

THE BIBLE

AND ITS

READING, LEARNING AND STUDY.

WE all have our own Bible. It contains 66 books, 39 in the first part, translated from Hebrew, the Old Testament. 27 in the second, from Greek, the New Testament. Yet all the books are one, God's perfect message—given in His love without mistake, or contradiction. There we find the unveiling of His glory, of His love, and of the one way of salvation for lost sinners, and then the path of loving obedience after salvation, while waiting for the coming again of the Lord Jesus.

How do we use this unique book? Do we love and read it daily? Do we know what it contains? Does it affect our whole life? The question comes, Do we really believe the testimony of God that we are by nature lost sinners, and "being dead" (Eph. 2. 1) need to be made alive, and to pass "out of death into life" (John 5. 24), because, in wondrous grace, "Christ died for the ungodly" (Rom. 5. 6)? We need to begin here.

Then the Bible has a new meaning. It is

our Father's message to us, and we long to hear His voice (Deut. 8. 3, Matt. 4. 4). The reading is no longer mere duty : it becomes our joy, and His words are spiritual food. Many only read one verse a day from a calendar, or irregularly, and have never read the Scriptures through. Yet, if we asked them, they would say that the Bible is the best book ! They rejoice in the Bible Society to send to *others*, but themselves fail to search the Scriptures daily (Acts 17. 11). A large number rise too late in the morning to have any real "time" over God's words. Everything is in a rush, through late rising. Some have a "wish," but through lack of definiteness they never get beyond this. They lack a plan: possibly a book is begun, and then, after a fortnight, dropped off. This is so easy in these shallow days. There are many suggestions for reading God's words daily. The Calendar of our magazine provides one plan to go through all, the New Testament more frequently than the Old, but both together. *You* can join in this, or, at least, the New Testament portion first. If you are already reading a Scripture Union portion, I would not hinder, but my deep desire is that there should be regularity, purpose, of heart—and prayer, if you know the Lord Jesus as your *own* Saviour.

Acquaintance with the facts of the Bible is not salvation, but it is well to see how God uses

His written words to lead to salvation, and to guide the daily life of those who have that unspeakable blessing. Every word that He has given is perfect, and important ; and, as it is in nature, there are hidden wonders of which most know nothing. Strangely we learn many things, and yet omit what God has written. When I was a boy, I learnt the kings of England, and the dates of battles, but did not know the kings of Judah and Israel in order. And there are many grown up ones who could not give the ten plagues or ten commandments, or the names of the twelve apostles ! Shall I suggest just a few questions ? I find they help thought, and study, for we can all read with unfixed minds—and soon forget. The Holy Spirit uses what has been learnt (John 14. 26). So let me ask a few:—

1. What did God make *each* day of the wonderful (literal) week of Genesis 1? (Notice the arrangement: each “half” begins with light, and ends with fruit).
2. What pieces of furniture were there in the tabernacle, and its court ? (*Every* one has a precious lesson about the Lord Jesus Himself).
3. What occurrences of 50, 70, 120 do you find in Scripture (120, 40 & 40 & 40) ? And what lessons are there ? (Every number has teaching from God).
4. Make a list of the Parables of the Lord

- Jesus (Booklets on *all* can be sent).
5. Draw a map, showing how the missionary journeys of God's servant Paul ever widened (Rom. 15. 19-24, 2 Cor. 1. 16), and marking the places to which epistles were sent. (Note grace to Jew and Gentile, a true missionary heart).
 6. What do you learn from the last mention of Jerusalem (Salem) and Babylon (Babel)? (God's purpose stands, Isaiah 62. 6, 7. In Revelation you will find many references to Genesis. "All Scripture" is one whole, (2 Timothy 3. 16).

Above all, (let me repeat) our longing is that readers, young and old, may know the Lord Jesus as their own Saviour, and then look for Him, and bring others to Him.

We do not know when, where, how, or through whom this messenger will reach *you*. But we do know the Lord Jesus is the *only* Saviour,—*your Saviour NOW*, or NOT! If He *is* yours, why not write? God's children are *one* family. We rejoice that the Scripture is fully inspired, that the Lord Jesus—God and Man—saves many by His blood, from eternal judgment, and that believers should be immersed into His Name, as a symbol of burial, of death and rising *with Him*, and then seek fellowship with likeminded believers in His will, outside this world's politics, fashions and empty amusements, desiring no human organization or name (except *His*), and looking for Him to come again soon. If *not yet* saved, and feeling *your need*, can we help by letter?