every scribe instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven, is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure THINGS NEW AND OLD." (Matt. 13:52).

VOL. XVI JULY, 1948 NO. 7

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Publishing Office:
ERIE BIBLE TRUTH DEPOT
30 East Ninth Street, Erie, Pa., U. S. A.

Editor's Notes

All communications for the Editor should be addressed to F. B. TOMKINSON, 30 East Ninth St., Erie, Pa.

For the benefit of all our readers, each article appearing in this magazine will have, by initials or otherwise, some indication of its origin, except in the case of those by the Editor.

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This Fund exists for the purpose of sending copies of the Magazines to Chaplains and men in the Armed Forces; world-wide Missionaries and other Workers, who would not otherwise get them. Encouraging letters are received continually from those who receive copies through this Fund, and these appear in THE HARVEST FIELD. a sample copy of which will be sent, gratis, to any enquirers. (Although the war has ended, there is still a demand for literature in this country and for the Armies of Occupation.)

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Help Me to Speak of Calvary

My gracious Master, help me now
Thy wondrous Word declare.
Help me to speak of Calvary,
And all Thy sufferings there.

To tell of love so great and good,
That, though so rich and high,
Thou did'st for us become so poor,
And e'en for us did'st die.

To show again how on the Cross,
Afflicted and alone.
The Lamb provided there by God,
Thou did'st for sin atone.

A faithful servant I would be,
My joy Thy will to do.
In telling forth Thy message, Lord,
Loving, sincere and true.

Thou knowest all my weakness, Lord,
Whisper again to me,
"I will be with thee" and I'll prove
Thine all-sufficiency.

Oh, Lord! if Thou art glorified
And weary souls are blest.
My prayer will fully answered be,
I leave to Thee the rest. —R. D.

"Surely I Come Quickly!"

(Continued)

CHAPTER II

THE RESURRECTION OF SAINTS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

The method Mr. Reese employs to discover the relation of the church to the tribulation will mystify

most Christians. Those who are familiar with Scriptural teaching concerning the origin, character and destiny of the church would naturally expect him to base his arguments on that part of the Word of God's eternal counsels. But he prefers to begin his demonstration of the Scripturality of his views in the Old Testament. Realizing that his beginning in such an unlikely place calls for an explanation, he defends this surprising maneuver in the following words:

"But it is necessary to explain that, in going to the O.T., we do so with no misapprehension concerning the nature and calling of the Church of the N.T. We shall not look for N.T. revelation there; we aim merely at finding out when 'the world's grey fathers,' and the rest of the holy dead of O.T. times, awake to life. Darbyist writers themselves assert that if we can fix the epoch of this resurrection, we can know the time of the resurrection of the Church, since the two synchronize. Hence the relevancy of the inquiry." (p. 34).

In spite of his careful disclaimer about the character of the knowledge he expects to find in the O.T., it is easy to see the great error he is perpetrating. He actually seeks to make the incomplete revelation of these times the beginning and basis for his whole case!

We can all readily agree that the saints of the Old Testament times will be raised at the same time as the church. But that the Old Testament, which contains not a syllable about the church, reveals the circumstances of such a resurrection, is totally false. Faith in resurrection these saints surely had as Ps. 17:15, Job 19:26; and II Sam.

12:23 testify. But the circumstances surrounding this resurrection, its extent, and its place in coming events were purposely vague. We can easily see why this was so.

The great period to which the Old Testament looks forward is neither resurrection nor a heavenly inheritance, but the coming of Messiah to reign over the earth. His reign naturally involves the dominance of Israel and the destruction of her enemies. Because of this outlook, there is little of the inspired Word devoted to the rejection of their King and the effects which flow from it. Then, too, this attention to earthly circumstances unfits them in some measure for the revelations of God's counsels about heaven. So it is natural, as well as part of His purpose, that the church and the relation of the resurrection of those who died in faith to a heavenly inheritance will necessarily be passed over in silence.

With these general considerations in mind, let us examine his Scriptures and arguments in detail. Mr. Reese first quotes from

ISAIAH 26:19

"Thy dead shall live; my dead bodies shall rise.
Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust;
For thy dew is as the dew of herbs,
And the earth shall cast forth the dead." (R.V.)

After quoting a comment on the verse from Sir G. A. Smith, which simply indicates that the verse is to be taken literally, Mr. Reese adds these words.

"Now the question that concerns us is whether we have any indication in this section of Isaiah concerning the time when this momentous event takes place? To an impartial mind there can be no doubt of the answer; this resurrection is to take place at the Day of the Lord, when Jehovah shall come, and Israel shall be reconciled to Him. The proofs of this are incontestable. The principal signs and events of the whole prophecy move, to use figurative language, within the cycle of the sixth and seventh seals of the Apocalypse. Here we have the Coming of the Lord, the conversion of Israel, the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom, and the sidereal signs in heaven that immediately precede them. Living Israel is restored, and the sleeping saints are brought to life, at the beginning of the Messianic Reign, not some years or decades before, as the new theories require. (p. 35, 36).

"This beautiful verse occurs in one of the most remarkable of all Isaiah's prophecies; the section that it is found in—Isaiah 24-27—is known as "the little Apocalypse of Isaiah." In chapter 25, we hear the song of redemption for the Redeemer has come to Zion, and Israel, looking to Him alone, is saved. There follows from restored Israel a hymn of thanksgiving, mingled with a sense of disappointed hopes at the smallness of her numbers. 'The answer to these disappointed hopes is the resurrection, verse 19' (Skinner, Isaiah, p. 197)." (p. 35).

This interesting specimen of Mr. Reese's idea as to what constitutes a Scriptural proof of his views is worthy of careful notice. With no further preliminaries than this very general comment on the 25th chapter and the single quotation we have seen from the 26th chapter, he has no hesitancy in saying that "the proofs are incontestable!" He has reached his goal in a single bound. There is no comparison of Scripture with Scripture, no de-

tailed examination of the verse itself prior to his pronouncement as to its decisiveness, nothing but his fiat that his views are proved! One would properly anticipate a more mature handling of this involved question from one who has shouldered the self-appointed task of overthrowing and correcting those prophetic views he believes erroneous.

Having announced his conclusion, Mr. Reese now gives us his reason for it. Since he pins a great deal of faith on the strength of the language used in this verse, to show that it refers to bodily resurrection, let us hear him on the matter. He says,

"The ordinary reader feels that the language can bear only one interpretation, namely: that here we have a resurrection of the dead in the ordinary meaning of the term. The wording of the promise indicates unmistakably that this is so. Phrases are used, one after another, that preclude all possibility of spiritualizing:

Dead men----------come to life,
Dead bodies----------arise,
Dwellers in the dust------awake and sing,
The earth----------casts forth the dead.

If terms such as these do not signify a literal resurrection from the dead what terms can? Throughout the whole Bible we meet with no passage that gives, in the same compass, so unequivocal a testimony to the doctrine of a bodily resurrection." (p. 36).

No one will deny that the language is strong enough to imply bodily resurrection. Unfortunately for him there is more to the question than the strength of language. Two other criterions are of equal importance: consistency with the con-

text and consistency with the teachings of other Scriptures on the same point. Let us consider this verse with these points in mind.

At first glance we might concede that the verse is speaking of a bodily resurrection. "Thy dead shall live; my dead bodies shall arise" seems unmistakably to bear that sense. The end of the verse, however, has a more equivocal ring to it. "The earth shall cast forth her dead" is hardly the equivalent of the New Testament's account of resurrection in which the voice of the Lord and the trump of God are the starting point. But let us look at the preceding and following verses before reaching any conclusions.

Isaiah 26:18 is, "We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind; we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth; neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen." No one, I believe, will differ with my conclusion that this language can only be properly understood as figurative. Moreover, this metaphor of birth is a familiar one for the national regathering of Israel. Here are two samples: "Shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children." (Isa. 66:8) "Therefore will he give them up, until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth; then the remnant of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel." (Micah 5:3).

Is not the sense of Isa. 26:18, 19 this? Israel mourns her failure to regather the nation or to

conquer her enemies, likening her failure to the false promise of birth with its ensuing disappointment. God replies, assuring her that it will take place, using the more vivid figure of resurrection. Mr. Reese would undoubtedly claim that he goes even farther, that he promises her additional numbers through the bodily resurrection of her dead. For help on this point, let us look at the following verse, Isa. 26:20.

The Speaker, evidently still Jehovah, says, "Come, My people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself as it were for a little moment until the indignation be overpast." Now if Mr. Reese insists that verse 19 refers to bodily resurrection, it is difficult to see how he can evade the application of verse 20 to those who have been resurrected. God, who calls them "My dead bodies," in verse 19, invites them as "My People" to hide until His indignation is overpast. Because of the correspondence between this verse and Rev. 12:6, "And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days," it seems evident that Isa. 26:20 refers to the same event, the great tribulation.*

Such a sequence of events would place Mr. Reese in a cruel predicament. If he clings to his theory

* Since Rev. 12:5 speaks of the man child who is caught up to God's throne, obviously Christ, as the offspring of the woman, she must be Israel.

of a bodily resurrection, he would be in the embarrassing position of committing himself to a resurrection *before* the tribulation, precisely the doctrine he opposes so vigorously. He would also be committed to the absurdity of supposing that these resurrected saints beyond the reach of death, are hiding for fear of mortal man! No wonder Mr. Reese did not care to examine the context. On the other hand, to admit that the passage is figurative would bring it into harmony with the other Scriptures which show Israel, not the church, going through the great tribulation. This latter view is the true one, I believe.

One further error is involved in making the passage refer to bodily resurrection. To do so would give the resurrected saints an earthly portion rather than the heavenly one which is rightfully theirs. "But now they (Abraham and his seed) desire a better country, that is, an heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for He hath prepared for them a city." (Heb. 11:16).

Mr. Reese's claim that "The principal signs and events of the whole prophecy move—within the cycle of the sixth and seventh seals of the Apocalypse," amounts to little. For one looks in vain for a reference to resurrection at the time of the sixth seal. It is true that men exclaim at that time, "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of His wrath is

come; and who shall be able to stand?" (Rev. 6:16, 17). But it is not the day of His wrath; it is simply their false conclusion that is stated. That it is false is easily proved. Not until the seventh trumpet is it said that, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ." (Rev. 11:15). Altogether, this verse affords a most inauspicious starting point for an effort whose aim is the demolition of the teachings Mr. Reese so strongly attacks.

ISAIAH 25:7-8 (R.V.)

"And He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering that is cast over all peoples, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He hath swallowed up death forever; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the reproach of His people shall He take away from off all the earth for the Lord hath spoken it."

Mr. Reese remarks, "Happily there is no controversy with our opponents on the import of this passage; they all admit, in view of N.T. usage, that we are to understand a bodily resurrection in the most definite sense.—The only question, therefore, that concerns us, is the time of the resurrection. According to the new theories the resurrection of Israel's holy dead takes place before the conversion of living Israel, the Coming of Jehovah, and the inauguration of the kingdom; but according to Isaiah that resurrection is inseparably bound up with these momentous events. When living Israel turns to Jehovah, sleeping Israel awakes from the dead. Chapter 25 relates the establishment in power of Jehovah's Kingdom (v. 6). We then have the resurrection of the dead (v. 7-8); and in verse 9 we read, "and it shall be said *in that day*—(the day of the Kingdom and resurrection)—Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord; we have

waited for Him, and we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation." Here we have the Advent of Jehovah, and the new welcome He receives from repentant Israel. But these take place *on the day of resurrection*, as the great Apostle conclusively shows in 1 Cor. 15:54." (p. 40).

If confidence and sweeping assertion were the only requisites for establishing the truth of a doctrine, no doubt Mr. Reese would carry his point. It will be our task, however, proceeding at a slower pace, to see if his confidence in his conclusions is justified by the passages he produces.

It is perfectly true that "according to Isaiah . . . when living Israel turn to Jehovah, sleeping Israel awakes from the dead." Such joining of events—widely separated in time—as though they were consecutive, is not uncommon in the prophets. We have already noticed that the 69th and 70th weeks of Daniel are separated by the whole church period, yet one would not gather from a reading of the passage that this great gap existed. It is only as one compares the New Testament Scriptures with the Old Testament that he is able to arrive at the true order of events. The failure to apply consistently this principle is one of the fallacies in Mr. Reese's arguments.

This very book of Isaiah furnishes us with an example of the close grouping of happenings widely separated in time. Isaiah 61:2 says, "To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God." When the Lord reads this passage (Luke 4:19) He significantly closes the book at the end of the phrase, "To preach the ac-

ceptable year of the Lord." His own comment indicates the meaning of His action. "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." The day of vengeance, although joined in the same sentence with the acceptable year, as if they occurred simultaneously, as separated from the beginning of the acceptable year by the length of the church interval and the tribulation. This incident alone should convince even the unwary that Old Testament prophecies must be compared with New Testament revelations before they can be definitely put into their proper place in the prophetic outline of future events.—W. F. P.

(To be continued, D.V.)

Notes On Discipline

We ought to remember what we are in ourselves, when we talk about exercising discipline—*it is anamazingly solemn thing.* When I reflect that I am a poor sinner, saved by mere mercy, standing only in Jesus Christ for acceptance, in myself, vile, it is evidently an awful thing to take discipline into my own hands. Who can judge save God? This is my first thought. But we are bound to be clear of evil in God's way.

Here I stand as nothing in the midst of persons dear to the Lord, whom I must look upon and esteem better than myself, in the consciousness of my own sinfulness and nothingness before the Lord, and to talk of exercising discipline! It is a

very solemn thought indeed to my own mind; it presses on me peculiarly. Only one thing gets me out of that feeling, and *that is the prerogative of love.* The moment I get out of that, it is a *monstrous thing.* The character of discipline as Master we have not at all. Though influenced by love to maintain righteousness, and stimulated to a jealous, watchful care one over another, we must ever remember that, after all, *"to his own master" our brother "standeth or falleth."* (Rom. xiv. 4).

One cannot admit of any principle of voluntary association at all, or of preservative rules of one's own. Man's will is that which brings in everlasting destruction. It may be modified, but the principle is altogether false.

It is a mischief to make church discipline the only discipline. It would be a most awful thing, if it were necessary to bring every evil before all. It is not the tendency of charity to bring evil into public. *"Charity covers a multitude of sins."* If it sees a brother sin a sin which is not unto death, it goes and prays for him, and the sin may never come out as a question of Church discipline at all. I believe there is never a case of church discipline but to the shame of the whole body. Like some sore on a man's body, it tells of the disease of the body, of the constitutional condition. The assembly is never prepared, or in the place, to exercise discipline, unless having first identified itself with the sin of the individual. If it does not do it in that way it takes a judicial form, and that will

not be the ministration of the grace of Christ. Christ has not yet taken His full judicial place. The moment it comes to that, the saying, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still," &c., the church has departed from its place altogether. *Its priestly character in the present dispensation is one of grace.*

If a saint gets into trouble, he is Christ's sheep, and I am bound, in whatsoever way I can, to seek to get him out of it. He may say, "What business have you to come?" and the like; but I ought to go and lay myself at his feet, in order to get him out of the net which he has got into, even though he dislike me for it. This needs the spirit of grace, and the seeking to bear the whole on one's own soul.

The great body of discipline ought to be altogether *aimed at hindering excommunication — the putting of a person out.* Nine-tenths of the discipline which ought to go on is individual. If it comes to the question of the exercise of the discipline of "the Son over His own house," the church ought never to take it up, but in self-identification, in confession of common sin and shame that it has come over to this; so it would be no court of justice at all, but a disgrace to the body. Spirituality in the church would purge out hypocrisy, defilement, and everything unworthy, without assuming a judicial aspect. Nothing should be so abhorrent as that, in God's house, such a thing happened. If it were in one of our houses that something dishonour-

able and disgraceful had happened, should we feel as though we were altogether unconcerned, that we had nothing to do with it? It might be that some reprobate son must be put out, for the sake of the others; he cannot be reclaimed, and he is corrupting the family—what can be done? It is necessary to say, "I cannot keep you here; I cannot corrupt the rest by your habits and manners." Would it not, nevertheless, be for weeping and mourning, for sorrow of heart and shame and dishonour to the whole family? They would not like to talk on the subject, and others would refrain from it, to spare their feelings; his name would not be mentioned. In the house of the Son, how abhorrent to be putting out! what common shame; what anguish! what sorrow! *There is nothing more abhorrent to God than a judicial process.*

There is nothing I pray for more than the dispensation of pastors. What I mean by a pastor is a person who can bear the whole sorrow, care, misery, and sin of another on his own soul, and go to God about it; and bring from God what will meet it, before he goes to the other.

All discipline until the last act is restorative. The act of putting outside—of excommunication—is not, properly speaking, discipline, but the saying that discipline is ineffective, and there is an end of it; the church says, "I can do no more."

The body claiming a right to exercise discipline! one cannot conceive a more terrible thing; it is turning the family of God into a court of justice.

Suppose the case of a father going to turn out of doors a wicked son, and the other children of the family saying, "We have a right to help our father in turning our brother out of the house"—what an awful thing!

The church is never in the place of exercising discipline until the sin of the individual becomes the sin of the church recognized as such. There is all this—"Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear" (1 Tim. v. 20); "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such," &c.; and the like. But if evil has arisen, of such a character as to demand excommunication, instead of the church having a right to put away, it is obliged to do it; the saints must prove themselves clear.

There are, then, these three kinds of discipline:

1st, That of brotherly relationship. Here I go as a person wronged, but it must be with grace.

2nd, That of fatherly care. The father exercising it with loving-kindness and tenderness, as over an erring child.

3rd, Where the Son is over His own house, and where we have to act in the responsibility of keeping the house clean, that people should have their consciences according to the house in which they are. Not only the individual, but the house, the body, the conscience of the body must act. The effect may be, graciously, that the individual is

restored, but that is a collateral thing; when you come to that point, there is something besides restoring, there is the responsibility of keeping the house clean—the conscience of all there; and that may sometimes give a great deal of trouble.

As to the nature of all this, the spirit in which it should be conducted, it is priestly; and the priests ate the sin-offering within the holy place. (Lev. x.) I do not think any person, or body of Christians, can exercise discipline, unless as having the conscience clear, as having felt the power of the evil and sin before God, as if he had himself committed it. Then he does it as needful to purge himself. It will all be for positive mischief, the dealing with it, if not so. What character of position does Jesus hold now? That of priestly service. And we are associated with Him. *If there were more of that priestly intercession implied by eating of the sin-offering within the holy place, there would be no such abomination as that of the church assuming a mere judicial character.* Suppose the case of a family, in which a brother had committed something disgraceful; would it not be for bitterness and anguish to the whole family? what common anxiety and pain of heart it would occasion! Does Christ not feed upon the sin-offering? does He not feel the sorrow? does He not charge Himself with it? He is the Head of His body the church—is He not wounded and pained in a member? Yes, it is so. If it be a case of individual remonstrance with a brother for a fault, I am not fit to rebuke him,

unless my soul has been in priestly exercise and service about it, as though I had been in the sin myself. How does Christ act? He bears it on His heart and pleads about it, to draw out the grace that will remedy it. So with the child of God; he carries the sin upon his own heart into the presence of God; he pleads with the Father, as a priest, that the dishonour done to Christ's body, of which he is a member, may be remedied. *This I believe to be the spirit in which discipline should be exercised.*

Discipline is a question of the energy of the Spirit. *If that which is done is not done in the power of the Holy Ghost, it is nothing.*

It is a terrible thing to hear sinners talking about judging another sinner, but a blessed thing to see them exercised in conscience about sin come in among themselves. It must be in grace. I no more dare act, save in grace, than I could wish judgment to myself. "Judge not, that ye be not judged: for with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." (Matt. vii. 1, 2.) *If we go to exercise judgment, we shall get it.* I speak of the spirit in which it is done; for we have to judge them that are within.

One thing I would pray for, because I love the Lord's sheep, is that there might be shepherds. I know nothing, next to personal communion with the Lord, so blessed as the pastor feeding the Lord's sheep, the Lord's flock; but it is the Lord's flock. I see nothing about a pastor and his flock; that changes the whole aspect of things. When it is

felt to be the Lord's flock a man has to look over, what thoughts of responsibility, what care, what zeal, what watchfulness! I do not see anything so lovely. "Lovest thou Me! Feed My sheep. Feed My lambs." *I know nothing like it upon earth—the care of a true-hearted pastor—one who can bear the whole burden of grief and care of any soul, and deal with God about it.* I believe it is the happiest, most blessed relationship that can subsist in this world. But we are not to suppose that the "Great Shepherd" cannot take care of His own sheep because there are no under-shepherds. If there were those who met together and hung on the Lord, if they did not pretend to be what they were not, though there were no pastors among them, there would be no danger; they would infallibly have the care of that Shepherd. We must not impute our failure to God, as though He could not take care of us. *The moment power in the Spirit is gone, power in the flesh comes in.*—J. N. D.

Short Papers on Church History

(Continued)

After the death of Nero the persecution ceased, and the followers of the Lord Jesus enjoyed comparative peace until the reign of Domitian, an emperor little behind Nero in wickedness. But meanwhile we must turn aside for a moment and notice the accomplishment of the Lord's most solemn warning, in

THE DOWNFALL OF JERUSALEM
A. D. 70

The dispersion of the Jews, and the total destruction of their city and temple, are the next events of consideration in the remainder of the first century, though, strictly speaking, that fearful catastrophe is no part of Church history; it belongs to the history of the Jews. But as it was a literal fulfilment of the Saviour's prophecy, and immediately affected those who were Christians, it deserves a place in our history.

The disciples, before the death and resurrection of Christ, were strongly Jewish in all their thoughts and associations. They connected the Messiah and the temple together. Their thought was that He should deliver them from the power of the Romans, and that all the prophecies about the land, the tribes, the city, and the temple would be accomplished. But Israel rejected the Messiah Himself, and, consequently, all their own hopes and promises in Him. Most significant and weighty are the opening words of Matthew 24, "And Jesus went out and departed from the temple." It was now empty indeed, in the sight of God. All that gave it value to Him was gone. "Behold *your* house is left unto you desolate." It was now ripe for destruction.

"And His disciples came to Him for to shew Him the buildings of the temple." They were still occupied with the outward greatness and glory of these things. "And Jesus said unto them, See ye

not all these things? verily I say unto you, *There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down*" (Matt. 24:2). These words were literally accomplished by the Romans about forty years after they were spoken, and in the very way that the Lord predicted. "For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation" (Luke 19:43, 44).

After the Romans had experienced many disappointments and defeats in attempting to make a breach in the walls, through the desperate resistance of the insurgent Jews, even until little hope was left of taking the city, Titus summoned a council of war. Three plans were discussed: to storm the city immediately; to repair the works and rebuild the engines; or to blockade and starve the city to surrender. The last was preferred, and the whole army was set to work "to cast a trench" around the city. But the siege was long and difficult. It lasted from the spring till September. And during all that time, the most unexampled miseries of every kind were experienced by the besieged. But at last the end came, when both the city and the temple were in the hands of the Romans. Titus was anxious to save the magnificent temple and its treasures. But, contrary to his

orders, a soldier, mounting on the shoulders of one of his comrades, threw a blazing brand into a small gilded door in the outer building or porch. The flames sprang up at once. Titus, observing this, rushed to the spot with the utmost speed; he shouted, he made signs to his soldiers to quench the fire; but his voice was drowned, and his signs were unnoticed in the fearful confusion. The splendour of the interior filled him with wonder. And as the flames had not yet reached the most holy place, he made a last effort to save it, and exhorted the soldiers to stay the conflagration; but it was too late. Blazing brands were flying in all directions, and the fierce excitement of battle, with the insatiable hope of plunder, had reached its highest pitch. Titus little knew that a greater than he had said, "There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." The Word of the Lord, not the commands of Titus, must be obeyed. The whole was thoroughly levelled, and razed to the foundations, according to the Word of the Lord.

For nearly every particular of this terrible siege we are indebted to Josephus, who was in the Roman camp, and near the person of Titus at the time. He acted as interpreter when terms were talked of between Titus and the insurgents. The walls and bulwarks of Zion seemed impregnable to the Roman, and he felt most anxious to come to terms of peace; but the Jews rejected every proposal, and the Romans at length triumphed. On

entering the city, Josephus tells us, Titus was struck with wonder at its strength; indeed when he contemplated the solid altitude of the towers, the magnitude of the several stones, and the accuracy of their joinings, and saw how great was their breadth, how vast their height, "Surely," he exclaimed, "we fought with God on our side; and God it was who brought the Jews down from these bulwarks; for what could human hands or engines avail against these towers?" Such were the confessions of the heathen general. It certainly was the most terrible siege that the whole history of the world records.

The accounts given by Josephus of the sufferings of the Jews during the siege are too awful to be transferred to our pages. The numbers that perished under Vespasian in the country, and under Titus in the city, from A. D. 67-70, by famine, internal factions, and the Roman sword, were one million three hundred and fifty thousand four hundred and sixty, besides one hundred thousand sold into slavery.* Such, alas! alas! were the awful consequences of disbelieving and disregarding the solemn, earnest, and affectionate entreaties of their own Messiah. Need we wonder at the Redeemer's tears, shed over the infatuated city? And need we wonder at the preacher's tears now, as he appeals to infatuated sinners, in view of coming and eternal judgments? Surely the wonder is that so few tears are shed over thoughtless, careless, per-

* See Dean Milman's "History of the Jews."

ishing sinners. Oh, for hearts to feel as the Saviour felt and eyes to weep like His!

The Christians, with whom we have more especially to do, remembering the Lord's warning, left Jerusalem in a body before the siege was formed. They journeyed to Pella, a village beyond the Jordan, where they remained till Hadrian permitted them to return to the ruins of their ancient city. And this brings us to the close of the first century.

During the milder reigns of Vespasian and his son Titus, the number of Christians must have increased exceedingly. This we learn, not from any direct account that we have of their prosperity, but from incidental circumstances that prove it, and which we shall meet with immediately.

THE CRUEL REIGN OF DOMITIAN

Domitian, the younger brother of Titus, ascended the throne in A. D. 81. But he was of a totally different temper to his father and brother. They tolerated the Christians, he persecuted them. His character was cowardly, suspicious, and cruel. He raised a persecution against the Christians because of some vague and superstitious fear that he entertained, of the appearance of a person born in Judea of the family of David, who was to obtain the empire of the world. But neither did he spare Romans of the most illustrious birth and station who had embraced Christianity. Some were martyred on the spot, others were banished to be mar-

tyred in their exile. His own niece, Domitilla, and Flavius Clemens, his cousin, to whom she had been given in marriage, were victims of his cruelty for having embraced the Gospel of Christ. Thus we see that Christianity, by the power of God, in spite of armies and emperors, fire and sword, was spreading, not only amongst the middle and lower, but also amongst the higher classes.

"Domitian," says Eusebius, the father of ecclesiastical history, "having exercised his cruelty against many, and unjustly slain no small number of noble and illustrious men at Rome, and having, without cause, punished vast numbers of honourable men with exile and the confiscation of their property, at length established himself as the successor of Nero, in his hatred and hostility to God." He also followed Nero in deifying himself. He commanded his own statue to be worshipped as a god, revived the law of treason, and put in fearful force its terrible provisions: under these circumstances, surrounded as he was with spies and informers, what must this second persecution of the Christians have been!*

But the end of this weak, vain, and despicable tyrant drew near. He was in the habit of writing on a roll the names of those persons whom he designed to put to death, and kept it carefully in his own possession. And in order to throw such off their guard, he treated them with the most flatter-

* See Roman History, "Encyclopedia Britannica."

ing attention. But this fatal roll was one day taken from under a cushion on which he was reclining asleep, by a child who was playing in the apartment and who carried it to the Empress. She was struck with astonishment and alarm at finding her own name on the dark list, together with the names of others apparently high in his favour. To such the Empress communicated the knowledge of their danger, and notwithstanding all the precaution that cowardice and cunning could suggest, he was despatched by two officers of his own household.—A. Miller.

(To be continued, D.V.)

Russia's Destiny

(Continued)

The latter part of this chapter (Dan. xi. 40-45) describes the *last* King of the North. He is represented as sweeping down upon the countries like a whirlwind, at the head of masses of men and fleets of ships. He will enter also "the glorious land." What land is this? PALESTINE, without doubt. That land will then be peopled by the Jews, a large number of whom have already gone back there within the last few years. The persecutions and banishment of the Jews by Russia have set them in motion, and many of their own leading men are encouraging them in every way that lies in their power to return to Palestine, utterly ignorant, for the most part, of how remarkably they are carrying out the plans of God revealed centuries ago.

Yes, the Word of God must be fulfilled. Antichrist (an apostate Jew) is yet to sit in the temple which is to be rebuilt at Jerusalem, and there the Jews nationally reinstated (not the remnant, but the unbelieving majority of the nation), gone back to Palestine *in unbelief* will yield to Antichrist the homage, allegiance, and worship which they refused to Jesus of Nazareth, their true Messiah. In the days which are past a small remnant only received the Messiah, while the nation rejected Him; in the future the nation, as a whole, will receive the Antichrist, whilst the remnant will reject him.

Then will be fulfilled that sorrowful prediction of our blessed Lord, "I am come in My Father's name, and ye receive Me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive." (John v. 43.) But their "covenant with death shall be disannulled," and their "agreement with hell shall not stand." An allusion is here made, we believe, to the same northern power (the Assyrian) already referred to. It would appear that in order to escape from the King of the North, who will at that time be Jehovah's rod of anger (Isa. x. 5), they will enter into a covenant with the Beast (or Roman Emperor) on the one hand (Dan. ix. 27), and with the Antichrist (Isa. xxviii. 18) on the other. But so far from this being a success, "when the overflowing scourge" (*i.e.*, the Assyrian, or King of the North) "shall pass through, *then ye shall be trodden down by it.*"

The last verse of Daniel ix. announces the same solemn judgment.* Three fearful characters of the future crisis already alluded to are mentioned in this verse. "He," that is the prince of the revived Roman Empire, will enter into a covenant with "the many," that is, with the apostate portion of the Jews; these again will seek a further help from the protection held out by Antichrist, the miracle-working "man of sin." But "on account of the protection of abominations" (that is, Antichrist's idolatry) God will send down upon them *a desolator* (the King of the North), who will sweep into "the glorious land" like an overwhelming scourge, as we have already seen from Daniel xi. 40, and Isaiah xxviii. 14-20.

But in spite of his victorious progress, three countries neighbouring upon the land of Palestine "escape out of his hand." This verse (ver. 41) affords an indirect evidence of the inspiration of Scripture which is altogether remarkable. It will be no mere accident of war that shall deliver Edom, Moab, and Ammon from the King of the North; but God, the Jehovah of Israel, has said, "I

* The correct rendering of this verse is:—"And he (*i. e.*, 'the prince that shall come,' or the Roman Emperor) shall confirm a covenant with the many for one week, and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and on account of the protection of abominations there shall be a desolator (*i. e.*, the King of the North) even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate (*i. e.*, Jerusalem)."

will lay my vengeance upon Edom by the hand of my people Israel." (Ezek. xxv. 14.) Israel, and not the King of the North, is to be Jehovah's instrument in the judgment of Edom. The same God that inspired Ezekiel likewise inspired Daniel. We notice this in passing in order to strengthen the faith of some of our readers that may be in danger of wavering owing to the assaults of Higher Criticism and other forms of rationalism.

It would appear that on this last expedition of the King of the North, Jerusalem will be besieged and taken; at least, we incline to think that it is then that Zechariah xiv. 2 will receive its fulfilment. Evidently this verse describes a siege of Jerusalem when "the city shall be taken." We must bear in mind the difference between the Beast and the confederacy of the *Western* kings of Europe, and the Assyrian (King of the North), and the confederacy of the *Eastern* nations. The Beast will make a covenant with the Jews (Daniel ix. 27) through the influence, no doubt, of Antichrist reigning in Jerusalem, whereas the King of the North (or Assyrian) will be the open and declared enemy of the Jews. It is of this Eastern confederacy that some of the psalms speak (*e. g.*, Ps. lxxix and lxxxiii.) These psalms are *prophetic;* they tell us of a time when the heathen shall come into God's inheritance, when they will defile His holy temple, and lay Jerusalem on heaps.

We cannot close our eyes to the fact that a great movement is now going on in the East and

around about the land of Palestine. Politicians of today are leaving God out of their reckonings, and yet are becoming the instruments for the carrying out of His plans. The Powers, so called, find Turkey a difficult problem. Letters and leading articles in the daily papers have gone the length of suggesting that Russia should assume a suzerainty over Syria and Turkey in Asia, and that the Jews should be put back in their own land.* This policy would meet the requirements of the case, some say. Are those writers aware that it is the exact plan revealed in the prophetic Scriptures?!

The Word of God has clearly foretold that the King of the North, or that power which will in the end occupy Syria and Turkey in Asia, "shall be mighty, *but not by his own power.*" (Dan. viii. 24.) There will be a power *behind* him, and, so to speak, backing him up. What this power will be, Scripture points out we believe. Furthermore, the same Scriptures of truth have revealed that some great maritime power is to be the instrument in the hands of Jehovah for the restoration to Palestine of that people "scattered and peeled," "a people terrible from their beginning hitherto; a nation meted out and trodden under foot." (Isaiah xviii.)

The first verse of the chapter should read, "Ho! to the land shadowing with wings," etc. It is the Lord summoning some nation to carry out His purposes in the restoration of the Jews to their own land. Wealthy Jews, private individuals, so-

* Written over 30 years ago.—Ed.

cieties, Christian and otherwise, for the colonisation of Palestine, have all been putting their hands to this work within the last few years, but when God's time has *fully* come He will accomplish swiftly (ver. 2) and thoroughly what men are trying to do slowly and imperfectly.

Meanwhile, dear Christian reader, stay your hand. Labor and pray for the conversion of souls to Christ whether Jew, Gentile or professing Christian, rather than making strenuous efforts to send back the Jews to Palestine to swell the ranks of the apostate people who will band together to serve and worship Antichrist.—A. H. B.

(To be continued, D.V.)

Correspondence

"I have hesitated to write you regarding your footnote on page 118, T. N. and O. Many are not in agreement with your remark. Surely our Lord's taking manhood and going back to the place from which He came in grace, prepared the place. Indeed, His words are sufficient, 'I go to prepare a place . . . I will come again and receive you to Myself.'"

Reply

"Was it by taking the blood into Heaven that Christ prepared a place for us?"

Answer by C. Crain: "Let us not forget that when He said, 'I go to prepare a place for you,' He had the cross in view. He went back to Heaven by way of death and resurrection, and, in doing so, He prepared a place for us."—Help and Food, 1921, p. 300.

The following comments on John 14 are taken from the Numerical Bible:

"He had come amongst men, not merely to do a certain work among them, however great, and to be gone. He was going back; but as a Man, taking back with Him the nature He had assumed to the glory He had left,—the pledge of abiding fellowship with those for whom He now went up to take a place as their Representative before God. The communion to which He had admitted them on earth was there to be continued and perpetuated: if it were not so, He would have told them; He would not have bound their hearts to Himself by that dear, familiar intercourse to which He had encouraged them, if it were to have an end for ever. Not so; if He were going away, it was to prepare a place for them; and He would return again Himself to receive them to Himself,—to welcome them to His eternal Home. His must be their first, best greeting.

He does not explain how the place in His Father's House should be prepared for them; nor were they yet, perhaps, able to understand. The epistle to the Hebrews will show us, if we turn to it, that the heavenly places had to be purified by the better sacrifice which He was to offer, in which all the sacrifices of the law would find their fulfilment. Ephesians speaks similarly of the "redemption of the purchased possession;" and Colossians of the reconciliation of things in heaven (Heb. 9:23; Eph. 1:14; Col. 1:20). Such thoughts are, even now, strange to many a Christian; for we are slow to realize the extent of the injury that sin has inflicted, and equally, therefore, the breadth of the application of the work of Christ. This is not the place to enlarge upon it; but it is not difficult to understand that wherever sin has raised question of God, —and it has done so, as we know, in heaven itself,—the work of Christ, as bringing out in full His whole character in love and righteousness regarding that which had raised the question, has enabled Him now to come in and restore, consistently with all that He is, what had been defiled with evil. Thus our High Priest, to use as the apostle does the figures of Israel's day of atonement, has entered into the

sanctuary to reconcile with the virtue of His sacrifice the holy places themselves, and make them accessible to us. Man in Christ has risen to the highest pinnacle of glory with the whole acclaim of heaven; and men redeemed by His blood can be associated with their Lord in glory, "made the (manifested) righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. 5:21).

They knew therefore whither He was going; they knew also the way. For they knew in fact more than they realized that they knew. When Thomas, thinking, as it would appear, of a kind of map of the road, which they had not, ventures to object their ignorance of this, the Lord shows him his mistake by assuring him that He Himself was the Way: through Him alone could any come to God. Nor only so; He was also the Truth,—the revelation of God. And since, even so, man was dead and unreceptive of the truth, He was the Life also, which men needed for this reception. The full treasury for man's need was here then to be found."—F. W. G.

Gleanings

And they came to Elim where were twelve wells of water, and three score and ten palm trees; and they encamped there by the waters. Ex. 15:27.

There are more Elims in life than Marahs; and we *encamp* by them. We are not bidden to tarry at the one, but we may spend long blessed days at the other. How delightful those long restful days! You say that they will never come to you? Yes, but they will! They come to all tired souls. There is no desert-march without an Elim at last. The Lamb cannot fail to lead you by living fountains of water, and to wipe away all tears from your eyes, before you pass the gateway of pearl. A lull comes in the storm; an arbour on the Hill Difficulty; a pause in the march. He makes His sheep to lie down in pastures of tender grass, and leads them beside the waters of rest.

—F. B. M.

CONFERENCES

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The Iowa Bible Conference will be held again (D. V.) at Wartburg College in Waverly, Iowa, August 18, 19, 20, 21, and 22nd. Those planning to attend please communicate with Carlyle Miller, Clarksville, Iowa, or Frank Hoel, Greene, Iowa, so that proper arrangements may be made.

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The annual Bible Conference will be held (D. V.) at the Dunkirk Conference Grounds, two miles east of Dunkirk, N. Y., on Route 5, August 28th to September 4th.

San Francisco, Calif.

The San Francisco Bay area assemblies purpose, the Lord permitting, having a conference beginning Saturday, September 4th and ending Monday, September 6th (Labor Day).

Those coming from a distance will please communicate with Henry Cerrina, 747 Maud Avenue, San Leandro, Calif.

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VOL. XVI AUGUST, 1948 NO. 8

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Publishing Office:

ERIE BIBLE TRUTH DEPOT

30 East Ninth Street, Erie, Pa., U. S. A

Editor's Notes

All communications for the Editor should be addressed to F. B. TOMKINSON, 30 East Ninth St., Erie, Pa.

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"Surely, I Come Quickly!"

(Continued)

Having shown that happenings which are closely linked in a prophetic passage are not necessarily consecutive, we shall postpone our examination of Mr. Reese's views on this passage until Chapter IV when we look at Paul's use of it in 1 Cor. 15:54.

MARTYRS OF THE TRIBULATION

Before noticing Mr. Reese's use of the next Scripture, Dan. 12:1-3, we shall look at an episode of the first resurrection which was purposely omitted in the last chapter. It deals with a limited class of saints who, apart from the provision we shall note, would be deprived of both earthly and heavenly blessing.

The reference is Rev. 20:4, 5. "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them; and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection."

The thrones which John saw with their occupants, the four and twenty elders were first described in chapter four. Their prominence is shown by their frequent mention, 12 or 13 times in Revelation, the last one being Rev. 19:4. They represent the Old and New Testament saints caught up with

Christ at His coming to heavenly thrones and crowns.* In the first verse before us, since the elders are incidental to the subject of the apostle, he gives them only sufficient notice to identify the company in which this group of martyrs is placed.

This group is composed of two sections, "those who were beheaded for the witness of Jesus," and those "which had not worshipped the beast," both of which are encountered earlier in the book. We find the first one in Rev. 6:9, 10. "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held; and they cried with a loud voice, saying, 'How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?' "

Whatever the obscurities of the seals may be, there is no doubt that these are martyrs. Their cry makes it equally clear that they are not martyrs of the church period. One cannot fail to mark the contrast between Stephen, the first martyr of this time, and these. He says, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge," (Acts 7:60). They say, "How long . . . dost thou not judge and avenge our blood?" The spirit of their question is utterly incompatible with that which should characterize us as exemplified by Paul, who as a prisoner could say, "According to my earnest expectation and

* We shall consider the question of the identity of these elders in more detail when we examine Mr. Reese's views on Revelation.

hope that . . . Christ may be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death." (Phil. 1:20). But it is entirely consistent with the outlook of those Israelites who have been told that they "Shall tread down the wicked, for they shall be ashes under your feet in the day that I shall do this" (that is, arise as the Sun of righteousness) "saith the Lord." (Mal. 4:2). Since they have been denied this privilege of treading down the wicked, they desire God to avenge their death.

Now it is perfectly in keeping with the ways of God that He does not allow their faithfulness to go unrewarded. Through their courage they have irrevocably lost their earthly heritage. For the Scripture referring to this period is, "He that endureth unto the end shall be saved." (Matt. 24:13). That is, saved to enjoy an inheritance in the millennial earth. But they receive a better, that is, a heavenly portion in place of the earthly one they have lost. Instead of entering the millennium as part of His earthly people, they are raised to share with the church and the O.T. saints, who were raptured to heaven before the tribulation, in reigning over the earth as those who have part in the first resurrection.

Now let us trace previous references to those who were slain for not worshipping the beast. In this same Chapter Six the first section of martyrs is told that "they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled." (Rev. 6:11).

Farther along these fellow-servants are more clearly identified. "And he* had power to . . . cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast† should be killed. And he causeth all, small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: and that no man might buy or sell save he that had the mark." (Rev. 13:15, 16). Evidently these are killed at a later period than the first group. No doubt this chronological difference is the basis for the separate mention of these two groups as having part in the first resurrection.

These two sections of martyrs show us the two aspects of witnessing during the tribulation—one, the positive side of testifying for Christ; the other, the negative side of refusing to worship a false god. With their addition to the company represented by the four and twenty elders the first resurrection is complete.

Now let us summarize what we have seen in this verse. The whole company is composed of (1) those Old Testament saints and the church which are caught up at Christ's coming before the tribulation, (2) martyrs for the testimony of Jesus early in this last prophetic week of seven years, (3) martyrs from the latter part of the prophetic week who are slain for refusing to worship the beast.

---

* The second beast, the Antichrist.

† The first beast, head of the revived Roman Empire.

This explanation seems eminently satisfactory. It accounts for the distinction between the three companies, it involves no straining of the text, and it meets the requirements exacted by the previous mention of these various groups. Although we have not gone outside of the book of Revelation to account for these martyrs, this explanation will clear up apparent difficulties met elsewhere.

Mr. Reese's objections to this application will be considered when we look at his comments on the passage in Chapter Five of his book. I have brought in the subject here as a preliminary to meeting his use of his remaining Old Testament Scriptures.

Mr. Reese now brings before us

DANIEL 12:1-3

"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of Thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, everyone that shall be found written in the book.

"And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."

Mr. Reese comments, "Here is a passage that, until yesterday, was almost universally applied to the resurrection of the dead in the ordinary sense. Alike among Jewish and Christian expositors, the belief has been general that here we meet with the doctrine of a bodily resurrection." (p. 41).

Quoting from another* in favor of his views, "The true rendering of Dan. 12:2-3 in connection with the context, is and (at that time) *Many* (of thy people) shall awake (or be separated) out from among the sleepers in the earth dust. These (who awake) shall be unto life everlasting, but those (who do not awake at that time) shall be unto shame and contempt everlasting." (p. 47).

Whether or not the "many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake" speaks of a literal resurrection or a natural regathering of Israel is a much disputed point. Those who believe it speaks only of a rebirth of the nation point to the well known use of resurrection as a figure of such an event in Ezek. 37. Here the inspired interpretation shows beyond all doubt the symbolic use of the quickening of the dry bones.

For our purposes there is no need to go into the question at all. Let us grant that the resurrection here spoken of is literal and occurs after the tribulation. We may do so without at all allowing that the church is raptured then. Indeed, we have seen that the unforced meaning of Rev. 20:3 requires such a resurrection, but only for the martyrs of the tribulation.

We need not concern ourselves, therefore, with the details of Mr. Reese's arguments. Since the passage says nothing about the identity of those who are raised, although we might imply because of the context that they are characteristically Israelites, there is nothing said or intimated which

* Nathaniel West.

conflicts in any way with our understanding of Rev. 20:3.

Mr. Reese now refers to his last Old Testament Scripture,

DANIEL 12:13 (R.V.)

"But go thou thy way till the end be; for thou shalt rest, and shalt stand in thy lot, at the end of the days."

Mr. Reese comments, "Here, then, in the clearest manner, Daniel's personal resurrection is associated with the End. What end? the end to which the Book of Daniel makes such frequent reference: the end of the pre-Messianic age; of the times of the Gentiles; of Israel's great tribulation, and of her estrangement from God; the end of the career of the Prince that shall come. The first certain occurrence of the phrase in an eschatological* sense is in Dan. 9:26: "and even *unto the end* shall be war; desolations are determined" (R.V.) This is the description of the age that we now live in; the age that succeeds the cutting off of Messiah the Prince, and the destruction of Daniel's city by the Romans." (p. 48).

Every one agrees that Daniel will be raised from the dead. His resurrection will occur at the same time as those of the church period. The Scriptures appear conclusive on this point. "God having provided some better thing for us, that they" (O.T. saints) "without us should not be made perfect." (Heb. 11:40). But that this time or resurrection coincides with the establishment of the kingdom cannot be supported from this Scripture.

Mr. Reese continues, "One correction needs to be made in the ordinary versions; and that is the elimination of the

* "Eschatology" is a theological term used to describe the happenings of the end times.

words "thy way"; they do not exist in the Hebrew text. Their presence in the English version assists the thought that the end of Daniel's life is meant. But this is not at all what is intended. The true sense is given by Driver in his Daniel:—'He is to await the "end" in the grave, from which, in the resurrection spoken of in verse 2, he will arise to take his appointed place, beside the other saints. But *thou, go thou to the end*: i. e., depart to await the end (as in verse 9, there is nothing in the Heb. corresponding to "thy way"): and thou shalt rest (in the grave Isa. 57:2).'" (p. 48).

Although Mr. Darby renders this verse as the Revised Version gives it, we cannot accept Mr. Reese's preference for another translation without necessitating his conclusions. The expression "go thou to the end" doesn't require us to suppose that Daniel awaits the end in the grave. That is Mr. Reese's explanation, and a very mistaken one I believe it to be. There is nothing here which is contrary to those Scriptures we have reviewed in Chapter I which led us to the convictions that the resurrection of both Old and New Testament saints precedes the tribulation. All that Dan. 12:13 divulges is Daniel's going to the end, when he shall stand in his lot. The *condition*,—that is, in the body or the spirit—in which he goes or the place—the grave or heaven—of his going, it does not reveal. Mr. Reese contends that he goes to the grave to await resurrection at the same moment as the resurrection of verse 2. But that is only his contention. This Scripture does not settle the time of the resurrection or Daniel's condition in the interval. I believe, based on the other Scriptures we

have noticed in Chapter 1, that Daniel, in his resurrection body will be in heaven between the resurrection and the manifestation of all the saints with Christ at the end of the tribulation. Dan. 12:13, I repeat, does not settle this issue at all, despite Mr. Reese's efforts to make it a pillar of his teaching.

In the clause "and shalt stand in thy lot, at the end of the days," we discern the care with which God phrases His promises. Notice that it carefully avoids stating whether the lot is an earthly or heavenly one. We have seen from Heb. 12:22, 23 that the heritage of the Old Testament saints is a heavenly one. Yet it was not the intention of God to disclose this fact in their own times. His words of promise, therefore, although clear enough to give all necessary encouragement, are couched in terms which are sufficiently general to permit New Testament revelation without contradiction.

THE MARTYRED REMNANT

Mr. Reese ridicules the expression, used by Mr. Trotter and others, "the martyred remnant."

> He says, "To speak of a *martyred* 'Remnant' is a ludicrous contradiction in terms. The Remnant of prophecy consists of those who *escaped uninjured* the desolations of the Last Days. They will not die. And we do not usually speak of *drowned* 'survivors' of a shipwreck. Just as incongruous is it to speak of a martyred 'Remnant'. This is the first of several fictions." (p. 39).

First, let us look at Mr. Trotter's explanation of the term as he uses it. He says, "By the martyred remnant we mean those Israelites, who in the

coming crisis, will at first form a part of that Jewish remnant, whose experience and destinies were considered in our last; but who, instead of surviving the final troubles and enter in on the earthly blessedness of millennial times, will be called to glorify God by a martyr's death. For those who do thus suffer, a higher destiny than that of the spared remnant is reserved." (Plain Papers on Prophetic Subjects, p. 385). I believe most readers will find nothing ludicrous or incongruous in the use of this expression.

Mr. Reese's analogy is hardly an accurate one. "Drowned remnant" would be ridiculous because either one of the terms, in ordinary usage, would prohibit the use of the other. But such contradiction does not inhere in the use of the expression "martyred remnant." For those who do not endure until the earthly kingdom receive something far better—a heavenly portion. So that in this combination of words we have the remnant which inherits a heavenly blessing distinguished from that which inherits an earthly one. They are both blessed, but one receives a greater heritage than the other. "Martyred remnant," then, implies comparison while Mr. Reese's faulty analogy implies contradiction. Any confusion in the understanding of these words lies with Mr. Reese, not with Mr. Trotter and others.

SUMMARY

1. Whether or not the church passes through the tribulation is independent of the literal or

figurative character of the resurrections spoken of in Isa. 26 and Dan. 12.

2. Because of the partial character of Old Testament prophecy, it must be interpreted in the light of New Testament revelation, especially in the continuity of events.

3. There is a limited phase of the first resurrection after the tribulation affecting only the martyrs of that period so to accept Dan. 12 as referring to a literal resurrection after that time of great trouble is not inconsistent with the rapture of the church before this era. —W. F. P.

(To be continued, D.V.)

Short Papers On Church History

(Continued)

On the very day of Domitian's death, Nerva was chosen by the Senate to be Emperor, September 18th, A. D. 96. He was a man of blameless reputation. The character of his reign was most favourable to the peace and prosperity of the Church of God. The Christians who had been banished by Domitian were recalled, and recovered their confiscated property. The Apostle John returned from his banishment in the Isle of Patmos, and resumed his place of service among the Churches in Asia. He survived till the reign of Trajan, when at the advanced age of about a hundred years, "he fell asleep."

Nerva commenced his reign by redressing grievances, repealing iniquitous statutes, enacting good laws, and dispensing favours with great liberality. But feeling unequal to the duties of his position, he adopted Trajan as his colleague and successor. He died in 98.

THE REIGN OF TRAJAN
A. D. 98-117

As the outward history of the Church was then affected by the will of one man, it will therefore be necessary to notice, however briefly, the disposition, or ruling passion of the reigning prince. Thus it was that the condition of the Christians everywhere depended entirely on him who was master of the Roman world, and to a certain sense of the whole world.

Trajan was an emperor of great renown. Perhaps none more so ever sat on the throne of the Caesars. The Roman earth or world, it is said, reached its widest limits by his victories. He caused the terror of the Roman arms and the Roman discipline to be felt on the frontiers as none before him had done. He was thus a great general and a military sovereign; and being possessed of a large and vigorous mind, he was an able ruler, and Rome flourished under his sway. But in the history of the Church his character appears in a less favourable light. He had a confirmed prejudice against Christianity, and sanctioned the persecution of Christians. Some say he meditated

the extinction of the name. This is the deepest stain which rests on the memory of Trajan.

But Christianity, in spite of Roman emperors, Roman prisons, and Roman executions, pursued its silent steady course. In a little more than seventy years after the death of Christ, it had made such rapid progress in some places as to threaten the downfall of paganism. The heathen temples were deserted, the worship of the gods was neglected, and victims for sacrifice were rarely purchased. This naturally raised a popular cry against Christianity, such as we had at Ephesus. "This our craft is in danger to be set at nought, and the temple of the great goddess Diana to be despised" (Acts 19:27). Those whose livelihood depended on the worship of the heathen dieties, laid many and grievous complaints against the Christians before the governors. This was especially so in the Asiatic provinces, where Christianity was most prevalent.

About the year 110, many Christians were thus brought before the tribunal of Pliny the younger, the governor of Bithynia and Pontus. But Pliny being naturally a wise, candid, and humane man, he took pains to inform himself of the principles and practices of the Christians. And when he found that many of them were put to death who could not be convicted of any public crime, he was greatly embarrassed. He had not taken any part in such matters before, and there was then no settled law on the subject. The edicts of Nero had

been repealed by the senate, and those of Domitian, by his successor, Nerva. Under these circumstances, Pliny applied for advice to his master, the Emperor Trajan. The letters which then passed between them, being justly considered as the most valuable record of the history of the Church during that period, deserve a place in our papers. But we can only transcribe a portion of Pliny's celebrated epistle, and chiefly those parts which refer to the character of Christians, and the extension of Christianity.

C. PLINY TO TRAJAN EMPEROR

"Health.—It is my usual custom, sir, to refer all things, of which I harbour any doubt, to you. For who can better direct my judgment in its hesitation, or instruct my understanding in its ignorance? I never had the fortune to be present at any examinations of Christians before I came into this province. I am therefore at a loss to determine what is the usual object either of inquiry or of punishment, and to what length either of them is to be carried . . . In the meantime this has been my method with respect to those who were brought before me as Christians. I asked them whether they were Christians; if they pleaded guilty, I interrogated them—a second and a third time—with a menace of capital punishment. In case of obstinate perseverance, I ordered them to be executed . . . An anonymous 'Libel' was published, containing the names of many who denied that they were, or had been, Christians, and invoked

the gods, as I prescribed, and prayed to your image, with incense and wine, and moreover reviled Christ —none of which things I am told a real Christian can ever be compelled to do. So I thought proper to dismiss them . . . The whole of the crime or error of the Christians lay in this—they were accustomed on a certain day to meet before daylight, and sing among themselves a hymn to Christ, as a god; and to bind themselves by an oath, not to commit any wickedness; not to be guilty of theft, or robbery, or adultery; never to falsify their word, nor to deny a pledge committed to them when called upon to return it. When these things were performed, it was their custom to separate, and then to come together again to a harmless meal, of which they partook in common without any disorder; but this last practice they have ceased to attend to since the publication of my edict, by which, according to your commands, I prohibited assemblies.

"After this account, I judged it the more nenessary to examine, and that by torture, two females, who were said to be deaconesses, but I have discovered nothing except a bad and excessive superstition. Suspending, therefore, all judicial proceedings, I have recourse to you for advice. The number of the accused is so great as to call for serious consultation. Many persons are informed against, of every age and rank, and of both sexes; and many more will be accused. Nor has the contagion of this superstition seized cities only, but

the lesser towns also, and the open country: nevertheless, it seems to me that it may be restrained and corrected. It is certain that the *temples, which were almost forsaken,* begin to be more frequented; and the sacred solemnities, after a long intermission, are revived. Victims likewise are everywhere brought up, whereas for a time there were few purchasers. Whence it is easy to imagine that numbers of them might be reclaimed if pardon were granted to those who repent."

LETTERS OF TRAJAN TO PLINY

"You have done perfectly right, my dear Pliny, in the inquiry which you have made concerning Christians. For truly no one general rule can be laid down which will apply itself to all cases. These people must not be sought after: if they are brought before you and convicted, let them be capitally punished; yet with this restriction, that if any one renounce Christianity, and evidence his sincerity by supplicating our gods, however suspected he may be for the past, let him on his repentance obtain pardon. But anonymous libels in no case ought to be attended to: for it is a very dangerous precedent, and perfectly incongruous to the maxims of our age."

The clear and unsuspected testimony of these two letters awakens thoughts and feelings of the deepest interest in the Christian's mind of today. The First Epistle of St. Peter was addressed to the fathers of these holy sufferers, and possibly to some of themselves then alive; and it is not unlikely that

Peter laboured amongst them personally. Thus were they taught and encouraged beforehand, to give to the Roman governor "a reason for the hope that was in them with meekness and fear" (I Peter 3:15). Indeed, the whole of the First Epistle seems divinely fitted to strengthen these unoffending Christians against the unjust and unreasonable course of Pliny. "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind" (1 Peter 4:1). Peter contemplates in his epistle the family of faith as on a journey through the wilderness, and God as the supreme Governor ruling over all—believers and unbelievers. "For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and His ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil" (I Peter 3:12). With such a scene before us, and such witnesses, making allowance, for the position of Trajan and Pliny as heathen statesmen, it may be well to inquire at this early stage of our history, What was and is

THE REAL CAUSE OF PERSECUTION?

—A. Miller.

(To be continued, D.V.)

Russia's Destiny

in the

LIGHT OF PROPHECY

(Continued)

Some have thought that the maritime power that is here mentioned is England. We offer no

opinion, nor would we encourage a speculative turn of mind. Certain it is that Russia has hitherto manifested a spirit of intolerance and persecution of the Jews, and, indeed, of unoffending Christians too—we refer to the Stundists. On the other hand, England has treated them with more tolerance. We do well to remember that though the Jews are now under God's chastening hand, they are nevertheless "beloved for the fathers' sakes" (Rom. xi. 28), and God will not hold guiltless either the man or the nation that oppresses them. They are His people, though for the time He cannot publicly recognize them as such. Scattered they have been for more than eighteen centuries; greater sorrows still await them; and all because of their rejection and crucifixion of their Messiah. But the time is coming when all the predictions of the prophets shall be fulfilled in their glorious restoration, when with repentant and contrite hearts "they shall look upon Him whom they have pierced, and shall mourn for Him as one mourneth for his only son." (Zechariah xii. 10.)

But when, through the influence of the nations, one or more, the Jews are back in their land, whilst Antichrist is still reigning at Jerusalem, persecuting the godly remnant in the most bitter and cruel manner possible, though at the same time entering into a covenant with the apostate portion of the nation, then will this last confederacy of the Eastern nations rise up against God and His people, saying, "Come, let us cut them off from being a

nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance." (Psalm lxxxiii. 4.) Edom, Moab, and Ammon, the ancient and inveterate enemies of Israel, once more appear upon the scene, and "joined with them" is Asshur (the Assyrian). In other words, we have here the very expedition described in Daniel xi. and Zech. xiv.

Let us go back again to Daniel xi. After the siege of Jerusalem, which we have noticed in Zech. xiv. 2, the King of the North will extend his conquests into Egypt, but while there carrying everything before him, tidings of a startling and terrible nature "shall trouble him." (Daniel xi. 44.) Let the reader observe the direction whence these tidings shall come—*out of the east and out of the north.* A glance at the map will show that this quarter is none other than *Palestine!* Fearful things will have taken place around Jerusalem, the report of which will stay his progress and strike terror into his heart. The greatest battle that this poor world has ever known is yet to be fought around Mount Zion. "The Beast and the kings of the earth, and their armies" (*i.e.*, the Western confederacy), are soon to be gathered together to make war with the KING OF KINGS and LORD OF LORDS.

This gathering of the Western nations will have taken place around Jerusalem during the time of the King of the North's expedition into Egypt. The Jews will then be settled in their own land. Having returned in unbelief, they will have formed

themselves into a flourishing community. Let the following extract from the *Jewish World* speak for itself. It is one of many that might be given, showing the thoughts that are agitating the minds of the Jews irrespective of God or His purposes. The extract is from an article with the significant heading, *"The Return to Palestine."*

"The financial obstacles could, no doubt, be met in a week. To form and finance a 'chartered' company for such an object as the re-establishing of an autonomous Jewish State in Palestine would indeed present hardly any difficulty, and when it was seen that the Jewish State would not help to give the balance of power to any European Government, but rather tend to the preservation of European peace, it is not impossible that political obstacles and diplomatic objections would not be found to be very great.

"Nor will some of the chief arguments that have been advanced against the Scheme bear close scrutiny. It is not true that the Jews are incapable of again becoming an agricultural people. Every agricultural colony of Jews that has been formed in Palestine or elsewhere, has, by its success, proved the reverse; while, even in Russia, where Jews are none too popular, Jewish agriculturalists have earned the commendation of the Government.

"It has been argued that Jews have too much love for art, literature, the theatre, and the concert hall, to willingly abandon London, Paris, Vienna, and Berlin for the Holy Land, where their talents and their tastes would find neither scope nor satisfaction. The answer is too obvious to need insisting on. One need only ask, *Could not Jerusalem also be made a centre of art and literary culture, the drama and music?* Surely, there is nothing in the soil or the climate to hinder this; and one might indeed look forward to a special development of Jewish art that would

benefit the world as well as the Jews themselves, but which is impossible while we are scattered and our artists are living in a non-Jewish environment and working, consciously or unconsciously, for a non-Jewish public. No, the danger is rather the other way. It is lest the new Palestine State should be merely a fighting-ground between the representatives of various and conflicting non-Jewish theories and practices imported by people of Jewish birth. If there be at the present time sufficient unity and idealism in Israel; sufficient detachment from the conventions of the nations; there is no very obvious reason why the restoration to Palestine should not be commenced in the way Dr. Herzel and his friends think possible."

Man's thought is to make Jerusalem the centre of the *drama and music!* God's thought is to gather all nations there for their judgment. (Joel iii.) Daniel's seventieth week is yet to come (Dan. ix. 24-27); the coming Roman prince will make a covenant with *"the many"* (*i.e.*, the mass of unbelieving Jews) for one week; in the midst of the week he will break off his covenant, and by means of Antichrist (the false king in Jerusalem) will establish idolatry in the Temple, where the "abomination of desolation" will be set up.

This will be the sign to the faithful remnant to flee, according to Matthew xxiv. 15-25. The second half of the week will be the period of the great tribulation, and when this is at its very height, and the clouds gathering thicker and darker around them, suddenly the Son of Man will be seen coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory—awful sight for the assembled armies of the West (read carefully Matt. xxiv. 26-31, and

Rev. xix. 11-21), but glorious deliverance for the godly and persecuted remnant.

Reader, these things may soon take place. Let not the infidelity of our days lead you to question the possibility of such things. The God who breathed on the hosts of Assyria in the days of Hezekiah still lives. What was done then is but a feeble foreshadowing of what is yet to be:—"The remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall yet again take root downward, and bear fruit upward. For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and they that escape out of Mount Zion: the zeal of the Lord of hosts shall do this. . . . For I will defend this city, to save it, for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake. And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the Lord went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians 185,000: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses." (2 Kings xix. 30-36.)

The "tidings out of the east and out of the north," which reach the King of the North when down in Egypt, are doubtless the gathering together of the armies of Western Europe, bent upon seizing for themselves the land of Palestine.* He

* It has been suggested that "the tidings out of the east and out of the north" (Dan. xi. 44) refer more to the movements of the ten tribes preparatory to the return to Palestine, than to the gathering of the Beast and ten kings to battle at Jerusalem. Be this as it may, it is certain that the tidings that trouble the King of the

goes forth "with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many. And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas (*i.e.*, the Mediterranean and Dead Seas) in the glorious holy mountain" (*i.e.*, the Judæan mountains). (Dan. xi. 44, 45.) But a greater than he will already have settled matters with them. The Lord Himself will be there, the Prince of princes, against whom this King of the North will "stand up," but only to be "broken without hand," for "he shall come to his end, and none shall help him." (Dan. viii. 25; xi. 45.) Let the reader observe that Daniel xi. 36-40 is an account of the Man of Sin, or Antichrist, but from verse 40 to 45 the subject is the last King of the North. We shall now turn to the prophecy of Ezekiel.—A. H. B.

(To be continued, D.V.)

The Heavenly Calling and the Church

The heavenly calling has been known from the beginning. The earth having been, in every age, a scene of Divine disappointment, (to speak after the way of men,) and the elect being therefore strangers and sufferers in it, the heavens have been disclosed to them as their place of rest and inheritance. Abraham desired a heavenly country. Enoch had been already translated there. Moses lost the

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North have to do with the affairs of the land of Palestine, which will then be engrossing all minds, even as they are today beginning to do so for many.

land of promise, but got the Pisgah of God. David confessed that he and all his fathers had been strangers with God in the earth. Elijah among the Prophets in the latter days of the Old Testament, as Enoch among the Patriarchs in its earlier days, was taken to heaven. And thus, the heavenly calling was had in constant remembrance and kept in view. And all the elect, in these Old Testament times, whether Patriarchal, Mosaic, or Prophetic, have, I doubt not, a part in the heavenly places. The Lord calls them all "children of resurrection" —and by that He teaches us that they will be called to their inheritance by resurrection from the dead,when they will not, as He further teaches, marry and give in marriage, as though they were children of the earth.

In the Divine reasoning of the Epistle to the Galatians, they are alluded to, and considered as standing in *sonship and heirship,* with the elect now gathering.

So, in the Hebrews, they are considered as per*fected and sharers of the heavenly calling*, with us of this day.

But the Epistle to the Ephesians never takes them up to associate them with the saints now gathering in *the body of Christ.*

These distinctions are very significant, and they lead us to the conclusion that the Old Testament saints enjoy the heavenly calling, or heavenly places as their home and their inheritance, though

kept apart from the Church, the body of Christ, and the Bride of Christ. I may say this concerning them.

But leaving these times of the Old Testament, times of Patriarchs and Prophets, and having entered the New, we reach in due season the day of Pentecost. The Holy Ghost is then on earth, upon the glorification of the Son of Man in heaven; and we find Him doing a work of "exceeding riches of grace", and which is to be to "the praise of the glory of God" in the ages to come. He is baptizing the election now gathering, into one body; a body of which Christ is the Head; a body which is also called "the fulness of Him that filleth all in all". And the whole, Head and body together, is called by an eminent, wondrous title, "Christ". (1 Cor. 12:12.)

All this is peculiar indeed.

Of course this election, thus forming the body or fulness of Christ will, with the Old Testament saints, have their place and inheritance in heaven. But while they thus share the heavenly calling with their Old Testament brethren, those brethren will not be in the body of Christ with them. When the Kingdom in its glorious form comes to be displayed, when "the world to come" is reached, Old Testament saints will have "a name" there, and be, as it were, principalities and powers in heavenly places; but the election now gathering, and baptized into one body, will then be "the fulness" of Him

who sits above those principalities and powers and names, of Him who "filleth all in all".

I am suggesting and submitting my judgment on these truths.

And then—as I would go on to say—when all these have been translated to meet the Lord in the air—when Old and New Testament saints together, as alike "children of the resurrection", have taken their place in the heavens, as thus ordained to be theirs from the beginning—then the action of the Apocalypse, from chapter 4 begins. In the course of that action, some saints of God will die as martyrs; and such also will be taken to heaven, and there occupy their places as certain dignities and thrones, "a noble army," or "a goodly fellowship", as we may say; but they will not be a part of the body of Christ with the election now gathering.

Those saints of God who survive the great judicial process of the Book of the Apocalypse, will form the seed or firstfruits of the earthly people. Their calling is not heavenly. They have no part in the heavenly places. They begin to fill and furnish the millennial earth; and to them as a first fruits will be gathered a harvest, till the face of the whole earth be fruitful — Jerusalem, the land of Israel, the people of Israel, and the nations all the world over, constituting a scene of power and of government, and a sanctuary for the service of the God of heaven and earth, who will then be displacing His Kingdom-glories.

And this Kingdom is the subject of notice in the scriptures of the Old Testament, together with the judgments which introduce it, and the glories which give it its character. But the calling out of a body for Him who is the Head of that Kingdom, is not the subject of those scriptures. It is called, in an eminent sense, "the mystery", and is declared to have been "hid in God from the foundation of the world", and only now revealed to the prophets of the New Testament, Paul the Apostle of the Gentiles being made the great vessel and depositary of it, its special witness and publisher.

There have, however, been glances at it from the very beginning; the Divine mind letting out hints of the secret it carried, now and again, as we ourselves are wont to do with some favourite thought of which we cannot or dare not speak particularly, times and seasons forbidding it. Is not this so? Is not this so with us, and do we not delight in seeing it thus with God and His secret? In spite of such forbiddings, in the face of such restraints, however respected they may be, and rightly so, the secret will at times break bounds, and cross the field of our vision in a type or in a story, leaving the eye of many a gazer unable to make out what it is or what it means.

Such glimpses of this brilliant secret I would now look at for a moment or two, having already travelled from the beginning to the end of Scripture, as "with all saints", noticing the destiny of the Old Testament saints of the election now gath-

ering under the Holy Ghost and of the Apocalyptic saints, whether they die in the course of it, or outlive the action of that awful season.

I believe, then, that "the mystery", the Church, the Bride of the Lamb, begins to tell itself out in the first woman. She was taken, as we know, from the side of Adam, when he was cast into a deep sleep; and she was then formed by the Lord God for Adam; and finally set at his side to be his help-meet, and in a sense and measure, his co-ordinate companion.

All this tells us of the Bride of Christ. (Eph. 5.) The same mystery, in different phases of it, is to be read in the stories of other women in the book of Genesis, as in Rebecca, in Rachel, and in Asenath. And so, in the Book of Exodus, in Zipporah the Gentile Bride of Moses.

It is very easy to read something of the Church in each of these. Ephesians 5 has surely encouraged us, and led us in the way, and given us a sample of the manner in which we are to read these types.★

I cannot doubt that the Gleaner in Leviticus 23 is also a like mysterious or typical person. She is introduced in the interval of the story of Israel and of the earth, or, between the Feast of Pentecost and the Feast of Trumpets. For a parenthesis of about three months in the Jewish ecclesiastical year, we

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★One has noticed, that the language of Ephesians 5 is in the style of the delight of Adam when he received the Woman whom God had prepared for him. See Gen. 2:23, Eph. 5:30.

lose sight of everything but this Gleaner. She is but a poor Stranger. She has entered the fields of the lords of the soil, not to covet or usurp, but as a Stranger to come in, and as a Stranger to go out, satisfied, as it were, with "food and raiment," which is the Stranger's fare, and the Christian's or the Church's contentment. (Duet. 10:18; 1 Tim. 6:8).

I say not, that Ruth may not be a like figure with the Gleaner of Leviticus 23, for she enters the scene also in an interval that breaks the story of Israel; as between their utter moral ruin at the close of Judges, and their revival at the opening of 1 Samuel.★★ But I grant that we may, the rather, see in Ruth the Remnant of the latter day coming in on the Gentile terms of sovereign grace, according to Romans 11:31.—J. G. B.

(To be continued, D. V.)

For Young Christians

THE AIM OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

"The Sower went forth to sow"—Matthew xiii. 3.

"The Sower soweth the Word"—Mark iv. 3, 14.

Sowing is a work of faith; "thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all . . . . thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good." Therefore the Gospel-sower neither observes the wind nor regards the clouds, lest, re-

★★The Church, as we know, enters the scene just when these Gleaners do, in a time when a break in the story of Israel has been experienced.

jecting the counsel of God for the wisdom of man, he should withhold his hand (Eccl. xi. 4—6).

Moreover, since the seed comes to fruitfulness only in the "honest and good heart," that, hearing the word, "accepts" and "understands" it, and since this "heart" no human eye can discern, therefore the sower "sows beside all waters," for it is God alone who gives increase (Luke viii. 15; Mark iv. 20; Matt. xiii. 23; Isa. xxxii. 20; 1 Cor. iii. 7).

Then patience must have its work perfected. "The husbandman (the farmer) waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until it receive the early and latter rain:" then appear, "first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear" (Jas. v. 7; Mark iv. 28). And because the Gospel-sower "knoweth not how the seed should spring up and grow," therefore he trusts, obeys, and waits, well aware that he cannot get ahead of God. He knows, moreover, that as the seed is God's seed, so is the harvest God's harvest, and that at "the consummation of the age," the sower shall receive his reward (Jas. v. 7; Mark iv. 27, 28; Matt. xiii. 39; 1 Thess. ii. 19).

Having considered well these laws of the "Lord of the Harvest," the Sunday School teacher will not be in a hurry to snatch here and there a handful of unripened grain. It was a lie from the first that "the King's business required haste;" it never has; it never will. "Precious fruit" is worth waiting for; premature garnering disappoints all concerned. True wisdom awaits the testimony of the years, and looks to eternity, not to time, for the vindication of service. The fruit that abides is the fruit that counts.

The purpose of the Sunday School then is, primarily, to impart to the young a knowledge of the Bible as the record of God's revelation of Himself to men, divinely inspired and therefore the sole source of such knowledge, and the final authority by which every religious teaching must be tested. The ultimate object in view is the regeneration

of the individual through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Let it be remembered, however, that while the necessity for regeneration may be taught, regeneration itself is always and only the work of the Spirit of God.

It is important that this order should be observed, for if the regeneration of the child is made the immediate object, the teacher may be tempted to assume that a profession of believing is necessarily a sign of "inward grace." And thus the influence of the teacher—and the same is true of parents—may produce a feeble and temporary simulation of that which only the Spirit of God can accomplish.

Two things must be kept in mind in this connection. It is no more within the power of the teacher, or parent, to produce regeneration in the tender heart of a child, than it is within any human power to produce it in a hardened sinner. This may sound obvious, but it is all too easily forgotten.

The second thing to be borne in mind is that the child (and in this respect, at least, some seem never to grow up!) and animals assume a protective colouring, coats that so naturally takes the line of least resistance. Certain insects harmonize with the surroundings that they are not conspicuous by contrast and so escape drawing attention to themselves. So under the unwisely-used influence of the parent, teacher, or class leader, children often make a profession because to do so makes it easier in the home and saves from embarrassing questions; or in a mission, the "herd instinct," the fear of being different, induces professions of conversion more or less because they are in the fashion in the little world in which the child moves.

Of course, under the circumstances thus suggested regeneration often does take place, and many who have confessed Christ in early years have maintained that confession to the end of life. With how many, on the other hand, has the profession been as the early dew that passes with the opening of the day!

We can teach—communicate knowledge; we cannot regenerate—impart life. We can secure a lip confession; we cannot produce faith. We can supply a religious vocabulary; we cannot provide a spiritual experience. It is easier to manufacture hypocrites than saints. The true method in dealing with children is not that of emotional appeal, but of instructing the mind in the Word of God, thereby providing the material on which the Spirit of God can work. The conventional antithesis between head and heart is false; Scripture does not countenance it, for there the heart is the seat of the intelligence and of the will, but rarely of the emotions. Hence in selecting hymns it should not be forgotten that singing is "unto God," and if it is to be well pleasing to Him or profitable to the singers, must not be with the voice only but "with the understanding also" (Col. iii. 16; 1 Cor. xiv. 15).

The primary object of the Sunday School, then, is to impart the knowledge of the Scriptures to the young, that, in some measure, they may learn what is the "nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. vi. 4). The typical Sunday School lesson is provided in Ps. xxxiv. 11-22, with its appropriate beginning, "Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the Lord." Enthusiasm is not enough—the Sunday School teacher must have an intelligent interest in, and understanding of, the children and the Bible, the knowledge of which it is his business to impart.—C. F. H.

Gleanings

Be quiet, soul:
Why shouldst thou care and sadness borrow?
Why sit in nameless fear and sorrow
The livelong day?
God will make out thy path tomorrow
In His best way.

CONFERENCES

Waverly, Iowa

The Iowa Bible Conference will be held again (D. V.) at Wartburg College in Waverly, Iowa, August 18, 19, 20, 21, and 22nd. Those planning to attend please communicate with Carlyle Miller, Clarksville, Iowa, or Frank Hoel, Greene, Iowa, so that proper arrangements may be made.

Dunkirk, N. Y.

The annual Bible Conference will be held (D. V.) at the Dunkirk Conference Grounds, two miles east of Dunkirk, N. Y., on Route 5, August 28th to September 4th.

San Francisco, Calif.

The San Francisco Bay area assemblies purpose, the Lord permitting, having a conference beginning Saturday, September 4th and ending Monday, September 6th (Labor Day).

Those coming from a distance will please communicate with Henry Cerrina, 747 Maud Avenue, San Leandro, Calif.

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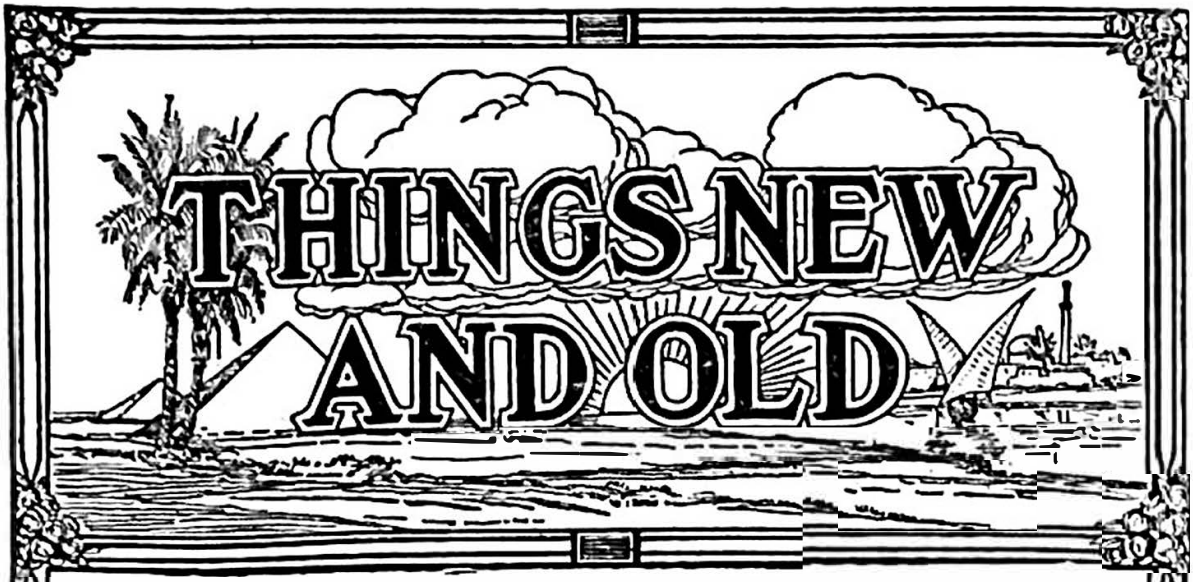
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"Then said He unto them, Therefore every scribe instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven, is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure THINGS NEW AND OLD." (Matt. 13:52).

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Publishing Office:

ERIE BIBLE TRUTH DEPOT

30 East Ninth Street, Erie, Pa., U. S. A

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All communications for the Editor should be addressed to F. B. TOMKINSON, 30 East Ninth St., Erie, Pa.

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Light of the Lonely Pilgrim's Heart

Light of the lonely pilgrim's heart,
Star of the coming day,
Arise, and with Thy morning beams,
Chase all our griefs away!
Chase all our griefs away!

Jesus, Thy fair creation groans—
The air, the earth, the sea—
In unison with all our hearts,
And calls aloud for Thee!

Come, blessed Lord, let ev'ry shore
And answ'ring island sing
The praises of Thy royal name,
And own Thee as their King!

Thine was the cross, with all its fruits
Of grace and peace divine;
Be Thine the crown of glory now,
The palm of vict'ry Thine!

—Sir Edward Denny.

"Surely I Come Quickly!"

CHAPTER III

RESURRECTION OF THE SAINTS IN THE GOSPELS

It will hardly come as a surprise to those who have read the preceding chapter that Mr. Reese finds nothing in the New Testament which overthrows the views he has developed from the Old Testament. Having adopted this part of Scripture as his viewpoint, he seeks to bend and fit New

Testament teaching into the pattern which he has formed. How badly some Scriptures must be strained and others ignored to achieve a consistency of doctrine will become more apparent as we go on.

Here is Mr. Reese's summary of what he believes he has already proved and what he anticipates the New Testament will reveal.

"Now the conclusion we have reached concerning the resurrection of Israel's holy dead has been seen to be subversive of the new theories* of the Advent. This being so, we should be warranted in claiming a verdict on the main issue, for if, as Kelly observes in his controversy with the post-millennialists, one text is enough to hang heaven and earth upon, then four unambiguous texts are sufficient to sustain the doctrine of the End that the new system was intended to supplant. Nevertheless, it is desirable to examine the teaching of the N. T. as well. And as the present work is intended for those who believe in a real inspiration of the Bible, and the harmony of the word of prophecy, it is unnecessary to postulate an agreement between the Last Things of the Old and New Testaments. It is a reasonable presupposition that, given a clear revelation in the O. T., of the resurrection of Israel's dead, nothing in the New will contradict it. We may expect to find a further unfolding of the earlier revelation, but nothing less than plain teaching to the contrary will avail to make us abandon the conclusion reached from the O. T. Does the N. T. contain any such teaching? In other words, does it indicate that the resurrection of the saints is to occur several years or decades before the Day of the Lord, as Darbyists insist? To this inquiry we now proceed." (P. 52-53).

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* That is, J. N. Darby's teachings that Christ will come for His own before the tribulation.

Having looked at some length at Mr. Reese's arguments based on the Old Testament, it is sufficient to remark that they only appear conclusive when isolated from New Testament teachings. So far as the inspiration of Scripture is concerned, we gladly agree with Mr. Reese as to the harmony between the various parts of Scripture; indeed, we insist upon it. But his views do not display this harmony, as we shall see.

Speaking generally, it would be true to say that the Old Testament views the end-time from an earthly and Israelitish standpoint. In the New Testament we have the same period viewed from a heavenly position, that of the church. In addition to a difference of viewpoint there is a time interval between the prophetic announcements and the actual occurrence of the events. The effect produced by this difference of standpoint and of perspective on our view of the coming of Christ may be explained by the following illustration. A traveler, plodding steadily along his path, sees in the distance a commanding peak. Altering his direction of approach as he nears his objective, he discovers to his surprise, that instead of one peak there are two, one directly behind the other. In like manner, the Old Testament reveals only the coming of the Lord with His saints—the distant view. In the New Testament alone we get the near view and are able to distinguish the two comings (for His saints and with them) from each other.

Mr. Reese now brings before us

JOHN 6:39-54; 11:24

He says, "The first passage, or rather expression, to be considered is the saying of the Lord, 'I will raise him up at the last day.' It occurs in connection with the resurrection in five places in St. John's Gospel: 6:39, 40, 44, 54; 11:24.

"It is worthy of note that in every case in the above texts the resurrection referred to is clearly that of the faithful dead. It is the resurrection of "life" (John 5:29), inasmuch as Christ promises it to those who believe and feed on Him . . . In other words, these texts all speak of the "resurrection of the just" (Luke 14:14). And we are told in every case that it takes place "at the last day." Here is a very definite point of time . . . Our Lord associates it (the resurrection) with the Last Day of the Pre-Messianic Age. (p. 53).

"It is important to bear in mind that the Jews divided time into two ages, the Messianic Age, and that which preceded it. This was a fundamental idea of Hebrew eschatology; and it was adopted by our Lord. For example, in speaking of those who left home, and relatives, and possessions for the sake of the Kingdom, observes that even in the present time they receive much more than they lose, whilst in the world (age) to come they shall receive everlasting life (Mk. 10:30).

"Having regard for His fundamental ideas on Eschatology there can be no doubt that the last day is the closing day of the Age that precedes the Messianic Kingdom of glory." (p. 54).

Presented in this way, these Scriptures, which seem so satisfactory to Mr. Reese, would carry conviction to the casual reader, too. They definitely connect resurrection with the last day. Since Mr. Reese hastens to assure us that the Jews linked the

last day with Messiah's coming, the demonstration seems complete. Resurrection must then be at the end of the tribulation; this is the necessary conclusion—so he feels.

Before introducing any other Scriptures, let us look at what Mr. Reese puts before us. We can agree that his connection of the last day with resurrection is a perfectly proper one since Scripture does so. But when he attempts to define it further, he is offering us the results of his own reasoning, for Scripture nowhere relates "last day" to earthly events. Mr. Reese's explanation of the Jewish belief which puts the introduction of the Messianic kingdom at the last day, is intended to supply this deficiency. Their ideas may have a certain historical interest, but no weight. We can easily recall other mistaken Jewish reasonings. They thought, too, that the Messiah would set up His kingdom at the time of His first coming, yet they were tragically wrong. It is helpful to see that their belief in the reality of both these events—setting up the kingdom and resurrection—is entirely Scriptural; their placing of them is faulty in both cases.

Mr. Reese's reasoning about the Lord's use of the expression "this age" and "the age to come" are not at all convincing. The Lord has said nothing to justify the conclusion that there is only this age and the age to come. True, He has only mentioned two, since He is making a comparison between them. Whether or not an age or ages intervene

between the two cannot be deduced from His words in this passage.

We might well ask ourselves, before going further and apart from the context, "What meaning is conveyed by the expression 'last day'?" It should be clear that "last day" is more a relative term than an absolute one. The word "last" simply asserts that a series of similar objects or events is ended by the one so mentioned. It says nothing at all of a new series nor does it locate all last things at the same point in time. The natural meaning would be the last day for the *person or group addressed.* Whether the "last days" of various groups was the same would be a matter for further investigation.

An illustration may be helpful. Frequently a school principal, addressing the whole student body, will urge each pupil to greater efforts so that he may get his diploma at commencement. The fact that the commencements for the oldest and youngest students may be years apart causes no confusion. Nor does any one dream that the principal believed all would graduate on the same day. "Last day," then, in its normal application would mean the last day for the one addressed apart from others and without reference to a new beginning of any kind. Now let us apply this idea to a further examination of Scripture.

To the five passages Mr. Reese has mentioned we should add a sixth reference which he has placed in a footnote.

He says, "The expression 'last day' occurs again in John 12:48, but it is of significance that nothing is said of resurrection. It refers to the generation who survive to the advent, which is viewed as near." (p. 53).

Here is the Scripture he refers to. "And if any man hear My words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I come not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth Me and receiveth not My words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." (John 12:47, 48).

How any one, without a special view to support, could see a time limit in this passage is hard to understand. It is as general a statement as can be conceived. If *any* man rejects Christ, His word will judge him at the last day. We could ask for nothing more explicit or more inclusive of all men in all time than our Lord's words.

The omission of specific reference to the resurrection doesn't prove Mr. Reese's point at all. Since some may be dead and some living at the time of their judgment for rejecting Christ, only that condition is stated which will be true for both living and dead. That is, that His word will judge them at the last day. There were those who heard Christ then, who died rejecting Him, and who will be judged by His word. That the unsaved dead will be raised Scripture clearly affirms. "I have hope toward God, which they themselves allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust." (Acts 24:15).

Note incidently that these events are joined together yet they occur more than 1000 years apart. Revelation 20:3, 4, a Scripture we have previously considered, shows us beyond all question when the resurrection of the just occurs. Since it affirms that "they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years," they must have been resurrected before the millennium. (I say before the tribulation, too, but for our present purposes it is unnecessary to insist on the exact moment.)

"But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." (Rev. 20:4). This latter resurrection is evidently for the wicked dead alone at least 1000 years later. For every one who stands before that great white throne is judged "according to their works." (Rev. 20:14). Since the Lord Jesus has distinctly told us that "he that heareth My words and believeth on Him that sent Me hath everlasting life and shall not come into judgment," (John 5:24) we understand that no child of God will stand here.

(You will notice that I have substituted for "condemnation" in the above quotation as the Authorized Version gives it, "judgment," the correct word as all Revised Versions will show. The difference is of moment. "No condemnation" means that one could be judged but would be found guiltless. "No judgment" means one will not even stand trial.)

Gathering up the teaching of these various Scriptures, we get a consistent, intelligible outline

of the two resurrections as related to the "last day." First, there are just six passages which use this expression, five applying to the resurrection of the saved and one to the unsaved. For, morally, there are just two resurrections, frequently linked in phrase but separated in time by more than a millennium. The Lord refers to the resurrection day for each class as its "last day." That is, when the saved are raised in glory that point in time is called their last day; when the unsaved dead stand before the great white throne, that, too, is called their last day. That the last day of either coincides with the first day of the millennial kingdom cannot be shown from these Scriptures. Furthermore, they are not even remotely connected with the question before us—the absence of the church on the earth during the tribulation.*

Mr. Reese now calls our attention to

LUKE 20:34-36

Jesus said unto them, "The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage; but they that are accounted worthy to attain to that age, and the resurrecton from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; for neither can they die anymore: for they are equal unto the angels: and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection." (R.V. mg.)

Mr. Reese comments: "In this present Age mortal men marry and give in marriage. But they who are counted worthy of the future Age marry not, for they become sexless as the angels, being sons of God and sons of the resurrection. It is important to note the order of the words: "they

* The careful reader will note that nothing has been said of the judgment of the unsaved living. That subject will come before us in a later chapter.

that are counted worthy to attain to that age, and the resurrection from the dead,"—not "the resurrection from the dead, and that age;" but first the Messianic Age, then the resurrection. The resurrection of the just is the first result of the Messianic reign." (p. 57).

It is pleasant to be able to agree with Mr. Reese as to the importance of every detail of Scripture, even the sequence in which ideas are presented. Here he feels that the order of the phrases, "that age, and the resurrection of the dead," has a marked significance which he can turn to the advantage of his scheme of interpretation. Before considering his remarks, however, let us examine the passage for ourselves.

The Lord is contrasting the conditions in the two ages regarding marriage. The proper emphasis and contrast are secured by the grouping in the text, "this age—that age." There are the two subjects under consideration. The expression, "and the resurrection of the dead," gives the *means* by which the dead attain that age rather than an event that follows in time the opening of this epoch. Once this point is clearly understood the fallacy of Mr. Reese's arguments will be clearly revealed.

Let me illustrate my meaning. I say to a person, "You may remain here or go to the next town. We'll take you there by car." The main point is the choice of location. The explanation about travel does not follow in time his going to the next town. It gives the means of accomplishment.

So it is in our passage. The main topic is the two ages. The means of reaching the coming age

is resurrection. To repeat, resurrection does not occur *after* the coming age begins; it is the method used for reaching it.

Having before us an alternative explanation, contrary to Mr. Reese's, our next step is to see if his interpretation fits the facts. He contends that we have here a strict chronological order—first the coming age, then the resurrection of the dead. But the Scripture does not make such a statement. It does not present us first with an age and then with a class which attains it. Rather it tells us only of one class—those that are worthy to attain to that age—which reaches it by resurrection.

Nevertheless, let us try to apply these points in chronological order. To do so would mean that those counted worthy, attain the age first and then are resurrected afterwards! Such a statement is obviously nonsense. Among other difficulties, to deduce such a meaning from these words would bring it into open contradiction with Colossians 3:4. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory." The verse shows us beyond controversy that we are with Him, having been previously raised in bodies of glory, when He appears to the world. Since it is this appearance which marks the beginning of the Messianic Kingdom, reversal of their chronological order, as Mr. Reese presses, is impossible.

His interpretation, then, is inadmissible. It should serve, however, as a good sample of the basic illogic characteristic of a superficial examination of

a Scripture, plausible as it may seem upon a casual reading—W. F. P.

Freewill Offering

Be still, my soul! Thy God doth undertake
To guide the future as He doth the past;
Thy hope, thy confidence let nothing shake,
All now mysterious shall be bright at last.
Be still, my soul! The waves and wind will know
His voice who ruled them while He dwelt below.
Be still, my soul! When dearest friends depart,
And all is darkened in the vale of tears,
Then shalt thou better know His love, His heart,
Who comes to soothe thy sorrows and thy fears.
Be still, my soul! The Saviour can repay
From His own fulness all He takes away.

—Selected

KEEP YOURSELVES IN THE LOVE OF GOD

Jude 21.

Keep warm by keeping in the sunshine; keep in the light by keeping in His rays; nourish your life by abiding in His presence. And one of the ways to keep yourself in the love of God is to keep searching His holy Word and translating it into practice. A tree takes up water and transforms it into sap, and the sap is transmuted into leaves, buds, flowers, and fruit. So should you keep yourself in the love of God by learning more and more what the Word of God teaches, and then transmuting what you receive into holy, humble obedience.—A. T. P.

Short Papers On Church History

(Continued)

Although different reasons may be given by different persons and governments for persecuting Christians, yet we believe that the real cause is the heart's enmity against Christ and His truth, as seen in the godly lives of His people.

The Romans professed to tolerate all religions from which the commonwealth had nothing to fear. This was their boasted liberality. Even the Jews were allowed to live according to their own laws. What was it then, we may well ask, that could have caused all their severity to the Christians? Had the commonwealth anything to fear from them? Had it anything to fear from those whose lives were blameless, whose doctrines were the pure truth of Heaven, and whose religion was conducive to the people's welfare, both publicly and privately?

The following may be considered as one of the unavoidable causes of persecution, looking at both sides of the question:

1. Christianity, unlike all other religions that preceded it, was *aggressive* in its character. Judaism was exclusive; the religion of one nation. Christianity was proclaimed as the religion of mankind or the whole world. This was an entirely new thing on the earth. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15) was the Lord's command to the disciples.

2. The pagan religion, which Christianity was rapidly undermining and destined to overthrow,

was an institution of the State. It was so closely interwoven with the entire civil and social system, that to attack the religion was to be brought into conflict with both the civil and the social. And this was exactly what took place. Had the primitive Church been as accommodating to the world as Christendom is now, much persecution might have been avoided.

3. The Christians naturally withdrew themselves from the pagans. They became a *separate and distinct people.* They could not but condemn and abhor polytheism, as utterly opposed to the One living and true God, and to the Gospel of His Son Jesus Christ. This gave the Romans the idea that Christians were unfriendly to the human race, seeing they condemned all religions but their own. Hence they were called "Atheists,' because they did not believe in the heathen deities, and derided the heathen worship.

4. *Simplicity and humility* characterised the Christians' worship. They peaceably came together before sunrise or after sunset, to avoid giving offense. They sang hymns to Christ as to God; they "broke bread" in remembrance of His love in dying for them; they edified one another and pledged themelves to a life of holiness. But they had no fine temples, no statues, no order of priests, and no victims to offer in sacrifice. The contrast between their worship and that of all others in the empire became most manifest.

The heathen, in their ignorance, concluded that

the Christians had no religion at all, and that their secret meetings were for the worst of purposes. The world *now,* as *then,* would say of those who worship God in spirit and in truth, that "these people have *no religion at all.*" Christian worship, in true simplicity, without the aid of temples and priests, rites and ceremonies, is not much better understood now by professing Christendom, than it was then by pagan Rome. Still, it is true, "God is a Spirit; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24).

5. By the progress of Christianity, the *temporal interests* of a great number of persons were seriously affected. This was a fruitful and bitter source of persecution. A countless throng of priests, image makers, dealers, soothsayers, augurs, and artisans, found good livings in connection with the worship of so many deities.

All these, seeing their craft in danger, rose up in united strength against the Christians, and sought by every means to arrest the progress of Christianity. They invented and disseminated the vilest calumnies against everything Christian. The cunning priests and the artful soothsayers easily persuaded the vulgar, and the public mind in general, that all the calamities, wars, tempests, and diseases that afflicted mankind, were sent upon them by the angry gods, because the Christians who despised their authority were everywhere tolerated.*

* See Mosheim's "Ecclesiastical History," Cave's "Primitive Christianity."

Many other things might be mentioned, but these were everywhere the daily causes of the Christians' sufferings, both publicly and privately. Of the truth of this, a moment's reflection will convince every reader. But faith could see the Lord's hand and hear His voice in it all: "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues; and ye shall be brought before governors and kings for My sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles . . . Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword." (Matt. 10.)

Having said this much as to the great opposition which the early Church had to contend against, it will be necessary to glance for a moment at the real causes of

THE RAPID PROGRESS OF CHRISTIANITY

Doubtless the causes were divine. The Spirit of God, who descended in power on the day of Pentecost, and who had taken up His abode in the Church and in the individual Christian, is the true source of all success in preaching the gospel, in the conversion of souls, and in bearing testimony against evil. "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord." Besides, the Lord has promised to be with His people at all times. "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Zech. 4:6, 7; Matt. 28:18-

20). But our object at present is to look at things historically and not merely according to the assurance of faith.

1. One great cause of the rapid spread of Christianity is its *perfect adaptation to man in every age*, in every country, and in every condition. It addresses all as *lost*, and supposes a like want in all. Thus it suits the Jew and the Gentile, the king and the subject, the priest and the people, the rich and the poor, the young and the old, the learned and the ignorant, the moral and the profligate. It is God's religion for the *heart*, and asserts His sovereignty there, and His only. It announces itself as the "Power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Rom. 1:16). It proposes to raise man from the deepest depths of degradation to the loftiest heights of eternal glory. Who can estimate, in spite of every prejudice the effect of the proclamation of such a Gospel to miserable and benighted heathens? Thousands, millions, tired of a worthless and worn-out religion, responded to its heavenly voice, gathered around the Name of Jesus, took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, and were ready to suffer for His sake. Love ruled in the new religion, hatred in the old.

2. Its *sanction and maintenance of all earthly relations*, according to God, were other reasons for the acceptance of the Gospel among the heathen. Each one was exhorted to remain in these relationships, and seek to glorify God therein. The blessings of Christianity to wives, children, and ser-

vants, are unspeakable. Their love, happiness, and comfort were an astonishment to the heathen, and a new thing amongst them. Yet all was natural and orderly. A Christian, who is said to have lived about this time—the early part of the second century—thus describes his contemporaries: "The Christians are not separated from other men by earthly abode, by language, or by customs. They dwell nowhere in cities by themselves, they do not use a different language, or affect a singular mode of life. They dwell in the cities of the Greeks, and of the barbarians, each as his lot has been cast: and while they conform to the usages of the country, in respect to dress, food, and other things pertaining to the outward life, they yet show a peculiarity of conduct wonderful and striking to all. They obey the existing laws, and conquer the laws by their own living."**

3. The *blameless lives of the Christians;* the divine purity of their doctrines; their patient, cheerful endurance of sufferings worse than death, as well as death itself; their disregard for all the objects of ordinary ambition; their boldness in the faith at the risk of life, credit, and property—were chief means in the rapid spread of Christianity. "For who," says Tertullian, "that beholds these things, is not impelled to inquire into the cause and who, when he has inquired, does not embrace Christianity; and when he has embraced it, does not himself wish to suffer for it?"

** Neander's "Church History," vol. 1, page 95.

In less than *a hundred years from the day of Pentecost,* the Gospel had penetrated into most of the provinces of the Roman empire, and was widely diffused in many of them. In our brief outline of the life of St. Paul, and in the chronological table of his missions we have traced the first planting of many Churches, and the propagation of the truth in many quarters. In large central cities, such as Antioch in Syria, Ephesus in Asia, and Corinth in Greece, we have seen Christianity well established, and spreading its rich blessings among the surrounding towns and villages.

We also learn from ecclesiastical antiquity, that what these cities were to Syria, Asia, and Greece, Carthage was to Africa. When Scapula, the president of Carthage, threatened the Christians with severe and cruel treatment, Tertullian, in one of his pointed appeals, bids him bethink himself. "What wilt thou do," he says, "with so many thousands of men and women of every age and dignity, as will freely offer themselves? What fires, what swords, wilt thou stand in need of! What is Carthage itself likely to suffer if decimated by thee: when every one there shall find his near kindred and neighbours, and shall see there matrons, and men perhaps of thy own rank and order, and the most principal persons and either the kindred or friends of those who are thy nearest friends? Spare then, therefore, for your sake, if not for ours."***—A. Miller.

(To be continued, D. V.)

*** Cave's "Primitive Christianity," page 20.

Russia's Destiny
in the
LIGHT OF PROPHECY

We have before pointed out that the King of the North will be a vassal of some greater power, and that power we believe to be none other than *the vast Russian Empire.* It may surprise some to learn that Russia is mentioned by name in the Scriptures, or, at any rate, in such a way as to leave no reasonable doubt that Russia is meant. Let the reader open his Bible and read Ezekiel xxxvii. to xl.; if chapters xxxvi. and xxxvii. be read with attention, it will be seen that the vision before the mind of the prophet is the restoration of Israel to their own land. The restoration here described is distinctly future; never since the days of Ezekiel has any such an one taken place. The repentance and conversion of the people are distinctly foretold: their blessing in the land, which will cease to be desolate, and become fertile as the Garden of Eden; the hostility of the tribes one against the other shall cease, and they shall be gathered together under one King—David's Son and David's Lord.

But the day of Israel's blessing in the land is also the day of the judgment and destruction of their enemies—a principle which is seen all through the Psalms, where the Spirit of God frequently employs language in a prophetical manner most suitable in the lips of God's earthly people, who cannot be fully blessed until all their enemies are de-

stroyed, but most unsuitable for the heavenly people, the church, who will be caught up to heaven before the living nations are judged.

Let Ezekiel xxxviii. and xxxix. be now read with attention. Israel being fully and finally restored to their own land, and blessed therein according to the distinct announcement of the prophetic word, their time of great tribulation being over, the Beast, or Western confederacy of nations, and the Antichrist, or False Prophet, having been destroyed by the brightness of Christ's appearing, the King of the North likewise having fallen upon the mountains of Judæa (Dan. xi. 45), there still remains to be dealt with that vast and mighty empire whose vassal the King of the North had been.

"Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, prince of Rosh,* Meshech, and Tubal, and prophesy against him." (Ezek. xxxviii. 2) Here we have the names of three of the sons of Japheth, who in the early days of the settlement of nations (Gen. x. 2, 3), moved off in the direction of what is now called Russia. These three names survive today in the well-known terms Russia (Rosh), Moscow (Meshech), and Tobolsk (Tubal). These two chapters describe in forcible language and almost in minute detail the final overthrow of the

* We give this as the acknowledged rendering of this verse, as well as of verse 3 of this chapter, and verse 1 of the next. Those who wish for an exhaustive discussion of the text are referred to *Notes on Ezekiel*, by W. Kelly.

vast northeastern confederacy which we see today in process of rapid and unexpected formation.

Oh, that God might open the eyes of many set in the high places of the earth, so difficult to reach with the simple story of the Cross and of the redeeming love of Jesus! May you, dear reader, whoever you may be, prince, peer, or pauper, be brought to own as your Saviour and Lord, now in the day of His grace, Him whom the proudest of monarchs and the haughtiest of empires shall be forced to recognize in the day of His power and judgment!

The Spirit of God distinctly announces that the time of the fulfilment of the prophecy was far removed from that in which the prophet lived — "After many days shalt thou (Gog) be visited." (Chap. xxxviii. 8) Not only so, but it was to be in "the latter days"—days now near at hand. Already do we see the signs of that movement amongst the Jews which is to result, according to Scripture, in their national restoration to their own land. And not only the Jews, but also the ten tribes, will share in that restoration. Men may ask, Where are they? Faith replies. They will be "gathered out of many people," and "brought forth out of the nations." (ver. 8) At the time of which this chapter treats they will be dwelling "safely, all of them." An evil thought will then come into the mind of Gog,* the north-eastern potentate.

* We must not confound the Gog and Magog of Ezekiel with that of Revelation xx. The former is BEFORE the millennium, the latter AFTER.

Beholding the prosperity of returned Israel, and their apparently unprotected condition in the land of "unwalled villages" (ver. 11.), blinded by the unbelief of Scripture, so rife at the present time, which, did he but heed it, might teach him that their prosperity was the evidence that they were now blessed by Jehovah, who had interposed on their behalf, he (Gog) gathers together all his bands from the north and the east, and comes down like a storm upon the once desolate but now favored land. "Cursed is he that curseth thee," Jehovah had long before declared, and all who oppress and despise the Israel of God will have to answer to the God of Israel.

In the words of another:—"It is the last enemy of Israel who confronts us. He dwells in the land of Magog, that son of Japheth who overspread in due time the vast steppes of what was anciently called Scythia. He is autocrat of all the Russians, prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal. Thus we have himself, his land, and his people. But the Lord Himself is against him who, instead of seeing when good comes to a long-troubled people, would fain aggrandize himself, and thus finds himself in array against, not merely the Israel of God, but the God of Israel."

"Thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts, thou, and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company and a mighty army: and thou shalt come up against My people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land; it

shall be in the latter days, and I will bring thee against My land, that the heathen may know Me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes." (vers. 15, 16.) Can any one giving a moment's serious thought to the subject fail to see how the events now transpiring tend to the accomplishment of these predictions? Russia's rapid extension of power in the East, the building of the Sibero-Chinese railway and its branches, whereby multitudes of the Eastern nations might be conveyed to the seat of war in a brief time, may be a means for carrying out those plans of Jehovah, long since foretold in the prophetic word, which is, alas! slighted, ignored, and despised by the vast majority in our days.

But will this invasion prosper? "Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal: and I will turn thee back, and leave but the sixth part of thee . . . and I will smite thy bow out of thy left hand, and will cause thine arrows to fall out of thy right hand. Thou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel, thou, and all thy bands, and the people that is with thee . . . thou shalt fall upon the open field: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God. And I will send a fire on Magog (*i.e.*, the land of Russia), and among them that dwell carelessly in the isles (*i.e.*, the distant countries that contribute to his host): and they shall know that I am the Lord (xxxix. 1-8.)

The overthrow is terrible, whether the language be taken literally or figuratively. So vast is the host destroyed, that their weapons of war will suffice to Israel for firewood for seven years, and seven months will be required for the burial of the dead and the cleansing of the land. Gog, who thought to possess himself of the land and its wealth, will find "a place there of graves," and God shall then be known, through the judgments that He executeth, by all those nations who refuse to know Him now as revealed in grace in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. Solemn alternative! Reader, lay it to heart!

When all is over, then, saith the Lord, "I will set My glory among the heathen, and all the heathen shall see My judgment that I have executed, and My hand that I have laid upon them. So the house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord their God from that day and forward." (vers. 21, 22.)

This, according to Scripture, is the destiny of Russia. Mighty as she is, she is destined to be more powerful still. The extent of her territory today is amazing—half of Europe and the whole of Northern Asia. But according to prophecy it is in Asia that she is destined to succeed. There can be little doubt that Russia, and not England, will be the dominant power in the East.

England's future is bound up with that of the Beast, or Roman Empire; she, as one of the ten horns, will be in that fatal gathering of the Western powers around Jerusalem. (Rev. xvii. and xix.)

Powers they may be called today, but in that day they will be forced to lick the dust, and bow before the Lamb who will come forth from heaven, not in weakness, but girt with strength and majesty, as KING OF KINGS and LORD OF LORDS.—A. H. B.

(To be continued, D. V.)

For Young Christians

When the prodigal decided to return home, his utmost hope was that he might become a servant there. How little he knew the father's heart! The kiss and the best robe awaited him, and the sweet words, "My son" (Luke 15). Lovely picture of the grace that has made us, not mere servants to God (the angels are that), but children, sons, and heirs.

We are CHILDREN. A real relationship has been divinely established. All who are born of God, and who believe in the Saviour's Name, have the right to take the children's place, and cry "Abba, Father" (John 1. 12). "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the children of God" (I. John 3. 1, R.V.). The Holy Spirit is the witness to this precious relationship, and seeks to lead us into the full blessedness of it (Rom. 8. 16).

We are also SONS, which means dignity rather than relationship. To His sons the Father reveals all His thoughts and plans. Amazing revelations of love and grace for ages yet to come are written in the apostolical epistles for our learning. This new dignity our Lord Himself announced on the resurrection day: "Go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God" (John 20. 17). All the sons will at the last be made like Him. We shall be conformed to His image (Rom. 8. 29).

All the children and sons are also HEIRS. It is the purpose of God to place all created things in the hands of Christ, and we are destined to share the vast inheritance with Him. Everything is in confusion now through sin, but when the sons of God are manifested in glory with Christ, every wrong will be righted, and every moan will be hushed.

Wonderful grace that has called us all to such intimate association with the Son of God!

Shall we not seek to walk worthy of it here and now? Should not the thought of it impart moral dignity to all our ways?—Sel.

The Heavenly Calling and the Church

(Continued)

But such Old Testament types are but faint indeed. The mystery of the Church is specially disclosed in the Epistle to the Ephesians. It is there spoken of under two titles, which are exclusively its own. It is "the body of Christ," and "the bride of Christ."

One has strikingly said, "It is not in the heavens above, nor in the earth beneath, nor in angels themselves, bright witnesses as they are of creative power, that the character and ways of God will be manifested in the ages to come: it is in the new, redeemed creation in Christ, in the Church and by the Church, that God's manifold wisdom will be made known. In the Church, brightest emanation of the Divine mind, masterpiece of God's handiwork every perfection of light and glory and beauty shall be displayed; otherwise she would be unworthy of her high destiny as the Bride. The depths and

heights of the grace and love and power of God will never be known to the heavenly hosts, till they behold the Church, chosen from Adam's ruined and apostate race, not only brought into the closest and sweetest intimacy of sonship to God, but exalted to the highest dignity in heaven, a partaker of the ineffable glory of her risen Head."

Surely these words are good for the use of edifying.—But further. In unfolding grace and glory in this Epistle to the Ephesians, (which Epistle I would now consider somewhat particularly), we may observe that there is a peculiar accumulation of language, as I may express it, as though the Writer (the Spirit) were conscious of what a theme of peculiar weight and dignity He was treating. We read of "the glory of grace," or "the riches of grace," of "the exceeding riches of grace," of "the praise of His glory," and of "the praise of the glory of His grace." This is the style in which the magnificent secrets of this Epistle are brought out to view. The casket is according to the treasure.

And the sight given of the ascended Lord is in the same style presented to us. It has been observed by another, that St. Mark tells us, that our Lord was carried up *into* heaven. The Epistle to the Hebrews tells us that He was carried up *through* the heavens. But this Epistle tells us, that He ascended up *far above all heavens.* (Mark 16:19; Heb. 4:14; Eph. 4:10.) What a varied, wondrous account of Him! But the Ephesian account is the

most magnificent—for it gives the Son of Man the very place which is given to God Himself in Deuteronomy 10:14.

And this accumulation of language, of which I have spoken, is preserved in the second chapter, where the Spirit comes to look at the objects of this high calling, and not, as before, at the character of the calling itself. He takes knowledge of us sinners in two conditions, *dead* and *alienated;* dead as in ourselves, alienated as from God—and then He sees us as translated into the opposite conditions of *life* and *nearness.* But He accumulates language, in treating of these things, as He had done before. Terms are multiplied, descriptions are repeated elaborately, that all these conditions in which we are presented, and each of them separately, may be apprehended with great emphasis by our souls. The death-estate in which we lay by nature was awfully complete; the life-estate into which we are now brought, is thoroughly, eternally perfect. Our condition of distance from God, in which grace found us, is described to have been such that nothing could pass beyond it—our present condition of nearness to Him is such as the Son Himself alone could have enjoyed, so to say, before us.

But further. The characteristic of the Church's blessing is this—that they are *in Christ.* Earlier saints, as we have seen, will be heavenly in their destiny; but the Church's calling is heavenly, *in and with Christ.*

The word "in" abounds there in a remarkable manner—and it is always in "Christ." In the course of the wondrous disclosures there made, we learn that having been quickened together *with* Him, we are now *seated in heavenly places in Him.*

Being thus ascended, we are also taught that, there on high, we are *blest with all blessings in Him.*

And again—we are *accepted* in Him, *the Beloved*—made the objects of personal love, as well as blessed with all spiritual blessings.

And again—in Him God has abounded towards us *in all wisdom and knowledge,* making known to us His thoughts and good pleasure touching ages to come; giving us the place of friends.

Thus is it with us *now.*—But this same scripture looks forward and backward, and shows us the interest we had "in Christ" before the world was, and what we are to have "in Him" when the world has run its course. Ere the world was, we learn that we were "chosen" in Him, and "predestinated" unto the adoption of children. And when the world shall be over, and dispensations have finished the display of themselves, and closed their wondrous story, we learn that we shall be "heirs" in Him and with Him of that great new system, "the world to come," in which all things shall be gathered together under Him as their Head.

This is a great theme indeed—our eternal portion in Christ, our standing in Him, with the counsels that purposed it ere the world was, the high

condition and prerogatives in which it now puts us, and the portion which it will convey to us in the ages to come. And all this excellent estate is ours, simply because we now believe or trust in Him.

But that which had been thus "chosen in Christ" from before the foundation of the world, was "hid in God" till revealed by the Spirit to New Testament prophets. And the revelation of it completed the Word of God. (Col. 1:25.) It was the closing, crowning disclosure, made specially through St. Paul the Apostle of the Gentiles. The Church is called into the highest place of dignity, and the revelation of it is in the last, the latest place in the communications of God. Yes. The *Church* has been revealed the *last*. The Gentile Apostleship has brought it forth. Though chosen in Christ before the world, and hid in God for ages and from ages, it now stands revealed, the crown of all His purposes, as it is the last of all His communications.

I ask, Is this strange? Must this be a surprise, or are we prepared for it? Has Scripture, has God Himself in His Word, prepared us for such a thing as this, such a method as this?

I believe He has. We get other like things, things kindred with this, in Scripture.

The Woman was the last creature revealed or brought out in the work of creation. Adam was at home, in his estate, and in his dominions, ere he got the Woman. All the provisions of the Gar-

den were his. He had been crowned the lord of all he surveyed. He had named all cattle, beasts of the field, and fowl of the air. He was in his dominions, as well as at home, and in his estate. But the Woman was not yet. She comes forth the last —but the crown of his joy and the perfection of his condition. (Gen. 2.)

So with *Jerusalem* in Canaan, as with the Woman in Eden.

The land itself had been subdued and divided. The sword of Joshua and the lot of Eleazer had done this, centuries before. But Jerusalem was still a stronghold of the Jebusite. It was still the possession of the Gentile. The Judges had ruled in their several day, and Saul had reigned. But Jerusalem was as nothing all that time, unvalued, unrevealed. At the last, David reduced it to the hands of Israel; and he beautified it and furnished it. It became the throne and the sanctuary, the great centre of attraction, the object of note in all Scripture, whose beauty and dignity is an exhaustless theme. The Spirit in Scripture celebrates it again and again; Israel, in the days of their nation, had their delights there, keeping feast-days and holy-days in her; and our scriptural thoughts are still full of her. She is the gem, the pearl, the queen, the object, in the land and in the story of Israel.—The last again is the chiefest. The Jerusalem of Canaan is as the Woman of Eden.

—J. G. B.

(To be continued, D.V.)

Unwaning Treasure

Midst all the things which change and pass and perish,—
The blessings which so oft seem growing dim,—
How good it is to calmly truly cherish
The treasure which is ours in having Him.

His love unchanged throughout the years abideth,
When other loves have changed or passed away;
No aching, breaking heart in His confideth
But finds its night of sorrow turned to day.

His care,—His wondrous care is wrapped around us;
Nor grows He weary though we ofttimes fall:
His mercies, like His mercy, they surround us;
He bends a listening ear whene'er we call.

Ah, yes, we have in Him unwaning treasure,—
Forgiveness, love, compassion, matchless grace;
May it be ours to give Him back some pleasure,
As daily in His will our steps we trace.

—J. Danson Smith.

CONFERENCES

"Gather the people together, and I will give them water."—Numbers 21:16.

Baltimore, Maryland—

God willing, an all-day meeting will be held on Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 25, 1948, at the Gospel Hall, 2542 Foster Ave., corner Luzerne Ave., Baltimore 24, Md. The first meeting will be at 9:30 a. m., (EST). Any attending from a distance, and who will need accommodation for the length of their stay, may write or telephone to: John Herman, 5900 Marluth Ave., Baltimore 6, Md. Telephone No. Hamilton 6358.

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VOL. XVI OCTOBER, 1948 NO. 10

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Publishing Office:

ERIE BIBLE TRUTH DEPOT

30 East Ninth Street, Erie, Pa., U. S. A

Editor's Notes

All communications for the Editor should be addressed to F. B. TOMKINSON, 30 East Ninth St., Erie, Pa.

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The Words of the Lord From the Cross

When the Lord of glory was crucified—
Before He bowed His head and died—
Seven times He spoke—let us all then hear,
As these blessed words fall upon our ear.

His cross was placed on Golgotha's hill—
He was fulfilling His Father's will,
As He took our place in judgment and death,
And suffered in the sinner's stead.

As they drove the nails through His feet and hands,
Was it justice that He from His God demands?
Nay, instead He beholds them in love and grace,
And thus He prayed for His enemies:

"*Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.*"
Have these words, dear friends, ever reached you?
'Twas also for you that the Saviour prayed,
And the hand of just retribution stayed.

Two robbers were crucified there with Him,
Who were suffering justly for their sin.
But one repented before he died,
And turned to the Saviour by his side,

And said in tones of expectancy:
"Lord, when Thou comest in Thy kingdom remember me."
He saw that Christ was the true Messiah,
The Blessed, Anointed One of Jehovah.

"Verily I say unto thee," the Saviour replies,
"*Today thou shalt be with Me in Paradise.*"
This unworthy sinner was saved that day,
And you may be too, if you come God's way.

As He lovingly looked upon Mary and John,
He said to her, "*Woman, behold thy Son;*"
And then said to him, "*Behold thy mother.*"
So, from that hour on they lived together.

Then for three hours darkness did cover the land,
And we see God's rod in His uplifted hand.
The stroke must fall—oh, wondrous grace!—
It fell on Jesus, Who took our place.

His cry of distress as He hung on that tree:
"My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken Me?"
Was heard from that darkness when He was made sin,
That we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

And now, to fulfill the Scriptures—God's Word—
"I thirst" from His parched, burning lips was heard;
But they had no pity—no water they gave,
Instead reached Him vinegar Who died man to save.

When He knew there was now no more to fulfill
(His joy and food was to do His Father's will)
He cried, "It is finished" with voice loud and clear.
That all without exception those blessed words might hear.

Atonement completed, He bowed His blessed head,
"Father, into Thy hand I commit My spirit," He said.
He dismissed His spirit—the Lord of glory died—
The justice of God was completely satisfied.

But we cannot stop this sweet story here:
He was raised the third day the Scriptures declare.
A living, loving Saviour, He's in the glory now.
Oh, will you not receive Him—to Him your knee bow?

And, oh, blessed truth, He's coming again
To receive to Himself those belonging to Him!
Are you ready for this most important event?
Can you say, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus, Amen?"

* * *

The words of our Lord which He uttered from the cross may be divided thus: Three, one and three. As the lamp-stand in the tabernacle of old had one central stem,

and three coming out from it on either side, making seven in all, so these "seven words" from the cross have one central stem with three on either side. Let us briefly consider them.

First—THE WORD OF INTERCESSION: *"Father, forgive them for they know not what they do"* (Luke 23:34). This was fulfilling the Scripture which says, "And made intercession for the transgressors" (Isaiah 53:12). Jew and Gentile alike were guilty of crucifying the Lord of glory, and all are under judgment to God (Romans 3 19). But the Saviour prays for His enemies, and the grace of God goes out to guilty man instead of well-deserved judgment. Yes, dear friend, God loves you and will forgive you all your sins if you will receive His Son as your Saviour.

Second—THE WORD OF ASSURANCE: *"Verily I say unto thee, today thou shalt be with Me in paradise"* (Luke 23:43). This was in answer to a robber's request to be remembered, just remembered, in a coming day. But this robber repented, that is, he judged himself, and confessed Christ as being without sin, suffering for *his* sins. Here we have "repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 20:21). He saw in Christ also the One who would rule the world—God's coming King. The Lord, however, gave him far more than he asked for. He took him to heaven that very day. Yes, and this is the way we are all saved, if we are to be saved at all. Faith, real, living faith in Christ saves the worst as well as the best.

Third—THE WORD OF CONSOLATION: *"Woman, behold thy Son!"* . . . *"Behold thy mother!"* (John 19:26, 27). These words were addressed to Mary His mother and to John the beloved disciple. Yes, the Lord thought of His own in the midst of His sufferings. Nor does He forget His own now. How good to know! The words of the aged Simeon, which he spoke when the Lord as a babe was brought into the temple, were now being fulfilled before her eyes: "Yes, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also" (Luke 2:35). The comfort she needed was supplied

in this hour of sore trial when the Lord committed her into the hands of the beloved disciple.

Fourth—THE WORD OF ABANDONMENT: *"My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"* (Matthew 27: 46; Mark 15:34)). These words are the most solemn ever uttered. So solemn are they that the inspired penman writes them in the Hebrew tongue as they were originally uttered: *"Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani."* Here is the central stem of the Lord's utterances from the cross. All the others, as it were, hang upon this. We see our blessed Substitute here as the Sin and Trespass Offering. He was made sin for us (2 Corinthians 5:21). He was also made a curse for us (Galatians 3:13). This meets our need as being sinners by nature and practice. Apart from this we could not know Christ as our mighty Intercessor; nor could He give us the assurance of being in heaven with Him; nor even comfort us while here on earth. We would all be in a hopeless condition and position before God, and He would have to hide His face from us for eternity. But our Substitute has entered into the immeasureable distance which sin had created between ourselves and a holy God. He has also entered the darkness which otherwise would have been our portion forever. Psalm 22:1 and Isaiah 53:6 were fulfilled here. It is the only time in our Lord's life that he addressed God *as God* instead of Father. As the Sinbearer He could not address God as Father; it would have been utterly impossible and out of place. We shall never fully understand the blessed and solemn mystery of this, but we know it is true, and we bow in holy reverence and worship, thanking God our Father and Christ our Lord for the truth of it.

Fifth—THE WORD OF SUFFERING: "I thirst" (John 19:28). As our Lord was seized by that terrible thirst which accompanies crucifixion, in response to the word which revealed His suffering, He receives a drink of vinegar. Earlier they had offered Him vinegar mingled with gall, a stupefying drink, which He refused. Now they

offer Him vinegar alone in fulfillment of Psalm 69:21. Vinegar—wine turned sour—is all that was given the holy Sufferer in His thirst. What a total lack of concern for Him this reveals! Truly the cross of Christ reveals what man is by nature—incurably bad. The comforters for whom He looked were not there (Psalm 69:20).

Sixth—THE WORD OF ACCOMPLISHMENT: *"It is finished"* (John 19:30). This is a translation from one word in the original tongue, but who can tell the worth of it? Did He not say "My Father worketh hitherto and I work?" (John 5:17). We hear Him also saying "My food is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work" (John 4:34). And in His high-priestly prayer, looking beyond the cross, He says: "I have glorified Thee on the earth: I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do" (John 17:4). In this connection we read: "After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst" (John 19:28). Yes, *all things* were accomplished. The scriptures foretelling His first advent and the sufferings connected with it, were all fulfilled. The work of redemption was finished once for all. We who believe on Him reap the benefit of this finished work, and who can tell the full benefit accruing from it?

Seventh—THE WORD OF PERFECT TRUST: *"Father, into Thy hands I commit My spirit"* (Luke 23:46). In grace He now submits to death. "The wages of sin is death," we read in Romans 6:23. As our Substitute He paid the full penalty for sin. For the unsaved soul, physical death is indeed a dire calamity. But we read that there is judgment to follow (Hebrews 9:27). This judgment is the second death—eternal separation from God. Yes, Jesus died that we might live. As He died there was an earthquake which rent the rocks. Unseen hands also rent the veil of the temple from top to bottom. The centurion who had charge of the crucifixion and those with him, watching Jesus, and seeing those things which were done,

feared greatly saying, Truly this was the Son of God (Matthew 27:54). Let us echo those words, and say from the depths of our hearts: "Truly, this was the Son of God." Having been brought to know Him, death can do us no harm. If called upon to die we can say with Stephen, the first Christian martyr: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (Acts 7:59). We are also privileged to say with the apostle Paul: ". . . to die is gain" (Philippians 1:21).

In closing let us notice that the first three utterances are manward; the last three Godward, as is also the central one. What transpired during those three hours of supernatural darkness we shall never fully know. There are depths here which no creature can fathom. But we know who passed through that darkness, and died and has been raised again, Who is even now at God's right hand. We also know He is coming again—coming for us who own Him as Saviour and Lord. May the blessed hope of His coming burn brightly in our souls until we see Him face to face, for His Name's sake.

—J. F. P.

"Surely, I Come Quickly!"

(Continued)

Next Mr. Reese calls our attention to

MATTHEW 13:43

"Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of the Father." (R.V.)

"We . . . have no doubt that the Lord is expounding Daniel, (12:3) and setting forth the transfiguration of the risen saints at the resurrection." (p. 58).

"The passage contains another statement of the *time* of the resurrection. It is to take place "*at that time*, that is, at the time when notorious sinners and stumbling-blocks are rooted out of the kingdom (vv. 41-42), the transfiguration of the risen saints takes place simultaneously with the destruction of the ungodly at the Advent." (p. 59).

In a later chapter, when the parables of Matthew 13 come before us, we shall consider the general bearing of this passage. At present we shall confine ourselves to reviewing Mr. Reese's connection of this verse with resurrection and Daniel 12:1, 2.

What proof does Mr. Reese offer that the Lord Jesus is referring to Dan. 12:1, 2? Not a line. The only evident similarity, and that not a close one, is one of language. Daniel speaks of the righteous shining as stars; Christ refers to the righteous shining forth as the sun. Beyond the impression that one gains from the context that both are future, there is no time relation expressed. What is more, the Lord makes no direct allusion to Daniel as He does in Matthew 24, nor does He speak of any prophecy being fulfilled through this event. On the contrary, He says, "I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world." (Matt. 13:35).

(In passing, we might note that major errors in the application of Scripture result from such plausible, but false identifications. For example, the church is referred to as the Lamb's wife in Revelation 19:7 and Israel is called "a wife of youth" in Isaiah 54:6. Yet to identify one with the other is a serious blunder.)

Apart from the unproved and indefensible coupling of this Scripture with Dan. 12:1, 2 there is not even the semblance of an argument to justify the idea that the figure of speech used speaks of

resurrection. Rather, it is a figure of manifestation. It is, of course, true that resurrection preceded the manifestation. But what Scriptural necessity is advanced to show that it must immediately precede it? No one argues that Christ's coming in glory shows that He has just been resurrected. Why, then, must it be true that the church has just been resurrected? Indeed, the reference to their shining forth as the sun should guard us from wrongly assuming that they have just come from the grave. For it indicates, if anything, a heavenly rather than an earthly starting point. We must conclude, therefore, that manifestation alone gives no clue as to the preceding time of resurrection.

It is true, as Mr. Reese says, that this passage contains a reference to the time of this shining forth —"Then shall the righteous shine forth," etc. That is, at the time the tares are burned (Matt. 13:41) the righteous shall shine forth. This event will occur, Mr. Reese takes it, at Christ's coming in the clouds of heaven as we have noticed in Matthew 24. Supposing that is correct, would that prove that resurrection has just taken place? Not at all. It simply shows, as I have contended, that the manifestation—not resurrection—occurs at this time. Resurrection is neither mentioned nor implied in this verse.

Mr. Reese, for his last Scripture in the gospels, calls our attention to, although he does not quote, as he has before

LUKE 14:14, 15)

He says, "A fourth—indeed the classic—passage on the resurrection of the just occurs in Luke 14:14 where the Lord, just before relating the Parable of the Great Supper, remarks: "And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee; for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just."

"This passage in itself furnishes no information concerning the relative time of the resurrection; but taken in connection with what follows, it supplies a decisive consideration; for when Christ spoke of the first resurrection, one of His hearers exclaimed: 'Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.' (v. 15). This shows how unmistakably the resurrection of the holy dead in Israel was linked with the coming of the Messianic Kingdom.

"Any one who has thought independently on this subject, and filled his mind with the conception of the Prophets and our Lord on the Last Things, must be forced to the conclusion that there is something fundamentally wrong with a programme of the resurrection that, far from introducing the age of peace, renewal, and righteousness for living Israel, will rather presage her entrance upon the times of Antichrist. No Hebrew would sponsor such a view." (p. 59, 60).

Since the Lord has assured us in a previous chapter that the Gentiles shall sit down in the kingdom of God with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Luke 12:27, 28) the exclamation of the guest, so far as its wording is concerned, is generally true. What he understood by the words is another question. That Mr. Reese is correct when he tells us that the guest referred to the current notion that the resurrected patriarchs would eat bread in the Messianic kingdom is quite possible. But where

does Scripture teach that this sitting down is on *earth?*

To say that the Jews firmly hold such a doctrine proves nothing. Indeed, their history, briefly and incidently narrated in the gospels, is a continual expose of their inability to comprehend the things of God. Would any one recommend as trustworthy interpreters of the mind of God the priests and scribes who, in spite of their knowledge of the letter of Scripture, crucified the Lord of glory? One might object that these were enemies of Christ from whom we could expect nothing else.

Well, what measure of understanding is displayed by His disciples? Among them, surely, there is a receptive attitude towards the things of God. If the natural mind* has capacity for grasping His thoughts, we shall find it here.

What is their record? They were continually at cross-purposes with Him in spite of His frequent and loving discourses. When He speaks of His purpose to go to Jerusalem and of the death that would follow, Peter rebukes Him. While He prays, asking them first to watch, they sleep. When He submits to His captors, Peter draws the sword. While He witnesses a good confession, Peter denies Him. After His resurrection, Thomas climaxes

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* Although the Apostles, with the exception of Judas, were born of water and of the Spirit (John 3:5), they had not received the indwelling of the Spirit which should teach them all things until Pentecost. (Acts 2:1-4). We immediately note the differences in their utterances.

this sorry story with a deliberate statement of unbelief in the face of overwhelming testimony.

I have not forgotten Peter's clear confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God." But it could never be used to show that the natural mind understands the things of the Spirit. The Lord Jesus Himself has interposed a barrier to such plausible employment. "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven," is His comment.

Therefore, to present the exclamation of a listener as the doctrine of Scripture is to teach as a commandment the tradition of men. God's Word says, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, neither can he know them for they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. 2:14). We may regard, therefore, any argument based on such a foundation as worthless for the purpose it is designed to serve.

What then, does Scripture tell us concerning the participation of resurrected Old Testament saints with the earthly enjoyments of the millennial kingdom? There is not a line that speaks of such a prospect. True, they with the church will be with Christ when He reigns over the earth at this time. (Rev. 20:4.) Reigning over the earth does not necessitate dwelling there. Since earthly sovereigns reign over territories in which they do not dwell and seldom see, no valid objection can be made to an insistence on the distinction between those two conditions.

Now let us consider the Scriptures which speak of the heavenly portion of these O.T. saints. Speaking of them, Paul tells us they "confessed that they were strangers on the earth" (Heb. 11:13) and "desire a better country, that is, a heavenly," . . . "for He hath prepared for them a city" (Heb. 11: 16). This city and its inhabitants are mentioned in Hebrews 12:22, 23. "But ye are come unto Mount Sion and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and the church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect." The inhabitants, apart from God and Christ, are divided into three classes, as follows: (1) Angels, (2) The general assembly and the church of the first born, (3) The spirits of just men made perfect. This last company, for compelling reasons, is evidently the O.T. saints. It cannot be the church for it has been separately mentioned. It cannot be heavenly beings who are not angels, since it is said to be composed of men. Finally, since it is characterized as "the *spirits* of just men made perfect" its individual members must have been, so far as the body is concerned, in the grave at the coming of the Lord. Therefore, we are forced to see in them the O.T. saints.

In keeping with their heavenly portion they have a heavenly body. "As we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that

flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God."

The following comment on this passage by Mr. F. W. Grant is both lucid and penetrating. "The image of the dust-made Adam is that which we have borne. We shall bear the image of the heavenly.

"From this the apostle draws the necessary inference, that 'flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.' This does not seem to be the same in meaning as if he said, neither flesh nor blood can inherit the kingdom of God. It is of the connections of the two he is speaking. The blood applies to the present life. It is the vehicle of change. It is that which implies the need of continual sustenance and renewal. A body which needs no renewal cannot need blood to renew it, and thus the Lord speaks of Himself as risen from the dead, not as having flesh and blood, but as having flesh and bones. 'A spirit hath not flesh and bones,' He says, 'as ye see Me have.' (Luke 24:39). He has poured out His blood and left it with the earthly life that He had lived. He has entered upon a new sphere, retaining all that makes Him truly Man, but not the condition of the old earthly life. The conditions are changed. Flesh and blood are not suited for the kingdom of God in this sense of it . . . It was good for man in the state of discipline for which God, for his own blessing, designed him at the beginning; but it is part, therefore, of the school-existence, as we may say, which, when the schooling is over, is done away."*

If these verses declare plainly what the glorified body cannot be, we are given in the preceding verses something affirmative about it. Paul tells us, "It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." (1 Cor. 15:44). Our present body is a soul-led body, but the body that shall be is one that is fitted for the spirit. We can easily understand, therefore, that our participation in the routine of mortal life is utterly incongruous with a resurrection state.

The act of the Lord in eating the fish and the honeycomb after His resurrection is not a decisive argument against these views. His eating had only one purpose—to assure them of the reality of His person. In its nature it was no doubt miraculous.

For the purpose of answering Mr. Reese, it was sufficient to show the weakness of the argument based on the guest's ideas of the coming kingdom of Messiah. Since we desire, however, to face all the Scriptures on any question, it seemed proper to consider points which Mr. Reese has not noticed.

SUMMARY

1. The term "last day" does not refer to a particular point in time. It speaks of the day when each shall meet God in an eternal condition. It cannot be used to show a connection between resurrection and an eternal condition.

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* "*Numerical Bible*": Acts to II Corinthians. I take this occasion to acknowledge gladly my immeasurable indebtedness to Mr. Grant. To me he is unequalled among commentators for breadth of vision, grasp of detail, and spiritual insight.

2. The expression "they that attain that age, and the resurrection from the dead," cannot be understood as giving a time order. It gives us a class that goes into a future state and the means by which it is reached.
3. There is no demonstrable connection between Daniel 12:1, 2 and Matthew 13:43. The figure used in Matthew 13:43 speaks of manifestation, not resurrection, without indicating the interval between resurrection and manifestation.
4. The exclamation of the guest in Luke 14:15 cannot be taken as authoritative. —W. F. P.

(To be continued, D. V.)

Russia's Destiny

in the LIGHT OF PROPHECY

(Concluded)

After the destruction of the Beast, or the Western confederacy, the northern and eastern nations remain to be dealt with. With prophetic irony, Gog, the autocrat of all the Russians, is thus addressed: "Be thou prepared, and prepare for thyself, thou, and all thy company that are assembled unto thee, and be thou a guard unto them." (Ezek. xxxviii. 7.) But the awful consequences of this onslaught upon favored and gathered Israel have been already described.

Reader, the Scriptures declare that it is the once-rejected but now exalted Christ who is "ordained of God to be the Judge of the living and the dead." (Acts x. 42.) The living nations will be

judged before the millennial reign of Christ; the dead who have died in their sins will be raised for judgment when those thousand years are over. (See Matt. xxv. 31 to end, and Rev. xx.)* He who has heard the quickening voice of the Son of God, and has believed the Gospel in this day of grace, shall not come into judgment; for even here below, possessing Christ, he possesses eternal life, and is passed from death unto life.

That Christ, once crucified by wicked hands, but now exalted to the right hand of the Majesty on high, and who is ordained of God to be Judge of the living and the dead, is now "set forth to be a propitiation (or mercy-seat) through faith in His blood." (Rom. iii. 25.)

A mercy-seat! Glorious thought! A meeting-place between a holy God and a guilty sinner has been provided by that holy and sin-hating God Himself. It is found in Jesus and His precious blood shed on Calvary. But all who in the stubbornness of unbelief refuse to meet a pardoning God in Jesus Christ, will have to meet Him in judgment, from before whose face heaven and earth shall flee away.

In sending forth this outline of prophecy it is our earnest desire that many who are living thoughtless lives of worldliness may be brought to consider the clear warnings of Scripture as to events now at our very doors. Heaven and earth

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* See a small booklet called, "*The Four Judgments.*"

will pass away, but of God's Word *not one jot or tittle!* "God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent: hath He said, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?" This principle holds good both in His dealings with nations and individuals.

APPENDIX

In view of the rapid and surprising advance of Russia's influence, both in the West and East, it may be of interest to our readers to give a few extracts from the will of Peter the Great, who died in 1725 A.D. This ambitious tyrant had formed schemes of conquest which of late years have been assuming shape and have been tending towards accomplishment. We copy from *Russia*, in Bohn's Standard Library. The will was published some years ago in *The Times*:—

"(1) The Russian nation must be constantly on a war footing, to keep the soldiers warlike and in good condition. No rest must be allowed, except for the purpose of relieving the State finances, recruiting the army, or biding the favourable moment for attack. By these means peace is made subservient to war, and war to peace, in the interest of the aggrandizement and increasing prosperity of Russia . . . .

"(3) No opportunity must be lost of taking part in the affairs and disputes of Europe, especially in those of Germany, which from its vicinity is one of the most direct interest to us. . . .

"(8) We must keep steadily extending our frontiers—northward along the Baltic, and southward along the shores of the Black Sea.

"(9) We must progress as much as possible in the direction of Constantinople and India. He who can get possession of these places is the real ruler of the world. With this view we must provoke constant quarrels at one time with Turkey and at another with Persia. We must establish wharves and docks in the Euxine and by degrees make ourselves masters of that sea as well as of the Baltic, which is a doubly important element in the success of our plan. We must hasten the downfall of Persia, push on into the Persian Gulf, and, if possible, re-establish the ancient commercial intercourse with the Levant through Syria, and force our way into the Indies, which are the storehouses of the world. Once there, we can dispense with English gold.

"(10) Moreover, we must take pains to establish and maintain an intimate union with Austria, apparently countenancing her schemes for future aggrandizement in Germany, and all the whole secretly rousing the jealousy of the minor States against her. By this way we must bring it to pass that one or the other party shall seek aid from Russia, and thus we shall exercise a sort of protectorate over the country, which will pave the way for future supremacy.

"(11) We must make the House of Austria interested in the expulsion of the Turks from Europe, and we must neutralize its jealousy at the capture of Constantinople, either by pre-occupying it with a war with the old European States or by allowing it a share of the spoil, which we can afterwards resume at our leisure.

"(12) We must collect round our house, as round a centre, all the detached sections of Greeks which are scattered abroad in Hungary, Turkey, and South Poland. We must make them look to us for support, and then, by establishing beforehand a sort of ecclesiastical supremacy, we shall pave the way for Universal Sovereignty.

"(13) When Sweden is ours, Persia vanquished, Poland subjugated, Turkey conquered—when our armies are united,

and the Euxine and Baltic are in the possession of our ships, then we must make separate and secret overtures, first to the Court of Versailles, and then to that of Vienna, to share with them the dominion of the world. If either of them accept our propositions, which is certain to happen if their ambition and self-interest are properly worked upon, we must make use of one to annihilate the other; this done, we have only to destroy the remaining one by finding a pretext for a quarrel, the issue of which cannot be doubtful, as Russia will then be already in absolute possession of the East and of the best part of Europe.

"(14) Should the improbable case happen of both rejecting the propositions of Russia, then our policy will be to set one against the other, and make them tear each other to pieces. Russia must then watch for and seize the favorable moment, and pour her already assembled hosts into Germany, while two immense fleets, laden with Asiatic hordes are conveyed by the armed squadrons of the Euxine and the Baltic, set sail simultaneously from the Sea of Azoff and the harbour of Archangel; sweeping along the Mediterranean and the Atlantic they will overrun France on the one side, while Germany is overpowered on the other. When these countries are fully conquered, the rest of Europe must fall easily and without a struggle under our yoke. Thus Europe can and must be subjugated."

This is the aim of Russia. Politicians of today may smile, yet many tremble at Russia's aggressiveness. Napoleon I. forsaw what many are waking up to in our day, and gave expression to his thoughts, while a captive at St. Helena, in the following terms:

"In the course of a few years Russia will have Constantinople, part of Turkey, and all Greece. This I hold to be as certain as if it had already taken place; all the cajolery and flattery that Alexander practised upon me was

to gain my consent to effect that object. I would not give it, foreseeing that the equilibrium of Europe would be destroyed. In the natural course of things Turkey must fall to Russia; the Powers it would injure, and who would oppose it, are England, France, Austria and Prussia. Now, as to Austria, it would be very easy to secure her assistance by giving her Servia and other provinces bordering on the Austrian dominions, reaching near to Constantinople. The only hypothesis that France and England will ever be allied with anything like sincerity will be to prevent this; but even this alliance will not avail. France, England, and Prussia united cannot prevent it. Russia and Austria can at any time effect it; once mistress of Constantinople, Russia gets all the commerce of the Mediterranean, becomes a great naval power, and God knows what may happen. The object of my invasion of Russia was to prevent this, by the interposition between her and Turkey of a new State which I meant to call into existence as a barrier to her eastern encroachments.

We attach no undue importance to the opinions of men, however great they may be. There is One "who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will." Man, though rebellious in heart against God, is but the tool in His hands to accomplish His purposes. God's purpose is "in the dispensation of the fulness of times"—that dispensation so near at hand when Christ shall reign in righteousness and peace—it is His purpose "to gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him." (Eph. i. 9-12.)

Reader, it is CHRIST, not Russia, that is to have "Universal Sovereignty" upon the earth. God has declared that to JESUS "every knee shall bow,"

both in heaven and upon earth. (Philip. II. 10.) Christ *has been* glorified in heaven, and He *shall* be glorified upon earth. The World Empires spoken of by Daniel the prophet have risen and fallen; when the fourth Empire rises again, for a very brief period, the Stone—now made "Head of the Corner" in God's heavenly building—shall fall upon that great human Image which magnifies itself upon earth, and break it in pieces, and IT shall "fill the whole earth." (Daniel II. 34, 35.)

In vain do men look for peace and a golden age without Christ. THE KING, God's King, must come, according to Psalm 72: "His name shall endure for ever . . . and men shall be blessed in Him . . . and the whole earth shall be filled with His glory. Amen, and Amen."

"EVEN SO; COME, LORD JESUS"

—A. H. B.

"The Future of Europe and Russia's Destiny," by A. H. Burton, 88 pages, is now available in separate form____60c

Short Papers on Church History

(Continued)

The next in order in our narrative of events is

THE MARTYRDOM OF IGNATIUS

There is no fact in early Church history more sacredly preserved than the martyrdom of Ignatius, the bishop of Antioch; and there is no narrative more celebrated than his journey, as a prisoner in chains, from Antioch to Rome.

According to the general opinion of historians, the Emperor Trajan, when on his way to the Parthian war in the year 107, visited Antioch. From what cause it is difficult to say, but it appears that the Christians were threatened with persecution by his orders. Ignatius, therefore, being concerned for the Church in Antioch, desired to be introduced to Trajan's presence. His great object was to prevent, if possible, the threatened persecution. With this end in view, he set forth to the Emperor the true character and condition of the Christians, and offered himself to suffer in their stead.

The details of this remarkable interview are given in many Church histories, but there is such an air of suspicion about them, that we forbear inserting them; it ended, however, in the condemnation of Ignatius. He was sentenced by the Emperor to be carried to Rome, and thrown to the wild beasts for the entertainment of the people. He welcomed the severe sentence, and gladly submitted to be bound, believing it was for his faith in Christ and as a sacrifice for the saints.

Ignatius was now committed to the charge of ten soldiers, who appear to have disregarded his age, and treated him with great harshness. He had been Bishop of Antioch for nearly forty years, and so must have been an old man. But they hurried him over a long journey, both by sea and land, in order to reach Rome before the games were ended. He arrived on the last day of the festival, and was carried at once to the amphitheatre, where he suffered

according to his sentence, in the sight of the assembled spectators. And thus the weary pilgrim found rest from the fatigues of his long journey in the blessed repose of the Paradise of God.

It has been asked, Why was Ignatius taken all the way from Antioch to Rome to suffer martyrdom? The answer can only be conjecture. It may have been with the intention of striking fear into other Christians, by the spectacle of one so eminent and so well-known, brought in chains to a dreadful and degrading death. But if this was the Emperor's expectation he was entirely disappointed. It had just the opposite effect. The report of his sentence and of his intended route spread far and wide, and deputations from the surrounding Churches were sent to meet him at convenient points. He was thus cheered and greeted with the warmest congratulations of his brethren; and they, in return, were delighted to see the venerable bishop, and receive his parting blessing. Many of the saints would thereby be encouraged to brave, if not to desire, a martyr's death, and a martyr's crown. Among the number who met him by the way was Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, who, like Ignatius, had been a disciple of John, and was destined to be a martyr for the Gospel. But besides these personal interviews, he is said to have written seven letters on this journey, which have been preserved in the providence of God and handed down to us. Great interest has ever been, and still is, attached to these letters.

THE WRITINGS OF THE FATHERS AND SCRIPTURE

But however worthy of all honour Ignatius may be as a holy man of God, and as a noble martyr for Christ, we must ever remember that his letters are not the Word of God. They may interest and instruct us, but they cannot command our faith. That can only stand on the solid ground of the Word of God, never on the infirm ground of tradition. "Scripture stands alone," as one has said, "in majestic isolation, pre-eminent in instruction, and separated by unapproachable excellence from everything written by the apostolic fathers: so that those who follow close to the apostles have left us writings which are more for our warning than our edification."

At the same time, these early Christian writers have every claim to the respect and veneration with which antiquity invests them. They were the contemporaries of the apostles, they enjoyed the privilege of hearing their instruction, they shared with them the labours of the Gospel, and freely conversed with them from day to day. Paul speaks of a Clement—a so-called apostolic Father—as his "fellow-labourer, whose name is in the Book of Life." And what he says of Timothy may have been at least partly true of many others: "But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity, patience, persecutions, and afflictions" (Phil. 4:3: 2 Tim. 3:10, 11).

From those who were so highly privileged, we should naturally expect sound apostolic doctrine—a faithful repetition of the truths and instructions which were delivered to them by the inspired apostles. But such, alas! is not the case. Ignatius was one of the earliest of the apostolic Fathers. He became Bishop of Antioch, the metropolis of Syria, about the year 70. He was a disciple of the Apostle John, and survived him only about seven years. Surely from such a one we might have expected a close resemblance to the apostle's teaching; but it is not so. The definite and absolute statements of Scripture, as coming direct from God to the soul are widely different from the writings of Ignatius and of all the Fathers. Our only safe and sure guide is the Word of God. How seasonable then is that word in the First Epistle of John "Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son and in the Father" (1 John 2:24). This passage evidently refers more especially to the *Person* of Christ, and consequently to the Scriptures of the New Testament, in which we have the display of the Father in the Son, and made known to us by the Holy Spirit. In Paul's Epistles we have more fully revealed the counsels of God concerning the *Church, Israel,* and *the Gentiles,* so that we must go farther back than *"the Fathers"* to find a true ground of faith; we must go back to that which existed from "THE BEGINNING."

Nothing has direct Divine authority for the believer but that which was from the "beginning." This alone secures our continuing "in the Son and in the Father."

The Epistles of Ignatius have been long esteemed by Episcopalians as the chief authority for the system of the English Church—and this must be our excuse for referring so fully to this "Father." Nearly all their arguments in favour of Episcopacy are founded on his letters. So strongly does he press submission to the Episcopal authority, and so highly does he extol it, that some have been induced to question their genuineness altogether, and others have supposed that they must have been largely interpolated to serve the prelatical interest.*

We will now resume our history from the death of Trajan, in the year 117, and briefly glance at the condition of the Church during

THE REIGNS OF HADRIAN AND THE ANTONINES

From A. D. 117 to 180

Although it would be unjust to class Hadrian and the first Antonine with the systematic persecutors of the Church, nevertheless Christians were often exposed to the most violent sufferings and death during their dominion. The cruel custom of ascribing all public calamities to the Christians, and of calling for their blood as an atonement to the offended deities, still continued, and was gener-

* See "The Genuine Epistles of Clement, Polycarp, Ignatius, and Barnabas," by Ab. Wake, 6th ed. Bagster.

ally yielded to by the local governors, and unchecked by the indifferent emperors. But under the reign of the second Antonine, Marcus Aurelius, the evil spirit of persecution greatly increased. It was no longer confined to the outbursts of popular fury, but was encouraged by the highest authorities. The slender protection which the ambiguous edicts of Trajan, Hadrian, and Antoninus afforded the Christians was withdrawn, and the excited passions of the idolatrous pagans were unrestrained by the government. It is most interesting to the student of Scripture history to see how this could take place under the reign of a prince who was distinguished for learning, philosophy, and general mildness of character.

The past sixty years of comparative peace had opened a wide field for the propagation of the Gospel. During that period it made rapid progress in many ways. Christian congregations increased in numbers, influence, and wealth throughout every quarter of the Roman dominions. Many of the rich, being filled with Divine love, distributed their substance to the poor, travelled into regions which as yet had not heard the sound of the Gospel, and, having planted Christianity, passed on to other countries. The Holy Spirit could not thus work without awakening the jealousy and stirring up all the enmity of the supporters of the national religion. Aurelius saw with an evil eye the superior power of Christianity over men's minds compared with his own heathen philosophy. He then became

an intolerant persecutor, and encouraged the provincial authorities to crush what he considered a contumacious spirit of resistance to his authority. But the Gospel of the grace of God was far above and beyond the reach of Aurelius; and neither his sword nor his lions could arrest its triumphant career. In spite of the bloody persecutions which he excited or sanctioned, Christianity was propagated throughout the known world.—A. Miller.

(To be continued, D.V.)

The Heavenly Calling and the Church

(Continued)

And so again with the *Golden City* of Rev. xxi.

The judgments which were to clear the Inheritance and to take out of the kingdom all that offended, have been executed. The victory of the white-horsed Rider and His army has been won. The reign of the thousand years has been set (chap. xix., xx.) But as yet the Bride has remained unrevealed. But now at the last, in the very close of the Book, as we take leave of the unspeakably precious oracles of God, it is the Woman we see, the Woman again of Genesis ii, the Jerusalem again of the land of Israel—only, it is the heavenly Woman, and not the Eden-Woman, the heavenly and not the earthly Jerusalem. She now, the Lamb's Wife, stands revealed, the chiefest in Divine workmanship, the latest in Divine revelation.

Is there not, then, I ask again, kindredness in all these things? May we not be prepared to find

that excellent thing which was chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, to remain hid in God for ages, and brought out only as the revelation of all secrets was about to be completed, and the Word of God to be filled up?

Surely there has been a rich and wondrous unfolding of the secrets of the bosom! *Home-secrets* are made known, as well as *kingdom-glories*. We are to stand by and see the way of God again.

When Israel had got beyond the fear and the sword of the Destroying Angel, and, under the conduct of the Cloud, had reached the neighbourhood of the Red Sea, they were commanded to stand still and see the salvation of God. (Ex. xiv.) They did so—and that salvation displayed itself in vast and wondrous forms of grace and power which till then had been hidden. They had already known redemption by blood. The first-born had been already delivered, and the judgment of God was now left behind. It had spent itself, and they were safe. But, the Glory in the Cloud, the rod of Moses, the Angel that waited in the camp, all had now to disclose some rare and wondrous virtues which as yet, up to that moment, had not been told. The Angel changed His place and came between the camp of Israel and the host of Egypt, to keep the one apart from the other all the night. The rod of Moses commanded the waters of the Sea to stand up as an heap. The Glory looked out from the Cloud and troubled the Egyptian army. Strange, mysterious powers, new and surpassing revelations of

grace! Israel is safe and quiet and triumphant, and have only to go forward, and sing the song of victory and deliverance, of present service in the sanctuary, and of coming glories in the kingdom.

So here, in the Epistle to the Ephesians, the sinner has been already rescued by the blood of Jesus. Sins are forgiven—and the saints, thus beyond judgment, are summoned to listen, till the high calling of the Church in Christ Jesus under the exceeding riches of the grace of God, like the salvation of God at the Red Sea, discloses itself in their hearing. They have but to listen. If they talk of responsibility, this is it; to listen, to accept, to be happy and thankful, because all this is what it is, and the God of all grace is to them what He is. And the Apostle, who teaches them these rich and marvellous secrets, only prays for them, that as they listen, they may have hearts to understand.

His prayers for them, whether in the first or third chapter, give us other samples of that accumulation of language, of which I have already spoken, and which is so expressive of the consciousness of having to deal with themes and thoughts of very peculiar weight and dignity.—J. G. B.

(To be continued, D.V.)

For Young Christians

COUNSELS TO YOUNG CONVERTS

Cleave to the Lord with purpose of heart. Depend on Him. There is power in Christ; there is sufficiency in Christ for all He would have you do or be. Some are allowed a long season of joy on first believing. But God

knows our hearts, and how soon we begin to depend on our joy, and not on Christ. He is our object—not the joy. Sin no longer remains on you, but the flesh is in you to the end; the old stock will put forth its buds, which must be nipped off as they appear. No fruit can come of it. It is the new nature that bears fruit unto God. But though the flesh is in you, do not be thinking of this, but think of Christ. As you grow in the knowledge of Christ, a joy comes, deeper than the first joy. I have known Christ more or less between thirty and forty years, and I can truly say I have ten thousand times more joy in Him now than I had at first. It is a deeper, calmer joy. The water rushing down a hill is beautiful to look at, and makes most noise; but you will find the water in the plain deeper, calmer, more fit for general use. Cleave to Christ with purpose of heart. A distracted heart is the bane of Christians. When we have got something that is not Christ, we are away from the source of strength. When my soul is filled with Christ, I have no heart or eye for the trash of this world. If Christ is dwelling in your heart by faith, it will not be a question with you, "What harm is there in this and that?" But rather, "Am I doing this for Christ?" "Can Christ go along with me in this?" Do not let the world come in and distract your thoughts. I speak especially to you young ones. They who are older have had more experience in it, and know more what it is worth: but it all lies shining before you, endeavoring to attract you. Its smiles are deceitful, still it smiles. It makes promises which it cannot keep; still it makes them. Your hearts are too big for the world: it cannot fill them. They are too little for Christ: He fills heaven, He will fill you to overflowing. "Cleave to the Lord with purpose of heart." He knew how treacherous the heart is, and how soon it would put anything in His place. You will have indeed to learn what is your own heart. Abide with God and you will learn it with Him, and with His grace. If you do not, you will have with bitter sorrow to learn it with the devil, through his successful temptation. But God is faithful. If you have been

getting away from Him, and other things have come in, and formed a crust, as it were, over your hearts, you will not at once get back the joy. God will have you deal with this crust, and get rid of it. Remember Christ bought you with His own blood, that you should be His, not the world's. Do not let Satan get between you and God's grace. However careless you may have been, however far you may have got away from Him, count on His love. It is His joy to see you back again. Look at the sin with horror, but never wrong Him by distrusting His love. Mistrust not His work, mistrust not His love. He has loved you, and will love you to the end. Talk much with Jesus. Never be content without being able to walk and talk with Christ as with a dear friend. Be not satisfied with anything short of close intercourse of soul with Him who has loved you and washed you from your sins in His own blood.—J. N. D.

Gleanings

A Quotation from F. W. Grant

"My own ground is simply this . . . that a person cannot be rejected unless for wickedness. I refuse this ecclesiastical thought that is going around to make ecclesiastical position wickedness. I believe wickedness is wickedness, the state of soul in which people are away from God, I believe that nothing short of wickedness should be that for which we exclude from the table of the Lord . If people are deliberately in association with blasphemy, I treat that as wickedness, and the people as wicked persons, and nothing less."

CONFERENCES

"Gather the people together, and I will give them water."—Numbers 21:16.

Baltimore, Maryland—

God willing, an all-day meeting will be held on Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 25, 1948, at the Gospel Hall, 2542 Foster Ave., corner Luzerne Ave., Baltimore 24, Md. The first meeting will be at 9:30 a. m., (EST). Any attending from a distance, and who will need accommodation for the length of their stay, may write or telephone to: John Herman, 5909 Marluth Ave., Baltimore 6, Md. Telephone No. Hamilton 6358.

Detroit, Michigan

In announcing the all-day meeting to be held on Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 25, 1948, at the Assembly Hall, 6516 Sixteenth St., we desire, first of all that God's work will be carried out in every detail of arrangement, and then that He will send among us, His servants to FEED the flock and minister for mutual edification. The Detroit Assembly has been growing in numbers;—we pray now for "growth in grace and the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." Any attending from a distance and desiring accommodations over the week-end, may write Bro. R. L. Palmer, 15822 Monica Ave., Detroit 21, Michigan, Telephone UN 1-8788.

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"Then said He unto them, Therefore every scribe instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven, is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure THINGS NEW AND OLD." (Matt. 13:52).

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Publishing Office:

ERIE BIBLE TRUTH DEPOT

30 East Ninth Street, Erie, Pa., U. S. A.

Editor's Notes

All communications for the Editor should be addressed to F. B. TOMKINSON, 30 East Ninth St., Erie, Pa.

For the benefit of all our readers, each article appearing in this magazine will have, by initials or otherwise, some indication of its origin, except in the case of those by the Editor.

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This Fund exists for the purpose of sending copies of the Magazines to Chaplains and men in the Armed Forces; world-wide Missionaries and other Workers, who would not otherwise get them. Encouraging letters are received continually from those who receive copies through this Fund, and these appear in THE HARVEST FIELD, a sample copy of which will be sent, gratis, to any enquirers. (Although the war has ended, there is still a demand for literature in this country and for the Armies of Occupation.)

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The Echo of Love

True Faith produces love to God and man—
Say, Echo, is not this the gospel's plan?
Echo—The gospel's plan.

Must I, then, faith in Jesus constant show,
By doing good to all, both friend and foe?
Echo—Both friend and foe.

But if a brother hates and treats me ill,
Must I return him good, and love him still?
Echo—Love him still.

If he my failings watches to reveal,
Must I his faults as carefully conceal?
Echo—As carefully conceal.

If he the worst construct on all my words,
Must I the best construct his case affords?
Echo—Best construct his case affords.

But if my name and character he tears,
And cruel malice, too, too plain appears?
And when I sorrow and affliction know,
He loves to add unto my cup of woe?
In this uncommon, this peculiar case,
Sweet Echo, say, must I still love and bless?
Echo—Still love and bless.

Whatever usage ill I may receive,
Must I yet patient be, and still forgive?
Echo—Patient be, and still forgive.

Why, Echo, how is this? Thou'rt sure a dove,
Thy talk will leave me nothing else but love.
Echo—Nothing else but love.

Amen! with all my heart: then be it so;
And now to practice I'll directly go,
Echo—Directly go.

Things being thus, then let who will reject,
My gracious God me surely will protect.
Echo—Surely will protect.

Henceforth on Him I'll roll my every care,
And both my foes and friends embrace in prayer.
Echo—Embrace in prayer.

Thus may I more into His likeness grow,
And calmly tread the path He bids me go—
Echo—Go.
(Matt. V, 44, 45).

"Surely I Come Quickly!"

THE RESURRECTION OF THE SAINTS IN ST. PAUL'S EPISTLES

After assuring us that the gospels and the Old Testament have consistently shown us that resurrection is simultaneous with the inauguration of the Messianic kingdom, Mr. Reese proceeds to show us that Paul's epistles do the same thing. This, of course, we do not believe for a moment.

He brings before us

ROMANS 11:15

"For if the casting of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?"

He comments, "Here, in verse 15, Paul links the conversion of Israel with the first resurrection."

"It should be admitted that the other view—of an awakening among the Nations at the conversion of Israel—has something to commend it, but the present writer agrees with those who find in the text the idea stressed by Darby, Kelly, and Trotter, that, when Israel repents, the saints are raised." (p. 62).

As Mr. Reese does not quote any passages from J.N.D., W.K., C.H.M. and W.T. to sustain his charge, we can only surmise what he has in mind. Judging from quotations from these brethren farther along in the chapter, he is referring to their writings which oppose the teaching that resurrection occurs after the millennial kingdom.* When meeting such arguments they have naturally ignored the finer point as to whether the resurrection precedes or follows the tribulation. Controversially, it is often effective, and certainly permissible, to show that one doctrine of an opponent is inconsistent with another. Here, however, Mr. Reese appears anxious to discover an inconsistency where none exists. On the large question of resurrection before or after the millennium, Mr. Darby and the others insist that it is before this period. On the smaller issue of resurrection before or after the tribulation, they contend it happens before this time of Jacob's trouble. Clearly there is no inconsistency here except what bias or lack of comprehension may conjure from within.

The passage itself will not require extended examination. Even a casual reading will make it evident that it will not support Mr. Reese's theories for the same reason as others we have noticed. In it the restoration of Israel is followed by "life from the dead," whose meaning we shall inquire about. This phrase cannot refer to the resurrection of the dead since it follows, not precedes, the restoration

* This doctrine is known as "post-millennialism."

of Israel. This order is the reverse of the Scriptural order we have frequently looked at before. The Word of God teaches clearly that the resurrection precedes our appearing with Him in glory. (Phil. 3:21, Col. 3:4). In turn this manifestation precedes the setting up of the millennial kingdom.

Since the phrase, "life from the dead," cannot refer to a literal resurrection, what does it mean? It alludes to a well known truth which pervades the prophetic writings—Israel's restoration is the first step in the blessing of the earth.

Considering the verse as a whole from this viewpoint, we understand the principle the apostle is setting forth. As salvation was not preached to the world at large until Israel had rejected it and therefore had been set aside by God, so the world will not bring forth abundantly in the measure of which it is capable until Israel is restored. The parallelism is so obvious that it needs little explanation. The first event, the casting away of Israel is connected with the liberation of soul and spirit from the effects of sin. The second, the restoration of Israel, is connected with the liberation of physical creation, generally speaking.

Mr. Reese now argues from

I COR. 15:50-54

Now this I say, brethren. that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption put on incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. In a moment, in a twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and

we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality. But when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory." (R.V.)

Mr. Reese says: "Our only concern, however, is to know if we can find any clue to guide us in our inquiry concerning the time of the resurrection . . .

"Is there any clue to guide us? Yes, a very decided one; and one that for open minds will settle the controversy. Paul not only describes the resurrection and transfiguration of the saints: he emphatically indicates the time for the fulfilment of these wonderful events."

"Nothing could be clearer than the apostle's argument here. The resurrection and transfiguration of the faithful dead will take place in fulfilment of an O.T. prophecy . . . Now if . . . we go back to Isaiah, using the lamp that Paul has furnished us with, what do we find? Why, that the resurrection of the saints, and the victory over death, synchronize with the inauguration of the Theocratic Kingdom, the Coming of Jehovah, and the conversion of living Israel." (p. 63).

Just one more quotation from Mr. Reese before we examine the Scripture.

"It will be seen, therefore, that Paul, so far from detaching the resurrection from the kingdom and the conversion of Israel, takes his stand with Isaiah, David, and the Lord Jesus Christ, in linking them up inseparably. In the very act of revealing new truth about the Christian hope he shows that the theory of his holding to a special coming and resurrection "for the Church" is the veriest fiction. The Coming Jehovah-Jesus is the hope of both Israel and the Church." (pp. 63-64).

"The reader may ask what explanation Darbyists give of this fundamental difficulty in 1 Cor. 15:54, and how they attempt to reconcile their theories with this Scripture. As

a rule they have nothing to say about it; they pay it the perpetual compliment of leaving it alone; or it is one of those 'details' that it is inexpedient to inquire about, though usually a craving for the last detail of the End-time characterizes the school . . . So far as I am aware, no Darbyist writer has ever honestly faced the question." (p. 65).

Mr. Reese's caustic remarks have little justification in fact. It may be perfectly true that few commentators have said anything about this quotation from Isa. 25:8. That fact alone doesn't prove they found it inexplicable. For it is equally possible that they deemed comment superfluous, since its meaning is so obvious. Ordinarily, I should feel this way, too. In view of Mr. Reese's challenge, however, anything less than a full examination of the passage would be hailed as a sign of weakness, an admission of inability to show it is consistent with the teaching that the church will *not* go through the tribulation.

In an understandable attempt to shore up his theory—which certainly needs all the help available—Mr. Reese insists that we must take the remaining part of the verse (Isa. 25:8) partially quoted into account in any proper exposition. Very little thought is required to show the untenability of such a position. If the Spirit had desired to apply the remainder of the verse, I suppose He would have quoted it. Beyond question, the selection of the end point of a quotation is as inspired as the choice of the starting point.

In Chapter II we noted the case of another quotation, by the Lord Jesus, in which He stopped in

mid-sentence, for a very good reason. He quotes only, "To preach the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke 4:19), although the verse goes on to "and the day of judgment of our God." Is it foolish, with this example before us, to believe that the Spirit broke off His quotation here in I Cor. 15:54 for an equally weighty reason?

As it stands, the verse does not teach that death is swallowed up in victory for all classes. That a restriction exists in its application should be clear from its inspired introduction. The apostle's words are, "Then shall be brought to pass, etc." Why doesn't he say, "Then shall be fulfilled?" For a very good reason; it would not be true. Mr. Jennings gives an excellent explanation and illustration of the difference between the two, which I quote.

"If the saying had been fulfilled, that would have meant that at that specific moment of the Lord's coming for us, when His shout is heard, and we are caught up to be with Him forever, this Scripture would be so finally and completely satisfied as to leave nothing more to be expected either for Israel or for the rest of mankind. But since the words are, 'Then shall it come to pass,' it leaves room for others later to share in the infinite blessings of that death being swallowed up in victory when it shall come to pass for them.

"We have a very simple yet clear illustration in the advancing tide. It comes to a certain marked spot, the tide 'has come to pass' thus far, but it still advances and rises to a higher mark, and again we may say 'it has come to pass' so far; finally it reaches its high-water mark, and then we may say the rising tide is 'fulfilled' and will go no further."

It should be evident from these considerations that the expression, "then shall come to pass" is not the equivalent of "then shall be fulfilled." This difference is required in order that Scripture might be consistent with itself. For death does exist after the beginning of the millennial kingdom. Isaiah tells us that "the sinner being a hundred years old shall be accursed." (Isa. 65:20). It exists in the interval after the millennium when Satan is loosed and Gog and Magog are destroyed by fire from heaven (Rev. 20:9). Not until the great white throne judgment is death destroyed. (Rev. 20:14).

The effects of these facts on Mr. Reese's theory are readily apparent. The significant limitation by the Spirit of the quotation to a section of the verse excludes its connection, as used here, with the establishment of the kingdom. The introductory clause, "then shall it come to pass," consistent with the limiting of the quotation, gives us authority to apply it to a class of resurrection, rather than to the complete abolition of death. The existence of death after the beginning of the millennial kingdom gives assurance that such a limited application is the correct one.

Having attained a clear understanding of these points, there remains no Scriptural barrier to the application of this verse to a resurrection before the tribulation and completely disconnected with the establishment of the kingdom in Israel.

Mr. Reese now notices

I THESSALONIANS 4:13-18

"But I would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that fall asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as the rest which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that are fallen asleep will God bring with Him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

Mr. Reese's comments are hardly compact enough to quote without either doing so at great length or giving only a partial account of them. Briefly summed up, he says that the verses settle nothing as to the relation of the rapture with other events. However, since the "Darbyists" agree that the rapture mentioned here is identical with that referred to in I Corinthians 15:54—which he has already shown to coincide with the setting up of the millennial kingdom because of its connection with Isa. 25:8—therefore, this Scripture must speak of that same time.

I have no disagreement, in the main, with Mr. Reese's statement that no relation is shown between the rapture and general prophetic events. Yet we would greatly err if we overlooked the significance of Paul's classing himself with those who would be caught up instead of with the dead. (He says, "*We* that are alive," not "*they* that are alive.")

There is no prophetic event whose fulfillment is to be looked for as necessarily preceding the coming of the Lord for His own. Moral signs of the last times are given in abundance, yet John could say, "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 it is the last time." (I John 2:18).

I CORINTHIANS 15:21-26

"For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming. Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the Kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."

As a preliminary to this passage, Mr. Reese explains why he quotes from Weymouth's version.

He says, "We quote from Weymouth's version, not only for its greater faithfulness to the Greek at one or two important points, but for its happy illumination of some difficult sayings. It undoubtedly represents the attitude of modern scientific exegesis toward this passage of Scripture." (p. 69).

I must express my complete disbelief in the highly extolled virtues of "modern scientific exegesis." This self-congratulatory phrase—whose not too subtle aim is to create the impression that these ideas should also enjoy the aura of favor which mantles all claims put forward in the name of science—is utterly unscriptural in what it claims as

well as its spirit of boastfulness. We are told by the Word of God to expect instruction from the Spirit, not science, which is slightingly referred to in Scripture. (I Tim. 6:20). Man suffers from the delusion that his painfully acquired knowledge, slowly accumulated through the centuries, better fits him for understanding the Word of God. Nothing could be farther from the truth. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him." (Ps. 25: 14) and "The meek will He teach His way." (Ps. 25.9). The reverent spirit of faith, subject to the Spirit of God is still, as always, the only true key by which man may unlock the mysteries of God.

Mr. Reese says of these verses, "Here is a passage where the great Apostle is dealing expressly with 'the resurrection of the dead': not merely of the righteous, but of the totality of the human race. Through Adam death passed upon all men; through Christ the whole human race shall be raised. And the Apostle even gives us the programme of the resurrection:—

1. Christ the first-fruits.
2. The redeemed, at Christ's coming to establish His kingly rule.
3. The End, when the rest of the dead are raised, at the close of Christ's kingdom and His delivering the sovereignty to God the Father."

"Allowing for differences on details, the great commentators of Germany are finding in the passage a resurrection of the saints at the beginning of Christ's Kingdom, and another at its close, in substantial agreement with John in the Apocalypse, chapter xx. One cannot fail to see that the interpretation is ruinous to Darby's scheme; not a word is said about the resurrection of a special class of tribulation saints, seven years or more after the Coming, when the redeemed are raised. If Paul entertained any such

notion, here was the appropriate place to say so, for he is distinguishing the classes in the resurrection of the whole human race." (p. 69, 70).

In characterizing this passage as a "programme of the resurrection," Mr. Reese is only partially correct. It would be more accurate to call it a programme of the end times since it also refers to Christ's reign and surrender of authority. Since it is only an outline, to argue that an omission of details proves that they are not existent is a dangerous principle. Indeed, it is one which would cause embarrassment to Mr. Reese in this very section. It doesn't even hint at the saints being caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Yet this omission, on his theory, would be a proof that the rapture would never take place!

In considering this Scripture it will be helpful to look at Mr. Reese's detailed conception of Christ's return. He believes that we shall be caught up in the air to meet Him in the clouds as described in I Thess. 4:13-16 and shall come back with Him immediately to the earth as we have in Colossians 3:4. He illustrates his meaning by the following incident.

Mr. Reese says, "During the Balkan War of 1912 an incident took place which illustrates, in a measure, what will take place at the Return of Christ. When the Serbian commander and his troops were approaching an ancient Serbian town in the hands of the enemy, they could be seen wending their way down the hill overlooking the city below; the inhabitants of the town were electrified by the sight: the Serbian descendants with joy, the Turks with fear and trembling. As the Commander and his troops came nearer, the officials and loyal citizens went forth to meet the man

whom they were hailing as their deliverer. A scene of delirious enthusiasm and exultation followed, and then the assembled multitude, having met him, turned and accompanied the commander and his troops on the way back to the city. The Turkish flag was hauled down and the Serbian one hoisted in its place. He had come for and with his rescued people on the same day." (p. 238).

The truth is that some Scriptures speak of the Lord's coming in such a general fashion that the two parts—coming *for* His saints and coming *with* His saints are not distinguished. A little reflection will reveal the wisdom of such inspired treatment of this exhilarating prospect. For to have described in a detailed manner the failures and resulting postponement of resurrection and the Messianic kingdom would have made a hopeful and daily looking to God for His intervention an impossibility. We note particularly in the Gospels the general and somewhat enigmatic references the Lord makes to His coming. In that stage of His disciples' development we can apprehend how inappropriate and unwise would have been any *direct* effort to speak to them of the distant future. How would men, who were unable to believe that Christ would be put to death in Jerusalem, be expected to receive and understand a revelation about the church and its place in God's counsels, including its resurrection and the two phases of His coming?

These two parts are so closely related that a reference to them as one event is entirely comprehensible. Christ comes *for* His own in order that He might come *with* them. A helpful illustration of their connection and relative prominence is this:

"When the Governor holds a levee, His Excellency receives privately in a drawing-room a short time before the public reception, persons of rank and distinction who have the privilege of entree, such as judges, executive councillors, and high officers of state. Then, attended by this distinguished cortege, the Governor proceeds to the public room. It is one levee, but when the Governor appears to the public he does so attended by the persons of high position who have been received in private a little while before. This is in exact analogy with the Lord's coming, and is consistent with the whole of Scripture-testimony on the subject. The saints of the present period meet the Lord privately as it were, at His coming, before He appears in public to the world."*

We can now leave this passage, since the only point deserving of notice is its omission of specific reference to the first phase of Christ's coming.

SUMMARY

1. When Paul, quoting from Isaiah 25, says, "Death is swallowed up in victory," the application of this quotation is limited by its introduction and separated from its context in the prophecy.

2. I Thessalonians 4:13-18 gives us the details of the saints living and dead being caught up to meet the Lord without showing the connection between this event and other future happenings.

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* Taken from "The Time of the End But the End Not Yet," by E.J.T. (p. 43).

3. I Corinthians 15:21-26 by its reference to "those that are Christ's at His coming," does not prove that the rapture is only a misinterpretation of Scripture.

4 Any proper interpretation of Scripture must recognize that the two parts of His coming—first *for* His saints and then *with* His saints are not always clearly distinguished from each other.

—W. F. P.

(To be continued, D.V.)

Short Papers on Church History

(Continued)

But here we must pause for a little, and look around us. There is something deeper far in the change of government towards the Church than the merely historical eye can discern. We believe that we are now come to

THE CLOSE OF THE FIRST PERIOD AND THE OPENING OF THE SECOND

The Ephesian condition of the Church, looking at it in this light, may be said to have ended with the death of Antoninus Pius, in the year 161; and the Smyrnean condition to have commenced with the reign of Marcus Aurelius. The persecution in Asia broke out with great violence in the year 167, under the new edicts of this Emperor; and Smyrna especially suffered greatly: the justly esteemed Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, suffered martyrdom at this time. But in order to prove the view we have taken, it will be necessary to glance briefly at

the addresses to the Churches of Ephesus and Smyrna.

THE ADDRESS TO THE CHURCH OF EPHESUS

Revelation 2:1-7

The grand object of the Church in this world was to be "the pillar and ground of the truth." It was set up to be a light-bearer for God. It is thus symbolised by a "golden candlestick"—a vessel which bears the light. It ought to have been a true witness of what God had manifested in Jesus on the earth; and of what He is now when Christ is in Heaven. We further learn from this address, that the Church, as a vessel of testimony in this world, is threatened with being set aside unless its first estate is maintained. But, alas! she fails, as the creature always does. The angels, Adam, Israel, and the Church, kept not their first estate. "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee," saith the Lord, "because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent."

There was still, however, much that He could praise, and He does praise all that He can. As an Assembly, they had patience; they had laboured and not fainted; they could not bear "evil men," or those who were seeking the highest place in the Church. Nevertheless, He feels the departure from Himself. "Thou hast left thy first love." He speaks as one disappointed. They had ceased to delight in

His love to them, and hence their own love to Him declined. "First love" is the happy fruit of our appreciation of the Lord's love to us. "Outward testimony might go on," as one has said, "but that is not what the Lord most values, though value it He does, so far as it is simple, genuine, and faithful. Still He cannot but prize most of all hearts devoted to Himself, the fruit of His own personal, self-sacrificing, perfect love. He has a spouse upon earth, whom He desires to see with no object but Himself, and kept pure for Him from the world and its ways. God has called us for this: not only for salvation, and a witness for Himself in godliness, though this is most true and important, but beyond all for Christ—a bride for His Son! Surely this should be our first and last, and constant and dearest thought; for we are affianced to Christ, and He at least has proved the fullness and faithfulness of His love to us. But what of ours!"*

It was this state of things in Ephesus, and in the Church at large, that called for the intervention of the Lord in faithful discipline. The Church, as planted by Paul, had already fallen from its first estate. "All seek their own," he says, "not the things of Jesus Christ." And again, "All they which are in Asia be turned away from me." Hence the tribulation spoken of in the address to the Church in Smyrna. Though the Lord is full of grace and love in all His ways towards His fallen and failing Church, still He is righteous withal,

* "Lectures on the Revelation," by W.K.

and must judge evil. He is not seen in these addresses as the Head in Heaven of the one body, nor as the Bridegroom of His Church; but in His judicial character, walking in the midst of the candlesticks, having the attributes of a judge. See chapter 1.

THE ADDRESS TO THE CHURCH AT SMYRNA

Revelation 2:8-11

Our interest in the history of the Church is greatly increased when we see that the Lord has distinctly marked its successive epochs. The outward condition of the Church down to the death of the first Antonine—so far as it can be ascertained from the most authentic histories—answers in a remarkable way to what we learn from Scripture, but especially from the address to Ephesus. There was outward consistency and zeal; they were unwearied. It is also evident that there were charity, purity, devotedness, holy courage, even to the greatest readiness to suffer in every way for the Lord's sake. At the same time it is clear from both Scripture and history, that false doctrine was making its way, and that many were manifesting a most unworthy zeal for official pre-eminence in the Church. That forgetfulness of self, and that care for Christ and His glory, which are the first-fruits of His grace, were gone. Historically, we now come to the Smyrnean period. For the convenience of the reader we will give the address entire.

"And unto the angel of the Church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive; I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty (but thou art rich), and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan. Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the Devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days; be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches; he that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death."

Here the Lord meets the declension by sore tribulation. Milder means had not answered the end. This is no uncommon case; though they may have thought that some strange thing had happened to them. But all their afflictions were known to the Lord, measured by Him, and ever under His control. "Ye shall have tribulation *ten days.*" The period of their sufferings is exactly specified. And He speaks to them as one that had known the depths of tribulation Himself. "These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive." He had gone through the deepest sorrow, and through death itself—He had died for them and was alive again. They had this blessed One to flee to in all their trials. And as He looks on, and walks in the midst of His suffering ones, He says, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Thus He holds in His hand the

martyr's crown, ready to place it on the head of His faithful overcomer.

We will now turn to our history, and mark its resemblance to the above epistle.

THE SECOND PERIOD OF THE CHURCH'S HISTORY

Commenced about A. D. 167

The reign of Aurelius is marked, under the providence of God, by many and great public calamities. We see the hand of the Lord in faithful love chastening His own redeemed and beloved people, but His anger was kindled against their enemies. The eastern army, under Verus, returning from the Parthian war, brought with it to Rome the infliction of a pestilential disease which was then raging in Asia, and which soon spread its ravages through almost the whole of the Roman Empire: there was also a great inundation of the Tiber, which laid a large part of the city under water, and swept away immense quantities of grain from the fields and public storehouses. These disasters were naturally followed by a famine which consumed great numbers.

Such events could not fail to increase the hostility of the heathen against the Christians. They ascribed all their troubles to the wrath of the gods, which the new religion was supposed to have provoked. Thus it was that the persecution of the Christians in the Roman Empire began with the populace. The outcry against them rose up from the people to the governors. "Throw the Christians to the lions!" "Throw the Christians to the

lions!" was the general outcry: and the names of the most prominent in the community were demanded with the same uncontrollable hostility. A weak or superstitious magistrate would tremble before the voice of the people, and lend himself as the instrument of their will.—A. Miller.

(To be continued, D.V.)

The Heavenly Calling and the Church

(Continued)

As we get in on the fourth chapter, we come into company with something wonderful in its way, like that which we have seen already.

The captivity of man under the hand of the old Serpent, in Genesis iii., was complete. Satan's lie was accepted, man became a sinner, separate from God, and lost: Eden was forfeited, the ground put under a curse, the man and the woman under penalties, and Satan as a liar and a wanderer went about on the face of the earth.

This earliest story of man's captivity is glanced at in Ephesians iv.—as by contrast. The Captor himself with all his host are now made captives, (a captive multitude,) and by man's Deliverer led in triumph, or made a show of openly, as another kindred Scripture speaks. (Col. ii.) But this Deliverer has proved Himself not only mighty after this manner, but glorious. He fills all things. He has both descended and ascended—has been in the lower parts of the earth, the grave, the very stronghold of the Captor; and is now far above all heavens. And such an One, this Deliverer, mighty and

glorious, has taken it upon Him to write the history or secure the fortunes of Satan's old captive. And it is wonderful, as we further read in this chapter. Having wrought the deliverance in the lower parts of the earth, He has now in the highest places, far above all heavens, received gifts for the former victims of the Serpent; and has dispensed them; and through them has endowed them with the richest portions and highest dignities. These endowments have brought the ancient captive of the great enemy to perfection; made him, in a divine, spiritual sense, independent; given him security against the wiles of the deceiver; and set his resources *within himself*, through the Holy Ghost given to him. (See ver. 8-16).

It may surprise us at first to find such a thing as this—the ruins of man in Genesis iii. thus confronted by the recovery of man in Ephesians iv.—the gain and triumph of the old Serpent there, answered and annulled by his shame and overthrow here. But so it is. And surprise may cease, when we remember that the Epistle to the Ephesians, as we have seen, is the most marvelous exhibition of the results of redemption, which Scripture presents to us. We may, therefore, expect to find Genesis iii. confronted in such an Epistle. It is the special writing on the Church which is "the Body of Christ" and "the Bride of Christ'—the first of these titles telling us that she is set in *the very highest place of honour;* the second of them telling us that she is set also *in the dearest and most intimate place of personal affection and relationship.*

She is made, moreover, to the creation of God, tc principalities and powers in heavenly places, the great witness, the only adequate witness, of grace, glory, and of the manifold resources and secrets of wisdom. She is this—and the revelation of her, again we may remember, has completed or filled out and up to its full measurement, the Word of God.

It has been observed by another, that the calling of God of old was either of *individuals*, that they might walk with God; or of a *nation*, (as that of Israel,) that they might observe the statutes and do the laws of God their King. But now, the calling of God is into a *body*. But though this is so, the individuality of the saint is still contemplated; and the Epistle to the Ephesians keeps this in view, addressing us emphatically in our personal, individual places, in chap. v.

This is suited, seasonable truth, at the close of this wondrous Epistle. And surely we ought to know our personal standing, our own individual perfection, ere we occupy ourselves with the calling of the Church or the Body. Accordingly, in another place, the Apostle lets the saints know, that he would speak of such wisdom, the wisdom of these Divine mysteries, only among them that were perfect. (1 Cor. ii. 6). And so here, in Ephesians we are individually chosen, predestinated, forgiven, accepted, instructed, sealed, (according to chap. i.); and then, we are prayed for, that we may have the spirit of wisdom and revelation which capacitates us to learn our Church-calling, the strength that

is leading us, and the glory that we are to reach: "The Church corporately is composed of individual believers; and while viewed in its corporate character, it has relations to Christ which the believer individually has not—for no believer is the Body of Christ or the Bride of Christ—yet, it is in the affections and conscience of the individual believer, that the relations of the Church are to be recognized and have their effect."

Surely this is so. Individually saints are first perfected, under the given Spirit, and then the Body is edified—as we have in chap. iv. 12. The precepts, which we find from chap. iv. 17 to chap. vi. 9, address us individually; but the Church-state is assumed or contemplated here and there throughout.

And here, let me say, as to precepts, that the calling itself, the grace in which we stand, might direct us, without precepts. This thought is sanctioned by such passages as Tit. ii. 11, 12, and 2 Pet. iii. 11, 14. The saints in Genesis act without law or precept. Their calling suggested their duties. "How can I do this great wickedness," said one of them, "and sin against God?" The grace in which New Testament saints stand might do the same. Still they are called to listen to precepts—as here in this portion of the Epistle to the Ephesians. But the precepts strikingly honour the doctrines. They commonly either refer to, or tacitly assume, the doctrines; and thus, as I may say, they present themselves as so many expressions of the *moral* virtue which lies hid in the doctrine.

And further. They let us know, that holiness must have a dispensational character. It is not simply moral virtue, such as conscience would suggest: it is not legal righteousness, such as the law might demand: nor is it what John Baptist would have prescribed. It is *Christian.* The holiness, or the due character, of a saint, is to derive itself out of the Christian calling. It finds its springs and sanctions in Christian truth. It measures itself by that Word which now addresses itself to us, and which delineates our dispensational place and peculiarity. It is the sanctification of the *truth,* the washing of water by *the Word,* that is looked for. It is this which gives definite character to the morals which God accepts, and which the Spirit works. And this is what is very much neglected or passed by, but which, to be in the light as God is in the light, must be heeded.—J. G. B.

(To be continued, D.V.)

"That Which is Behind of the Afflictions of Christ"

Our blessed Lord was indeed "a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." Rejoicing, as He did, in unhindered communion with His Father, and in the consciousness of ever and only seeking His glory; happy, too, to find here and there a faith which could recognize Him in spite of the vail of humiliation upon Him—rejoicing as He did in these, it remains true that what gave character to His life was the dark side, the sins

and sorrows which so thickly strewed His path—sins, it is needless to add, with which He had nothing to do, sorrows brought in by man alone. It is a wholesome exercise to dwell upon the sufferings of Christ, forgetting for the time our own, which are indeed eclipsed by Him. He suffered because He was a perfect Man, the only righteous One, in the midst of all manner of evil, selfishness, and worldliness. What pain, constant pain, it must have been to Him, only desiring to please His Father, to find all only desiring to please themselves, and His Father set aside completely; to meet with no desires above this earth, to find no thought of that heaven where all His thoughts were,—these things to say nothing of the grosser forms of sin, nor of the sad witness of man's alienation from God in the manifold forms of disease and infirmity which oppressed the people, made the world to Him the valley of the shadow of death. We read that He sighed deeply, that He wept: ah! well He knew the sad necessity for sighing and tears in a world like this. But in passing, it is precious to note that neither the sorrows of earth nor its sins drove Him from it. At any moment He could have ascended up to where He was before, but no such thought occurs to Him. The very sorrows, the very sins, were links which held Him here until He had accomplished that which would bring forgiveness and deliverance as regards the sin, and joy in place of the sorrow.

So far, we have been speaking of the sufferings

of our Lord from the mere fact that He was in a world like ours. His holy nature shrank from contact with its surroundings. But though exquisitely sensitive, He was no weakling to run away from conflict. He was here as the light to manifest the works of darkness, as the righteous One to reprove all unrighteousness, and the world hated Him for the testimony He bore, it persecuted Him as Cain did his brother Abel. At Nazareth, they sought to cast Him down from the brow of the hill because He bore witness to God's grace, and intimated that as they would not receive it, it would be presented to the Gentiles; His most wonderful miracles and His most striking teachings, (if we may so speak when all was divinely perfect and in its place absolutely the best to be done or said,) alike provoked enmity, hatred, persecution even unto death. For one view of the cross shows us man's hatred of God's Son. At last, when nailed there and lifted up from the earth, hatred had its full way. But what suffering all this entailed upon Him! Looked upon with suspicion, His words perverted, His life sought — such was His pathway here, a pathway leading on, through ever-deepening gloom, to the culmination, when, delivered by His own people into the hands of the Gentiles, He was by them crucified and slain.

When we remember who He was—the Anointed of God, the Messiah, with special promises as the head of the Jewish nation; when we see Him associating Himself with His people in their circum-

stances, and desiring, as only He could desire, their blessing and their glory, to find them unwilling to be blessed, unwilling to receive Him who came in the name of Jehovah, we can understand that outburst of sorrow, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!" the same sorrow which led Him later, as He beheld the beloved city, to weep over it. This hardened state of the nation He well knew would be sure to bring upon them judgment from God, and would necessitate His own cutting off as Messiah. This must have been an added ingredient of bitterness in His cup of sorrow and suffering, which, present all through His public ministry, was intensified in the garden of Gethsemane when His soul was "exceeding sorrowful, even unto death," and He sweat as it were great drops of blood. Here He doubtless was realizing that every earthly prospect was to be sacrificed, and that as Shepherd of Israel He was to be smitten and the sheep scattered. But the shadow of a darker suffering, anguish more awful, was there pressing on Him. He was, in anticipation, entering into the sufferings of the cross, and His holy soul shrank in unutterable horror from the awful prospect.

The sufferings of Christ of which we have been speaking were not atoning. The direct question of sin and its penalty had not been entered into until

the darkness which settled down on Calvary left Him alone to bear the full load of judgment, to drink to the last drop the cup of wrath which we deserved, and to accomplish eternal redemption for His people. We are here on most holy ground: reverence is most becoming; but for God's glory, for our own deeper acquaintance with our blessed Lord, let us pause and dwell upon this awful scene. The darkness about Him was but the fitting accompaniment of that more terrible darkness which pressed upon His soul when God withdrew His presence from Him. "Why hast Thou forsaken Me?" No answer, no help, no succor. He was made sin, though He knew no sin, and treated with that wrath deserved by the ungodly. It was not now a question of man's hatred, or Satan's either: what were they compared with the wrath of God, all the waves and billows going over His head? Well may we wonder and adore.

But this brings us back to our subject. We have been seeing somewhat what the afflictions of Christ were; and is not the question a natural one —Can there be any more of those afflictions? Did not He exhaust them all? The scripture before us tells us that the apostle was filling up that which was behind, was still lacking in the sufferings of Christ. As to atonement, it is only blasphemy to hint that all was not completed when our blessed Lord finished the work on the cross, and was raised in token of God's acceptance of the sacrifice for sin. As to His sorrows as Messiah, and in anticipation

of the cross, those were personal to Himself, though in some measure understood by him who once wished himself accursed from Christ for his brethren, his kinsmen according to the flesh (Rom. ix. 3), and by all who know what the fear of wrath is. As to His sufferings for righteousness, all who will live godly in Christ Jesus will taste of that cup. "If they have persecuted Me, they will persecute you." But the afflictions alluded to here are specially for the Church, and in a peculiar way the apostle Paul filled up those sufferings. For as long as the Church is on earth, there is an opportunity for suffering—a necessity. Let us read a catalogue of some of those afflictions which the apostle went through for the sake of the Church:—

"Of the Jews, five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils by the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Besides those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?" (2 Cor. xi. 24-29).

(To be continued, D. V.)

Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart. (Jer. 15:16).

Receive the Bible as the **Word of God,** not as the word of men (1 Thess. 2:13). Receive it with **meekness** because it is able to keep you from defilement and hindrances in the pathway (James 1:21). Receive it **in faith** because it is thus that the word is made profitable to us (Heb. 4:2). Receive it **with all readiness of mind** and do as the Bereans did, for they searched the Scriptures daily (Acts 17:11).

Oh, grant us grace, Almighty Lord,
To read and mark Thy holy word,
Its truth with meekness to receive
And by its holy precepts live.

"No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is for me, saith the Lord." Isa. 54:17.

A venerable saint, recently departed, gave as the sober retrospect of 80 years, mostly spent in public life, this: "I have often been wrongfully attacked, but have never attempted to defend myself. I have borne in silence and committed my cause to God and there has never been a wrong done me

that has not been rectified, no blow aimed at me which has not recoiled on him who dealt it."

—A. T. P.

My soul He has delivered,
My sins He bore away,
And whatsoe'er concerns me
Concerns Him every day.

"He . . . made intercession for the transgressors." Isa. 53:12.

"Pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." Matt. 5:44.

However affronting people are, you should never be affronted. The one that dwells in God is not provoked, however provoking others may be. The bottom of the matter is the cross. Leave out the cross and you leave out Christ; you will care for yourself and not for the person who provokes. But think of the cross—"All they that see Me laugh Me to scorn." He said, "Father, forgive them." If the cross be at the bottom of your thoughts you are sure to be Christ-like; but if you forget this, be sure you will be like the worldling under provocation, using offensive language and doing offensive deeds.

Oh, to be like Him, tender and kind,
Gentle in spirit, lowly in mind;
More like to Jesus day after day,
Filled with His spirit, now and alway. E.C.E.

CONFERENCES

"Gather the people together, and I will give them water."—Numbers 21:16.

Baltimore, Maryland—

God willing, an all-day meeting will be held on Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 25, 1948, at the Gospel Hall, 2542 Foster Ave., corner Luzerne Ave., Baltimore 24, Md. The first meeting will be at 9:30 a. m., (EST). Any attending from a distance, and who will need accommodation for the length of their stay, may write or telephone to: John Herman, 5909 Marluth Ave., Baltimore 6, Md. Telephone No. Hamilton 6358.

Detroit, Michigan

In announcing the all-day meeting to be held on Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 25, 1948, at the Assembly Hall, 6516 Sixteenth St., we desire, first of all that God's work will be carried out in every detail of arrangement, and then that He will send among us, His servants to FEED the flock and minister for mutual edification. The Detroit Assembly has been growing in numbers;—we pray now for "growth in grace and the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." Any attending from a distance and desiring accommodations over the week-end, may write Bro. R. L. Palmer, 15822 Monica Ave., Detroit 21, Michigan, Telephone UN 1-8788.

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VOL. XVI DECEMBER, 1948 NO. 12

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Publishing Office:

ERIE BIBLE TRUTH DEPOT

30 East Ninth Street, Erie, Pa., U. S. A.

Editor's Notes

All communications for the Editor should be addressed to F. B. TOMKINSON, 30 East Ninth St., Erie, Pa.

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There Hath Not Failed

"There hath not failed one word of all His good promise."—I Ki. viii. 56.

"Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the Lord thy God, He it is that doth go with thee; He will not fail thee, nor forsake thee."—De. xxxi. 6.

"He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, "The Lord is my helper. . . . "—He. xiii. 5, 6.

There hath not failed one word of His good promise;
His hand hath guided on the unknown way;
He hath upheld, and comforted, and gladdened;
He hath been near—the promised strength and stay.

There hath not failed one word of His good promise;
His grace supported—when all else had failed:
When human loves forgot—perchance deserted—
He did not fail—and so His grace availed.

There hath not failed one word of His good promise:
Needs, clamant needs, He ne'er did once forget;
If ravens came not,—means undreamt-of answered
His faithful word, that all our needs be met.

There hath not failed! nor shall there fail His promise
To guide, support—to succour and sustain:
Thus, with our spirits on His Word relying,
We shall but find that Word to ne'er be vain.

—J. Danson Smith.

"Surely I Come Quickly!"

CHAPTER V

THE RESURRECTION OF THE SAINTS IN THE APOCALYPSE

Mr. Reese's treatment of Revelation is more remarkable for what it ignores that what it examines. He notices only Rev. 11:15-18; 20:1-4,

and the identity of the twenty-four elders first mentioned in chapter 4. A few other passages are singled out for examination, it should be said, later in his book. Nowhere does he meet the full argument of the book as a whole. We shall find, therefore, that the inherent weaknesses of his theories foreshadowed in earlier chapters, now become manifest.

REVELATION 11:15-18 (R.V.)

"And the seventh angel sounded; and there followed great voices in heaven, and they said, The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.

"And the four and twenty elders, which sit before God on their throne, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God.

"Saying, we give thee thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, which art and wast; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and didst reign.

"And the nations were wroth, and thy wrath came, and the time of the dead to be judged, and the time to give their reward to thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and to them that fear thy name, the small and the great; and to destroy them that destroy the earth."

Mr. Reese comments, "Paul tells us that the dead in Christ shall be raised incorruptible at the Last Trumpet. (1 Cor. 15:52). We have already seen that this trumpet sounds on the Day of the Lord, when Israel is converted and the Kingdom introduced. And here in Rev. 11:15 we have these very events under the seventh or last trumpet, which also blows at the Day of the Lord. The conclusion is inevitable, therefore, that the Last Trumpet of Paul, and the Last Trumpet of John are one and the same. We are right, therefore, in inferring the resurrection from Rev. 11:15-18. It is no answer to object that Paul nowhere speaks of seven trumpets; for the *last* trumpet may be the last of two. It will be sufficient, if in reading of the Last

Trumpet in Paul, we credit him with having in mind the trumpet to sound at the Day of the Lord, and one or more that sounded previously." (p. 73, 74).

We have previously examined the implication of the word "last", (Chap. III). There we recalled that "last" is relative rather than absolute. Consequently, to assume that all "last" things occur simultaneously is entirely unjustified by its usage. Therefore we must recognize that the "last trumpets" referred to by Paul and John cannot properly be considered identical without a definite Scriptural basis for such a conclusion.

The reasonings advanced by Mr. Reese are not at all convincing. The use of the expression "last trumpet" in 1 Cor. 15:54 doesn't require us to suppose something in Paul's mind necessary to an understanding of this passage. Any such principle is both preposterous and dangerous. It would give a free reign to imagination already too active.

The explanation usually given of this expression is simple and adequate. It is an allusion to the practice employed by a Roman legion in breaking camp. The first trumpet was the signal for taking down the tents; the second, for forming rank; the last trumpet, for beginning to march. Paul's emphasis on the instantaneity of the transformation satisfactorily explains why no preparatory trumpets are mentioned. It should be evident that any attempt to fill in this apparent blank can only lead to the dangerous practice of interpreting silences after our fancy.

Mr. Reese goes on to prove, as he believes, that "the dead" mentioned are only the righteous dead.

He says, "A consideration of Rom. 14:10-12 (R.V.) and 1 Cor. 3:13-15 will show that Christians are to be judged, not in order to determine their salvation—for in this sense the believer cometh not into judgment (John 5:24)—but to determine and allot the reward of each, according to his life and service. And there can be no doubt that "the judgment of the dead" in Rev. 11:18, refers to the judgment of the people of God that follow their resurrection." (p. 76).

The comments with which Mr. Reese favors us on these verses are a striking illustration of the proverb that there is none so blind as he that will not see. He has told us clearly, and properly, that the righteous dead cannot be judged. One would think that the only possible conclusion would then be that a passage that speaks of the judgment of the dead could not refer to the righteous dead. But no! Mr. Reese gravely assures us that here this unambiguous expression "the time of the dead to be judged" means "the time of the works of the righteous dead to be judged"—something radically different from its only possible meaning. A more palable blunder it is difficult to conceive.

Interestingly enough, the expression in the original is exactly the same as in John 5:24 (where we are told that those who believe "shall not come into judgment") except for the omission of "not".

Nowhere in Scripture do we have a passage which speaks of the judgment of the *righteous*

dead. The Word of God tells of judging their works, but carefully avoids any implication that their persons are judged. What right has any one to suppose that this verse is an exception to this procedure? Only the exigencies of a mistaken theory could ever induce one thus to fly in the face of the clear meaning of the text.

If we apply this phrase to the unsaved dead, its only possible meaning, we find no inconsistency with other Scriptures. Not that the dead are judged that very instant. Language does not require so rigid a construction. The words simply indicate one of the consequences which will proceed from Christ's coming in power. It will not take place for more than 1000 years after He takes His throne.

Since some may feel that I am taking liberties which I have denied to Mr. Reese, an illustration of this point may clear up any doubt which exists as to the legitimacy of my usage.

A poor widow has a fine young boy who is just beginning school. Yet, she is already looking forward to his college days, but with anxiety, since she is not able to pay his tuition. Without warning, a year later she receives a large legacy. She immediately exclaims, "Now my boy can go to college." Yet he will not start college for 10 years! Time is not involved, simply consequences.

Why is the judgment of the dead mentioned first when it occurs in the distant future? It is in character with the book that judgment of the wicked is a prominent feature of the recorded

events. As we have noted the souls under the altar (Rev. 6:9) call for such a judgment. Therefore, the first assurance given at the signal for the inauguration of the kingdom concerns the judgment of those who seem most likely to escape the punishment their deeds deserve, since their condition has put them beyond the reach of man.

The second event mentioned, "The time to give their reward to thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and to them that fear thy name, the small and the great", evidently includes the rewarding of the saints of all times who are both dead and alive. There is no need to distinguish further between these classes. Our only object is to notice the objection Mr. Reese makes about the rewards.

REWARDS

Mr. Reese says, "In his (W. Kelly's) "Revelation" he tells us that the Twenty-four Elders of the Apocalypse represent the saints of the O.T. and the Church of the New, raised, raptured, and glorified in heaven, before a single seal is opened or plague poured out; that is, they are seen as already judged and rewarded; for they are said to be robed, crowned, and enthroned—ideas that, if the Elders are human beings, or represent human beings, clearly betoken that they have been already rewarded; and yet, to save his theory of the resurrection in the presence of Rev. 11:18, Kelly tells us that the giving of rewards is to take place at the Revelation of Christ on the Day of the Lord. But he cannot have it both ways. It is clear that the theory is not only at variance with Scripture, but also with itself.

"There is, however, a much more cruel exposure of the unscriptural character of the theory that the rewarding of

the saints is separated from their resurrection by a period of years. I refer to the words of our Lord, 'Thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just' (Luke 14:14). The new system is in open opposition to the words of Christ. It separates the giving of rewards from the resurrection by a period of years, whereas the Lord Jesus Christ joined them together.

"Inasmuch, therefore, as Revelation 11:18 depicts the giving of rewards to the whole company of the redeemed, we may be sure that this also is the time of the resurrection of the just." (p. 76-77).

Mr. Reese's lack of comprehension of the obvious harmony between the vision of the crowned saints in Revelation 4 and the bestowal of rewards at the time of the kingdom as detailed in Revelation 11:18 is most puzzling. Any one who has had experience in giving awards finds the Scriptural procedure both natural and understandable.

The crowns of the elders are unmistakably those promised in various Scriptures (2 Tim. 4:8, Jas. 1:2. 1 Pet. 5:4).* But this scene is just one view of heavenly rewards. We are also told, "If we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him." (2 Tim. 2:12). In the parable of the talents in Matthew 25:15 the idea of reigning is particularized to ruling over cities.

From these Scriptures we discover a double aspect of the awards corresponding in detail to the crowns of Revelation 4 and the rewards of Revelation 11. The crowns show that the records have been examined and the works judged. That

* Later in this chapter we shall note the reasons for identifying these elders with the resurrected saints.

is, the judgment seat of Christ is passed. (2 Cor. 5:10). The actual entering into the position which the Lord has appointed awaits the establishment of the kingdom. That is what we get in Revelation 11.

Notice the accuracy of Scripture. It doesn't speak of the giving of crowns; that has been done. It speaks of rewards, a broader word.

Here is a simple illustration of the events. A contest in public speaking is held for the student body. After the various speakers have been heard, the judges announce their decision. The winner, at that very moment, knows that victory is his. Yet he will not be presented with a silver cup, the reward of his achievement, until Commencement, a month in the future!

To find, therefore, that a lapse of time occurs between the giving of the crowns, the tokens of victory, and the ruling with Christ, the fruits of victory, will bring perplexity only to those who seek it.

REVELATION 20:4-6 (R.V.)

"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them; and I saw the souls of them that had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and such as worshipped not the beast, neither his image, and received not the mark upon their forehead, and upon their hand; and they lived, and reigned a thousand years. The rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years should be finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; over these the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."

Mr. Reese comments. "There are three distinct classes mentioned in the passage.

(a) First, there are those of whom John says: 'I saw thrones and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them.'

Who are these? The whole body of saints who live to see the Parousia (coming of the Lord) at this time; they are transferred from earth to occupy thrones in the kingly rule of Christ; it is the Rapture of the survivors in 1 Thess. 4:17. It is not said that this class was raised from the dead; but simply that they took the thrones prepared for them. We have seen them suffering and enduring throughout the book; now they are seen as overcomers who inherit the sovereignty in the kingdom. It is here that they receive the Morning Star." (p. 82).

The error of this view is so glaring that comment is unnecessary. Paul tells us distinctly in the Scripture referred to (1 Thess. 4:17) that *both* living and dead are caught up to meet the Lord in the air. What room does that leave for such preposterous teaching that the living are immediately placed upon thrones to reign with Christ? Surely any system of interpretation which requires for its vindicating this open setting aside of a clear-cut passage is evidently untenable.

Mr. Reese says,

(b) "John mentions a second class that is honoured at this time: 'I saw the souls of them that had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, and for the word of God.' (R.V.)

(c) "Thirdly, he speaks of 'such as worshipped not the beast, neither his image, and received not the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand.'"

"It is true that the third class consists of those who fall in the last Great Tribulation. But it is thoroughly

wrong to limit the second class—those 'that had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and the word of God'—to latter-day saints. It is wrong to assert that this class includes no Christians, but is restricted to half-enlightened Jews and Gentiles raised a generation after the Church. The proof of this is simple: the Church herself is not raised until this very time. Such is the doctrine of Christ, Paul, and of John in this very book. (11:15-18). Secondly, without raising questions to be fully discussed later, it is to be insisted, and strongly insisted upon, that 'beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God' is a description, and a glorious description, of the martyrdom of a Christian. Unnumbered multitudes throughout the Church's history, including Peter and Paul, have been slain 'for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God.' It is here they rise.

"As if to shut out once for all the theories that have been based upon this passage, John himself has interpreted it for us. In chapter 1:9, we read: 'I, John, your brother, and partaker with you in the tribulation and kingdom and patience, which are in Jesus, was in the isle called Patmos, for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.' (R.V.)

"No reasonable doubt can exist that when John says that he saw 'the souls of them that had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God' come to life, he is meaning to depict the resurrection of all who, since the time of Christ, have been slain because of their Christian service and belief." (p. 84, 85).

First, let us summarize Mr. Reese's interpretation of this passage.

(1) Those who sat upon the thrones are the saints who are living at the time of the Rapture.

(2) Those beheaded for the word of God are the Christian martyrs throughout the ages.

(3) Those who had not received the mark of the beast. That is, those who had died during the

persecution of the tribulation period.

That these three classes include all who participate in the first resurrection seems clear from the text. (For it says, "the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished."; Yet the Old Testament saints and those of the church who died a natural death find no place here in his scheme of things! What could be more revealing of the unscripturalness of this theory than this complete disregard for what is undoubtedly the largest class of saints participating in the resurrection?

But wait! Reading on to page 91, one discovers this revealing comment by Mr. Reese.

"At chapter 20:4-6 we read: 'I saw thrones and they sat upon them.' Who are these? Beyond all question the saints to whom the sovereignty has been promised . . . It is the saints transfigured at Christ's coming, who 'sit upon thrones'. No doubt this class will include the large number of believers who shall have died a peaceful death, but it is composed primarily of those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord.'"

It is not easy to understand why Mr. Reese did not include the "large number of believers who shall have died a peaceful death" in his explanation of the scope of each of the three classes given in this passage. That this interpretation is utterly incredible can be shown from his own words. He has assured us in commenting on this clause that "It is not said that this class was raised from the dead; but simply that they took the thrones prepared for them." (p. 82). Yet nine pages later he includes those who died a peaceful death in a group

that Scripture does not refer to as raised from the dead—a statement to which he assents! If these saints who died naturally were a numerically small group it would still be impossible to fit them to the description given of the saints mentioned in Rev. 20:4. Since they must be many times the number of those living, the inconsistency of this sorry travesty of exposition is the more bewildering.

Now let us look at his comments on the class which is beheaded for the word of God and the witness of Jesus. Mr. Reese insists it includes all Christian martyrs, basing his views on Rev. 1:9 where John's banishment to Patmos is attributed to his faithfulness to Christ. If there were no other reference to sufferers for the word of God this passage would be a very strong argument for his theory. Although it should be pointed out that John is not said to be killed for his testimony; he is only exiled.

Unfortunately for Mr. Reese, Revelation 6:9-11, a Scripture he does not even notice, is conclusively against him. John tells us, "And when he opened the fifth seal I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their breth-

ren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled."

The description of this company answers exactly to that one described in Revelation 20:4. But it is unquestionably not a Christian company of martyrs. As we noticed in Chapter II a Christian martyr would say with Stephen, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." Paul, too, could look upon a martyr's death as a means of knowing Christ more intimately (Phil. 3:10) rather than a cause for invoking God's wrath upon his persecutors.

The spirit displayed here is in harmony with the godly Israelitish remnant of the Psalms rather than New Testament saints. These Israelites exclaim, "The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance." (Ps. 58:10).

The connection between this group and those who suffer for not receiving the mark of the beast should not be overlooked. This second group is called "fellowservants" and "brethren" who should be killed as they had been. Evidently they are closely connected in time as well as character.

Therefore, if we take (1) those who sit upon the thrones as the saints of all times living and dead prior to the rapture, (2) those who are beheaded for the word of God as martyrs of the first part of Daniel's last week, and, (3) those who have not received the mark of the beast as the martyrs of the last half-week, we have an explanation which is consistent with *all* Scripture.

It cannot be too strongly emphasized that this interpretation is impregnably buttressed by the

preceding verses, in addition to its consistency with the Scriptures on a whole. The account given, beginning at Rev. 19:11, of the saints coming out of heaven with Christ to execute judgment upon the hosts of the beast and the false prophet, shows beyond refutation that the resurrection of Rev. 20:4 can only be a partial one. Only by taking this last Scripture completely out of its context can any other view be made to appear plausible.

THE FOUR AND TWENTY ELDERS

The first passage in Revelation relating to the elders is Rev. 4:4. As Mr. Reese does not give it, I quote from J.N.D.'s translation.

"After these things I saw, and behold, a door opened in heaven, and the first voice which I heard as of a trumpet speaking with me, saying, Come up here, and I will shew thee the things which must take place after these things.

"Immediately I became in the spirit; and behold, a throne stood in the heaven, and upon the throne one sitting, and he that was sitting like in appearance to a stone of jasper and a sardius, and a rainbow round the throne like in appearance to an emerald.

"And round the throne twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones twenty-four elders sitting, clothed with white garments; and on their heads golden crowns."

Before examining at length the question of the identity of the elders let us get the context of the passage clearly before us. As we have noticed, the Lord Jesus has given His own divisions of this little-understood book. He tells John, "Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which are hereafter." (Rev. 1:9). More correctly, the last clause is "and the

things which shall be after these." The proper translation shows that these happenings follow the "things that are" without a break. The "things which thou hast seen" is the vision John is given in Rev. 1 of the Son of Man walking among the candlesticks; "the things which are" refers to the addresses to the seven churches, and "the things which shall be after these" begins with Chapter 4.

The reasons for making the divisions at the points indicated are simple and convincing. The "things which thou hast seen" are, without controversy, those revelations in Chapter 1 which precede our Lord's command to write. "The things that are," therefore, must begin with the address to Ephesians which immediately follows. These epistles to the seven churches form a continuous and clearly marked section of the book, ending in Chapter 3 with the promise "Behold I came quickly" to Philadelphia, and the threat to Laodicea, "I will spew thee out of my mouth." The one gives us the hope of His own and the other the judgment upon those who have rejected Him.

Now these churches are "the things that are" in two senses. (1) They actually existed in the time of John. (2) They form a prophetic picture of the time which elapses from the time of John's ministry until the Lord comes to take His own home with Him. The best detailed proof of this view is the accuracy with which the exhortations and statements to the various churches match the history of Christendom.

Beginning with Chap. 4 we are transported to a heavenly scene. Is the vision, we might ask, revealed to the apostle to be placed before the epistles to the seven churches, simultaneous with them, or afterwards? We need only refer again to His words in Rev. 1:19 for guidance. The words in this chapter, verse 4, are exactly the ones He uses there, "The things that shall be after these." Moreover, it is their first occurrence since their use in Chapter 1. Does it appear unreasonable, then, to take this point, marked by a change in viewpoint, and subject as well, as the beginning of future events?

Since these words open up a heavenly scene after the close of this period of grace, it would be surprising, indeed, not to find the church, the Bride of Christ, in glory. What is the characteristic of her position?—W.F.P.

(To be continued, D.V.)

Short Papers on Church History

THE PERSECUTION IN ASIA

A. D. 167

In Asia Minor the persecution broke out with great violence, such as it had never been before. Christianity was now treated as a direct *crime against the State.* This changed the face of everything. Contrary to the rescript of Trajan, and the conduct of still milder emperors, Hadrian and Antonine, the Christians were to be sought for as common criminals. They were torn from their homes by the violence of the people, and subjected to the severest tortures. If they ob-

stinately refused to sacrifice to the gods, they were condemned. The wild beast, the cross, the stake, and the axe were the cruel forms of death that met the Lord's faithful ones everywhere.

The prudent and dignified Melito, Bishop of Sardis, was so moved by these unheard-of barbarities, that he appeared before the emperor as the Christians' advocate. His address throws much light both on the law and on the conduct of the public authorities. It is as follows: "The race of God's worshippers in this country are persecuted as they never were before, by new edicts; for the shameless sycophants, greedy of the possessions of others—since they are furnished by these edicts with an opportunity of so doing — plunder their innocent victims day and night. And let it be right, if it is done by your command, since a just emperor will never resolve on any unjust measure; and we will cheerfully bear the honourable lot of such a death. Yet we would submit this single petition, that you would inform yourself respecting the people who excite the contention, and impartially decide whether they deserve punishment and death, or deliverance and peace. But if this resolve, and this new edict—an edict which ought not so to be issued even against hostile barbarians—comes from yourself, we pray you the more not to leave us exposed to such public robbery."*

There is, we fear, no ground to believe that this noble appeal brought any direct relief to the

* Neander's "Ecclesiastical History," vol. 1, page 142.

Christians. The character and ways of Aurelius have perplexed the historians. He was a philosopher of the sect of the Stoics; but naturally humane, benevolent, gentle, and pious; even childlike in his disposition, some say, from the influence of his mother's training; yet he was an implacable persecutor of the Christians for nearly twenty years. And the perplexity is increased when we look to Asia, for the proconsul at this time was not personally opposed to the Christians. Still he yielded to the popular fury and the demands of the law. But faith sees beyond the emperors, governors, and people; it sees the prince of darkness ruling these wicked men, and the Lord Jesus overruling all. "I know thy works and tribulation. . . . Fear none of these things which thou shalt suffer . . . Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life . . . He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death."

Aurelius, with all his philosophy, was an utter stranger to the sweetness and power of that Name which alone can meet and satisfy the longings of the human heart. All the speculations and boastings of philosophy have never done this. Hence the enmity of the human heart to the Gospel. Self-sufficiency, which leads to pride and self-importance, is the principal part of the Stoic's religion. With these views there could be no humility, no sense of sin, and no idea of a Saviour. And the more earnest he was in his own religion, the more bitter and vehement

would he be against Christianity.

In a circular letter addressed by the Church of Smyrna to other Christian Churches, we have a detailed account of the sufferings of the faithful unto death. "They made it evident to us all," says the Church, "that in the midst of these sufferings they were absent from the body, or rather, that the Lord stood by them and walked in the midst of them; and, staying themselves on the grace of Christ, they bid defiance to the torments of the world." Some, with a strange, momentary enthusiasm, rushed in self-confidence to the tribunal, and declared themselves to be Christians: but when the magistrate pressed them, wrought upon their fears, showed them the wild beasts, they yielded and offered incense to the gods. "We therefore," adds the Church, "praise not those who voluntarily surrendered themselves; for so are we not taught in the Gospel." Nothing less than the presence of the Lord Jesus could strengthen the soul to endure with tranquility and composure the most agonising torments, and the most frightful deaths. But thousands have borne with meekness, cheerfulness, and even with joyfulness, the utmost that the power of darkness and the fourth beast of Daniel could do. The pagan bystanders were often moved to pity by their sufferings, but never could understand their calmness of mind, love to their enemies, and willingness to die.

We will now conclude this general account of the persecution in Asia, and notice particularly

the two most eminent persons who suffered death at this time: namely Justin and Polycarp.

THE MARTYRDOM OF JUSTIN, SURNAMED MARTYR

Justin was born at Neapolis, in Samaria, of Gentile parents. He carefully studied in his youth the different philosophical sects; but not finding the satisfaction which his heart longed for, he was induced to hear the Gospel. In it he found, through God's blessing, a perfect rest for his soul, and every desire of his heart fully met. He became an earnest Christian, and a celebrated writer in defence of Christianity.

Early in the reign of Aurelius, Justin was a marked man. Information was laid against him by one Crescens. He was apprehended, with six of his companians, and all were brought before the prefect. They were asked to sacrifice to the gods. "No man," replied Justin, "whose understanding is sound, will desert true religion for the sake of error and impiety." "Unless you comply," said the prefect, "you shall be tormented without mercy." "We desire nothing more sincerely," he replied, "than to endure tortures for our Lord Jesus Christ" The rest assented, and said, "we are Christians, and cannot sacrifice to idols," The governor then pronounced sentence: "As to those who refuse to sacrifice to the gods and to obey the imperial edicts, let them be first scourged and then beheaded, according to the laws." The martyrs rejoiced and blessed God, and being led back to prison, were scourged and afterwards

beheaded. This took place at Rome about the year 165. Thus slept in Jesus one of the early Fathers, and earned the glorious title "Martyr," which usually accompanies his name. His writings have been carefully examined by many, and great importance is attached to them.

THE MARTYRDOM OF POLYCARP

The behaviour of the venerable Bishop of Smyrna, in view of his martyrdom, was most Christian and noble in its bearing. He was prepared and ready for his persecutors, without being rash or imprudent, as some at times, through excitement, had been. When he heard the shouts of the people, demanding his death, it was his intention to remain quietly in the city, and await the issue which God might ordain for him. But, by the entreaties of the Church, he suffered himself to be persuaded to take refuge in a neighboring village. Here he spent the time with a few friends, occupied, night and day, in praying for all the churches throughout the world. But his pursuers soon discovered his retreat. When told that the public officers were at the door, he invited them in, ordered meat and drink to be set before them, and requested that they would indulge him with one hour of quiet prayer. But the fullness of his heart carried him through two hours. His devotions, age, and appearance greatly affected the pagans. He must have been over ninety years of age.

The time being now come, he was conveyed to the city. The proconsul does not appear to

have been personally hostile to the Christians. He evidently felt for the aged Polycarp, and did what he could to save him. He urged him to swear by the genius of the emperor, and give proof of his penitence. But Polycarp was calm and firm, with his eyes uplifted to Heaven. The proconsul again urged him, saying, "Revile Christ, and I will release thee." The old man now replied, "Six and eighty years have I served Him, and He has done me nothing but good; and how could I revile Him, my Lord and Saviour?" The governor, finding that both promises and threatenings were in vain caused it to be proclaimed by the herald in the circus, "Polycarp has declared himself to be a Christian." The heathen populace, with an infuriated shout, replied, "This is the teacher of atheism, the father of the Christian, the enemy of our gods, by whom so many have been turned away from offering sacrifices." The governor having yielded to the demands of the people, that Polycarp should die at the stake, Jews and pagans hastened together to bring wood for that purpose. As they were about to fasten him with nails to the stake of the pile, he said, "Leave me thus: He who has strengthened me to encounter the flames will also enable me to stand firm at the stake." Before the fire was lighted he prayed, "Lord, Almighty God, Father of Thy beloved Son, Jesus Christ, through whom we have received from Thee the knowledge of Thyself; God of angels, and of the whole creation; of the human race, and of the just that live in Thy presence; I

praise Thee that Thou hast judged me worthy of this day and of this hour, to take part in the number of Thy witnesses, in the cup of Thy Christ."

The fire was now kindled, but the flames played around the body, forming the appearance of a sail filled with wind. The superstitious Romans, fearing that the fire would not consume him, plunged a spear into his side, and Polycarp was crowned with victory.

These are but short extracts from the accounts that have been handed down to us of the martyrdom of the revered and venerable bishop. The martyrologies are full of particulars. But the Lord greatly blessed the Christ-like way in which he suffered for the good of the Church. The rage of the people cooled down, as if satisfied with revenge; their thirst for blood seemed quenched for the time. The proconsul, too, wearied with such slaughter, refused to have any more Christians brought before his tribunal. How manifest is the hand of the Lord in this wonderful and sudden change! He had limited the days of their tribulation before they were cast into the furnace, and now they are accomplished: and no power on earth or in Hell can prolong them another hour. They had been faithful unto death and received the crown of life. —A. Miller

(To be continued, D. V.)

"That Which is Behind of the Afflictions of Christ"

(Concluded)

What anguish there was in connection with the

case of discipline at Corinth! The rod with which he smote them, he felt upon himself; sorrow, tears, fears, showed how great was his anxiety, how real his suffering. Indifference to their welfare, to Christ's glory, might have spared him much pain, but he did not choose the easy path. He was here for the Church, and so ready to suffer for it. When the fundamental truth of justification by faith was in danger among the assemblies of Galatia, he lets us see, in the epistle he wrote them, the deep sorrow of soul through which he passed. "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you." What love he had for that Church which had been purchased with the precious blood of Christ! In his measure, he would take up the work where his Master laid it down, and enter upon that path of unrequited love for the sake of the Church. Our Lord can no longer suffer though He can sympathize with His people, and intercede for them in their constant needs; still He loves them with the same unchangeable love which led Him to the cross for them. Well, then, are the sorrows undergone for the welfare of that Church called "the afflictions of Christ." Does He not Himself say "Why persecutest thou Me?" How edifying it is to see this devoted servant thus suffering for his Lord's Church. We know him as a man of wonderful gift, inspired to present us some of the richest and most important portions of the Word of God; we know him as successful in a marvelous degree, but let us remember him as one who

rejoiced to suffer for the Church,—who appreciated the dignity of bearing a part in what he by inspiration calls "the afflictions of Christ." This very epistle to the Colossians, as well as others, was written from prison; and one of its touching sentences at the close is, "Remember my bonds."

And now the question comes nearer home, and we are compelled to ask, if our blessed Lord, after enduring all that fitted us for eternal glory, still left a heritage of suffering for His servant, does there yet remain anything which can be spoken of as that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ? The question can be answered by another: Is the Church still on earth? and has it needs, sorrows, and failures to be noted and met by us? Then, as long as this is the case, so long will there be something that is behind of the afflictions of Christ, for His body's sake, which is the Church. Let us, then, for our own consciences, see some of these needs, and where, it may be, we too, in our little measure, can be associated with the Great Sufferer.

Here is moral evil in the assembly; alas! that such a thing should be. It is not enough that we should judge it and put away the evil person. What about the confession of it, the bitter sorrow, the earnest prayer for the restoration of the wanderer? But apart from that which requires extreme dealing, there is a vast mass of what needs correction if we are able to reach those affected. Just here do we need to learn how to suffer for the Church.

How often do we allow personal prejudice or wounded feelings to rule us! A brother has gone wrong, but he has misrepresented us, wounded us, and, lo! we forget that he is a member of the body of Christ, and render ourselves utterly unfit to help him because of our personal relation to the trouble. Ah! if we mourned over him,—if we felt in our soul how he had dishonored his and our Lord,—if we dropped the question of our rights, how soon would our sorrow melt him, and that hardness, which is visible enough, melt into grief and tenderness! Let us remember that servant who had been forgiven a great debt, and who went out and took by the throat his fellow, demanding full payment of a small claim. In the light of our forgiveness by God of that great debt, are we going to exact full penalty for every offense? How much more becoming, how much more like our Lord, did we mourn over the wrong—really suffer about it as an injury to the Church of Christ. Did we carry these things with real sorrow to our God, what help there would be!

If this spirit always animated us, we would not err so frequently on the side of legality. "The letter killeth;" and we can no more enforce the letter of some direction in the epistles, if we do it in a legal way, than we could an ordinance from Leviticus. There must be heart work in all these things, or our very righteousness will lead us astray. We are under grace, not only as before God, but in all the relationships of life. That grace is to charac-

terize all our action, and nowhere more than in the assembly of God. How much friction might be avoided, and hopeless entanglements escaped, did we act on the principle of grace, and instead of maintaining our righteous opinions as judges, be real sufferers for Christ's body. But you will be misrepresented, misunderstood; be it so; suffer that, if thereby you save further wandering in some sheep of Christ,—if you thereby heal a breach which otherwise might be widened. Let the legend of the Roman patriot, who would close a chasm by leaping into it, find a truthful illustration by our sinking self and being healers of breaches, not makers of them. Oh, what matters it whether or not we are thought well of, if only we help the Church?

But it may be asked, How are we to do this? Is righteous principle to be sacrificed, or evil to be winked at? Without attempting to answer definitely, we can only point to our verse and say, Seek to carry that out. Endure sorrow, bear pain for the sorrows of the Church, get into that state of soul, and then you will be able—not till then—to see what is righteousness and what is self-will.

Apply this truth to the too prevalent habit of criticism. It is easy to find faults. Alas! there are too many in us all, and it needs no great discernment to detect them. But where is the benefit? Is criticism helping to fill up that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ? Can we conceive of Him indulging such a spirit? There is

nothing which so enfeebles the soul, and unfits for all helpful dealing with our brother, as this practice. Let us be mourners, not critics, and we will find that thus we will be helping saints, not contributing to the general confusion about us.

Notice, too, that in this we have the common privilege of all saints. No gift is needed to sorrow over evil,—no eloquence, no prominence. The obscure brother, the weakest sister, have here a place from which none can thrust them but themselves. In times of special trial and distraction, when all seems to be in confusion, if there are sufferers,—those who feel, not anger or excitement or resentment, but grief at the injury done to the feeble flock of Christ, we have in that very fact a promise of recovery and blessing. What a name to give to the troubles and sorrows of the Church—"the afflictions of Christ!" and what a privilege, what a dignity, to be called on to suffer for His sake! To think of any little self-denial, any sinking of our own wishes, any enduring in silence, as being placed along-side the griefs of the Man of Sorrows! Let us dwell upon His woes; and as our hearts are melted by their contemplation, let us anew seek to imitate Him "who when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not."—"Help and Food," 1892.

The Heavenly Calling and the Church

(Concluded)

But there is still another thing in this Epistle.

There is conflict or wrestling. We see the *walk* of a saint in Eph. v., his *fight* in Eph. vi. His walk lies through the chequered paths of life, the circumstances and relations which make up human history. His fight is with "the wiles of the devil," or with "spiritual wickedness in heavenly places."

These wicked spirits come forth from heavenly places—and they come with lies and deceivableness of infinite variety. 2 Chron. xviii. is a direct witness of this. There, a spirit is seen to come forth from heaven with a lie in his mouth; or with a lie he puts into the mouth of one of Ahab's false prophets. And that lie leads Ahab to the fatal battle of Ramoth-gilead.

The Serpent, at the beginning, entered the garden as a liar, and with one of his "wiles" ruined the man. (Gen. iii.) Satan, with another of them, tempted David to number the people, and led him to a terrible day of retribution. (1 Chrn. xxi.) This same character of a deceiver is recognized in Rev. xii. 9, xx 8. And signs and lying wonders and all deceivableness of unrighteousness are spoken of as the working of Satan in 2 Thes. ii., 9-10.

Thus we have wicked spirits in heavenly places exercising "wiles" here in the midst of us.

These wiles, these lies of "the rulers of the darkness of this world," may be multitudinous; such as, infidel suggestions, perversions of truth, devotional human superstitions, confounding of things which dispensationally differ, false calcula-

tions touching the world's progress, and the like. How solemn the thought! But how well to be told of these wiles, and thus to be put in preparation for them. Distinct instances of these wiles are again noticed in 2 Cor. ii. 11; xi. 3; 2 Tim. ii.26.

It is with these wiles we have to wrestle. In other characters, (as when he is a liar or a persecutor,) we may have to fall under the enemy. For our fight is not with flesh and blood, as was that of a Joshua or a David. God sent them forth to such conflict, having put armour upon them that was suited to meet flesh and blood. But it is in no wise so now. Not one piece of our armour would do for the battle at Ai, or for the day of the valley of Elah. Our enemies are not the Amorites or the Philistines. It is armour fitted to meet the corrupter of the truth, him who ceaseth not to pervert the right ways of the Lord. (Acts xiii. 10.) It is, the girdle of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes of the gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit.*

The whole age through which we are passing is regarded as "a war," with occasional fights or "evil days"—and therefore the Apostle says to us, "That ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."

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* Satan is an accuser of the Brethren in heaven, (Job. i., Rev. xii.) On earth he is an accuser of God, (Gen. ii.,) and a persecutor of saints. (Job ii.; Rev. xii.) But the Apostle speaks only of his wiles or deceivings.

These "wiles," too, may become "fiery darts." That is; these lies and deceivings which at all times are abroad, may now and again, in some shape or another, be levelled directly and personally at ourselves.

And it is striking to observe what this one Epistle teaches us about these evil principalities and powers. It tells us, that they are *Christ's captives*, the *saint's enemies*, with whom he has to wrestle, and *the rulers of the world's darkness.* (iv.8; vi.11,12.)**

But here I might add, (though our Epistle does not suggest it) that the present ruler of the darkness of this world is doomed to take a solemn journey by-and-by. He is to be cast out of heaven where he now is, and act on the earth only. He is then, in season, to be taken from the earth and put into the bottomless pit. He is then, as taken out of the pit, to be given over to the lake of fire, or his eternal doom. (See Luke x.18; Rev. xii.,xx.)

And this, I may further add, is the very contrary or opposite journey of that of the Lord. The Lord came from the grave as a Conqueror. He had been "death of death and hell's destruction." He returned to the earth, tarrying there for forty days, giving pledges and promises touch-

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**It has been observed by another, that Ephesus is exhibited very specially as having been the scene of those wicked spirits that practise their lies and deceivings. (See Acts xix. 19.)

ing His future kingdom here. And then, He ascended to the highest heavens, receiving all power, and sending down the Holy Ghost to dwell in His saints, and prepare them for Himself in the day of exceeding glory, when He shall be displayed as filling all things—according to this same Epistle.

Here we end, save the very conclusion, which has, however, a character in it that I must notice.

The Apostle speaks of himself as "an ambassador in bonds." What another witness was he, then, at that moment, of the character of the world which he had just recognized as under the rule of the powers of darkness! God's ambassador was put in prison by the world into which He had sent him! Does one nation treat the representative of another in this way? Is not the person of an ambassador sacred?

But man's prisoner is God's freeman; and in the care of thoughtful love, from his prison-house he will send messages of sympathy and comfort and encouragement to his loved brethren hundreds of miles away from him beyond the seas.—J. G. B.

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