

The Student of Scripture.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by Him; and He shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between His shoulders." Deuteronomy 33. 12.

A Word of Introduction.

THE Holy Spirit delights to tell us of the love that reaches to the redeemed of the Lord. Scripture is full of God's love. The words concerning Benjamin are definitely applied to "the beloved of the Lord" that we may appropriate them by faith. The first clause indicates blessing of PLACE, and the second of TIME. Not only are the Lord's people near, but "all the day long" are they sustained, and when they awake they are still with Him (Ps. 139. 18). Our hearts call to mind the words, "I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment: lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day" (Isa. 27. 3). It is wonderful to know God's wonderful grace, to see how deep an interest God takes in His own. To emphasize His love, and the path of love's responsive obedience, are these pages humbly sent forth, while we look for our coming Lord.

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Sidelights on the Deity of Christ.*

OUTLINE OF ADDRESS:—

1. The Glory of our Triune God.
2. Christ's Stress on Himself in contrast with His people; e.g. Mark 12. 6, John 12. 26.
3. Worship Invariably Approved.
4. The Atonement implying Christ's Deity.
5. Devotion to Himself in the Epistles.

WITHOUT any hesitation, without any side-thoughts of doubt, our hearts acknowledge that "in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." And we KNOW Him. This is not a matter of bare argument. We KNOW and rejoice to know that He Who came of the seed of David according to the flesh, was over all, God Blessed for ever. We confess His Name as the One Who was the Great I Am. He Himself said, "Before Abraham came, I am." Christ is to us not a created being, not merely a glorious Messenger, not only a Prophet, not barely One Who has wrought a work of marvellous attractive power, but **the One Whom our hearts acclaim with believing Thomas,—“My Lord and My God.”** "The Son of God loved me and gave Himself for me." This conclusion is not reached by verbal reasoning. If any have been brought to know Him, it is the work of Divine grace, and our hearts can praise-fully rejoice in that which our lips would readily confess. The glory of our Triune God shines out in the Scripture, from one end to the other. The very first verse declares "God (plural) created (singular) the heavens and the earth." The very first chapter emphasizes "Let US make man in OUR image." When God's glory was seen and felt by Isaiah, he HEARD the utterance "A Holy One, A Holy One, A Holy One is the Lord of Hosts" (Isa. 6. 3). Soon the question of authority and love reached his ear, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for US?" The subject, beloved friends, is manifestly important, for at the present time there are many attacks on the Tri-unity of God. It is evident, therefore, that Satan has a bitter opposition to the Person of Christ, —a bitter opposition to this part of the truth, which, moreover, is travestied among the many Satanic travesties in the book of Revelation. The dragon, the beast, and the false prophet are plainly a caricature of our TRIUNE God. What Satan hates he often parodies. We call to mind the harlot, a travesty of the bride. The deadly wound healed presents a travesty of the death and resurrection of Christ. Satan, therefore, HATES the Triune Nature of God, and parodies it. But that which Satan hates we would manifestly hold the more earnestly and proclaim at the present time of need. We would be spurred to more godly enthusiasm, for that which the devil would set on one side must have a special present meaning, to reach our hearts and strengthen our hands.

The PLACE which our Lord Jesus Christ occupies in the Scripture, from beginning to end, makes it evident that He is God. APART from the many DIRECT statements, this is again and again IMPLIED, and the whole structure of Scripture would involve idolatry in its exaltation of Christ, were He not essentially God. Being in the form of God, He emptied Himself to become a Servant:—He was, therefore, not a Servant

essentially. He was essentially ABOVE A SERVANT, essentially FULL. That which would be an exaltation to a created being, even a perfect position of uniquely privileged service, involved FOR HIM a humiliation, and strikingly He sets forth this aspect where He alludes to re-instating, "Glorify Thou Me with Thine Own Self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was" (John 17. 5). Again let me say that the place Christ has from the beginning to end of Scripture would involve IDOLATRY, if He were not essentially "Over all, God blessed for ever" (Rom. 9. 5). Among the names which He has we find "The First and the Last," names which are essentially linked with Deity, and SET FORWARD AS A MANIFESTATION OF DEITY. Names which COULD NOT be taken by another unless there were robbery (Isa. 44. 6 with Rev. 1. 17). He is, moreover, "the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the Ending," and thus the vowel letters suggest that the New Testament is only explicable in relation to Him, and that He also vocalizes the unpointed Hebrew Scriptures, and becomes their key. In accord with this, He is IMPLIED in the first verse of Genesis, but mentioned **specifically** in both the first and the last verse of the New Testament. Not only "implied," for the UNveiling is found in the Greek Scriptures, and we have Christ as the gloriously unveiled One. Nor can we know the Father except by Him. He Himself declared this. Nor can we have the Father unless we have Him. 1 John 2. 23 is decisive. We cannot separate the persons of our Triune God, as to nature or purpose. If we take from the glory of One we diminish the glory of Each Person. If we fail to understand something of the dignity of One we degrade not only One but All. Ah, beloved friends, I long to keep in front of you and of myself this precious and delightful thought:—Christ is God, and yet He became Man to die for sinners, to die for me! We are not speaking of an academic subject, but of a Person Whom we love, One, Whom we know, because He first knew us, and in Whom we rejoice because He was pleased to come unto us. Christ is not to us the bare spelling of a half dozen letters. He is not only a Name on the pages of history. He is real, and while we speak of Him, He lives to intercede FOR US (Heb. 7. 25). If He is real to us we are real to Him, and if we remember Him in measure, He forgets us never. It is an overwhelming thought. The Lord Jesus Christ is ALWAYS distinguished from created beings. We shall see this more fully afterwards. The highest created beings are seen in Isaiah 6, and throughout the book of Revelation. They utterly distinguish themselves from the Lord Jesus. They acknowledge their lowliness. They never say one word to suggest His lowness. He is from THEIR standpoint the Highly Exalted One, and this is actually the special subject before us. We are

not now dealing with the direct statements of the Deity of Christ, but with the INDIRECT witness of Scripture, the sidelights on His glory which have proved helpful—helpful beyond measure to not a few of us.

I have been impressed of late with Christ's own stress on Himself. Have you read through the Gospels to see **how** He mentions Himself? It is an important subject. Let us remember that He was the humbled One, and YET He reveals the exaltation of Himself throughout all the time of His humiliation. I venture to say if a created being were to set forth one tithe of what Christ sets forth of Himself, we should feel that he was wrongly honouring himself. We should say such language hardly seems humility. Are we not in a difficult dilemma? Is it not true that we must ever deny the humility of Christ or accept His Deity? Ah, beloved friends, it is not a dilemma to us. We accept His Deity in a moment. We have long accepted it. But if any doubt has risen on any mind upon this subject, if the Deity of Christ is set on one side, His humility must be set on one side also. At once His character is robbed of its glory. It is not a question as to whether Christ was Divine, or the most glorious created being. He is either Divine OR proud. He is either Divine OR an impostor. There is nothing between the two. Those who would exalt Him professedly, yet deny His Deity, are confused. They have no basis in Scripture. Grant His Deity, every difficult expression can be understood. Deny His Deity, all the four Gospels lead us to confusion. Christ's stress on Himself is remarkable. We have such words as "I am the Bread of Life," "I am the Vine," "I am the Good Shepherd," "On this Rock I will build My church," "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up," "Before Abraham became, I am." Such expressions are the more remarkable because they are repeated so frequently, and on no occasion does He speak in measurably parallel words of ANY other. Christ was not One to degrade others. He honoured them: He honoured His servants. He spoke beautifully of them, but never used words at all parallel with the words which He used of Himself. Take one striking illustration. Christ honoured John the Baptist. He praised the faithfulness of John the Baptist. John was not a reed shaken with the wind. Among those born of women there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist. Here was Christ's startling testimony, asserting that the forerunner has as high a record as any among men. If Christ therefore was only a man, He would come to the level of the highest among those born of women, but He does not suggest this at all. He sends the messenger to John,—“Blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in **Me**,”—as if lovingly blaming John, with gracious firmness, for not realizing that Christ must be the One trusted, and viewed as the Resting Place

of His people. This becomes the more remarkable when we see how John speaks of himself and of Christ. The contrast is impressive. But every word is fitting, when we see the Divine **Saviour** and a godly **man**. There is no other key. I think we also agree that Christ exalted such as Abraham and Moses. He honoured them, but did He for one moment put Abraham on a level with Himself? “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and rejoiced.” “Before Abraham became, I am.” Abraham's position is marked as infinitely lower than His own. Could a holy created being have spoken thus? There would not have been truthfulness, and there would not have been graciousness, and there would not have been lowliness in such words. If the Deity of Christ is not real, the humility of Christ is not real, and the whole of His character is shattered. We are compelled to lay a prayerful stress on this. Moses and Elias were with Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration. Here were they in glory after their earthly life had been followed by years of unseen privilege. We should no longer view them as failing men, but the Lord Jesus did not treat them as like to Himself, nor own Peter's request, nor did the voice that came from heaven put them at all on a level with the Lord. They were COMPARATIVELY nothing. They were left out of account. Peter's proposal that tents should be made for them AS WELL was through sheer ignorance, and the voice said, “This is My Beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased, hear ye Him.” Moses was faithful as a SERVANT, but Christ as Son OVER His own house. He stands out in remarkable glory. Would Christ have degraded David? David He honoured, as the faithful king, the king after God's own heart; but when He referred BACK to David, He asks why David calls Messiah “Lord”—“The Lord said unto my Lord.” When we think of the height of David's exaltation and privilege, Christ's allusion to David in this connection plainly shows that He viewed Himself as infinitely beyond David. Nor are those individual cases alone. When the Lord Jesus speaks to all His disciples He tells them their privilege is to follow Him, and that ONE is their Teacher. He does not suggest for a moment that any of them were at all comparable with Himself. Their rejection was to be for His Name's sake. They were to go forth and represent **Him**. He sent them. Rewards are to be in accord with the fact that cups of cold water were given “because ye belong to Christ.” What created being could speak thus? It is not that He says, “Those who are unfaithful are much below Me.” He ever assumes that the most faithful of His people would regard Him on an infinitely different level, so that they would find their glory in emphasizing that they belonged to Him. It is clear that the highest believers, the most godly ones, devoted in their love to God,

and so worthy of every encouragement, are brought to acknowledge their highest dignity is in belonging to **Him and pleasing Him.**

(If the Lord will, to be continued).

* Over 200 addresses, on subjects to help God's beloved people, have been typewritten and revised, and can be had for a fortnight's use to God's glory. On reading one for re-typing I felt it might be the Lord's will to print it. That conviction has not changed and the subject is deeply important. May our Heavenly Father deign to use it month by month. We shall be glad to send any believer the list of typewritten notes. Whatever can be done to help the Lord's people is a privilege and a responsibility, for we are members one of another.

"A Nation Bringing Forth the Fruits Thereof."—Matthew 21. 43.

WHAT is this nation? Anglo-Israelism declares it is found in Britain, and our hearts recoil from that which appears to us so painful an alteration of the testimony of Scripture, and so sad a denial of the sinful condition of this favoured land.

It will at once be said, "You grant the land is favoured." Yes, and in some respects all Europe has received special providences, which have not been shown to the descendants of Ham. God has fulfilled the prophecy of Genesis 9. 27 as to Japheth, which many overlook. History records God's sovereignty. Look too at the course of other lands,—Switzerland and Holland, for example. They have seen times of great privilege. We acknowledge God's providence, and thank Him. But to assume that privilege suggests Israelitish descent is merely assumption, and we plead for Scripture, not fancies. Where is the Scripture which brings before us special blessings to Israel before our Lord comes back?

His own testimony is perfectly clear—"All nations" are the sphere of Gospel testimony (Matt. 28. 19), but all nations, in themselves, are against the Gospel (Matt. 24. 9). This is not a dispensation of an earthly people any more than of an earthly city (Heb. 13. 14). We must find the "nation bringing forth the fruits" in a **spiritual** sphere, and the Holy Spirit in 1 Peter 2. 9 gives the key.

Again we shall be hastily told by Anglo-Israelites that this is their contention, and they will point to 1 Peter 1. 1. But the passage deals with those who are elect to personal Salvation (2), though of Israelite birth. **They**, not the rest, were the holy nation. The Holy Spirit thus designs a contrast with the old national position in the flesh. He does not say that those who were outside the royal priesthood were the nation, but Anglo-Israelism dares to assume this. To declare that the English people have brought forth "the fruits" of the

Kingdom of God is a sad perversion of Scripture, and fact, only ministering to pride, and glorification of a national religion which ignores spiritual worship. The error is more than one of interpretation, it affects the whole attitude of separation unto the Lord, and the heavenly calling (Heb. 3. 1).

The joy of the believer in God's free grace must ever be encouraged. The present time is one of dealing with all nations in a marked way (Rom. 16. 26. Gal. 3. 8). The Gospel is for sinners as sinners. Romans 11. 28 is definite against a special "Israelite" character of the present time. Christ is the Light to lighten the Gentiles, and then the words come, "The Glory of Thy people Israel." The salvation of Israel is linked with the gathering, not with the dispersion (Jer. 31. 10). Revelation 7 illustrates that God will deal with Israel nationally after this dispensation. His loving emphasis in Ephesians 2. 12 indicates the character of the present time, and God associates His covenant with Abraham and the **land** (Lev. 26. 42). Not two "lands." The tense "I will appoint" of 2 Samuel 7. 10 is the same as "I have made thee a great name" in verse 9, and there is no reason to employ the future. The whole Scripture is against two places for Israel. Is it not a poor interpretation which depends on an error of translation? Ezekiel 37. 21 reminds us of Israel's "own land." God has not changed His arrangements. He emphasized through Nathan that the appointed "place" **should stand**. Many who read Deuteronomy 12. 5, 11, 14, 18, 21, 26; 14. 23, 24, 25; 15. 20; 16. 2, 6, 7, 11, 15, 16; 17. 8, 10; 18. 6; 26. 2; 31. 11 will have no remaining doubt as to the Holy Spirit's message.

And we return to Matthew 21, and the certainty that there shall be "fruit." Is not this in contrast with the typical vine of Psalm 80? Is not all fruit in personal relation to Christ? We have already alluded to 1 Peter 2, and there we find also the spiritual **house** of which Christ says in Matthew 21. 42 that the rejected Stone becomes the Head of the corner. His own glory ever shines out. Some not only ignore the stress on personal spiritual life in the holy nation, and the fact that the Kingdom of God is **not** earthly in the present evil age, but also overlook, it seems, that 1 Peter 2. 10 does not say as Hosea 1. 9, 10; 2. 23, "Not My people," but "not a people," alluding to Deuteronomy 32. 21, and reminding of Isaiah 65. 1.

Earnestly we would plead with God's beloved people to beware of any interpretation which removes the precious message of God as to the heavenly calling, separatedness and hope—unconsciously they may be drawn to approve of part in politics and warfare, and to forget that the whole world still lieth in the wicked one. Satan desires to take our eyes off our exalted Lord Jesus, and, if he cannot succeed in one way, he will seek another. Let us be prayerfully on our guard at all times.

"Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them."

Acts 13. 2.

THESE impressive words bring before us the personality of the Holy Spirit, and also His authority. In days when He is explained away as an "influence," this Scriptural teaching is deeply important. The Holy Spirit **commanded**, and He viewed the separation as for Himself, that He might use in the work. His possession and direction of the missionary labour is our refreshment.

There is a little word untranslated after "Separate." We might almost render it "then," i.e., "Separate Me then,"—in answer to their prayer and fasting. Thus the Deity of the Holy Spirit is before us, as He acts in executive, responding to prayer to God the Father. We have access in one Spirit (Eph. 2. 18), and it was appropriate that the reply should be given thus.

"Barnabas and Saul." Mark the personal choice, and observe that the first and the last in the list of verse 1 were taken. Appropriately there were two, even as the Lord Jesus sent forth by twos. Fellowship in service is very important. And three were to remain. The Scriptural stress on "two or three" comes to mind.

"For the work whereunto I have called them." **Work** is beautiful, if it is appointed work. The heart that loves God hates laziness. Abraham, when called, went out, "Lot went with him," but drew back from the pilgrim path. In like manner, John Mark accompanied (Acts 13. 5), but he "went not with them to the work." How precious is a call from God: how real is relationship to Him, and how needful is dependence on Him with love's glad obedience.

"I have called them," evidently **before**. Thus the Holy Spirit worked in their hearts first, yet there was also a blessed arrangement to cause and show fellowship with other brethren in the step. How important are the principles underlying these words, keeping us from self-will, and from ignoring others, yet urging an inward and personal waiting on God. May this be our experience.

Time is a great responsibility, a trusteeship which we all equally possess. It is easy to squander it, and to be "busy doing nothing,"—nothing that lasts. To-day never returns; if it is lost, we have grieved the Holy Spirit of God.

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"Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples. As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you; continue ye in My love." (John 15. 9.)

A Word of Introduction.

THE object of these pages is the glory of God. Having experienced His lovingkindnesses, we long that others too may know Him, and His grace. And we desire to know His will more and more, and to stir up, and to be stirred, that there may be something for Himself in our personal lives, in our homes, our businesses, and our intercourse. Meetings after the Lord's own heart, and according to the pattern He has shown, should be diligently sought. He will not disappoint expectant faith. Christ lives to intercede, and the Holy Spirit lives to indwell and inwork. Praisefully we can say, "These are not theories but facts." May we experience them, while we look for Him Who died for us, and will soon come again.

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Godly Husbands and Wives in Scripture.

THE power of a godly home is implied throughout Scripture. Proverbs 31. 10-31 is an impressive acrostic, and the unhindered prayers of 1 Peter 3. 7 are ever delightful. Indeed the fact that the home relationship is made the background for the display of the love between "Christ and the church" shows us how precious to God's heart is the fellowship of husband and wife, in holy dependence on Him and His will.

Then we think sadly of Adam and his wife, and the lack of godly order. Eve was not a **help**, was not "meet" for her husband. But he chose the **wrong** path (how evil is **wrong** love), and was **not** "deceived" (1 Tim. 2. 14), and thus his responsibility is the more manifest. But though we have many sad homes in Scripture, and remember how Solomon turned aside and Ahab "whom Jezebel his wife stirred up" (1 Kings 21. 25), yet, thanks be unto God, there have been beautiful contrasts, and the Holy Spirit emphasizes them for our joy, our praise and our imitation.

First, our mind is led back to Abraham, believing Abraham. And was not his wife believing Sarah? "Through faith she received strength" (Hebrews 11. 11), just the same as her husband (Romans 4. 18-20). And the encouraging words are added, "She judged Him faithful Who had promised." Such a testimony is among God's many striking declarations concerning godly women. Some of the most impressive examples of holy service are found among them. And another apostle was moved by the Holy Spirit to lay stress on Sarah as one among "holy women . . . who trusted in God," that godly Christian women to-day may be viewed as walking in the same family (1 Peter 3. 5, 6). Thanks be to God, this family 'is not extinct.

In the later Scriptures we call to mind Zacharias and Elisabeth. What commendation could be stronger than "And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless" (Luke 1. 6). We think of God's commendation in Job 1 and 2, though there the wife is contrasted. It is a wonderful privilege to be a "help," meet and suitable, the reverse of the hindrance that husband and wife may easily become to one another. It is refreshing to find after the birth of John the Baptist that father and mother were of one mind (verses 60, 63); neither was turned aside by relatives. Thanks be to God for fixity of character. There is a measure of parallel between Judges 13. 7 and Luke 1. 15, and in the earlier passage the faith of Manoa's wife seems the stronger. Yet Samson was only moved at times, as the record goes, and amid great physical strength he failed (contrast 2 Cor. 12. 9). But John's fidelity shines out. The testimony to Zacharias and his wife is much beyond anything in Judges 13, and thus emphasizes how God approved a godly home. And He is the Same to-day.

Joseph and Mary moreover set forth a beautiful relationship to one another (Matt. 1. 20-25, 2. 20-23, Luke 2. 41-52). And the Lord Jesus in the perfection of His childhood honoured both. No words are more impressive for children than those of Luke 2. 51. He was the Mighty God, yet, when He came into this world, He filled every sphere perfectly. How sinful is the insubordination of the natural heart.

When we read the Acts and Epistles, we find Aquila and Priscilla. They are **always** mentioned together, and there is a remarkable placing of Prisca, or Priscilla, first on three occasions. The Holy Spirit witnesses **definitely** through Paul as to the distinct spheres of brethren and sisters, but by such precious hints as the above He prevents misuse of the Divine teaching. There is no rivalry or antipathy, or jealousy where God appoints or works.

And as we ponder these graciously recorded examples of godly homes, we reach the unnamed overseers of Christian assemblies, chosen according to 1 Timothy 3, 5, 6 and praise God for this witness, and that of verses 11 and 12. And still beyond this we come again to Ephesians 5, concerning Christ and the church, and realize anew the beauty of a Christian home and its contrast with that of Adam and Eve. God has set high honour upon the husband and wife who acknowledge their privilege. But the joy of this blessing is not reached by mere desire. There must be a humble walk with God, in the continued love of background devotedness, in the enabling of the Holy Spirit, and let us all, who own the Name of the Lord Jesus, married or unmarried, prayerfully seek after this.

Language—A Witness to God.

COME with me to some semi-savage nation. The language most probably has remarkable features. Do you tell me that this language was formulated by those who are so de-graded? If you answer "Yes," your mere words are not evidence. What kind of proof can you suggest? I can understand great things being done by them who are personally unable to produce them, if there is a definite causative work of God as a Mighty Designer, but not otherwise. If your reply is "No," and you regard the nation as sunken, may not this explain many historic and prehistoric things which evolutionary theories only confuse? Are not these theories as unscientific as they are unscriptural, for true science knows nothing of guesses, and evolution knows nothing of anything else? Men are ever seeking to conceive of the lowest producing a greater, unaided, and by forces which are blind and accidental. But God reveals the only science, even His own creative work, and then the deadly effects of sin, blighting and destroying. Yet, on this sad background, grace shines out.

Again, think of the language of the land where you are. Have many words, like "humility," improved in meaning? Comparatively few, and that with Christian usage. But words that have deteriorated in meaning as "knave" and "cunningly" and "sharp" can be produced readily. Why? The tendency of man is ever downwards. And language witnesses once more to the need for the Gospel of the grace of God. And thank God there is such a gospel, and well may we rejoice in Him, and in it.

Sidelights on the Deity of Christ.

(Continued.)

Nor is it otherwise in the parables. He ALONE obtains the field. He ALONE purchases the pearl. He ALONE is the Good Shepherd. He ALONE deals with the case of the man who went down to Jericho. The servants in Luke 19 receive the pounds. He marks Himself out as the One Who presents, and will receive a reckoning. He does not for one moment suggest that when the servants came up for reckoning it will be the time when He will be brought up for reckoning. He regards Himself as in simple and full authority. All are His servants. He is not on their level, nor are they on His. It is deeply important when we find this throughout the parables. In Matthew 21, the Father has One Beloved Son. Whom He sends. ALL the prophets are but servants. There is One Who is distinct. The feast of Matthew 22 is made for the King's Son alone. There is no doubt as to the One to Whom Christ refers. Others are to share in the feast. Others are to be welcomed to it, that is their high privilege, but HE is the One for Whom it is prepared: all is for His glory. If even one parable were thus it would be remarkable, but in every parable He is the ONLY One Who is thus honoured and exalted. The ONLY One Who is central.

Let us once more think of John the Baptist. Let us notice now his words concerning himself. Speaking of the Lord Jesus, he says, "Whose shoelatchet I am not worthy to unloose." Further, "He That hath the bride is the Bridegroom":—I am only "the friend of the Bridegroom." Christ is the Possessor. This humility is fitting. If we find any created being, we expect that his height of godliness will mean a wonderful depth of humility. Hence we understand such an attitude in God's servants, as Isaiah, John or Paul. **We have looked in vain for such expressions on the part of Christ,** though if He were a created being beyond John, we should expect in the days of His humiliation some similar expressions,—but we cannot find them: they are not to be found. John revealed his true glory by humbling himself before Christ, and Christ revealed His true glory by exalting Himself, in the midst of His very humiliation, without any exception. Thus His Deity is not a matter of degree, or of greatness amid created beings. He is not merely Divine in a measure of dignity, but essentially God. Different in kind, and not only in degree, from those who are caused by grace, and by grace alone, to share in His glory. It is well to repeat this from different standpoints, that He may be honoured aright.

Christ's attitude in regard to worship is equally a sidelight. God is jealous of worship, and when a Herod gives not

God the glory, in Acts 12, he is eaten of worms. The climax of Antichrist is the mesmerism and control of the worshipping tendency of man, toward Himself, and the dispensation ends with the worshipping of the beast. I venture to suggest that if Christ were not over all, God Blessed for ever, the stress on worshipping Him which we find in the Scripture would amaze us more than the worshipping of the beast! It is terrible when an evil power seeks worship, but if one who appears consistently glorious should seek and approve worship, though unworthy of it, the subtlety of the snare would be greater for those of us who wish to glorify God alone, and therefore the danger would be greater, and thus the evil wrapped up would be greater:—and the only escape from this conclusion is the acknowledgement that Christ is absolutely worthy of worship, not through the height of His personal character and work as a Delegate, but through the essential nature of His perfect, eternal Godhead. Peter in Acts 10 refuses worship on the ground that he is but a man (verses 25, 26). The angel in Revelation 19. 10 rejects worship, NOT because his degree is not high enough, but because God alone is worshipped. Worship, therefore, is not a matter of degree of dignity; it is ONLY for God; and the higher a created being, the more may we anticipate he will repudiate worship, that God alone may be exalted. There are degrees among created beings, manifold gradations, but they are gradations. There is only One ABSOLUTE line of demarcation, that which exists between the Creator and the created, and if we carefully study the Scripture there can be no doubt as to which side of that line Christ is. That He emptied Himself (Phil. 2. 7) and took upon Himself the form of a servant is evident. That He was pleased to take a body prepared for Him is plain. Plainly the body was not eternal. THAT was prepared. He became man in fulness of time, and as such a Servant; and the fact that He took a prepared body, and the fact that He became Man, thus having a beginning to His life as God-Man,—that fact accounts for all the expressions of humiliation, for all the expressions of the glory laid aside. So we have TWO SETS of passages, perfectly consistent,—some which assert absolute glory, and some which deal with voluntary and perfect humiliation. The latter passages are explicable BECAUSE He laid aside His glory. The former are inexplicable, UNLESS we acknowledge the glory which He had essentially. The glory of "Himself"! He emptied Himself, but remained Himself. Let it ever be realized that worship was not only acknowledged on one or two occasions, or in an indirect way. It was consistently and openly acknowledged. In Matthew 2. 2 the wise men came to worship Him, and they worshipped Him as a Babe (11). Mary is explicitly contrasted. They came to the young Child and

His mother, and worshipped Him. That is the Divinely worded contrast. It is worthy of notice that the Lord Jesus, Who always accepted worship Himself, was stern against Satan seeking worship in Matthew 4. 9, not only because of Satan's iniquity, but because worship is restricted to God. "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve" was Christ's declaration. If He took that standpoint, YET accepted worship, He contradicted Himself unless He were God Himself. Thus the very temptation of the evil one serves to bring out the more clearly the Deity of Christ. The leper came to worship Him in Matthew 8. 2. In 9. 18, He was again worshipped in the working out of His miracles; Those in the ship in the 14th of Matthew, and the Syro-phenician woman of 15. 25, and Salome in chapter 20. 20,—all worshipped Him. There are some who will tell us that He was thus exalted in resurrection. We grant it, but there is an equal stress on worship before resurrection and afterwards. He was worshipped when a Babe, not only as a Man. It is not simply worshipping because of the glory of a special work, but the worshipping because of the inherent glory of His nature. In resurrection He still accepted worship, as Matthew 28 shows (verses 9, 17). And not only so, but we find our beloved Lord never reprov'd a man for exalting Him. A Nicodemus said, "We know that Thou art a Teacher come from God." Christ would not allow this partial acknowledgement, but led on Nicodemus to the thought that He was the Son of Man Who is in heaven. The ruler came to Christ, and was willing to acknowledge Him on the level of a good man. Christ would not recognise this. "WHY callest thou Me good?" He did not repudiate the stress on goodness, but He did repudiate the ground on which the man called Him good, and showed that if it was on the ground of 'humanity there was no goodness, and that the goodness could only be acknowledged on the ground of confessing His Deity. In other words, the Lord Jesus never reprov'd a man for exalting Him, but He reprov'd those who had a partial view of His exaltation. What striking evidence is this.

(If the Lord will, to be continued).

Faith has every reason for fixity since it rests on God and His words. Presumption has every reason for uncertainty since it depends on self and the words of men.

God has given to us exceeding great and precious promises, not only because He knows our need and tendency to despond, but because He delights to show His great love.

Leanness of soul is the result of our own way. "He gave them their request." They felt glad, it may be. But there was a real loss. Thanks be unto God for withheld quails.

"And let them Sacrifice the Sacrifices of Thanksgiving." Psalm 107. 22.

THERE is too little praise. In a future day, the walls of salvation will be intersected by the gates called "Praise" (Isa. 60 18), and the principle applies to-day. The Holy Spirit lays an emphasis on "the sacrifice of praise to God continually" in Hebrews 13. 15. This thought of a "sacrifice" is thus emphasized, evidently to show us how praise depends on the finished work of Christ, and that it is acceptable, and brought into God's very presence, for His joy. The sacrifices were spoken of as God's food (Lev. 21. 6, 8, 17, 21, 22), this precious language showing His delight in the work of Christ, and in the praise and obedience which rests thereon.

In like manner Psalm 50. 14 says, "Sacrifice unto God thanksgiving," and in verse 23, "Whoso offereth (sacrificeth) praise glorifieth Me"; Hosea 14. 2 has a similar message, "So will we render the calves of our lips."

The context in Psalm 107 speaks of a gracious deliverance from physical trouble, and, as the whole of that psalm, pleads for more realization of the hand of God in all, and more gratitude to Him. We call to mind Luke 17. 17, "Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?" There is a tendency to think more of **getting** a blessing than of giving thanks for the mercy, and this is selfishness. We are apt to overlook the fact that selfishness may exist in spiritual things quite as much as in earthly things. The nature of the blessing does not affect this. The attitude is all-important. If we value spiritual blessings for our own exaltation, and forget God's glory, there is no less selfishness in us because they are holy.

And Psalm 107. 22 continues, "and declare His works with rejoicing." Isaiah 12 reminds us of the link between praise and declaration of what the Lord is, and hath done. Should not the preaching of the Gospel have this note of praise more definitely in its background, and more than in its background? And do we not learn that true proclamation is from praising hearts, and that right rejoicing is the personal experience of thanksgiving?

The sufficiency of God is the comfort of His people. We should naturally choose the removal of the waters, but spiritually we are willing for, "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee" (Isa. 43. 2). The flesh could say, "We want no afflictions," but faith rejoices to utter the words, "This is my comfort in my affliction." God often removes not the mountain (though He can), but gives us grace to surmount it.

God does not give His people a great surplus of blessings now and then, but daily grace for daily need.

"To him that esteemeth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean."—Romans 14. 14.

THIS verse sets forth an important principle. The apostle does not assert that sin is not "unclean in itself." He is speaking of material things, and of meats and so forth. Some Gnostics taught that "matter" was essentially evil: the deadly effect of such teaching in excusing sin can be realized. Further, the inspired words, rightly understood, witness against the sin of so-called "Christian Science." "Esteeming anything unclean" does not refer to moral and invisible things: search the whole context, and all will become clear as to the Holy Spirit's meaning. And the verse assumes, too, that "things" do exist. "Christian Science" takes hold of part of truth as the ground-work for a colossal lie. The misused part of truth is, however, important, namely, thoughts have a powerful influence, and effect the character of things, and bring blessing or harm thereby. But sin is a fact, "sin is lawlessness" (1 John 3. 4).

Observe that whereas "esteeming unclean" can make a thing unclean, "esteeming right" is not said to make evil good. "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil" (Isa. 5. 20),—meaningless words, alas, to some. It is easy to spoil a right action by a wrong motive, but a "right motive" cannot be pleaded to sanctify sin. The message of Haggai 2. 12, 13 is impressive. In the type, holiness was not contagious, but unholiness was. And we catch diseases, not health. If a thing is "probably" right, but we are not sure, let us stand still till we know more definitely God's will. Playing with conscience is a deadly game, and the Holy Spirit warns against it. May our hearts receive the gracious warning, and be preserved from Saul's hastiness: "Withdraw thine hand." "They waited not for His counsel" is a saddening description: but blessed is the one who hears the Lord, waiting at the posts of His doors.

Our Heavenly Father has not promised to supply all our wishes but all our need. A truism, often repeated, but how important that it should become truth in our experience, and, not only so, but that our wishes should be brought within His.

Who can explain grace? No one. But we do not wait to explain our physical life before we breathe, nor to analyze our nourishing food before we eat it.

The measure of a believer's acceptance with the Father is —CHRIST.

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No messages on the Lord's Day.

The Student of Scripture.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"How sweet are Thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth! Through Thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate ever false way."—Psalm 119. 103, 104.

A Word of Introduction.

IT IS a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and we would send forth these pages, gladly yet humbly, in His Name. Our longing is that they may not take the place of Scripture study, but be a signpost and help thereto. The joy of the psalmist needs more hearty illustration as to writer and reader alike. "O taste and see that the Lord is good" leads on to the tasting of His words. The order is precious, for faith has every reason to "taste" and then "see." The holy determination of the psalmist is explained by the sentence immediately before, "Thou hast taught me." We need not only the right teaching but the Perfect Teacher. The Holy Spirit gives the true emphasis and application that we may not depart (cf. verse 102 with Jer. 32. 40). So will God be glorified in, and through, the daily walk.

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Some Searching Messages in Judges 1.

1. The book of Judges begins with asking the Lord, yet how quickly there was departure. Let us not trust to a godly beginning. We need to continue in the Lord's words.
2. Have we a reminder of Genesis 11. 31 and Acts 13. 2 and 5 (13)? How we need a personal relation to God and His will.
7. Acknowledgement of retribution is no proof of love to God.

10. Caleb went up (20, Josh. 14. 12-15), in personal faith, yet as representing Judah, the tribe God marked out for sovereignty. There is a two-fold reason for many actions.
15. "Give me also springs of water," There is a precious spiritual parallel, and our Heavenly Father will not give less than Caleb.
16. If in right fellowship we can leave even a city of palm trees for a wilderness.
18. Yet the lords of the Philistines again obtained power. Let us **continue** depending on God.
19. "The Lord was with Judah," then there was success. "But could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley, because —," the Lord unmentioned. When **He** is forgotten "things" have their power. So Matthew 14. 30, "beginning to sink." And observe in both cases the defeat is after the victory. There is no guarantee of preservation in one victory. We must humbly continue. Hence "if ye have faith and doubt not" (doubt may come in, subsequently and undo afterwards). See also Numbers 14. 9 and 14. 42, 43.
21. "The Jebusites dwell with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem unto this day." A sad "with." And Judah likewise failed when attempting to occupy the same city (Josh. 15. 63). Let us have no "with" of self's toleration of evil.
27. "Neither did." "The Canaanites would dwell in that land;" shall the works of the flesh have their "would" against us? How searching is this Scripture.
28. Observe the contrast between putting to tribute, and driving out. Scripture shows that worldlinesses are to be driven out, and the flesh is not to be allowed to pay tribute, but imprisoned. Hence the words "mortify the deeds of the body." Thus three aspects come before us, heart-searchingly as to the life of a believer in the Spirit.
29. "Neither did."
30. "Neither did." "Dwelt among."
31. "Neither did."
32. "They did not." "Dwelt among."
33. "Neither did." "Dwelt among."
34. Defeat. The children of Dan forced into the mountain. Hence a narrowed land. The solution of the flesh is found in Judges 18—i.e., seeking something else, not victory where God has placed. Let us all beware.
35. "**Would** dwell." Prevailing is precious on God's line; but mere tributaries are not laid low, they are allowed to **contribute**. There must, on the contrary, be no truce with the flesh,—observe in 2. 2 that a "league" had been made. Hence these solemn and precious warnings for us.

Sidelights on the Deity of Christ.

(Continued.)

WE go a step further, and we find that not only is this worship throughout Scripture, but it is Divinely commanded with respect to His return in glory. "Let ALL the angels of God worship Him" (Heb. 1. 6). Every created being, of every dignity, is hereby called upon to acknowledge One Greater. He is distinguished from ALL the angels, and in the same context He is called God. **THEY** are messengers, **THEY** are to worship, **HE** is to be the worshipped One, worshipped by ALL. The line of demarcation is clear. The archangel, whose name signifies, "Who is like God" is a contrast with Lucifer who says, "I will be like the Most High,"—the archangel rebukes Satan in Jude, but the Lord Jesus Christ is seen as the One Who bears **the Name**—the Name of glory.

Further, the Atonement implies His Deity. It is worthy of notice that where atonement is brought before us we have, in more than one passage, a very remarkable stress on Deity. Exodus 34 says, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, BEARING iniquity," and Micah 7 calls attention to this startling view of grace. "Who is a God like unto Thee, BEARING INIQUITY?" The translation "pardoning" refers to the EFFECT, the Hebrew word to the CAUSE. Deity and atonement are in the same verse. Israel reject these two points. Like to believing Thomas they will yet see the two together, then they will acknowledge, "Lo, this is our God, we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord, we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation." When looking upon Him Whom they pierced they will enter into **this** precious aspect, "They shall look upon ME Whom they have pierced." But not only have we this unveiled aspect. The very PRINCIPLE of atonement involves Deity. This subject has been impressed upon me of late. When we think what atonement means for a great number whom no man can number delivered from wrath, and made to possess eternal life, our hearts are amazed; and, if we are heirs of God, if we are those brought out of death into life, well may we rejoice already with something of joy unspeakable and full of glory. Our sins are cast behind God's back, and we ourselves are accepted in the Beloved. The Holy Spirit, Who exalts Christ, always leads to a joyful recognition of this finished work. But you will observe, beloved friends, that in the atonement Christ stands out as the Contrast with His people. Every one of them needs atonement. He needs none. Even as He said, "Ye ought to wash one another's feet," but never suggested "Ye ought to wash Mine," so is it here. In the epistle to the Hebrews we are reminded that Aaron offered **for Himself**, but Christ offered

HIMSELF FOR His undeserving people. Without exception, the godliest of believers are viewed as requiring atonement (cf. Ex. 30. 15), for before their godliness they were equally sinners, even as others, but He is never viewed in such a connection,—never viewed as needing a work for Himself, but always viewed as the Contrasted One, Who wrought the whole. Amazing grace,—without preparation on His people's part, without assistance from them, **He wrought the whole work.** The line of demarcation between created being and Creator must be here.

I go further. Without substitution, wrath on the sacrifice, would be unjust. There are many who teach that the atonement is but a display of the mercy of God and of His moral government, with His hatred of sin. But if it were not substitution, if He were not taking my judgment, it was injustice for Him to die. The atonement demands substitution. You may call it the commercial view of the atonement, if you will, or rather, if you dare, but let me call it the covenant view since Scripture calls it this. The covenant is not a matter of chance. Atonement is not a theory, and salvation is not a mere possibility. God has wrought a glorious work of permanent certainty. But, beloved friends, I go a step further,—if Christ were not over all, God Blessed for ever, we should have the laying of judgment upon a created being. I do not know how you feel, but my heart, in the light of Scripture, would shrink from this. A created being is necessarily a dependent being, and to bring a dependent being into the position of bearing substitutionary wrath, would seem to put an unfair and impossible strain even on the highest created being. The Holy Spirit never suggests bringing a dependent being into such a fulness of vicarious judgment. The objection which we often meet in the streets is, "Do you think it fair that Someone else should suffer for you?" I answer, "No, if that one is a created being." But if That One is the Creator, against Whom I have sinned. Who has, in grace, humbled Himself and **become** the Perfect Servant, then He has a perfect **right of love** so to do. There is nothing of compulsion, there is nothing of forcing of another to bring it about. It is an absolute fulness of His love. Deity is wrapped up in the thought of atonement.

If the Lord will, to be continued).

"I find no Scripture for being resigned to God's will":—some such words in a letter long ago have ever stuck to me. The thought was pressed that we should joy in His will. Resignation is only passive, love is active. Resignation approaches near to "putting up with" The circumstances which God appoints. But **that** is not the loyal response of devotion. Our Heavenly Father has a right to something much beyond "resignation."

Striking Inspired Testimony to some Believing Women.

IT is important to realize that, although the Scripture gives distinct spheres to brethren and sisters, it **never** minimises the value of women's ministry in a God-appointed path. It is a joy to collect some of the inspired commendations of those who sought and did the Lord's will, and when we do this we do well to remember how the fact that Christ was born of a woman is emphasized by the Holy Spirit (Gal. 4. 4, Gen. 3: 15, Ps. 22: 9, 10, 69. 8, Isai 49. 1). In the following list we do not include Hannah's song of trust and praise, or Mary's, for instance, (though we rejoice in their heavenly trust); it is our present object rather to show what **God says about women** who loved and served Him, and what He enabled His servants to say. In like manner we do not include general declarations as Proverbs 1. 8, 9, 14, 1, 31. 10-31, though they show us what God expects from holy women. And a New Testament parallel is found in 1 Timothy 5. 10. Nor would we forget the words, "The ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price; for after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves" (1 Pet. 3. 4, 5). And now we reach **individuals** of like feelings with ourselves, enabled to glorify God, and to receive His approval.

"Sarah . . . judged Him faithful Who had promised" (Heb. 11. 11).

"Hail (rejoice) thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou among women" (Luke 1. 28).

"Blessed is she that believed; for there shall be a performing of those things which were told her from the Lord" (Luke 1. 45).

"One Anna, a prophetess, . . . she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day" (Luke 2. 36, 37).

"She loved much" (Luke 7. 47).

"Certain women . . . which ministered unto Him of their substance" (Luke 8. 2, 3).

"O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt" (Matthew 15. 28).

"Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her" (Luke 10. 42).

"She has wrought a good work upon Me . . . Verily I say unto you, wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her" (Matthew 26. 10, 13).

"These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus" (Acts 1. 14).

"Dorcas, this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did" (Acts 9. 36).

"Phebe . . . she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also" (Romans 16. 1, 2).

"Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Jesus Christ, who have for my sake laid down their necks; unto whom not only I give thanks, but also the churches of the Gentiles" (Romans 16. 3, 4).

"Mary which bestowed much labour on us" (Romans 16. 6).

"Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labour in the Lord. The beloved Persis, which laboured much in the Lord" (Romans 16. 12).

Questions:

"DOES Scripture teach that sins committed since conversion need not be confessed, and forgiveness (or cleansing) prayed for?"

A few general thoughts first may help in dealing with difficulties of one another:—

It is deeply important that we should be accurate in repeating divergent statements among those who bear the Name of Christ. Apart from godly concern as to truth, and avoidance of all misrepresentation, our hearts long to gain "one another," and not to perpetuate, or intensify, or cause bitterness as to differences. If any one has said that believers need not confess sin he is plainly uninstructed in the things of God (1 John 1. 7). But some, who have been earnest and thoughtful, have urged that since our sins have been forgiven for the sake of our adorable Lord (1 John 2. 12), and since there is "no more conscience of sins" (Heb. 10. 2), it is (so they feel), a denial of His precious work accomplished once for all, and of our heavenly acceptance and access, to ask for forgiveness. We rejoice in their loving emphasis on "clean every whit" (John 13. 10), and readily add that such remember also the spiritual parallel with the ashes of the heifer (Num. 19), and the washing of the feet (John 13. 8), and do not excuse sin. But it seems to us they confuse two parts of Scriptural teaching, and no error, however godly those who hold it, can be harmless. Is not the glorious forgiveness a fact in such a way that we do not come into judgment? But the fact our beloved Lord has borne the legal **wrath** for our sin does not mean that He has borne the gracious **chastisement** of our Father. That is not wrath, nor is it linked with a death penalty. Hebrews 12. 5-11 can be helpfully applied in this connection. Hence should we not ask for **fatherly** forgiveness? If we say "that too is past" we imply that we were viewed as children of God in connection with

the legal bearing of our sins. But, as we **have** seen, the **Fatherhood** of God is not universal, nor linked with wrath; it involves a new relation after the settlement of our sins against God as Judge. And do we not now dishonour our Father? Then does not a new forgiveness come in appropriately? And with which forgiveness is Matthew 6 associated? Many have regarded the prayer as "legal," losing the stress on "our Father," and they have erroneously suggested that John 16. 23 suggests new petitions, but does it not rather give a new realization and standpoint? If "in My Name" (cf. Col. 3. 17) means that we cannot ask for forgiveness, it means we cannot confess our sins, nor our faults to one another. The fact that God views us in Christ (a glorious reality) does not mean that He, as Father, does not see our sins, nor that they are viewed as in Christ. Our **twofold** position must ever be realized. It is helpful to observe that the word for forgiving, or sending away, in Ephesians 1. 7 rather implies a present condition, a holy experience of the effects of the once-finished work. And this may be suggested by 1 John 1. 7 also. The thought of some that we should not ask for what God has promised is not only contrary to Ezekiel 36. 37 and Revelation 22. 20, but misses the aspect of prayer. We ask **because** God has promised, "Do as Thou hast said" (2 Sam. 7. 25). If these words are used to bring a tenderer attitude among children of God, and a fuller sense of their full acceptance in Christ, and their responsibility in the redeemed family, we shall rejoice, and, it may be, James 5. 15 and 1 John 1. 9 will have a richer meaning, with a deeper hatred of sin in our lives.

Some Twofold Thoughts in the Life of Nehemiah.

1. 11. "Prosper I pray Thee, Thy servant this day, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man. For I was the king's cupbearer." (a) "Thy servant" amid the earthly business of "the king's cupbearer." (b) Observe also "This man" before the mighty God; but Nehemiah honoured him as "The king."
2. 4, 5. "So **prayed** to the **God** of heaven, and I **said** unto the **king**." Observe the order.
2. 18. The **hand** of my God; the king's **words**.
4. 16. "Half of my servants wrought in the work, and the **other half** of them held both the spear," etc. So in 17 "one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the **other** hand held a weapon." We need this twofoldness, spiritually, in our warfare. Positive "building" work is ever necessary as well.
6. 9, 11. "They made us all afraid." "Should such a man as I flee?"—Faith's victory over fear.

7. 2. Not only "my brother," but "a faithful man." He "feared God above many." Favouritism because of relationship, and personal reasons must never decide, though God has a purpose in relationship and love and responsibility thereby, which Nehemiah did not forget.
7. 5. "My God put into mine heart." But there was also a godly work, and use of that which had been done by others—"I found a register."
8. 9. "Mourn not." 17, "Very great gladness," yet 9. 1: "with fasting and with sackcloth." A holy concern for holy balance.
9. 37. "Thou hast set over us;" acknowledgement of God, and of appointed authority. Yet godly concern as to this state of affairs. "They have dominion over our bodies (not 'our souls') and we are in great distress."
13. 8, 9. "I cast forth the household stuff of Tobiah." "Thither brought I in again the vessels of the house of God." It is not enough to "cast forth." There must be positive love. How many places have been broken from the Lord for worldly "household stuff?"
13. 22. When emphasizing his earnest desire and work to please God Nehemiah rightly and humbly adds. "according to the greatness of Thy mercy." So is it ever. O for humility in our lives too.

The children of Joseph said, "I am a great people," and sought a wider land (Jos. 17. 14). God's servant answered them, "Cut down . . . in the land of the Perizzites," i.e. take possession of the land. We too often ask for an "easier blessing," instead of realizing God has already given us scope for further inheriting along the path of earnest conflict. How natural it is to ask God to give what He has given already, when we really mean, "Make it easier to possess." But He trains His beloved people by the precious strain of claiming in the might of the Holy Spirit (cf. Jos. 18. 3):

The things of God are deep, and full. There is no parallel. Human description falls short. But inability to say all that God's love means does not at all diminish His love. "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable Gift."

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Edited by Percy W. Heward.

God's gracious Purpose through Loving Ministry:—

"Speaking the truth in love may grow up into Him, in all things, which is the Head, even Christ." Ephesians 4. 15.

A Word of Introduction.

*I*N the gracious enabling of our Heavenly Father, we send forth these pages. "He is faithful that promised," and we would look ever unto Him. The gospel is the only hope for a sinner, and the Will of God the only pathway for a saved one. It is a great privilege to have the Scriptures. The longing of our heart is that we, and those who read this magazine, may love God's words (Ps. 119. 97), and feed on them, and walk accordingly in devoted separation to Him whose Name they bear, WITHOUT pride of their separation, and without a man-made austerity, in glad willingness for His will. May this be our experience in the enabling of the Holy Spirit. This is true GROWTH and all else is imitation.

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Sidelights on the Deity of Christ.

(Concluded.)

I go a step further, my mind is rightly drawn to love the One who died for me, and I long to love Him more. Nor do I feel I can love Him too much. If He has delivered me from the wrath to come, I ought to love Him fully—infinity. But in loving Him with a fulness of love, I find a problem if He is a created being,—in loving Him as I must love Him. Thereby I diminish the love to God. A created being becomes too glorious in my view. Not only do I diminish the love

of God, but, imperceptibly, I find another thought arises in my mind,—I see One Whose work has delivered me from judgment, from absolute judgment for ever and ever, and I think to myself, if God gave up one who was essentially and altogether less than Himself, and contrasted with Himself, He put the greater burden on one whose nature was less than His Own, and I think THAT ONE did more for my salvation than God did, and I begin to love Him the more. My view of Deity has gone. My love, too, has gone. I have become an idolator, and I am lost for ever. A wrong view of the atonement undoes the atonement, and there is only confusion. But if I acknowledge that the One Whom God gave up was equally God, the giving up by the Father is EQUALLY love with the bearing of wrath by the Son. If He gave one who was less than Himself, His love was less in that He gave a created being. But if He gave One Who was essentially as Himself, the giving and giving up were a display of love equally great with the bearing of judgment. To give up one less than oneself is NOT an act of supreme love. But for God the Father to give up One co-equal with Himself, and infinitely loved as such, is an act of equally supreme love with the bearing of doom. And thus the whole principle of atonement demands the absolute, essential and eternal Deity of our beloved Lord. These aspects have been deeply impressed upon my heart and mind of late, and I feel that they are in Scripture the Holy Spirit's resting place for God's people from which there is no escape in any other interpretation. Nor do we wish it. We desire to be drawn to love Christ more, and in so loving Him to feel that our love is toward the Triune God, for is it not written "the Lord our God (plural) is One Lord, and thou shalt love the Lord thy God (in His Triune glory) with all thine heart."

Finally, for this evening,—yet not I hope finally, rather initially with a view to a life of more conscious nearness,—we reach "Devotion to Christ in the Epistles." Here the Holy Spirit unfolds to us our Lord Jesus Christ in connection with the inner life of such an one as "Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ." Here is a man, no bare enthusiast, a man of great ability, a man who had of old thought he ought to do many things against Jesus of Nazareth, which also he did. A man who had, in early life, advanced beyond many his equals, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of the fathers—not a man of fanatic weakness, not a man of easily turned brain, but a man who had experienced a miracle of grace, and had grown up manifestly as one full of sober thought, a man of deep love to God who dreaded sin and hated it with the strongest kind of hatred, even in its beginnings, a man who trembled at all idolatry and any rivalry between the creature and God,—yet that man writes in the spontaneous language of love which always distinguishes Christ from him-

self; and Christ from all the people of Christ. Unhesitating he places the line of demarcation THERE, and associates the Lord Jesus with God the Father. Paul was a bondservant, and Jesus Christ was the Master. Believers are all viewed as related to Him, and dependent on Him. "Ye are Christ's." HE is the Possessor. He alone gave Himself for them, and everything they have is linked with Him, and comes to them through Him. The desire of Paul's heart was to know HIM, and the longing look forward was to see HIM. But not only have we here the expression of a devoted heart, we have the writing of an inspired pen. Yes, this inspired testimony is the Holy Spirit's own exaltation of Christ. Tell me, beloved friends, that a godly man exalts a created being to this extent, and I say the man is encouraging me to an idolatry which forgets God. Tell me, if you can venture so to do, that the Holy Spirit inspired epistles to exalt a created being to this extent, but I can only shudder at the thought. The only solution is that Christ is Over All God Blessed for ever. Granted THIS, and all the constellations have found the centre around which they revolve. There is no difficulty now. Grant His perfection in the perfection of essential Deity, I understand Paul's love. It diminishes not one iota from true love to God, for Christ is God. I understand that every particle of his love to God the Son exalts God the Father, for God the Father did not give up one less than Himself. Every iota of love to the One involves a fulness of love to the Other in the perfect unity of that inexplicably glorious Trinity. I can understand it now. I can understand why Paul wanted to know HIM, and the power of HIS resurrection, and the fellowship of HIS sufferings. Everything is clear; but everything is mist and confusion otherwise. If we acknowledge that the Holy Spirit exalts the Glorious One Who BECAME a Man for us, we not only see the perfection of Scripture, but our hearts are brought to recognise the Holy Spirit's view of Christ, and how He would have us view and love Christ in our daily life. I dread lest these meditations should become in my life, or in yours, bare thoughts of argument, to meet objections. If they remain in our head, we shall lose heavily for our greater knowledge, and less obedience, at the Judgment Seat of Christ; but if, by grace, applied in the working of the Holy Spirit they fill our lives, then, recognizing that we in ourselves were nothing, and that all our merits are by His finished work, enabled day by day, our heart will stretch forth toward Him Who has become our Centre, and day by day will experience something similar to the enjoyment that belonged to one as great as any among those born of women when John said—"He must increase, but I must decrease." And thus shall we look devotedly for our Lord's Coming. CHRIST is the Centre of Scripture, the Centre of prophecy. His finished

work and future glory shine forth in amazing unity. His past Coming and future Coming are graciously entwined. Happy are those who can say, in the unity of the redeemed which He has brought about, "I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine"—"Jesus Christ the Same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever."

Some Musings in Judges 17-19.

THE Holy Spirit has given to us solemn narratives as to the days when men did what was right in their own eyes (Jud. 21. 25), and each thoughtful believer says, "O that this may speak to my heart." After Samson's threefold indulgence and failure, we turn to Micah. The number "1,100" in 17. 3 reminds of 16. 5, and may suggest by "eleven," worship, but, alas, a sinful mixture that was not the worship of God at all. It is saddening to see a home ruined, and to hear the words of the mother after "cursing," and when theft has been acknowledged. How could she dare to say, "Blessed be thou of the Lord, my son"? And, next, the sinful object is revealed. Self's choice in worship is laid bare—the graven image,—and a woman appointed it instead of God. Are we surprised that the same woman could excuse robbery? And, further, verse 4 complicates all—If it was given to the Lord professedly, to draw back was the sin of Ananias and Sapphira. Yet the very profession of giving was full of iniquity. Which-ever way we turn we are amazed. Verse 5 shows that Micah had a self-delight in his own "temple," as many who form their own religious societies and arrangements to-day (Col. 2. 23), and verse 6 follows with its humbling refrain. How we need to know what is right in God's eyes.

The next narrative is painful. A Levite is searching a place—a contrast with Deuteronomy 18. 6—and he enters into a bargain for money and clothing and food, "So the Levite went in." We realize here a prototype of ritualism's priests, with the stress on clothing, and the ominous words "a father and a priest." And yet so dark is the heart away from God, Micah speaks with what may seem to be a saddening sincerity, "Now know I that the Lord will do me good, seeing I have a Levite to my priest" (13). Sincerity is not acceptable to God, unless linked with truth and His holy will. There is no power in privileges, or in a man (although a Levite) or in any "it." God's salvation and God's revealed will must ever be before us. And, as we shall see, Micah had the reverse of "good," and the man who had deceived his mother was himself deceived. The Levite showed no lasting affection, but robbed his "benefactor." He had been invited in to serve for earthly gain, and went away for a greater position. Such is the hireling.

The narrative of the Danites comes in impressively. They had not claimed their appointed inheritance—they lacked the power of God (Jud. 1. 34). But, instead of being humbled, they did what many of us have done, and sought an easier path elsewhere. A nominal acknowledgment of God existed, as in Christendom to-day (18. 3-6). The priest uttered smooth things; many like to ask God, if they think they can get an answer to suit themselves (Jer. 42. 19, 43., 2, 3). Let us beware of this sin, beloved friends, and seek to pray transparently, in the Holy Spirit.

Success seemed sure, and, as we shall see, it was attained, but this was no proof of God's will. On the further journey of the Danites, the images of Micah were stolen, and, when a tempting offer was given, "the priest's heart was glad" (18. 20). A self-appointed priesthood is found in Romanism and elsewhere, and the people love to have it so (Jer. 5. 31). True worship must be as God seeks (John 4. 23, 24, see Mark 7. 7). How contrasted is the seeking of the way with the little ones in Judges 18. 21 from seeking God's way for the little ones in Ezra 8. 21. And the attitude of Micah and of all concerned continues to appal, and then organized idolatry is set up first in Dan, the tribe unmentioned in Revelation 7,—in a context of holy worship,—for some perfect and humbling reason. And one of Jeroboam's calves was set up in Dan; the soil was already prepared. And, alas, evidently "Jonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of Moses" is the reading of Judges 18. 30—although Gershom's very name was to witness to love's strangerhood and separation. Rivalry against God is seen "all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh."

Are we surprised at the amazing moral iniquity recorded in the following chapter? God cannot be ignored with impunity. Cain came his own way to worship, and then slew his brother. So is it here. The background was whoredom (19. 2), and then feasting indulgence seems emphasized. At last the Levite—both narratives are linked with this privileged tribe, set apart for the Lord—started to return. His hesitation as to "the city of a stranger" reminds us that through failure Israel had not taken Jerusalem (Jos. 15. 63). It is another part of the dark background. Alas, the city of the children of Israel provided iniquity not known among many at least of the Gentiles (1 Cor. 5. 1). And the further disregard of the stranger shines out in Judges 19. 18, against God's word, even regarding a stranger not of Israel (Deut. 10. 18, 19).

Sin ever leads to sin. The iniquity of Sodom was, as it were, intensified (cf. Ezek. 16. 48), and the carelessness of human life displayed in verses 24 and 25 is set forth to make us alarmed at the beginnings of sin. The added desperation of the Levite, followed by the revenge of Israel (ch. 20) makes a

fitting and solemn climax. Yet were there not with the other tribes also sins against the Lord (2 Chron. 28. 10)? There were, and the Lord caused them to have a temporary set-back, and many deaths to humble (1 Cor. 11. 30). Yet we see no deep reviving. There is a "naturalness" in so much of the activity, and we think of our own fleshly zeal, and learn the need for true lowliness of spirit, to receive guidance from God in everything. And thus as we see something more of the holy reason for this solemnizing record, we learn more fully why the Scripture was written, and pray from the heart that the words of the Holy Spirit here may not be in vain in our lives, but that we may have individually, and with other of God's redeemed people, a contrast with the ending of the book, after all God's call to repentance, "In those days there was no king in Israel, every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (21. 25). True revival is the exact opposite of this, and bears the hall-mark of the Holy Spirit in its tenderness and humility, and its holy zeal for God's glory.

A Fourfold Curse.

IN Genesis 3 we have the entry of sin into the world, and it is a sad story. Satan's deceiving work, and Adam's willingness (1 Tim. 2. 14), and the hearkening to another voice instead of God's voice (3. 8, 17), cannot but impress our hearts. And the word "curse" is before us twice. In verse 14 we have a foreview of the judgment of Satan, and entwined therewith the marked warning against sin, which God has made manifest (cf. Isa. 66. 24) in the condition of the animal creation (Rom. 8. 20). How important that this should be felt, and taught. All books of natural history ignoring this are perilously deficient, and all theories of evolution are fearfully against God. The word "cursed" is plain in this context. We read on, and we find the vegetable creation. This too is spoilt by man's sin. Hence, "cursed is the ground for thy sake" (17). The thorns and thistles are the tokens (18); God would keep these thoughts before our mind, and we need to be impressed and humbled. How different was the garden before Adam sinned, and how bright is the prospect of Isaiah 35 by the work of Christ.

Now it is evident that "death passed upon all men," but the Holy Spirit has designedly omitted the word "cursed." The whole Scripture is clear that all are before God without any hope, and the words "by nature children of wrath" (Eph. 2. 3), are God's own message. But in perfect wisdom He first uses the word "cursed" with respect to Cain, and it is introduced by an emphatic "now" (4. 11). It is evident that those who are eternally condemned have personal works of guilt (Rev. 20. 13). None will be sent to the Lake of

Fire who are only included in the headship of Adam, and have not committed deliberate sin. This has an important bearing on the gracious hint set forth it seems by Matthew 2. 18 with Jeremiah 31. 15, that those who die in infancy are redeemed by the precious blood of Christ. And whereas there is no iota of encouragement to excuse sin in such a Divine plan, it helps us to see more clearly that He can deal in a way of marvellous wisdom with imbeciles also. It is a blessed privilege to leave all restfully in God's hands.

But to return—Cain, the first man born into the world, was an utter failure, and the word "cursed" sounded forth in his personal rejection of God and of his fellowmen, and his despising of salvation by atonement. And so the word is linked with a holy sending away from the presence of God.

After the flood, the same striking lesson is repeated. "Canaan is visited with a "curse" (9. 25), and he too stands forth as a type of the ungodly. So it is throughout Scripture. The word "cursed" in Deuteronomy 27 and in Jeremiah 17. 5 and in Matthew 25. 41, and in Galatians 3. 10 is linked with personal sins.

The solemnizing view makes contrite ones to feel more conscious of the message of mercy, and they say feelingly, from the heart "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who hath **blessed** us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" (Eph. 1. 3), for "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the Propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4. 10). And thus our hearts add, in the enabling of the Holy Spirit, "What manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness" (2 Pet. 3. 11);

The Coming of the Lord is not only a subject for a convention, but for our daily walk. How does it affect our business, our possessions, and our use of money? Here is a criterion.

"Seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not." This was God's message to one who was "blessed" of old (Baruch,—Jer. 45. 5). Why should we seek anything for ourselves?—Our joy is that we can please the Lord, and bring something to Him to glorify His Name. It is wonderful that we have anything at all, and we have **everything** in Him. We cannot be poor in Him (2 Cor. 8. 9)!

"He answered her not a word" (Matt. 15. 23): How important it is not to draw inferences of our own. The Lord had a purpose of love. He does not unkindly burden and afflict (Lam. 3. 33) those whom He draws to more simplicity of faith in a way of perfect wisdom.

"By whom was the animal slain (or the animals) whereof the Lord God made coats of skins and clothed them?" Genesis 3. 21.

IT is a joy to study the types; they are full of Christ. We may not understand all, but we shall learn much of Him. It may be noted that the word "skins" is like our English "gold" or "sheep," and may have a singular force here, as well as a plural. Personally I feel this is intended with a fuller view of the one work of Christ, contrasted with the many leaves vainly sewn together, only to reach an apron, and that entirely set aside by God. It is a privilege to search whatever God has written, but we must be careful not to put our inferences on the level of His truth. Whatever He has not said is unsaid for a purpose. Hence if any one says, "Adam killed the lamb," we hesitate; the more so, as there is no record of any act of obedience after he fell, nor word of repentance, nor is he mentioned first in Hebrews 11. The Holy Spirit does not declare that Adam never confessed his sin, but He has chosen to be silent that our hearts may be concerned. And the stress here on God's work throughout (He made, He clothed), would at least remind us of Romans 8. 32 and Isaiah 53. 6. Whether God slew the sacrifice, or not, He is the First in everything as to salvation, and, as to the Antitype, He caused the sword to awake (Zech. 13. 7), and in this is our glorious assurance. The holy anger of God cannot be turned aside from us (Isa. 12. 1), except by the Holy One bearing judgment for us. Man's piercing of hand and feet and side could not have saved; "It pleased the Lord to bruise Him." "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable Gift."

The privilege of pleasing God needs to be emphasized: it is not merely a "duty." The Lord's dear people have been bought with a price that they may find joy in their Redeemer's will.

Who can measure the love of God? No one on earth. But, thanks be unto God, He does not love us according to our realization of His love, nor reduce His mercy because we fail to appreciate it all.

If God has graciously helped you by the address on the Deity of Christ, you may be thankful to know we hope to reprint it (16 pages) for prayerful, widespread distribution. We shall be glad to hear from any concerned. Also you may desire some of the other addresses (more than 250), which are typewritten and can be sent for a fortnight, God willing.

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The Student of Scripture

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

The Lord Jesus said:—

"Heaven and Earth shall pass away, but MY WORDS shall not pass away." Matthew 24. 35; Luke 21. 33.

A Word of Introduction.

IN the changeless lovingkindness of our God we would send forth these pages. We have not followed cunningly devised fables, nor need the trumpet give an uncertain sound. Ah, it MUST not give an uncertain sound, for we have "the certainty of the words of truth" (Prov. 22. 21), and we know Whom we have believed. It is a privilege to know the Lord Jesus Christ, and to rejoice in His lovingkindness. "In Whom we have redemption through His blood" is a precious realisation, and to help believers in the path of love's simple and trustful obedience, in the enabling of the Holy Spirit, is a privilege; and should we not be drawn more to ONE ANOTHER if drawn, in daily experience, nearer to our soon coming Lord?

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"He sent Him also Last," Mark 12. 6.

"Unto you First God sent Him." Acts 3. 26.

THERE is a beauty in each Scripture by itself, and we find increased beauty by comparing Scripture with Scripture. In God's dealings with Israel as a nation we find the Lord Jesus sent "last." This is a correction of a common dispensational mistake which implies a further national position and an "offer" of the kingdom from this standpoint, in the early chapters of Acts. Indeed this theory of an "offer," even

in the gospels, seems to put in a background position, (though unintentionally), that the Lord Jesus "came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Matt. 20. 28). "He sent Him also last!" In accord with this the fig tree was set aside "henceforward for ever" (Matt. 21. 19), and the house was no longer called "My Father's house." Mark the solemn words, "Your house is left unto you desolate" (Matt. 23. 38). In this context, however, there is a precious contrast, for the "not henceforth" (i.e. from this time, not, from this moment), is linked with a "till ye shall see." In other words, though the fig-tree **national** status on national ground is gone for ever, Israel as a saved nation of believing **individuals** shall be restored in the olive tree with Christ the Holy Root, and we may, and should, still "pray for the peace of Jerusalem."

"In like manner, He sent Him also last" did not interfere with the gospel to Israel. But it is not on a national basis; they are now part of "all nations" (Matt. 28. 19), and of "all the world" (Mark 16. 15), but "beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24. 47), where they were, the apostles went "to the Jew first" and God showed His love to sinners the more remarkably. "Unto you first" was fittingly a proof of grace in the city where Christ had been slain, and the same principle was illustrated again and again. But a Jew is saved as a sinner, just in the same way as a Gentile, and thus the two expressions perfectly harmonize in the perfect wisdom of the Holy Spirit. Thanks be to God for the Scriptures; may they be our food and joy.

"Love Thinketh No Evil." 1 Cor. 13. 4, 5.

IT is evident that love does not rejoice in iniquity; the very next verse in the chapter before us indicates this. Nor is love careless and indifferent. Far otherwise: the New Testament unites with the Old to show the intense hatred of sin wherever love exists. "Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity" is a wondrous and repeated description of the Lord Jesus in both parts of Scripture (Ps. 45. 7 with Heb. 1. 9).

But the inspired words before us show that love not only avoids all brooding over evil, it condemns the imputation of evil, for that is the definite meaning of the verb which the Holy Spirit employs in 1 Corinthians 13. 5. And if we are children of God, this message speaks powerfully to us to-day. It is easier to "impute", than we realize, One form of this sin is the imputation of motives. Unless a man declares what his purpose is, or unless the Holy Spirit indicates in Scripture, it is not our province to decide. This may seem a simple statement, but believers will find how far-reaching it is, and how much easier sin in this respect is than they have

hitherto imagined. The iniquity is intensified when the thought finds utterance. How many times one child of God has damaged the character of another, by giving a "plausible" explanation, assuming a wrong motive for a wrong action. And how many sins have been festered and increased thereby, with forbidden bitterness (Eph. 4. 31) and unloving retort. May we not go a step further? The explanation may be correct, and yet it is forbidden now, even as judgment (1 Cor. 4. 5). We must leave all with the Lord. Is this a test? It is a blessed one.

Again, we must not impute, even to those in error, the "inferences" which seem to us logical from their mistakes. We may point out the peril, but "imputation" is not entrusted to us. Further, how often dear believers, who long to show love, have unwisely attacked what they feel to be an error in prophetic interpretation, and said, "If you believe God has marked out intervening events, you are not looking for the Lord." Such "imputation" is unkind, though unintentionally so, and since the Hope shone brightly in the lives of those who were told they would personally die (John 21. 18, 2; Pet. 1. 14, 2 Tim. 4. 6, 7), the inference seems one that the Holy Spirit disapproves. What if it is the **natural** mind obtruding into the sphere which belongs to living and loving faith? This subject is a vast one, for we are all too hurried, and too quick to assume. The Lord Jesus commanded His disciples to be like men that waited for "their lord," and yet He spoke of a long journey and an occupying till He should come, lest any should think that the kingdom of God would immediately appear (Luke 19. 11). And it is hard to see how any can read Acts 1. 8 and think that the absence of a revealed intervening event is essential to holy watchfulness. Why do we lay such stress on this? Partly because so often dear children of God who urge this "inference" speak so glibly and harshly of others. Nor do they always seem to study prayerfully what has been written by those from whom they differ. Some of us who have, with deep exercise of heart, been caused to leave the usual interpretation have, at least, prayerfully pondered both sides, and it was only loyalty to what we felt were God's written words that led to the change. But we are concerned that there seems such a tendency to bitterness, and harshness, when some differ, and almost to despising. The writer remembers when he too felt Mr. George Muller was lacking light on this subject because he spoke of the Lord's people passing through the tribulation. And it was years before God brought me to see that the partial darkness was rather mine, and that the tribulation is distinguished from the wrath of God throughout Scripture, else I, as many others, might have continued in the confusion. But just now let us plead with children of God

while seeking to avoid all error, wherever found, nevertheless to avoid all "imputations." Never charge another with that which he does not hold! The Jew says we must believe in three instead of One God **because** by **faith** we rejoice in our **Triune** God. There are many who assume that we cannot accept the Deity of Christ when we rightly recognise His Humanity, but, by **faith**, we see that He took upon Him the form of a servant, which was not His originally. The Romanist objects that justification by grace through faith alone must excuse sin, whereas we rejoice in the fruit of a living faith. Many who are opposed to election say that those who exalt the covenant grace of God deny human accountability, when we accept Scripture simply, and do not attempt to explain by **human logic** Divine Sovereignty and man's deadness, yet nevertheless his legal liability before God. And so is it as to the solemn mysteries of God's perfect providence. Language can be easily framed to daringly attack God's character because of what He permits. This is the fruit of human inference. There are many encouragements to childlike **faith** in a ruined world. The "imputation" of harshness to those who believe in election is so natural, and seems so logical to those who make it, even as the "imputation" of a lack of "that Blessed Hope" seems so natural and logical to those who think that the first resurrection has stages, and that the "last trump" is not to be read with the finishing of the mystery of God in Revelation 10. And what is the result? "Imputation" leads to mutual misunderstanding, and instead of getting down before God, believers sow discord which the Lord hates (Prov. 6. 16-19).

Suffer a further word for His Name's sake, beloved readers. If children of God out of love's acknowledgement of Christ's "This do" use unleavened symbols at "the Breaking of Bread," they are called legal, and are told that "we are not to be occupied with **things**." The insinuation is unwittingly cruel. It implies that we cannot be spiritual if we keep to the bread which our beloved Lord used and about which He spoke, and if we not only omit the word "wine" (which He never used), but likewise omit the ferment which is **not** in "the fruit of the vine,"—His own precious and perfect wording. It "imputes" a wrong attitude of mind to those who are recognised as believers in Christ, whereas if "harshness" indicates a wrong attitude, do not writings on the other side betray this the more? Yet we dare not say that differing children of God are "willingly ignorant," or that they have no love when they alter His command. Far otherwise, we rejoice in their love, and long that ours too may increase. But "insinuations" neither illustrate love, nor feed it, beloved readers.

We do not plead for excusing of differences. If you feel any one is wrong, it is right to be sad over it, and to show

godly concern, and to seek that we may be of one mind; but do not "impute" wrong motives or evil condition, or your own inferences. Godly love does not hide the difference, but it sorrows **with love**, and; when we become more and more in this loving attitude, the Holy Spirit will cause us all to see more whence the error springs, and where the error lies, and we shall be drawn to Scriptural belief and practice, in His gracious inworking! Thus will there be humbling and reviving (Isa. 57. 15). But do not "imputations" erect barriers of pride, and hinder responsiveness to the Lord?

Finally, the words of Philippians 4. 8 may indicate that "impute" includes "thinking much about." The tense and context seem to suggest this. Love does not brood over evil. It is not occupied with it. If a brother is really in error, let us not dwell on this to the exclusion of praise for what God has done on his behalf (note 1 Cor. 1. 4). And even when we think of the evils in a ruined world, let not our love become cold by attacking **them** more than we remember **our Lord** (Matt. 24. 12). The angel of the church in Ephesus appears to have left his first love as he thought disproportionately about real evil. Do not let our minds be so full of fighting error, that we have no room for Christ, and His glory. Jude 3, has a precious balance, even when dealing with ungodly men (4). And how much we need this balance when dealing with the differences of those whose relationship to Christ seems probable, and **more than probable**. To be "occupied" with controversy will not feed the spiritual life. Let us be plain and point out error, let us honestly refuse to take part in that which would grieve our consciences before the Lord. Let us act definitely and firmly, but let not this be the whole of our life. Love to Christ is not a great negative, but a wondrous positive (1 Cor. 13. 6). It is not only, "I cannot do this," rather there is a fulness of "I joy to do that," yea, without talking of doing, the new life leads to "doing" with a tender graciousness. If you cannot have fellowship with actions of mine, do not be afraid to tell me because of a "fear" that I may become angry, and do not think I shall wish to force your agreement with me, or attribute difference to obstinacy of heart. And if I have the same hesitation, do not let me be afraid to speak lest you may, with a cold shoulder, or heart, spread insinuations that will hinder the repentance we all need. "Repentance" is the Lord's call to His people, as Revelation 2 and 3 show, and love that thinketh no evil desires to emphasize rejoicing in the truth (1 Cor. 13. 6), and to have more time for the glory of God and thinking upon **His Name** (Mal. 3. 16). It is the growing up into Christ in all things (Eph. 4. 15) which will be used by the Holy Spirit to remove rather than increase, the sad mutual suspicions that stand in the way of that true reviving which loves our Lord's Appearing, and looks for "that Blessed Hope."

Which Altar is Found in the Book of Revelation?

EVERY word of God is perfect, and when one word has two meanings He indicates His interpretation far more often than we think. The eight-fold mention of an altar in the Revelation is impressive, reminding us of the standpoint of worship throughout that book (6. 9, 8. 3, 5, 9. 13, 11. 1, 14. 18, 16. 7). Chapter 9. 13 gives a helpful key—it is the golden altar **before God**. Moses was told to make everything according to the pattern which he saw, a pattern of a still higher reality. Here we have the things in the heavens. He was instructed to put the golden altar before the veil, and thus before God. Revelation 11. 1 confirms this thought. The inner temple is measured and claimed; the court is cast out. So is it in the epistle to the Hebrews. Believers go within the veil, and, at the same time, without the camp. The **court** speaks of Israel's earthly calling and of their blessing in Christ, individually and nationally, in the future. Christ suffered there, at Jerusalem, in the outworking of the types; the brazen altar was there. No sacrifice was allowed on the golden altar. Romanism chooses to belong to the cast-out court. This interpretation is borne out by 8. 3, 5, where we have a stress on incense and prayer, and 14. 18, affords a solemnizing parallel, in answer to holy prayer for Christ's return. The same view is found in 16. 7; the vengeance is the vengeance of His temple (Jer. 50. 28). The holiness of God's judgment ever shines out.

Chapter 6. 9 remains, and we now realize that the saints there viewed are a people who belong to the holy place, and they are seen in the resting place, consciously waiting for their Lord's Coming. They are regarded thus as heavenly people, not of the court (this confirms all Scripture as to the great tribulation, which is **not** called God's wrath), and may help us to realize Paradise as a kind of portico of the third heaven ("into Paradise," "up to the third heaven," 2 Cor. 12. 4). The striking way in which Scriptures illustrate one another must ever be helpful to the believer, and our hearts long that we may more and more experience their practical power, and live in the light of the high and heavenly calling, as a people who represent on earth the glorious Lord Who, in an infinitely more wonderful way, represents them in heaven. The association of prayer with the altar of incense reminds us that our prayers rest upon, and within, the sacrifice of Christ, (see too Ex. 30. 10). The size of the scaffold of 2 Chronicles 6. 13 on which Solomon knelt is remarkably the same as the brazen altar (Ex. 27. 1), illustrating the same foundation of prayer and the "scaffold" is called by the **name** of the "laver," showing the need for holy cleansing too when we draw near. Hebrews 10. 2 has the twofold message.

Why do we find Genealogies, and Cities of Israel's Inheritance in Scripture?

"**T**HANKS be unto God for His Unspeakable Gift" (2 Cor. 9. 15). In the light of Christ and His salvation, we value "all Scripture" (2 Tim. 3. 16), and know that it is "profitable" throughout. There is a blessing in reading, and we praise God for this. It is, therefore, not with any spirit of criticism, or objection, that a child of God sometimes seeks His gracious guidance as to the **inclusion** of various lists of Scripture. Are they only catalogues of names, or has God some definite lesson for us? Romans 15. 4, and 1 Corinthians 9. 10 appear to give an immediate answer. It is well to realize that if they were only "catalogues of names," there would be a blessing in the realization that God provided, and arranged, for His people of old, and **will do for us**. His care for them has a parallel to-day, and day by day! It is important to remember that Israel were a real people, and the Scriptures have been given to bring vividly before us the realities of history, and of God's concern as to **our** daily life, **our** places of residence, **our** food, **our** clothing, and **our** all. And even if we did not, at first, come to see this, the humble acceptance of God's wisdom in appointing what should be in Scripture, would not be "blind" faith in the experience of those who already know Him, and the power of His written words. "Not to understand" is often a great help to lowliness. Hence there are two general blessings which we would ever seek more and more in our personal application.

It is easily possible to go further as to some of the genealogies. We may remember that there is only one **complete** line of chronology in Scripture. This is very remarkable. Cain's line has none at all. The only antedeluvian dating is on the line of promise. All Scripture is with a view to Christ.* Correspondingly some genealogies are definitely with a reference to Christ (or with appointed contrasts). One feels this at the end of Ruth, and albeit the contrast is seen in the list of Genesis 36. But there are many other catalogues in 1 Chronicles 1-8, and we learn how much more spiritual we need to be to use such passages to the glory of God than to use, for example, Ephesians 2. The strange "background" often emphasizes such verses as 1, 43, 4. 10, 23. 5. 20, 6. 49, the more definitely, showing us to bring a spiritual standpoint into our daily business.

Likewise is it with town lists as in Joshua 15. How impressive are verses 15, 19, 47, and 63. Possibly at first one may ask "Why 47?" But the teaching is clear as soon as we enter into verse 63, and learn the power of the long-unconquered Philistines, who were nevertheless **given** into Israel's hand. And have we not a spiritual parallel? Must

not a believer humbly say, "Do not I find unconquered parts of my life, of my inheritance, as it were, which the Lord is willing to subdue before me?" Our gracious Heavenly Father knows how slow we are to bring His work into all our ordinary circumstances, and thus He helps and encourages more by such lists of conquered cities, known and unknown, that we may anticipate fuller and fuller victory in the Holy Spirit.

The food of God's dear children is of primary importance, but we would not overlook, in closing, how these explicit particulars have been used to stimulate the archæologist, and to illustrate the truthfulness of Scripture. We may not need this vindication, but God has used it to lay low human pride, and to bring **some** to a reverence for Himself and His Word. And for this also we give thanks unto His Name.

*The mode of dating, as in the three days and three nights, a legal portion representing the whole, graciously prevents undue calculation of the day of Christ's near coming.

Fireworks.

I SAW them as I stood preaching the glorious gospel of God's grace. They flashed—and were gone; the blackness of darkness for ever. Each one made but a poor display; even the brightest only lasted for a few seconds. Yet such, I thought, are the world's pleasures. They amuse the children of this age, but there is nothing permanent, nothing to satisfy. How different is the gospel of Christ. And yet men turn, alas, from this, and seek their empty joys. The child's passing bubble, and the momentary firework sparks are but a fit picture of all that the world can give. "Truly every man walketh in a vain show." The attractions of novelty seem very real, but are they worth while? Is it wisdom, Esau-like, to despise heaven for a few trifles of tinsel, and to throw away true welfare for a fleeting merriness? The folly of sin seems its most remarkable characteristic—until we think of the iniquity of the sin against God: **that** is still greater than the folly. Man's basest ingratitude to his fellow is far less than man's ingratitude to God. But let me add to these words yet one greater climax—"Where sin **abounded**, grace did **much more abound**." Grace is no bubble, the Gospel is no mere firework. Christ saves and saves for ever. Will you neglect so great salvation? Or, if we have this blessedness, shall we neglect to make it known by lip and life, as God gives the opportunity?

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The Student of Scripture.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"The grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." 1 Timothy 1.14.

A Word of Introduction.

BY THE loving kindness of our God we can again seek to serve Him through the printed page. It is wondrous to contemplate His love in permitting, and enabling. We are not sufficient of ourselves to think anything of ourselves. We cannot boast; our gracious Lord has been so patient with us. He might have long ago dismissed us from His service. Humbly would we thank Him, and desire grace to walk much more worthily of Him. How one longs to be well pleasing to Him increasingly. We have this desire not only for our readers, but for ourselves. The glory of God is beyond all else; may it not only be our final object, but our present conscious aim. Not only in front of us as to the ultimate goal, but realized in our daily experience. It is with such a wish that these messages are sent forth.

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The Parables of the Lord Jesus.

SOME PREPARATORY THOUGHTS.

"YE ought to remember the words of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 20. 35) was the helpful testimony of Paul to the elders from Ephesus. At Nazareth the people "wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth" (Luke 4. 22), yet soon rose up to thrust Him out of the city, and to become, in intention, His murderers. Grace was indeed poured

over His lips (Ps. 45. 2), and well might the officers say, "Never man spake like This Man" (John 7. 46). The words of the Holy Spirit, through prophets and apostles, preserved in all Scriptures are equally inspired, but these holy men of God did not always experience this inspiration. Christ, on the other hand, spoke inerrantly at all times. Happy are we, if unlike those at Nazareth, and by contrast, like John the Baptist, we rejoice greatly because of the Bridegroom's voice (John 3. 29). This joy is the mark of His sheep (John 10. 27), even as it is the characteristic of the Bride, for "His lips are like lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh" (S. of S. 5. 13).

It is remarkable how many of the recorded utterances of the Lord Jesus are parabolic. This is the testimony of the Holy Spirit. On some occasions, "Without a parable spake He not unto them" (Matt. 13. 34). He Himself emphasized this aspect, "Therefore speak I to them in parables" (Matt. 13. 13). And we are told that this was in fulfilment of prophecy (Matt. 13. 35). It is important to ponder the reason. The disciples were contrasted with the multitude, because it was given to them to know "the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven." They were "within" the parables were addressed to those "without" (Mark 4. 11). Accordingly when the Lord Jesus reproved His dear people for their "unwisdom," with regard to their heavenly "generation" (Luke 16. 8) He used a parabolic mode of instruction even to them.* It is evident that "mysteries" are only known to those who are brought "within" (cf. 1 Cor. 2. 7, 8, 15. 51; Col. 1. 26, 27, etc.), and that parables contain veiled instruction. Hence we read, "Therefore speak I unto them in parables: because they seeing see not, and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand." The Lord knew the condition of the nation, and was never deceived by the temporary and outward enthusiasm (cf. John 5. 35). The heart was gross, and there was an unpreparedness for the "healing" which only belongs to the broken in heart (Matt. 13. 15 with Ps. 147. 3). Hence these messages were only beautiful stories to those who were not humbled, and were given with the intention that only the wise might understand (Mark 4. 11, 12, see Dan. 12. 10; Hos. 14. 9). We think of the "very lovely song" of Ezekiel 33. 32, and the sad blindness of the people generally, though glad of heart that some were brought to experience a wondrous salvation.

* The writer is looking to God for grace, strength and wisdom to issue a book on the subject, and possibly some parts will appear in this magazine. He has found much spiritual help in the study, and expects more, for the Lord does not fail. It may be added that there are already about 30 Typewritten Notes on the Parables of Christ since the previous list was issued, and believers are welcome to the use of copies for a fortnight.

WE have seen that the Lord Jesus Himself uses the word "parable" which occurs 50 times, and is also rendered "comparison" or "figure" (Heb. 9. 9). The Holy Spirit, moreover, alludes to a type as "a parable with a view to the time now present," and thus we observe the close link between the types and parables. This is important. The one is usually in materials and actions, the other in words: thus **both** contain parallels **and** contrasts:—for every figure designedly falls short in showing. For example, the glory of the Lord Jesus and His work. The Hebrew term is rendered "parable" 18 times, and "proverb" 19, for a proverb is often a condensed simile. The later Scriptures only once render "parable" in this way (Luke 4. 23), usually employing another term (John 16. 25, 29; 2 Pet. 2. 22), equally setting forth the opposite of speaking "plainly." We may therefore expect some things hard to be understood, and the Lord Jesus indicated that He would thus "utter things which have been kept secret" (Matt. 13. 35). It behoves us, therefore, to be reverently attentive and to seek God's gracious instruction as to the "things new and old," brought before our responsive hearts.

Such thoughts prepare us for a very important inference. Unless the Holy Spirit records the interpretation as with "the Sower" and "the tares," we must be careful not to use any parable to prove our opinion, instead of corroborating what has been revealed by God elsewhere. Many dear children of God have gone astray by building on types, in accord with their own ideas. The type was appointed perfectly, but we must not interpret, and say, "This is that," **unless we have Divine evidence**. In other words, parables and types, confirm, illustrate, amplify and impress, but, if we find no definite **Scriptural** clue, it may be we understand amiss. One realises the havoc through the so-called "spiritualising" of Scripture, and there are serious errors by human inferences of godly believers, e.g. regarding much as a type of those said to be caught up before the tribulation, which they have wrongly linked with the flood, albeit the flood was quite contrasted wrath. Many have thus been hindered in prayerful study of the prophetic Scriptures by these well-intended deductions. How vast, too, has been the superstructure of dangerous teaching founded on the theory that the gospel "leavens" the ruined world. It is so easy for us all to put **our interpretation** of a parable on a level with the words of God: may we be granted humility and discernment, lest His people be led astray. It is not with a sense of personal infallibility that these expositions are taken in hand, but with a desire for personal discipleship, and discipleship is always lowly, and the prayers of other disciples are a treasured possession.

* We may hesitate as to the expression: "The parable of the unjust steward," for strong evidence is needed, when the Holy Spirit omits this word. Serious errors have been introduced through many assuming that we have "The parable of the rich man and Lazarus" in Luke 16. Satan would ever explain away Scripture.

ion, that our Father may not be dishonoured, nor the Holy Spirit grieved.

It is important to answer at once the common objection. "You must not press a point too far." It is often associated with a failure to realise the fulness of plenary inspiration. We venture to assert that when the Lord gives a parable, **every word has a meaning** whether we understand it or not; His own explanation in one case illustrates this fulness (Matt. 13. 37-41), and shows a helpful way of writing out others, with a column for the meaning (and another for parallel Scriptures as evidence). If Christ refers to the "joy" of the buyer in Matthew 13. 44, **there is a reason**†: if He alters the language from "came down" in Luke 10. 31, to "as He journeyed" in 33 **there is a reason**‡. If He changes from "which was lost" in Luke 15. 6, to "which I had lost" in 9, there is a reason.§ Every sentence, every word, every order, every tense will contribute its blessing. If the Lord wished to omit anything (e.g. "the fold" in Luke 15. 4) the omission is spiritually helpful: the silence as to any buying in Matthew 25. 11, is full of instruction, the final view is "they went to buy." One there is Who if He goes **to do** a work goes **and does it** (John 14. 2; 3), but this cannot be said of all.

Such examples might be multiplied but the last enforces a very precious point. The parables have a solemnising, and refreshing practical **message**. Though they veil truth from the unready, they impress it on the disciple, and are full of blessing as to the Person of the Lord Jesus and His work, and as to the accountability of sinners who make light of God's message (Matt. 22. 5), and the responsibility of believers to occupy till their Lord comes. These are not only narratives of beauty. They appeal to the heart, and bring before God's beloved people His gracious messages for their deep heart-searching, and only as we have the application, by the Holy Spirit, in our daily life, can we truly profit. The words of God are not given to make us clever, but lovingly obedient, and we shall find parable after parable to make us grateful for grace to the graceless, and, awakening praise, to summon to love's devotedness even though the words are not added as in Luke 10. 27. "Go and do thou likewise." Let it be repeated that the ruin of man, the redemption of Christ, the work of the Holy Spirit, the path of the believer and the coming again of our Lord will alike be before us, and in a deeply practical setting, that all our studies may bring forth fruit both now, and in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ, and may we not hope that some reader will, through these meditations see, by faith, for the first time, "the Lamb of God Who taketh away the sin of the world," and realise the joy of the gift of eternal life by His finished work?

(If the Lord will, to be continued.)

* Note Hebrews 12. 2.

† The Good Samaritan was not going down "by chance."

‡ No blame attaches to The Shepherd

How is He then His Son? Luke 20. 44.

THE Lord Jesus does not deny that Messiah is the Son of David, but He asks "How?" The answer is found in other Scriptures, e.g. "Of the seed of David according to the flesh" (Rom. 1. 3). There we have the stress by our Lord Himself in His two natures in the days of His flesh. And it is so throughout.

A careless reading of many verses leads to confusion. Other questions of the Lord Jesus have been misinterpreted, e.g. "Why callest thou Me good?" (Mark 10. 18). There is no denial of Godhead, any more than of goodness, in this passage. Some would make it a rejection of the former: if so, it would be a denial of goodness also. The point of the question is "Why?" The young man attributed goodness on a wrong basis: he imagined it was inherent in certain men, and that eternal life was obtainable by the works of such. The Lord Jesus cuts at the root of this, and shows that eternal life is because He, Who was over all, God blessed for ever, became a Man to die for sinners. No man is able to gain life. There is a wealth of teaching as to the person of Christ, the ruin of man, and the way of salvation, in the single word "Why?"

In like manner, many have misunderstood the precious quotation of Psalm 22. 1 on the cross. The Lord Jesus did not utter such words petulantly, or complainingly, or ignorantly. "Why hast Thou forsaken Me?" indicates "**With what object?**" suggesting a precious and glorious purpose, and for our sakes He spoke (John 11. 42) and for our sakes this is written (1 Cor. 9. 10), that we may rejoice, the more intelligently and praisefully, in the fruit of His atonement.

These thoughts show the importance of prayerfully seeking grace in the contextual study of the Holy Scriptures, and remind us how dependent we are on the Holy Spirit for the right "accent" and emphasis. There is all the difference between the tone of "How" in "How can Satan cast out Satan?" and in the verse before us. We realize that when Mary asked "How shall this be?" she implied "It shall be, but how?" for her faith is recorded (Luke 1. 45). And if we read Luke 12. 27 as a question there is no doubt as to the fact, "Consider the lilies: how do they grow?" In like manner (John 7. 15 is a question of surprise based on fact—"How knoweth This Man letters?" As a rule "How can?" implies an impossibility, or that which seems so to the questioner (John 3. 4, 9, 6. 52, etc.). And it is worthy of notice that the Lord Jesus in His question does not say, "How can He be His Son?" The perfection of His language is ever precious, and we adore. That which was hidden from the wise and prudent has been revealed, and we behold Him Who was before Abraham, yet Who became a Man in the fulness of time, and was made under the law, that He might redeem poor, guilty sinners and that we might become the righteousness of God in Him (2 Cor. 5. 21).

A little Service Abroad.

“FOR HIS NAME'S SAKE.”*

WE were strangers in a small town in Belgium. I wondered if the Lord would enable a gospel meeting there. A café was before me with an adjoining hall. Would the proprietor let it? Yes, and for a reasonable sum. But he realized we were not Catholics,—he was a freethinker—and still (to my surprise, for Rome is mighty) expressed willingness, and finished the sentence that we hoped he would come, with the words, “be converted.” We went away to ponder: it seemed God's will, so we returned to the town another day, with the draft of an invitation—to be printed. Would he not draw back now? He went away, and came back. Still willing. I paid, and felt drawn to show confidence by desiring no receipt. God seemed to lead against going to a printer near, previously noticed. We went on, at last a printer was before us. It was Tuesday: the meeting, God willing, was to be Wednesday. Could we have proof by midday? Frankly he said “No.” We pondered: he gave us another address. We paused near, (the three brethren in Christ), to converse: it was suggested the printer might naturally hesitate to print for a **gospel** meeting. Suddenly he came up to refute our fears: if we could come a little later, we should have the proof. Agreed: we were strangers, and proposed a deposit. No, he trusted us implicitly. These “details” might have taken us ten times as long: we might have tried ten cafés instead of the first. Our Heavenly Father knew our need, and the emergency of pioneer service.

In between, we went via Luxembourg to France for a little service, and returned, encouraged in the Lord, for the “proof.” The promise was exactly fulfilled. A joyous evening of service in a Luxembourg town, among residents and Italians, was granted. Wednesday morning we arrived: the cards were quite ready. Taking some, we visited the hall. Could we pay a little, and make it our headquarters for prayer, etc., during the one day of making known? Yes, but the payment was firmly refused. Could we write up large notices and put on the entrance to the hall? Yes. The proprietor himself helped to put it up, unmidful if his paint was spoilt. Truly God can work. (Later, part was torn down but **not taken away**: it was put back, and no further damage done).

It was a joy to see men pull out an already possessed card, when asked if they would accept one. Few, very few, were thrown away. Yet we wondered if nobody would come, or if there would

* The study of Scripture is bound with love's concern for souls: hence we do not hesitate to include this little record of grace in “The Student of Scripture,” praying that God may use it to stimulate love and prayer.

be an uproar, but we looked to our Father. He knows all, and loves so wondrously. During the day we sought the works, to give out the invitations, with their precious gospel text (1 Tim. 1. 15).* One brother had been bitterly opposed by officials in the adjoining Luxembourg town. I felt I had better go there instead, and **also** avoid a certain hot bed. Ignorantly going in another direction, I was summoned, almost furiously, into the Gendarmerie itself; one leading official thundered and threatened; the Lord gave peace, though I know how easily such can “hold up,” and I wished to rejoin brethren. A cell was suggested: a blow seemed probable. “The Angel of the Lord encampeth round about.” Another official alternately thundered **and** listened—and our Lord was removing the storm. The sun shone: invitations were handed round the office. The almost-assailant was evidently surprised that we loved him: he readily shook hands twice, and all others once, and without a word of check or warning, I went on my way rejoicing. God had won that victory: not unimportant in needy Luxembourg. Let us give thanks unto Him, and “continue in prayer.”

Brethren were met; the service was continued, and prayer. 7.30 drew near: one man arrived early, would he remain? Others were curious, but outside: they would come in later, so they said. What should we do? Not knowing, but looking up, we ventured to start. More gathered: some stayed part of the time, but many to the end. The words “Entrance free” on the invitation were a help. “You believed my words, although a stranger, and came: God has given His words of welcome: will you hesitate to come? The entrance here is free for an evening because we paid the expense. The entrance to God's glorious Presence for eternity is free, because the blood of Christ has paid the great cost.” The exact words are forgotten but the gist may help. A few words from Luke 1. 47 and John 2. 5,—and three elderly women walked out: the testimony that Mary also needed a Saviour was not welcome to all. But there was wondrously maintained order, among dear rough fellows who had perhaps never been to such a meeting before, and possibly 70 in all were present, or more. Thanks be to God for grace. A “priest” came outside but did nothing. The printer fulfilled his further promise and came: may the Lord's work be seen. Nearly 20 gave in their names and addresses afterwards for New Testaments. An elderly man and his wife who spoke with us indicated that they knew of none others owning God's Name in all the town. It was a precious opportunity which could be repeated (in answer to prayer) in, I am persuaded, a hundred places, though with varied trials, and with a constant call to lowliness and dependence. The attendance was the more remarkable because practically all the notices were **not given out till the very day**. If we printed thus in London, we

* We can send a copy to any desiring.

should rejoice if five came. Beloved friends, there are real opportunities, and open doors, and we long to follow up God's work. A brother will seek to visit the houses of those desiring a New Testament‡ and the faithful printer, etc. We long to see souls saved. We could not then stay in the town. A week's earnest meetings would, in some such places, probably bring personal dealing and fuller blessing. We need God's enabling and guidance. Pray for the foreign work committed to our care, that it may be humbly in the enabling of the Holy Spirit.

‡ During part of his season from daily business, together with another brother who is remaining some weeks, a few miles off, in the Lord's loving service. (Later:—The Lord has enabled much except the printer: my omission of reminder).

**"The living, the living, he shall praise
Thee,"** Isaiah 38. 19.

HEZEKIAH rightly realized that praise should be prominent. The wondrous experience he had was a background for thanksgiving. And have not we received wondrous mercies? We are often ungrateful. We lack a holy memory. Of Israel it is written "They sang His praise: they soon forgot His works" (Ps. 106. 12, 13). There is much instruction for our hearts in the link of these sentences. Only one out of ten returned to give thanks, and we still find the same ingratitude to-day. We pray more as to trials than we praise for deliverance. Needs bring us to the throne of grace, yet God's supplies are often received as "a matter of course,"—but surely they are from the throne of **grace**. We have so many mercies that we have become used to them, and almost complain if these are apparently withheld for awhile.

The holy attitude before us is well illustrated by Psalm 118. 17, "I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord." Whenever we are spared and enabled, it is not that we may please ourselves, but that we may serve Him Who has blessed us. Our lives are to be to His glory. Let us seek to feel this more and more. "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for my soul" (Ps. 66. 16).

And there is another aspect which needs earnest realization. We were dead in trespasses and sins (Eph. 2. 1), we have been quickened and begotten to a living hope (1 Pet. 1. 3). The new life is able to praise spiritually. Though all men ought to acknowledge their **Creator**, and though this recognition is to be emphasized, yet spiritually, even to-day, "the dead praise not the Lord" (Ps. 115. 17).

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"When he came, and had seen the grace of God, he was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord." Acts 11. 23.

A Word of Introduction.

IT IS a joy to continue in the things which we have learned (2 Tim. 3. 13). This joy is the privilege of the believer. He has no need to change with the times. He dare not change with the times. Scripture is not "relative truth," if there is such a thing. The Words of God are absolute truth, and we cannot vary from them. These pages are associated with a frank and earnest recognition of God's way of salvation, and of the Holy Scriptures as authoritative. We have no wish to restate, or modernize, God's message. We accept the gospel for the first century as the gospel for the twentieth. Sin may change its form, yet is it essentially the same. And God's gracious salvation by the blood of Christ remains the same.

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THE PARABLES OF THE LORD JESUS (continued).

The Parables of Matthew 13.

THE Lord Jesus sometimes spoke one parable by itself, as far as we know, but usually two or more (e.g. Luke 5. 36-39, 13. 18-21). The "threefoldness" of Luke 14 is before us, and the three "panels" and threefold finding, in chapter 15. As the Book of Psalms contains parallel lines in the majority of verses, so the parabolic teaching of Christ is normally given, that we may compare the parables with one

another, and mark the appointed **contrasts** as well. We have seen that the Book of Proverbs bears the very name "Parables," and do we not find the same twofoldness in most verses there?

But Matthew 13 has a yet fuller structure, and though the Lord uttered parables before this (Matt. 9. 14-17; 12. 29). He Himself laid a great stress on the understanding of the Sower. "Know ye not this parable? And how then will ye know all parables?" (Mark 4. 13). Furthermore, it is in this context that He was pleased to explain most plainly why He thus spoke, and to give the (unusual) explanation of two parables as a key to other passages also. Moreover two of these precious similitudes, at least, were uttered for emphasis on another occasion also (The Mustard Seed and The Leaven). It seems therefore that we may humbly expect God's gracious help in parabolic interpretation if we take this chapter **first**; nor shall our faith be disappointed.

The setting is impressive. The Lord Jesus turned from "this wicked generation" in chapter 12. 45, and emphasized the new relationship of those who did the will of the Father (12. 50), even as He led up to the new order of scribes in 13. 52. There is thus a putting aside of mere Judaism, and we are not surprised to find His own description, the mysteries of the **kingdom of heaven**" (13. 11). Mysteries are not mysterious to all, but only opened to those who have opened hearts and eyes. May we be such! The "kingdom of heaven," or more literally "of the heavens" is not mentioned in any other book. It is observable that Matthew's gospel alone refers to the "church" by name. The fact that the Holy Spirit uses "the kingdom of God" in a retrospective passage as Matthew 21. 43 reminds us that "the kingdom of the heavens" involved a fresh status, and was viewed as future in Matthew 3. 2, 4. 17. When we realise that the Sower evidently is the Lord Jesus personally, in both the first two parables (Matt. 13. 37, see Mark 4. 14), we regret the omission by our translation of the definite article in verse 3, "Behold **the** Sower went forth (or came out, John 16. 28) to sow." Not only does this set forth His pre-eminence throughout the parables, but we have His own description of His earthly ministry. And inasmuch as "the kingdom of the heavens" tells of a heavenly calling, based on His atonement, it is fitting that in the first passage we do not read "the kingdom of the heavens is like," albeit we have the "word of the kingdom" (19). It is not till the second parable that we find the kingdom of the heavens inaugurated, and there the field has been purchased and the word "His" bears this testimony. So exact is the language of the Holy Spirit. Nor is it the exactness of strained effort, but of perfect wisdom.

The Lord Jesus was the Sower. How He delighted in the **word**. In ministry, amid temptations, when raised from the dead, He ever laid stress on **the word**. Alas, that men seek

to introduce something else. **The Word, and the Word only**, is to be sown. "They have Moses and the prophets." And Paul could testify thus, "saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come" (Acts 26. 22). The human heart craves for novelty, excitement, and amusement, but we would preach Christ crucified. He is altogether worthy. The excellence of the message, and the perfection of the Preacher, did not mean that all received. The human ear is not changed by hearing the proclamation, any more than by the holy government of Christ's kingdom (Rev. 20. 8). How we need to look upward, and, while we feel our need, refuse to be discouraged, laying hold of the precious promise that "a seed shall serve Him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation" (Ps. 22. 30). And thus, in the fourfold ground (suggesting, it may be, the parallel world-wide condition), there is **one** soil that in "good." The ploughed ground, the prepared ground, welcomes the seed aright. Christ shall see of the travail of His soul, and be satisfied (Isa. 53. 11).

But it is observable that, in every case, attitude to **the word** both at the time of hearing and afterwards, is brought before us. The wayside heares does not understand **the word**, the rocky ground hearer receives it with joy, but in the absence of a living root and of the continued moisture of inner fellowship with God, receives in vain that which brings out the failure is "tribulation or persecution . . . because of **the word**;" (cf. John 17. 14). The thorny ground shows the choking of **the word**. In every case where there is failure, we behold a wrong relationship to **God's Word**. Many have arisen to-day who would speak well of the Lord Jesus, but they disparage the full authority of the Words of Truth. This attitude is criminal. The Lord Jesus showed the importance of associating Himself and His words (Mark 8. 38), and said, "If a man love Me, he will keep My words" (John 14. 23). If the twentieth century thinks otherwise, the twentieth century is wrong. Men may think us behind the times if we look back to the first century, but believers are actually "before the times" for they look onward to the appearing of the Lord Jesus, "which in His times He shall show" (1 Tim. 6. 15).

Every true child of God has received **the word** aright. In Matthew 13. 23 we have hearing and understanding, reminding as of 1 John 5. 20 and Luke 24. 45. And the holy result is fruit. Is not this important? The aim throughout is fruit, God has a right to fruit. His holy perfection must emphasize fruit. To excuse the absence of fruit would be sin. The vineyard that rendered no fruit was taken from the husbandmen (Matt. 21. 34, 41), and the test whether of the fig tree in Luke 13. 6-9, or of the branch in John 15. 2 is fruit (cf. Matt. 3. 10; 7. 16-20): nothing can take the place of this. God is not seeking cleverness or greatness. The searching character of this

parable is now more evident. It is not only dispensational, or general. It has a personal message. Do we bring forth fruit? Have we a holy response to His love in our lives? Our Bible study is with the object of fruit. Every word of God rightly received is fruitful (Col. 1. 6); If there is no fruit, the fault is with us. And in this connection we feel the personal application of the whole passage. Though children of God are a new creation, it is still possible to treat some portions of God's truth in a fleshly way. Is it not easy to find verses of God's testimony towards which even we are more like wayside hearers? And are there not other verses we welcomed till trial and isolation came in on account of the holy principles they set forth. And now—what effect have these messages in our daily life? Can we find in ourselves some humbling, yet precious, passage which has been choked because we have become more worldly than we once were? Thanks be unto God, if there are portions of His truth which bring forth fruit—more fruit. But it may be that His teaching as to the judgment seat of Christ only as thirty fold, and that as to prayer only sixtyfold. Are there not differences in our assimilation of our Lord's gracious instruction? Do we not desire rather the climax hundredfold (Gen. 26. 12) with regard to all God's will? And, if our heart is tender (2 Chron. 34. 27), this will be the result increasingly. The wayside is hard, and the rocky ground hard. The usual translation "stony" seems to miss the point. We have here the rock underneath, and a layer of dust like earth—linked with the serpent—on the surface. And,—striking indeed is Christ's description,—it is here that we find joy. Men urge a "happy" giving of the heart to God, without brokenness. When the spirit of grace shall be poured out upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the land will mourn; every family apart (Zech. 12, 10, 12). Men have a new theory, a more palatable gospel and mode of profession. But is it the work of the Holy Spirit or strange fire? Where is conviction of sin to-day? Is it sought? Is it expected? The comfortable preaching of an emotionally received gospel is the evidence of a hard heart. This diagnosis is startling, but it is perfect. The One Who spoke these words knew what was in men. The more we ponder, the more we realize the remarkable force of Christ's words. "Anon with joy receiveth it" may at first seem an encouragement. But it is the reverse. Is it a mark of love not to be moved to anguish by the judgment which broke upon the Lord? Is it an evidence of a work of grace to be so glad at personal salvation, that there is a slight sense of sin? Surely such joy is innate selfishness and the proof of a hard heart toward the Lord. And this is exactly what He sets forth! Yet many seek after emotional joy and hurried profession, and almost slur over the deep and painful work of God. The Lord Jesus unveils the real character of this happiness; many are too hard hearted

to have felt anything of what their sin means to the Lord Jesus. Will they find themselves among His people in that Day? The theory of salvation by verbal acceptance of Romans 10. 9 as a formula, or by the criterion of "I am happy because I am saved" is very dangerous, and all who encourage it are unconsciously cruel. "A broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise" (Ps. 51. 17), and the context there suggests our need, albeit we are believers. Do we not sometimes have joy that is not in the Lord (Phil. 4. 4), and that lacks loving sorrow over sin? Do we enter into our Lord's standpoint and feelings as we should? Need it be stated that there is a joy in the beginning of the Christian life, and after, and that the added words in 1 Thessalonians 1. 6 ("of the Holy Spirit") are blessedly linked with the added contrast, even persistency amid "affliction." The Holy Spirit never leads to a light view of sin (Zech. 12. 10).

This passage agrees with other solemnizing parables; there is no thought that God will cast out those who have come to Him, or that saved ones will become unsaved. The grafted-in branch that is taken away in John 15 is not said to become fruitless; it is never seen with any root at any time, and the third ground is thorny before the good seed is sown, and this shows relationship to the first Adam, and a curse (Gen. 3. 17; Heb. 6. 8,—an important help in the explanation of this oft-misunderstood passage). Again, we behold the exact wording of the Holy Spirit. But the fact of eternal salvation never excuses carelessness. Only as we bring forth fruit are we welcomed to enjoy assurance. The test is not orthodoxy but living fruit, for faith worketh by love. Although the ministry of the Lord Jesus is primarily before us, the principles abide. We, too must preach **the word**. Fresh opinions and plausible theories are to be as nothing to us. We are not to please men. The rejected testimony must be given as in Luke 14. 17-20. We may not give the pearls of gospel promises to those who are unclean (Matt. 7. 6); but we are bidden to sound forth the gospel testimony, and as the watchman of Ezekiel 33. 7 to hear the word at God's mouth, and warn them from Him. Our message is not to change with changing times. The gospel is still the power of God unto salvation. And thanks be unto God there will yet be good ground. If we preach anything else we becloud the issue, for only by a right attitude to **GOD'S WORD** can the true believer be discovered. The wicked one hates **THE WORD**; the child of God brings forth fruit thereby. This is of vital importance. No other ground is good. No other ground produces anything for the Lord's garner. Happy, indeed, are they who "having heard the word keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience" (remaining under; Luke 8. 15). So shall He have the glory when He comes back.

Inasmuch as the Lord Jesus makes this a test parable (Mark 4. 13), we expect that the seed and fine flour will elsewhere portray that which is from Him, and the birds of the air indicate the work of the evil one. But before we reach these in the parable of the mustard seed, we have the tares, of which as we have seen, the Lord Jesus gives His own detailed explanation. And it is the first parable of "the kingdom of the heavens" indicating a contrast with local Judaism, and also with outward glory. The Sower is first before us. He sows nothing but good seed. His people belong to Him and He sends them into the world, ("the field is the world") to bring forth fruit. Helpfully we learn the blessing wrapped up in our earthly circumstances, if we use them aright. He has authority over the earth; it is His field (note John 17. 2), but He does not now show that authority in judgment. He will yet take the heathen as His inheritance (Ps. 2. 8, 9); but at present He "sits" (Ps. 110. 1). He looks for the witness of His people while He is "away"; they are sown with this object. He abides in the house (Matt. 13. 27). It is beautiful to realize that types, and parallels, are often twofold. Are not the servants themselves among the good seed? (cf. the bride and the body in Ephesians 5). The good seed is in the earth, but they also have fellowship with Him in the house. And they bring everything to Him, and rightly wait for His answer and counsel, unlike Israel (Ps. 106. 13); and Saul (1 Sam. 13. 12), and the disciple in Luke 22. 49, 50. Their concern is as to the tares, which do not appear at once, and this is well. But how came the tares? "An enemy hath done this." Observe the same antipathy to the seed as in Matthew 13. 19, but there we find taking away, here an adding. How has this been done? "While men slept." The Master is not said to have slept. The enemy is guilty, but he has taken advantage of sleep. The disciples entered into temptation in Gethsemane through sleep. As this dispensation begins, so it ends, with failure through sleep. "While the Bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept." Ah, we will not say "ends"; there shall be a gracious reviving, and those who are His will be "ready," but there is much to search us in this twofold "sleep." It is a key to the history of Christendom. It has a message for our personal life: we cannot excuse ourselves. We have not chosen evil deliberately, but have we kept awake? The enemy does not sleep.

(If the Lord will, to be continued.)

The privileges of a believer are more in number, greatness, and precious value than we can estimate: let us not live as if we were in penury. The Holy Spirit makes these privileges real to the heart and mind.

Evolution—A Myth.

IMAGINE a theory without a foundation, and without a real example, and without a proof,—and you have evolution. The natural man rejects God's revelation, and he is turned unto fables (2 Tim. 4. 4). It is amazing that seemingly wise men are so willing to embrace whatever would invalidate God's revelation. From the standpoint of human thought, some of us feel we are too sceptical to be revolutionists. The demands on our faith, of those who reject true faith, are too great. How is it possible that men should become so enamoured of this theory? There is only one solution. An enemy is "designing," and he hates God's truth, and hates God's emphasis on the fall. The special attack of evolution is on the fall, and we know who was at work then (Gen. 3. 1-6). If there was no fall, there is no salvation. Salvation by the blood of Christ stands with Genesis 3 (John 5. 46, 47).

Evolution has no room for love. It has nothing of love to God, and love to fellow creatures, unselfishness and sympathy are fundamentally against evolution. This moral, or rather immoral, aspect is self-condemnatory. The gospel presents in every point a perfect and entire contrast. For example, the gospel declares how ruined man was brought down by sin: evolution assumes development. The gospel tells of a new creation from above: evolution imagines a change from within. The gospel provides amazing mercy for the worthless: evolution would let them die out, or exterminate them. Evolution is the glory of self-assertiveness: the gospel leads to the Holy Spirit's stress on self-denial. Every point is opposed. This is not merely an "accident." It may be important to mention the absence of "in between" species, countless links, which should be found as to all forms of life by the myriad, if the theory were true. But it is even more important to show the moral tendency of this vain "philosophy,"—for it cannot be called "science" (i.e., objective knowledge). It is most important to preach Christ and Him crucified, the only hope of fallen sinners!

If evolution were true, "nature" should have less marks of beneficence. The only interpretation of nature (as of history) is that found in Scripture. There are blemishes to be found in nature; there is sufficient confusion to show that something has gone wrong. But the marks of order, and of beneficence are preponderating in so many ways that the only fair explanation is—the mighty power of sin, but the mightier power of God. Yes. His power is infinitely greater, and He can save even evolutionists to-day, and the heart-burdened sinner is welcome to Him at once. What a blessedness there is in God's grace. Evolution not only gives me no love, but no one to love. Salvation brings me into God's family. It is not only logically and morally precious, but spiritually beyond all parallel. Well may the believer live a life of praise.

"I Judge him not." John 12, 47.

THE words of the Lord Jesus are of deep dispensational importance. Far from denying judgment, or its right and righteousness, He declares it. "The word that I have spoken the same shall judge him in the last day" (48). The contrast of time is impressive. "I came **not** to judge the world," but He will come in flaming fire taking vengeance (2 Thess. 1. 2). He now sits—but sits "until" (Ps. 110. 1). "When once the Master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door" (Luke 13. 25), there will be a manifest change. God now gives space to repent, but when transgressors are come to the full, there will be appointed judgment. The contrast finds an illustration in Genesis 15. 16 and 1 Samuel 15. 3. God is never before His time, but He is never late. It is this perfect discrimination which the natural man does not understand, and, reading superficially, he imagines contradictions. "God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world" (John 3. 17); our adorable Saviour came to save sinners (1 Tim. 1. 15), and to call them (Luke 5. 32).

This principle affects a believer. He cannot, consistently with Scripture, take any part in politics, judicial repression, penal force, or warfare. He is a stranger and pilgrim. Hence the change of tense rings out once more; "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto (the) wrath; for it is written, Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, saith the Lord" (Rom. 12. 19).* We can safely commit the keeping of our souls to Him (1 Pet. 4. 19).

The same aspect is included in John 8. 11. "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." It has been helpfully pointed out that accusers were necessary (Deut. 17. 6; 19. 15), and the Lord significantly points to their departure. Moreover, far from excusing the woman's sin, He would remind her by this allusion that she deserved death, and would lead her (as the man of John 5. 14) to hate sin. He ever saves with a stress on holiness. "Neither do I condemn thee" gives no protection for the sinner in the future; justification is a precious contrast with the fruit of enjoyed sanctification. The Lord Jesus has referred to Himself as the One without sin (John 8. 7), and thus hints here His coming back. The judgment will come, but now God waits, and the two-fold thought of Romans 2. 4 (forbearance) and Romans 3. 24 (grace) may well awaken the humble praise of His redeemed people.

*Leave room for wrath, God's wrath at the appointed time. If we take His place we usurp: we are to leave place for Him, but not for the devil (Eph. 4. 27).

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The Student of Scripture.

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"He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing." John 15. 5.

A Word of Introduction.

THE Lord Jesus lovingly shows both aspects. He does not only say what we cannot do. He encourages our hearts, by making clear what He is willing to do through us. And there have been Children of God who have brought forth much fruit, by "abiding." Why may not we humbly glorify Him in the same way? Our Father is the Same. We still have the Scriptures. The Holy Spirit still indwells believers. To encourage both writer and readers in the Lord, are these pages sent forth. If we are among the called of Jesus Christ, we may enjoy much more the privileges and victories of faith. The Lord's hand is not shortened. His hand is not straitened. The only straitening is in ourselves. Let us trust HIM.

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THE PARABLES OF THE LORD JESUS (continued).

The Parables of Matthew 13.

The devil's object is to take advantage of our slumbering. Hence the stress on holy wakefulness in the conflict of Ephesians 6. 10-18, and 1 Thessalonians 5. 6-8. We see further, that Satan is not said to pluck up the seed. He cannot, but he can divide the people of God. He sows in the midst. Likewise in John 10 the thief comes to kill,—yet we are not told he kills. But the wolf comes and actually catches and scatters (verse 12). Thanks be to God, he cannot destroy; neither the

enemy, nor the tares, nor even the sleep can kill the wheat. The enemy divides, and accomplishes this oft-times by "imitation Christians." Tares are not unlike wheat—at first. The word is strikingly chosen; by derivation it suggests "vomiting," and this plant has been said to be the only one of the grass family with poisonous seeds. It produces dizziness. The spiritual parallel is impressive. The surprising fact is before us that the enemy is a patron of some mass movement of "Christian profession" in the present age, linked with a veiling of his personal activity. If we deny this, we deny Christ's parable. If we acknowledge this, we must grieve over Christendom. And this one fact will separate us from human methods to gain numbers and to attain success. Constantine's attitude and the after history of Europe, with so-called "Christian countries" to-day, are explicable in the light of these words, not otherwise. And this simple acknowledgment logically involves the break of humble discipleship from "state churches," and from the great denominations of to-day. The words "Let both grow together until the harvest" refer to the field, i.e., the world. It seems strange that any, in spite of Christ's interpretation, argue in favour of mixture in a Christian assembly. The whole principle of Scripture, and such passages as 1 Corinthians 5, 2 Timothy 2, and Revelation 2 and 3 impress on believers the need for holy separatedness in a local gathering. We cannot reform the world, nor purge Christendom, but we must seek to carry out all the will of the Lord humbly with those who call upon Him out of a pure heart. "Let both grow" does not only imply that believers are not to use the sword. Indeed, that is not the primary aspect, though elsewhere emphasized against Rome's sad perversions. Satan sows his counterfeit, yet he is not here associated with giving physical life; but religious profession. Hence if the planting is not birth, the uprooting is not death. It may seem to involve drastic measures, hence it is fitting that reapers (angels), and not the servants, are thus used, during this dispensation, even as the servants of Matthew 22:13 are distinguished by the Holy Spirit's word from those of verses 3 and 4 (cf. too "His armies," 7). "Here is the patience and faith of the saints" (Rev. 13:10). The removal of nominal Christian profession is before us—the gathering is "out of His kingdom" (41); the casting into the furnace of fire is subsequent. The exactness of Scripture is evident. The tares are not said to be taken out of the field when bundled together. And do we not read elsewhere of the overturning of Christendom's profession, (empty though that has been), in the climax 3½ years of the wild beast? We remember how, after supporting the whore of religiousness, he hates her (Rev. 17:16). Will it not be then that "the kingdom of the heavens shall be likened unto ten virgins"? There are still unsaved ones, but they are outwardly virginlike. During the centuries the enemy has

rather aimed at a harlot-like travesty of the bride, yet many count this to be spread of the gospel. The practical bearing of these parables on the Christian life and separation from the great organizations of to-day, is deeply important for the unprejudiced and lowly disciple.

The reason for not gathering up the tares is searching. For years the writer thought, "The tares were at first like the wheat," but the language of Christ conveys a further lesson. "Lest . . . ye root up also the wheat with them." Does not this imply that the wheat sometimes becomes like the tares? This searches us, although we may be "wheat." Healthy growth is needful to present the contrast. But, above all reproof, the Lord's love shines out; no wheat shall be uprooted. He watches over all His people. The tendency to recognise all as Christians, who profess so to be, is quite against Scripture, but the other extreme is condemned. We do not know all the wheat, and must not root up, or glibly deny the relationship of any to Christ's kingdom, through our anticipatory judgments. The Lord knoweth them that are His (2 Tim. 2:19), whether in Protestantism or Romanism. We leave the field to Him, in this connection. Love is sorrowful, yet often silent, as to the solemnizing state of affairs. It is not for us to pronounce either way. It is important to see how practical every passage is. The dispensational and prophetic instruction never makes secondary the Lord's humbling, yet refreshing, message to our hearts, as to His personal love, and our personal need.

The harvest is next before us. Observe "the time of the harvest," and "the end (or rather the ending) of the age." This expression occurs in verses 40 and 49, also, and in chapter 24:3, and the last verse of the gospel (28:20). The only other occurrence of "ending," is Hebrews 9:26, alluding to Christ's manifestation on earth. May we not link that with the three and a half years, or so, from John 1:31? "The ending of the ages" was a special season which seemed to belong to two dispensations—retrospectively and prospectively. Inasmuch as Antichrist will declare himself against Romanism, and every other "ism," and show himself as god, in the midst of the last seven years (Dan. 9:27), will not the tares of Satan's intentional counterfeit be at that very time unmasked? This would make the ending of the age a like period to that of Hebrews 9:26, and explain "Gather ye together first the tares." The burning is not said to be first. This is important, for the unsaved are not thus judged while the Lord's wheat are on earth, but they are "gathered," for the final confederacies of evil. Many prophetic students ignore this, and assume that the Lord's people will be caught up first, but all Scripture harmonizes with itself. Some may find difficulty in that the reapers gather (at the same time as the change in heaven, Rev. 12:7), whereas the work is linked with Satan's revelation and that of Antichrist (2 Thess. 2:9), but this rather helps in view of

Revelation 17. 17. The enemy prepares his array, but the Lord ordains the channel for this overflowing flood, so that the angels of the Lord Jesus "gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity" (lawlessness)—an apt description of defiant ungodliness alone. The bundles appear to remain awhile, but not for long; man's glory is short lived. There is a furnace of fire. But, thanks be to God, for the contrasted words "the wheat into my barn." No wheat is placed in the fire, no tares are found in the barn. The breaking up of Christendom will be a stepping stone to the glory of the Lord. The Lord Jesus does not rise up till "the last day" (see Ps. 110. 1), but He can send His angels before; yet (as we have observed) this is **not** physical destruction, which rather takes place **when** the Lord takes the kingdom, and "the righteous shine forth." They are not manifested now (see Col. 3. 4). The heavenly figure of the sun is helpful. The wheat shows us a pilgrim life of fruit bearing (all the wheat seems to bring forth something for the Lord—26) but the heavenly glory is sure as well.

(If the Lord will, to be continued.)

A Right View of Life.

"MY life is wasted," thought one, who felt the strain of weakness, "What can I do?" "My life is full," thought another in the flush of activity, and apparent success. But "What is the Lord's view of my life?" is the question of supreme importance. From the standpoint of many the life of the seraphim is wasted in saying, "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of hosts," as Judas thought of Mary's ointment,—and there is no commercial value in worship. But nothing can compare with the will and pleasure of God and His glory. The theory that activity to gain money or goods is resultful appears so foolish when we think of Him Who can create more money than the world can ever produce, with a word. And the exaltation of success among men is so miserable when we realise what men are. Take heart, dear fellow believer, amid your weakness. The background worship and intercession are not small to Him, till you begin to think them great, and then the ointment loses its fragrance. Every little thing in His will is large; till we begin to compare it with the labour of others, to their detriment. Then we learn our constant need for a holy sense of unworthiness, to keep us in the place of humble dependence and away from the twin robbers of spiritual blessing, even pride and despondency. Life is not wasted because of my feebleness, but because of the self-centredness which works without the Lord, or the self-consciousness which forgets that He can work through utter weakness. In both cases He is left out, and **that** is failure.

A Few Suggestions concerning the Living Waters of Zechariah 14. 8.

WE rejoice in the Holy Spirit's perfect use of words,—e.g. in the precious types of Leviticus 14 we not only have the **living** bird, picturing Christ's resurrection, but the **living waters** (5). The English translation "running" is not so forceful, but it reminds us that when God promises "living waters," in the future, there will be nothing stagnant. It is impossible to explain away this prophecy. "A fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord, and shall water the valley of Shittim" (Joel 3. 18). We are reminded of the holy emphasis in Ezekiel 47, "Their waters they issued out of the sanctuary" (12).

Truly there is a spiritual parallel to-day, and we realize God, in all dispensations, contrasts Himself and His work with a mere "cistern" (Jer. 2. 13). We praise Him for the spiritual "well of water springing up into everlasting life" (John 4. 14), and long to feel and illustrate more in our lives the precious words of John 7. 38 that out from us "shall flow rivers of living water."

But these precious applications do not remove the earthly fulfilment when Jerusalem shall be "a praise in the earth." The living waters will be no mere "winter torrent" (the word used for a brook in John 18. 1). "In summer and in winter shall it be." Perennial blessings will be granted, and God's city shall be central. The same thoughts are before us elsewhere. If in Psalm 46. 4 we have "There is a river," in 48. 2 we find "Beautiful for situation," or rather, "elevation." So is it here:—"All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon, south of Jerusalem; and it (Jerusalem) shall be lifted up and inhabited in her place" (Zech. 14. 10). "In the last days, the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills" (Isa. 2. 2).

What a contrast there will be with Nimrod's eight cities (Gen. 10. 10-12). They were linked with earthly glory and commerce. But Jerusalem is not to be a business centre (Isa. 33. 21); worship is to be pre-eminent. And how striking in this connexion is the end of Zechariah 14. Not only "There shall be no more the Canaanite (see Isa. 23. 8, trafficker) in the house of the Lord of hosts," but upon the bells of the horses shall be the motto of the high priest,—a holy contrast with the days when Solomon became a merchantman, and, multiplying horses (2 Chron. 1. 16, 17, with Deut. 17. 16, 17), fell into the further sin against which God had warned (1 Kings 11. 1), showing us that something more than knowledge is ever needed (1 Cor. 8. 1), and making us to cry more and more for the love of truth in our own experiences.

But when the river goes out from Jerusalem to the former and hinder sea it will be associated with God's central glory, and grace linking men of east and west. A map will show that Jerusalem is, as it were, the pivot of Europe, Asia and Africa. And the eastern and western flowing waters will illustrate this. And the holy instruction is made more impressive when we remember that God will dry up two rivers of antiquity, associated with commerce and with Israel's servitude. Of the Nile we read, "The Lord shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with His mighty wind shall He shake His hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams and make men go over dryshod" (Isa. 11. 15). This remarkable prophecy is followed by the words "There shall be a highway for the remnant of His people, which shall be left, from Assyria." Yes, it is for His people's sake and for His own glory. And now we understand more fully the judgment of the sixth vial in the Day of the Lord. "And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the East might be prepared" (Rev. 16. 12). Both dryings up are to facilitate the access to Jerusalem. Could two more remarkable rivers have been chosen? We associate them with the line of Ham, and with rebellion against God. Observe the contrast, even in **direction**. They suggest to us "north and south:" the new, twofold, river, "east and west." **They** do not touch Jerusalem: the new living waters come from the very place that God chose and has never forgotten. There the Lord sets aside the glory of man, and He alone is exalted in that day. Hence the **literal** fulfilment will be full of **spiritual** teaching, and our hearts enter once more into Psalm 107. 33-36. "He turneth rivers into a wilderness."—"He turneth . . . dry ground into water springs." The God of Isaiah 43. 19, 20; 49. 10 is our God, and He still says for the comfort of His redeemed people. "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the heathen. I will be exalted in the earth" (Ps. 46. 10). And in the joy of His truth our hearts respond to Him Who loveth us, and redeemed us. "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

**"When shall These Things be—?
Take heed lest any man deceive you."—
Mark 13. 4, 5.**

THE perfect answers of the Lord Jesus are always impressive. He not only replied but gave further instructions, teaching also as to the manner of dealing with any difficulty. If Thomas asked as to the way, instruction was granted as to the Truth and the Life as well, and the Personal Character of all was emphasized,—that a thing, a religion, a method may never be central, but Christ Himself. If Peter asked

"What shall this man do?" the reply affords deep heart-searching, that we too may henceforth be the more occupied with the Lord's will for ourselves, and His pathway of obedience. How often the "speculative" aspect may come prominently into our questions: but the Lord always emphasises that which is practical. "Lord, are there few that be saved?" "And He said unto them, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate" (Luke 13. 24). "Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"—"It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in His own authority, but ye shall receive power" (Acts 1. 7, 8). **Witness**, in the might of the Holy Spirit, was dear to **His** heart.

And so it is in Mark 13. The Lord Jesus lays stress on holy concern lest we be **deceived**. The enemy is more clever than we can realize: his temptations are more subtle than we can imagine. "Take heed." It is not for us merely to know facts, we need to apply God's precious truth to and in our daily walk. If we are looking for the Lord Jesus, (and this should be our attitude), we need to be likewise getting ready for Him. The Hope is bright, but we are not merely to say, "He will put all straight when He comes," and then to settle down. It should be ours to seek earnestly the promised reviving, which the Holy Spirit has associated with "that Blessed Hope." Moreover, we are all too quick to assume our own share in blessings: hence when Nicodemus came to the Lord Jesus, the searching reply as to the new birth was given: so it is here. "What shall be the sign?" may imply that the questioners are already prepared for what is coming. Thus the Lord lovingly gives a heart test that we may not be sidetracked and see ourselves outside. It is well to have assurance, but the assurance must be Divinely grounded. It is well to speak and sing heartily of the Lord's return, but let us make sure (by Scriptural tests) that we are ready for Him to come. Some will be deceived, and find themselves to be foolish virgins at the last.

Moreover, only when we are obedient, can we study the words of truth aright. We remember the precious language of Revelation 1 "To show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass." There is no contradiction with John 15. 15, as the added verse in the same chapter (20) indicates. A **son** serves (Mal. 3. 17) and there is added beauty in such service. There is a vast difference between being a servant (a privilege), and being **called**, or addressed, as one. How helpful are the words of Holy Scripture as to every part of our experience. It is a joy to be serving the Lord, but He does not say "Servant, do this." In like manner, He will not address us as "unprofitable servants" in that Day, but He encourages us thus to think of ourselves in deep humility (Luke 17. 10). And the more lowly we are the more likely are we to hear His "Well done, good and faithful servant."

The word "Take heed" is an "eyesight" word. It refers to the opened eye. The disciples had referred to signs, and the Lord would remind us that our eyes must also see the present dangers. If we are sleepy, if we close our eyes, we become in measure in some degree like the dead. A living believer may **look like** an unsaved soul. O that this may not be our characteristic.

And as the Lord begins the address, so He finishes, "And what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch" (verse 37). He exempts none from the need of this exhortation. He lovingly urges all His people to keep awake, and to rise up, as the word signifies. Only when we are aroused can we please Him. If we make ourselves comfortable for sleeping, let us not be surprised if we fall asleep. It is wrong to court temptation, while praying to be kept from it.

Seed Thoughts.

IT is deeply important that believers should honour God by consistency. "Little inconsistencies," as they are called, often undo the earnest testimony for months. The world notices and remembers them. The more we emphasize God's words, and the path of love's separation unto Him, the more concerned we need to be to grow up into Christ in all things. If an infidel loses his temper, no one is troubled. But if a Christian is excited, the world blames his Lord. And the more a Christian urges the narrow path the more are his failures a dishonour to Christ. If we plead for His will in all, we ought to love much. As soon as a believer stands outside the denominations of to-day, his love or lack of love, will be noticed. Separation without love is a failure. All these things are an encouraging testimony as to the high standard rightly expected when the way of the Lord is sought. For a high standard implies that His way is a precious one. Every expectation of "much more" from a Christian than from others is a refreshing witness that the glory of Christ is owned, even unwittingly, and unwillingly.

I must not make others pay for my faith, or suffer for my love. To bring difficulties to unsaved ones through my faith is to dishonour the Lord. The problems are good for one, but I must not make others share them without the faith.

The Lord Jesus is still rejected, are we unwilling to go forth to Him without the camp? Why?

The Shepherd does not tend His sheep to make Himself love them, but He tends them because He loves them.

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The Student of Scripture.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"The gospel . . . therein is the righteousness of God revealed, from faith, to faith: as it is written, the righteous shall live by faith."
Romans 1. 16, 17.

A Word of Introduction.

AGAIN the same standpoint, the same message, the same object. Persons, times, circumstances, and all manner of things change, but God changes not, and His words abide. We rejoice that we have no need to apologize for any defect in Scripture: the only defect is as to our whole-hearted acceptance of it, we all hesitate so often. We need a revival of love to the Lord, and His words. It is easy to make pretensions and profession, but the need is far deeper. A believer is created not made. A Scriptural gathering is Divinely planted, not organized by human wisdom. In like manner, the true progress of a child of God is his humble realization that God is willing to be exalted in the gracious use of His willing and obedient people. SELF is the danger everywhere, and the glory of God is the opposite of all self-centring.

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"His Angels."

(Matthew 13. 41, 24. 31, 2 Thessalonians 1. 7).

IT is sometimes suggested that Matthew 24. 31 does not refer to the catching up of the redeemed, and that the reference to angels implies a contrast with the Lord Himself in 1 Thessalonians 4. 16. But the epistle does not say "The Lord Himself shall catch up." His personal presence is before us,

with a shout of command, and whom does He command? "Gather My saints together unto Me" (Ps. 50. 5). Is it remarkable if He commands the angels of His power? It is possibly overlooked that we read, "Shall be caught up:" there is nothing against the Lord's use of angels. Is He not the Keeper of His people to-day? But does this deny "He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways" (Ps. 91. 11), or undo the words "Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation" (Heb. 1. 14)?

We recognise this privilege in all other Scriptures. No one thinks that a believer saves a soul from death in his own name (Jas. 5. 20), and conversely may not Ephesians 2. 17 include a reference to the Lord's ministry through His people? Is there any contradiction between the quoting of one passage as the testimony of the Holy Spirit, and another verse from the same book as Isaiah's witness? Was it less the Lord's deliverance of Peter because He sent His angel (Acts 12. 11)?

We have already alluded to Psalm 50. There the Lord calls to the heavens above. His people in the heavens are to be brought together. Yet He uses means. So in the future "He That scattered Israel will gather him" (Jer. 31. 10); yet instrumentality will be employed in certain cases (Isa. 66. 20). No one sees a contradiction.

In all earthly parallels we find no difficulty. An architect builds a house without using a tool. And the Holy Spirit approves the language. Of Solomon it was written "He shall build Me an house," and afterwards "Solomon began to build the house of the Lord," and further "I have built an house of habitation." "Solomon had built the house of the Lord." Let us all be prayerfully concerned lest we invent difficulties, unconsciously, and lose spiritual teaching, and misrepresent other children of God. As the precious arrangements of baptism and the Lord's supper were to unite, Satan aimed at causing division thereby. And as the precious Hope of the Lord's Coming was meant to be a sanctifying expectation to the redeemed, drawing them together in One and devotedness, can we be surprised that the enemy has sought to cause bitterness and misunderstanding here?

It is worthy of notice that the Lord's Coming is particularly associated with His angels in Hebrews 1. 6 as well as Matthew 24. 31. There is the beautiful explanation of the Lord Jesus as worshipped of all, and a designed contrast with His death on Calvary when He stood alone. This connecting of His glory must never be overlooked, and does not the very chapter in Thessalonians emphasize the archangel waiting on the Lord (a holy antithesis to Jude 9), with a fitting hint that those over whom he is archangel are likewise glad to attend the One Who is infinitely beyond them all?

God's Longsuffering and the Crisis.

THE longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, but at last there was the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. This thought is marked throughout Scripture. There is a limit to longsuffering. We think of the Amorites. Their iniquity was not full in the days of Abraham (Gen. 15. 16), but the fulness was reached later. Individual cases come before us. Nebuchadnezzar had a remarkable experience. For twelve months there was a respite and lengthening of his tranquility, and then, when he spoke "once" boastfully, not a day longer was allowed. "The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar" (Dan. 4. 33). The wondrous mercy of God was manifested in mental restoration. Belshazzar had no "afterwards" of repentance; he had already rejected the warning in the life of the earlier king, and "in that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain" (Dan. 5. 30). There was no deliverance for him. And Herod comes to our mind (Acts 12. 23); he had refused God's message in Peter's deliverance, and the crisis arrived. And we could multiply cases such as Balaam, Eli's sons, and Zedekiah. It is important to realize this and bring it before men. God may use circumstances to warn, as He used the defeat of Genesis 14 to speak to the men of Sodom and Gomorrah, but they went on frowardly, and the fire and brimstone of chapter 19 was the goal. He sent prophets to Israel, and Judah day by day (see Jer. 25. 3. 4), but "they mocked the messengers of God and despised His words." Hence, though the Shekinah glory remained awhile, at last "the wrath of the Lord arose against His people, till there was no remedy" (2 Chron. 36. 16). The Lord Jesus wept over Jerusalem; but the people knew not the things that belonged to their peace (Luke 19. 42). Hence, albeit the wrath of God was held back for a generation as it were (about forty years), at last His armies came and burnt up their city (Matt. 22. 7). When God arises to judgment there is no sparing (Ezek. 8. 18). Longsuffering is not for ever.

The present dispensation has similar reminders of God's ways. "I gave her space to repent of her fornication, and she repented not" (Rev. 2. 21). The end of the age will be marked by the same attitude. The trumpets are a warning, as in Ezekiel 33, but men heed not. "The rest of the men . . . repented not" (Rev. 9. 20), and again under the vials we find unchanged persistency. "They repented not of their deeds" (Rev. 16. 11).

These thoughts have a message to God's dear people. Though He hath not dealt with them after their sins, yet in the new sphere of the family there is a holy righteousness, and chastisement may cut off physically if a warning is unheeded (1 Cor. 11. 30). The early years of this age were marked by quick

departures from the words of the Lord, and the bitter fruit was reaped. Assemblies ceased to exist, and corporate testimony was no longer seen. If we personally do not obey a part of truth brought before us it becomes indefinite, and we no longer see it. If we neglect an opportunity we may have it taken from us (cf. Rev. 3. 11). Moses could not enter into the land after he had wrongly smitten the rock,—the crisis came suddenly.* We little know when we may shut the door to further privileges along a path that lies in front of us. An illness often has a period of incubation before it is manifest, and so is it spiritually. Our heavenly Father speaks to us in this way, though we would remember Jonah, and the Lord's "second time" (Jon. 2. 1), lest the enemy distort and misuse truth to discourage godly repentance, hope, and activity in the Spirit.

* There is a remarkable silence in the inspired book of Acts as to Peter's ministry after the period of Galatians 2. 11, (though we know the Lord used him), and to Barnabas' service after Acts 15. 39 (though we thank God for Mark's evident restoration, 2 Tim. 4. 11).

THE PARABLES OF THE LORD JESUS.

The Parables of Matthew 13 (continued).

The contrasted futures are definitely marked. If any are not God's planting they shall be rooted up (Matt. 15. 13). To hide this message would be sinful. There is a tendency to-day to imagine an in-between position, but Scripture shows the glory *and* the judgment. The tares are not saved and then lost. They were never saved, but they appear to have associated with children of God, and acted as if they were. It is observable that the contrast began to be seen as soon as there was "fruit." Thus are children of God to be marked out.

It may be well, ere we approach the parables not explained by the Lord Jesus, to examine the structure of this passage. Everything in Scripture is precious, and there is an unique arrangement and order. It is evident that the mustard seed and leaven go together, as in Luke 13. 18-21. And Matthew 13. 44-46 provides manifestly a pair (selling and buying). The tares and the net, moreover, are alike linked with the ending of the age. Hence we have:—

- a. The Sower (Personal: not "the Kingdom of heaven is like").
- b. The Wheat *and* Tares.
- c.(i) Mustard Seed.
- c.(ii) Leaven (Hid).
- c.(ii) Treasure (Hid).
- c.(i) The Pearl.
- b. The Net, with Good and Bad.
- a. The Householder (Personal: not "the Kingdom of heaven is like").

It is important to realise the Lord's object—even the instruction of His people, that, as He uttered things kept secret, they may learn His truth and bring forth things "new and old" (verse 52) for His joy (cf. Song 7. 13). The setting aside of Israel in Matthew 12. 45, and the stress of spiritual relationship (Matt. 12. 49-50), are followed by the setting aside of Israel's scribes, and a new responsibility for every "scribe instructed unto the kingdom of heaven" (13. 52). Though somewhat anticipating, we may point out how dear the Lord's people are to Himself, and in how many ways He mentions them. "My brother and sister and mother"; the good ground, the good seed, the treasure, the pearls, and the good fish; and the servants of verse 27 and the scribe of verse 52 show the responsibility of His faithful ones. Individually and collectively are His people before us, and elsewhere other precious language shows again and again His intense love to them. There is always a note of affection in the Lord's ministry, and John 17 reminds us as to this characteristic of His abiding intercession (Heb. 7. 25).

Have we any doubt as to the meaning of the mustard seed? The beginning is small; but the growth is abnormal, "becometh a tree." Does not this imply a contrast with the original appointment, "after his kind" (Gen. 1. 11)? The "frequency" in nature would not make it normal, for nature now contains death, and designed departures from the original plan (e.g. Thorns and thistles, "it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength," Gen. 4. 12) to remind us of the devastation which sin has brought. The over-growth is the *only* reason which the Lord Jesus gives for the entry of "the birds of the air" ("so that"). His explicit statement and His explanation of the birds in verse 19 ("Then cometh the wicked one") would prevent our misunderstanding. Here is a radical *change*, with saddening results. When we add the Lord's interpretation of "His field" (31, with 38), we behold an apparent progress in the earth, with a development of Satanic tactics. The sowing of tares "in the midst" of the wheat has prepared for this. The Lord has declared the tares will be awhile in His kingdom (41): Hence "the kingdom of heaven is like" presents no hindrance. Satan is not said to pluck up and destroy, after the first parable (when the seed does not denote persons): he aims at "imitations," his method changes but not his purpose. Any theory that makes the birds good ignores this, as well as Christ's key-explanation (Mark 4. 13). Nor is the figure of a branching tree in the earth without meaning; in Daniel 4 it pictures Nebuchadnezzar, in Ezekiel earthly nations are thus described, and in Hosea 14 Millennial Israel. In the present dispensation may it not here suggest earthly greatness before the appointed time? The words "Therefore he was saying" in the parallel passage (Luke 13. 18), with the added, "Strive

to enter in . . . for many . . . will seek . . . and shall not be able" (Luke 13. 24-30), may bear a similar warning.

We think of Luke 9. 43, 14. 15; 16; the Lord Jesus perceived the nature of profession (John 2. 24, 25) and no passage can be found which prophesied great "success" in the present dispensation. The common interpretation is out of harmony with the whole character of His prophecies. As soon as we see a saddening perversion of the narrow way, and the lodging of the emissaries of the evil one, we have a Divine key to the attitude of Constantine, and, to the changes in Europe from a persecuted minority to a state power, i.e. from a Christian brotherhood to Christendom. The woman of Revelation 17 is linked with ruling in verses 2 and 18. Ecclesiasticism with nests for these birds, instead of an assembly devotedness of the bride to the Coming Bridegroom, is the solemn message for our hearts, and if we now find our resting place where the birds of the air find theirs, we are out of harmony with the Lord Jesus. The word "lodge" indicates a tabernacle, and reminds us that the assembly should be God's dwelling place.

It is remarkable that we hear to-day of "branches" of Christendom, but, alas, men glory in that whereof they should be ashamed. It is for us to be humbled. If any one is prepared to make the birds good in spite of Christ's interpretation, he will naturally add the rejoicing in a kingdom-status to-day, and regard success from man's standpoint, but the Lord's message still sounds on some ears that are not deaf, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (Luke 12. 12), and there is still music in the closing contrast with Revelation 22. 17, "The Spirit and the Bride say, Come." The Spirit of God has not changed.

Two objections may be raised,—the first urges that if Christ planted the seed, the result is the development of *His* work. But may we not add to what has been said regarding God's warnings in nature, that the Scripture has answered this objection in previous parables? "The choicest vine . . . it brought forth wild grapes" (Isa. 5. 2), and again "I had planted thee a noble vine wholly a right seed, how then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto Me?" (Jer. 2. 21).

The other objection is that the mustard seed was proverbially used to suggest remarkable growth (Matt. 17. 20). Evidently as "less than all the seeds" (not in nature, as a whole, but among those which a man took; the context prevents misunderstanding), it was symbolic, but passages like Luke 17. 6 never mention the undue growth or branches, and it is possible they rather indicate that if we only had a little faith we should do much (see Luke 8. 25), for faith is more precious and more powerful than radium. No objection can be said to have weight against the only interpretation which fits exactly between the introduction of the *tares* and the *leavening* of the fine flour.

Some Remarkable Contrasts between Genesis 18 and 19.

A BRAHAM and Lot are often before us, with helpful and solemnising instruction from God. Abraham, when he was called; obeyed (Heb. 11. 8); but Lot "went with him" (Gen. 12. 4), and was "taken" (5). There is no evidence of a deep experience of God's will and guidance (Rom. 12. 2). Abraham failed—the very first chapters which tell of his faith humbly remind of his faltering also; God does not conceal.

But with Abraham there was a determination which refreshes our soul. His valleys are deep ravines, yet there are more mountains, whereas Lot never seems to reach such a mountain. We do not doubt his salvation; the Holy Spirit declares he was righteous (2 Pet. 2. 7). Ponder this description, with the different adjective used of Abraham in Galatians 3. 9. There is not the slightest suggestion that he shared in the sins of those around him; far otherwise, he vexed his righteous soul whenever he heard evil talking. But this inspired language gives a key to his character. After telling us he was vexed or burdened, God adds that he tormented himself (2 Pet. 2. 8). The active is striking; he caused his own burden. How? By "dwelling among them." Hence he could not be "the friend of God" (John 15. 14). And many dear children of God to-day bring themselves into anguish by mingling with the world, and remaining in societies—ecclesiastical or social or "trade"—which God has disapproved. In Genesis 13 we notice that Lot lifted up his eyes, whereas Abraham, not "choosing," was commanded and encouraged by God, "Lift up now thine eyes" (14). And Lot did not receive and enjoy the promises, whereas Abraham is thus characterized (Heb. 6. 13, 7. 6). Nor do we read that Lot built any altar. We all still hinder devotion as soon as we mix with the world. God granted Lot a gracious warning. When the king of Elam and his confederates laid Sodom low, "they took Lot . . . and his goods" (Gen. 14. 12). Yet alas, he did not learn the lesson, but returned to Sodom when set free through Abraham's faith and victory (Gen. 14. 16). The record of saddening progress in world-likeness has been often felt. At first, he only beheld all the plain of Jordan. Next he chose it. Then he "pitched his tent towards Sodom." He still had a tent; but the same verse declares "Lot dwelt in the cities of the plain," mark the plural; did he spend more time in his worldly business than in his tent? Are we surprised that the tent was soon abandoned, and that he had a house in the leading city of evil? Let us beware of the chains of sin, and let us remember the suffering of loss of which Lot had a bitter foretaste. Refusing a tent he was brought to dwell in a cave (Gen. 19. 30). Instead of faith we read fear.

The writer has been impressed with the many striking contrasts between the two narratives of chapters 18 and 19, and

with a desire that God may glorify His Name thereby and that we may be more pilgrim like, some of these are tabulated. There is no claim to completeness. Believers may be helped in further prayerful study and heart-application.

Chapter 18.

The Lord and two others (1, 2).
Mamre (Hebrew "altar" 13, 18).
Tent door (1).
Heat (1).
"Lift up his eyes" (2).
"By him" (2).
"Ran to meet him" (2).
One addressed (3).
"Favour in Thy sight" (3).
"Pass not from Thy servant" (3).
"Rest yourselves" (4).
"Under the tree" (4).
"So do" (5).
"Hastened" (6).
Abraham's wife (6, 9).
Sarah's help (6, Gen. 2, 20).
A sacrificial animal (7).
"Young man . . . hasted" (7).
Question (9).
"Sarah" (Isa. 43, 1).
"In the tent" (9).

Chapter 19.

Two angels only (1).
Sodom (1).
Gate (1).
Evening—darkness near.
"Seeing" (1).
"Rose up to meet" (1).
Angels addressed (2).
"Your servant's house" (2).
Riotous disturbance (4).
"The shadow of my roof" (8).
"Nay" (2).
"Made them a feast" (3).
"Remember Lot's wife" (see 26).
"He . . . did bake" (3).
Old and young evil (4).
Contrasted question (12).
No name given.
Relations in "this place," "this city" (14).
Loss of family (and evil sons after, no promises recorded).
"Out of this place" (14).
"They brought them forth" (17).
"Look not" (17).
Moab and Ammon (37, 38).
Lot's daughters.
"Escape" (17)—flight.
"Haste thee" (22).
Request for himself (19, 20).
No communion.
"Without" (16) "The place destroyed" (12-14, 29).

Promise of a son (10, Heb. 7, 6).
"I will return" (10, 14).
"Bring them on the way" (16).
"Looked" (16).
"Shall I hide?" (17).
"All nations blessed" (18).
"Command his children, etc." (18).
"Stood before the Lord" (22).
"Drew near" (23).
Prayer for others (23-32).
Cities not spared: Lot blessed (19-29).
Communing with Abraham.
Abraham returned unto his place (33).

May our Heavenly Father graciously use these contrasts to lead us to holy concern. Grace is precious. The Lord was merciful to Lot (19, 16), but he, though just, is never said to have been faithful. We do not read "By faith Lot," and so forth; he is not an example to stimulate our faith. Let us never misuse grace or excuse one sin because of God's patience and tenderness. The Lord would not do anything till Lot had escaped (19, 22 "cannot") but He would have spared the city if ten righteous ones had been there. There is a wealth of meaning here as to grace, as to power for God in united prayer, and as to our failure in bringing blessing to others when we mingle with them.

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The Student of Scripture.

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"Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth."

John 17, 17.

A Word of Introduction.

IT IS a privilege beyond measure to be in the family of God. A living relationship to Him, a living union with the Lord Jesus—who can explain, or measure, what this means? And grace has abounded to those who "were by nature, children of wrath even as others." (Eph. 2, 3.). With Christ "all things" that are needful, are freely bestowed. (Rom. 8, 32, 2 Pet. 1, 3). Truly we may speak of the exceeding riches of God's grace. And it is a joy to remember that the Lord Jesus lives to intercede for His own (Heb. 7, 25.).

Hence we are glad to fill a large portion of this issue with the first part of a Concordance to His precious intercessory prayer in John 17. May the result be a fuller realization of a believer's blessings, with corresponding obedience in the enabling of the indwelling Holy Spirit, as our hearts cry, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

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THE PARABLES OF THE LORD JESUS.

The Parables of Matthew 13 (continued).

This fourth parable shows a woman. Is she the bride or the counterfeit? If we make her to be the Lord's faithful servants we imply that the fine flour pictures evil, and the leaven good—against the symbolism of Christ throughout, and that of all Scripture. Strong evidence would be needed for such a contrary usage. The characteristic of the present age seen in

Revelation 17 (illustrated by the position of the woman in the fourth letter of Revelation 2), seems to fit in with the saddening yet evidently true, interpretation, which shows corruption of God's fine flour. This suits the context and the added words, "Things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world" (Matt. 13. 35). The thought of "progress" would be against Christ's testimony, and suggest approval of the very Christendom that has changed His appointments for "strangers and pilgrims." Hence the alternatives are striking—acknowledgment of the leaven as evil, or the nullifying of Christ's testimony in Matthew 24. 9, etc.

A remarkable corroboration is found in the earlier Scriptures. "Three measures" or seahs are an ephah, and thus we find a woman and three measures both in Genesis 18. 6 and Zechariah 5. 5-11. The words "make ready quickly" (cf. Ex. 12. 39) leave us in no doubt as to the absence of leaven in Abraham's arrangement. But the reverse is found in Zechariah.

The preceding parable-prophecy tells us of Satan's counterfeit of the holy place (measurements in 5. 2), and the "declaring innocent" of the sinner is through that "which frameth mischief by a law" (5.3, marg. Ps. 94. 20). Abiding in the house (5. 4) reminds of the birds of the air, in Matthew 13. 32. How remarkable when we behold "wickedness" in the midst of the ephah. "This is wickedness" (cf. 1 Cor. 5. 8). The woman placed herself in the three measures. Nor is this two-fold symbolism strange. Christ is both the One Who builds and the Foundation, and He is the One Who presents that which is unleavened, which likewise pictures Himself. The system of evil puts "self" in the place of Christ, corrupting thereby the fine flour of sound doctrine. The Lord's allusion to Zechariah 5 seems more than probable, and inasmuch as Satan's ark with its talent of lead, (the opposite of the mercy seat), is awhile away from Babylon, to return thence via Palestine (Zech. 5. 11), our hearts realise European Babylonianism in Christendom's nations, exactly that which the Lord Jesus seems to set forth in the parable of the leaven. Yet so few are spiritually affected by this holy warning.

But we have seen this sad interpretation fittingly follows the tares and mustard seed, and leads up to verse 35. Satan at first comes and sows but then goes his way (Matt. 13. 25), content to work through instruments, and the professing church itself. The birds of the air are outward, the leaven is inward. The object of the enemy in both parables is a "change." The world is not being converted; the end of the age is the opposite, even Antichrist's revelation, according to Scripture. There is no prophecy of a so-called "leavening" by the gospel, and the spread of Christ's kingdom. That kingdom is heavenly, and there is a bringing out of the world. But if we have here a corruption of truth, gradually but definite, we have that which

has taken place and is taking place. Its hidden working, (leaven works in the dark), is the reason why many do not see. But our eyes should be opened and our hearts humbled.

The figure is very impressive. Leaven is a plant (a suited parallel with the mustard seed, though man's science did not know this when Christ spoke), a parasitic plant. This fungus is near at hand, clinging to the very bloom of the grape, but not inside; the slightest "breaking" makes its opportunity. It produces intoxication by altering the grape juice, even as Babylon's cup. When in fine flour, the end is putrefaction; unless stern measures are used. Only fire can deal with this; compromise is ruinous.*

The method of Satan is not always open antagonism. Martyrdoms became a power in gospel witness. Balaam tried fornication when direct attack was forbidden (Rev. 2. 14), and this symbol of fellowship with the world (Jas. 4. 4) has often been the "new" plan of the evil one. The adoption of the fine flour of sound doctrine and its phraseology, linked with its gradual corruption, has been so frequent, that it is evident we are face to face with a subtle scheme, not an accident. Words such as "inspiration" and "atonement" have been employed with modified meanings, or, if we take one sphere more fully, even assembly arrangements; we find that if God specially used the word "church" of all saints, or a local assembly, the term has been warped to signify a national or denominational organisation or a building, or to indicate plurality of churches in a city, exactly the meanings God excluded. Baptism has been changed by many from immersion of believers, to the sprinkling of infants. The Lord's *supper* has been "transferred" to the morning and the word "wine," which the Lord Jesus never used, continually employed, and the leavened bread, about which He did not utter one syllable of symbolic teaching or command, substituted for that which He Himself used and lovingly appointed. If in Scripture we are impressed by the exclusion of ecclesiastical titles, whether "pastor" or "elder," we find these commonly sought to-day, and the holy condemnation of the terms "Father" and "Teacher" in Matthew 23 has been set aside by the adoption of the latter "Doctor of Divinity", among many who rightly repudiate the former. If there is a special appointment of the Holy Spirit as to married elders, we realise Romanism first misused the term "presbyter," and then with a counterfeit priesthood ordained celibacy. Many can, by grace, see this deliberate leavening, but are not conscious of the sad perpetuation of linked errors. Not a few still observe "Christmas," despite its heathen origin, and introduce in the worship of God arrangements of musical service which are no more dispensational than the "sacrifices" and

* Leaflets gladly sent.

"priesthood" they deplore. If the Lord Jesus expressly forbid force, some will urge particularly that it is lawful for a Christian man to bear arms, and Christ's clear teaching as to refusal of legal oaths in this dispensation is equally nullified. And some who would grieve over this sin quite ignore—and almost seem to flout—the Holy Spirit's repeated instructions for godly women to dress neatly. The leaven has worked in every way, and is working. The Lord's people appear to be afraid to be unlike the world. But none of us can lift up our heads proudly. We all need to be humbled. The writer would sorrow, with others, as to his own failure to represent the Lord Jesus, and to follow His gracious will. Yet is the call to awaken still lovingly granted, and our hearts, though they have long hesitated, would now hear and obey.

A striking illustration of the "leavening" has already been hinted. The Lord Jesus appointed two symbolic actions, the second, the Lord's supper, being two-fold. Christendom has not only leavened the doctrine, but the very materials He used. This is very remarkable, because bread and fruit of the vine were probably the two commonest things in Palestine, and in other lands, which are used in both an unleavened and leavened state.* The change was, and is, "natural" and easy. Faith is needed to keep to the Lord's will. He has permitted this picture lesson to warn us of many errors, and it is significantly in view of His voice, and His *giving* and His words "Take, eat" and His "This do," that the first woman, who prefigures the professing church misled by the serpent, "look" of the forbidden fruit, and "gave" to Adam, and he did "eat," but the Lord rebuked with the words, "Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife." And to the designing tempter the solemn judgment sounded "Because thou hast *done this*." May our hearts be attentive, and our eyes be open to seek the Lord's will and to seek none other.

The more we ponder, the more we must realise the gravity of the issue. If the common interpretation of the parable is to be accepted, with the thought of "progress," traditions and developments are sanctified, and the Scriptures *fall*. But if not, the holy view of the Lord Jesus is clear, and His holy hatred of the departure from His simple path is definite. With foreseeing wisdom He forewarned His people: so seriously did He regard the matter. And there is no in-between position. If the leaven is the work of the enemy, separation, though with gracious humility, is no longer optional. The question comes with burning power. Is Christ's standpoint ours, and are His interests ours; or not? Love to beloved children of God who remain in "national churches" must not blind our eyes to His condemnation (Rev. 17. 2) and His eyes are as a flame

* There is a parallel in the process, albeit the ferment remains in the wine, but is burnt out from the bread, though its results remain.

of fire. "Infant baptism" and similar errors are no longer misunderstandings, but part of an original scheme of the enemy, although, in the knowledge and experience of many, they are now unconscious misunderstandings, largely because of the unfaithfulness of those who have seen something of the terrible plan of evil. But it is love to point this out, if done with lowliness and in the spirit of love, and with a frank acknowledgment that some in the systems of to-day may love their Lord more devotedly than many of us, who have come out, yet may have allowed the enemy to sidetrack awhile into the equally deadly sin of leaving our first love. There is room for a general breaking down and confession. The devil is willing for us to be warmhearted in error, or coldhearted in truth, but he hates the love of the truth, in the power of the Holy Spirit.

In the light of fulfilment, and of 2 Thessalonians 2. the reference to Zechariah 5 seems clear. In that chapter we have the mystery of lawlessness (feminine) inworking, till the man of sin comes forth. Verses 6 and 7 tell of that which restrains, which seems to be parallel with the talent of lead, and human government, "until he shall have become out of the midst" (verse 7 literally). No mistranslation has been more used than that of this verse, since there is no word "taken" nor is there any word for "the way." The uniform excellence of our version makes this veiling of Satan's plan by the misrendering the more remarkable, in the very passage which tells of a subtle "inworking." If only believers realised that the wickedness now inworking will arise out of the midst in Shinar, as "the man of sin," would they not be stirred the more to look and pray and prepare for that Blessed Hope, that, in love's separation unto the Bridegroom, there might be a godly going forth to meet Him?

(If the Lord will, to be continued.)

It is easier to see the faults of others than our own; it is easier to see our faults than to escape from them; it is easier to escape from those which are outward than those which are inward. But we would not be "occupied" with either difficulty as if they were primary. Our hearts would draw near unto Him with Whom all things are possible.

A Concordance to the Lord's Prayer in John 17.

THANKFUL and happy indeed is the believer who realizes in increasing measure the Lord's intercession for His own. He Himself tells us that the words of John 17 were spoken in the world, *that* His people might have His joy

fulfilled in themselves (13). Evidently this includes the precious thought that they are comforted as they realise the way in which He now intercedes, and with a view to this comfort He uttered such words in advance. How often too, have we been refreshed by His emphasis on unity in this chapter, associated with His marvellous love, and then suggesting a loving responsibility. And willing separatedness from the world is ever linked. When asked to speak on this glorious theme recently the writer felt its power, and the impressive beauty of the Lord's repeated words, and a long cherished desire for concordances to separate books of Scripture, (that the emphasized words of the context might be felt); and to sections of books, received further impetus. The "first-fruits" is this little Concordance. It is often difficult to say what is the Holy Spirit's "division" unless we take a whole book, but there is no doubt here, nor would there be as to such portions as Psalm 119 and the Address on the Mount.

The wish to show the words of the Holy Spirit, without undue references to manuscript readings and grammar, has led to brief indications where the same word is differently rendered, and a few allusions to the precious thoughts wrapt up in tenses (see list of abbreviations). The emphatic nominative promises—"I" and "Thou" are shown. If an English word is not found in the alphabetical order, or with another word, it is because it is not found in the original, but only used for English idiom. On the whole, Tregelles' text has been followed. Imperfections are found in all human work, though we would prayerfully seek more accurate service in the enabling of the Holy Spirit, and any corrections or suggestions before reprint will be welcome. This little help to Bible Study is offered to the Lord's people (and especially to dear children of God who cannot read the original). May their hearts, and our own, be warmed as the oft-repeated words (e.g. Father, Given, Word, As, One, In order that*) unfold our Lord's joy and purpose.

When we come to the privilege of such service as that which is now granted we see, as never before, the remarkable emphasis on such expressions as "Thou hast given Me." This is one advantage of Concordances to short portions where the Holy Spirit brings certain thoughts before us in a way never to be forgotten. Each reader may discover for himself or herself which words are often grouped, and which verbs are linked with the object "them," and similar points of helpful power in continued prayerful study.

*Observe the total number of words (about 490) and then the small number of different words (under 100). Thus the large proportion of "repetitions," in love's enforcing, will be realized. The many pronouns, "I," "Me," "Thou," "Thy," "Them," bring before us the personal note, and the Lord's personal interest in those of whom He says, "Thou hast loved THEM as thou hast loved Me."

Abbreviations used: A., Accusative; Aor., Aorist; D., Dative; F., Future; G., Genitive; Gr., Greek; I., Imperative; Im., Imperfect; In., Infinitive; M., Middle; N., Nominative; Neu., Neuter; P., Perfect; Pa., Participle; Pass., Passive; Pl., Plural; Pr., Present; S., Subjunctive.

Note. When two words are joined with a hyphen they denote one word in the original: this helps to show emphasized nominative pronouns, for the hyphens then omitted.

AND, ALSO. **Kai** (29).

See also "But."

3 **And** Jesus Christ Whom Thou
5 **And** now, O Father, glorify
6 **And** Thou gavest them Me
6 **And** they have kept Thy word
8 **And** they have received
8 **And** have known surely
8 **And** they have believed
10 **And** all Mine are Thine
10 **And** Thine are Mine
10 **And** I am glorified in them
11 **And** now I am no more in
11 **And** these are in the world
11 **And** I come to Thee
13 **And** these things I speak
14 **And** the world hath hated them
18 So have I **also** sent them
19 That they **also** may be
20 But for them **also** which shall
21 Thou . . . art in Me **and** I in
Thee
21 That they **also** may be
22 **And** the glory which Thou
gavest
23 I in them **and** Thou in Me
23 **And** hast loved them as Thou
24 That they **also**, whom Thou hast
25 The world **also** (omitted in A.V.)
25 **And** these have known that
26 **And** I have declared unto
26 **And** will declare it that
26 In them, **and** I in them

ALL. **Pas** (6).

2 Power over all flesh that
2 **As many** (A. sg.) as Thou hast
7 **All things** whatsoever Thou
hast
10 All Mine are Thine, and
21 That they **all** may be one

ALONE. **Monon** (1).

20 Neither . . . for these **alone**.

AS. **Kathos** (8).

See also "Who."

2 **As** Thou hast given Him power
11 That they may be one, **as**
14 **Even-as** I am not of the
16 **Even-as** I am not of the
18 **As** Thou hast sent Me
21 **As** Thou, Father, art in Me
22 One, **even-as** We are
23 Thou hast loved them as

BE (Am, is, etc.) **Eimi** (23).

3 This **is** (Pr.) life eternal that
5 Before the world **was** (In.)
6 Thine **they-were** (Im.) and
7 Given Me **are** (Pr.) of Thee
9 For **they-are** (Pr.) Thine
10 All Mine **are** (Pr.) Thine
11 Now **I-am** (Pr.) no more in
11 These **are** (Pr.) in the
11 That **they-may-be** (Pr. S.) one
12 While **I-was** (Im.) with them
14 **They-are** (Pr.) not of the world
14 **I am** (Pr.) not of the world
16 **They-are** (Pr.) not of the world
16 **I am** (Pr.) not of the world
17 Thy word **is** (Pr.) truth
19 That they **also may-be** (Pr. S.)
21 They all **may-be** (Pr. S.) one
21 That they **also may-be** (Pr. S.)
22 That **they-may-be** (Pr. S.) made
23 That **they-may-be** (Pr. S.)
24 That they **may-be** (Pr. S.) with
24 Where **I am** (Pr.) that
26 That the love . . . **may-be** (Pr. S.)

BEFORE **Pro** (2).

5 With Thee **before** the world
was

24 **Before** the foundation of the

BEHOLD. **Theoreo** (1).

24 That **they-may-behold** (Pr. S.)

BELIEVE. **Pisteuo** (3).

8 **They-have-believed** (Aor.) that
20 Which (shall) **believe** (Pr. Pa.)
21 That the world **may-believe**
(Pr. S.)

BUT, sometimes rendered "and."
De (4).

3 **And (but)** this is life eternal

13 **And (but)** now come I

20 **Neither (but not)** pray I

25 **But** I have known Thee

Alla (3).

9 **But** for them which Thou

15 **But** that Thou shouldest

20 **But** for them also which

Ei me (1), "If not."

12 **But** the son of perdition

CHRIST. **Christos** (1).

3 Jesus **Christ** Whom Thou

COME **Erchomai** (3).

1 Father, the hour **is-come** (P.)

11 **And I-come** (Pa.) to Thee

13 **And now come-I** (Pr.) to

COME OUT. **Exerchomai** (1).
8 I-came-out (Aor.) from

DECLARE. **Gnorizo** (2).
26 I-have-declared (Aor.) Thy
62 And will-declare (F) it.

DO. **Poieo** (1).
4 Thou gavest Me to do (Aor. S.);

EARTH. **Ge** (1).
4 Glorified Thee on the earth

ETERNAL. **Aionios** (2).
2 Give eternal life to
3 This is life eternal

EVIL. **Poneros** (1).
15 Keep them from the evil

FLESH. **Sarx** (1).
2 Power over all flesh

FATHER. **Pater** (6).
1 Father, the hour is come
5 O Father, glorify Thou
11 Holy Father, keep
21 As Thou, Father, art
24 Father, I will that
25 O righteous Father, the

FINISH. **Teleioo** (1).
4 I-have-finished (A. Pa. prob.)

FOR (Conjunction). **Hoti** (4).
See also "That."
8 For I have given them
9 For they are Thine
14 Because they are not of
24 For Thou lovedst Me

FOR (Preposition). **Peri** (5).
"Concerning."
9 I pray for them: I pray
9 Not for the world, but
9 For them which Thou hast
20 Neither pray I for them
20 Alone but for them also
Huper (1), "On behalf of."
19 For their sakes I sanctify

FOUNDATION. **Katabole** (1).
24 Before the-foundation

FULFIL. **Pleroo** (2).
12 Might-be-fulfilled (Aor. Pa.)
13 Joy fulfilled (P. Pa. Pass.)

GIVE. **Didomi** (17).
2 Thou - hast - given (Aor.) Him
power over all flesh
2 That He-should-give (Aor. S.)
eternal life to as many as
Thou-hast-given (Aor.)

4 I have finished the work which
Thou-gavest (P.) Me.

6 I have manifested Thy Name
unto the men which Thou-gav-
est (prob. A.)

6 Thine they were and Thou-
gavest (prob. A.) them Me

7 All things whatsoever Thou-
hast-given Me (prob. P.)

8 The words which Thou-gavest
(prob. A.) Me I-have-given (P.)

9 But for them which Thou-hast-
given (P.) Me

11 Those whom Thou-hast-given
(P.) Me

12 Those that Thou - gavest (P.)
Me I have kept

14 I have - given (P.) them Thy
word, and the world

22 The glory which Thou-gavest
(prob. P.) I - have - given (P.)
them

24 Whom Thou-hast-given (P.) Me

24 Behold My glory which Thou-
hast-given (prob. P.) Me

GLORIFY. **Doxazo** (5).
1 Glorify (Aor. I.) Thy Son
1 Also may-glorify (Aor. S.)
4 I-have-glorified (Aor.)
5 Glorify (Aor. I.) Thou Me
10 I-am-glorified (P. Pass.)

GLORY. **Doxa** (3).
5 Glory which I had with
22 Glory which Thou gavest
24 Behold My glory which

GOD. **Theos** (1).
3 The only true God

HATE. **Miseo** (1).
14 The world hath-hated (Aor.)

HAVE. **Echo** (2).
5 Glory which I-had (Im.)
13 That they-might-have (Pr. S.)

HE (Him, His, They, Them).
Autos (28).
See also "They."
2 Thou hast given Him (D.)
2 Life to them (Gr. D.)
2 Thou hast given Him (D.)
6 Thou gavest them (A.) Me
8 Given unto them (D.)
8 They (N.) have received
9 I pray for them (G.)
10 Glorified in them (D.)
11 Those (them, A.) whom Thou

The Student of Scripture.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"They looked unto Him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed." Psalm 34. 5.

A Word of Introduction.

RELATION to God is the all-important question. If I am His child, I have a blessedness beyond human words. If I am not, all the riches and the pleasures of the world are vanity, and my success is utter failure. And when, by the grace of God, any can humbly say they are "in Christ Jesus," it is their privilege and responsibility to seek to walk correspondingly with the high calling. The characteristic of the Lord Jesus in the days of His flesh, is given in Psalm 16, "I have set the Lord always before me." (8). And this should be OUR aim and delight. Whenever we forget Him, or forget that our Saviour and Lord should have all the pre-eminence, there must be confusion. Darkness instead of light will be our portion when our eyes are on the things of the world. 2 Corinthians 3.18, 4.18 speak to our hearts

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THE PARABLES OF THE LORD JESUS.

The Parables of Matthew 13 (continued).

It may be well at this point to call to mind the historical parallels many believers have felt between the first seven parables and the epistles of Revelation 2 and 3. And the study is doubtless, suggestive. The sequence in Revelation is impressive. Though the first letter starts much later than the first parable* the lack of love there indicated had a sad

* More definitely associated with the second.

counterpart in history, and, if Smyrna suggests a martyr period, Pergamum may bring before us Constantine's corruption of the "church" and its parallel with the work of Balaam and Balak, remind of the mustard seed, the *third* in each case. And the Jezebel of Thyatira, though primarily personal, hints, and more than hints, the woman and the leaven, reminding moreover of the Jezebel who led Ahab,—and are there not many believers like Jehoshaphat who still compromise with such? The few names in Sardis may bring before us the treasure *hid*; and the refreshment as to Philadelphia may encourage even as the one pearl. There are contrasts as well as parallels, as to the seventh parable and letter, but both bring before us the dread result of sin,—and the casting away and spewing out. May our hearts be bowed down, lest we fall from our steadfastness. Again we look back to see the sowing of the tares *followed* by the coming of the birds and the leavening of the *whole*. The sin is one, and the *hiding* of the aim is evident throughout. Nor is the climax reached at once. Tares are sown, not planted as grown up already: the birds do not come till the branches tell of a radical change: the leaven is not seen at the outset. Only a little is needed to leaven the whole lump. Error does not proclaim its essential character, but if our eyes are not opened early they will be opened too late. These messages of Christ are not only for our study: His words are intensely practical. Are our hearts attentive, or are we still unmindful?

Some may still hesitate on one point, which to them remains as the one difficulty. "The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven." The parable before has prepared for this, the "change" does not alter the *wording* (e.g. Luke 5. 37, the "new" wine becomes fermented; but another name is not then introduced). This is part of the Divine teaching, and in itself indicative of the enemy's unholy tactics adopting words and appearances of truth, but denying the power (2 Tim. 3 5).

In accord with this, and with the description according to profession, "the kingdom of *heaven*" is likened unto ten *virgins*, although five were *foolish*, and the *holy* city is still thus called in Revelation 11. 2. Nor can we forget the "ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance." There is no impossibility in such language, but the problem may be to find the special shade of meaning. Here the lesson seems impressive, in accord with the fact that leavened fine flour is still so described, to indicate Satan's attempt in adopting the language of God's truth with a changed meaning. Hence far from being a difficulty the startling words themselves crystalize the sad meaning of the parable.

God has never broken one promise, or disappointed one act of spiritual faith.

FIVE LINKED PARABLES.

Matthew 9. 14-17, Mark 2. 18-22, Luke 5. 33-39.

AT first it may seem as if we only have two parables, one of the garment, and the other of the wineskins, but a little prayerful attention will show that the first concerns the children (or sons) of the bride-chamber, and this is used to introduce the robe and the food, alike connected with the marriage feast (see Matt. 22. 11, 12, John 2. 1-10). The Lord Jesus, as in John 3, is emphasized as the Bridegroom, though so many fail to realise this, and the "taking away" of the Bridegroom conveys a lesson of deep solemnity. The appointed death was always before Christ's view, and He shows this in various parables. We should not have expected this reference to His sacrifice in the "taking away" here, but the Lord Jesus thereby includes an answer to the questioners' underlying thought; they imagined a new sect of Judaism, and realized nothing of the new birth on the ground of His finished work. Fittingly, therefore, the next parable reveals the throwing away of the rags of self-righteousness. The "old garment" is not to be patched. The remarkable fact is that mending is usual, but neither in Matthew or Mark, nor in the distinct parable of Luke 5, does the Lord refer to the normal mode of repair. He speaks of uncarded* cloth in the one case, and in the other of a piece torn out from a new garment. People regularly mend with a strip of finished cloth; why does the Lord Jesus exclude this idea? Evidently the usual Divine principle applies, i.e. omissions are with a purpose, and often indicate that in the point omitted there is a designed contrast between the earthly custom and the spiritual theme. Clearly the garment of self's goodness is not to be mended. Every attempt ignores the depth of our ruin. Christ utterly excludes the possibility of any "normal" way of repair, and shows the failure of two abnormal ways, with much instruction for our hearts. The raw uncarded cloth would picture a good, but unfinished work. Those who knew nothing of atonement viewed the Lord Jesus as a "Good Teacher," to enable them to mend their own work. But, though there is nothing of the rag in uncarded cloth, and albeit it is not worn, it is incomplete, and not to be used. Thus the Lord portrays His work, as men wished, and still wish, to apply it, when viewing Him only as a Leader. No one uses unfinished cloth for earthly mending, else that which is put in to fill it up takes from the garment. And Christ will not provide a makeweight. He will not "fill up" a man's work, His real fulness is very different (John 1. 16). He will not help men to save them-

*The margin is clear; strangely the translators render quite different words in Matthew 9. 16 and 17 as if alike, and also make the statement contrary to fact.

selves. Man's own garment, with all its religious rites (Matt. 9. 14), must be set on one side. The only hope is the new robe.

If we would understand the parallel, yet somewhat distinct message of Luke 5, we must seek a simple translation. "No one putteth a piece from a new garment upon an old; if otherwise, he will both rend the new, and the piece from the new agreeth not with the old." Here we find no thought of an unfinished work. A complete garment, unused, unworn, undamaged, is before us; it is a finished garment, evidently ready for wear, not merely cloth; and the word "new" implies a complete contrast with that which needs mending. Here we have a picture of the prepared and finished work of Christ (Isa. 61. 10), a striking contrast with the altogether inadequate apron of the first Adam. In ordinary matters, no wise man would cut up a good garment to mend an old and ragged one; rather would he discard the old, and accept the new. Yet that which a sane man would not do, as to his body, is commonly done as to the soul. Or rather the attempt is vainly made, for such is the foolishness of sin. The utter worthlessness of the flesh and of its works, is not acknowledged, although partial, personal failure is often confessed, to the extent that "repair" is said to be needful. The theory is held that "God helps those who help themselves" and that "if we do our part, God will do the rest." The Lord Jesus shows He will not be party to such a compromise and fallacy; it is impossible before God. We cannot tear somewhat out from His robe to patch our faulty garment. It is madness to try to do so, and there is no "agreement" between His perfect work and our failure. Possibly the attentive reader now sees the importance of this literal rendering.† The new would not necessarily make a rent, in earthly things, but if the man rends the new everything is clear; it is important to realize that Christ's statements are invariably true to fact. It is deeply important to lay hold of this part of truth; the writer has found it a help in open air witness also:—Do not seek to patch up your work, a man cannot have part of the work of Christ; God has revealed a complete salvation for a complete sinner: throw away your rags (Isa. 64. 6), this is the only safe step, and receive the finished work of the Lord Jesus instead. Judaism did not unveil this, but the gospel has nothing else. How blessed it is when we see that nothing "agrees" with Christ's work, or rather that His holy work "agrees" not with our sin; yet, in mercy, the broken-hearted sinner is not condemned; the whole of "the righteousness of God is imputed to him, and he is accepted in the Beloved. The parables are ever full of "the glory of Christ," and of the fulness of the gospel.

† It is common to various translations; Wycliffe and Tyndale are both correct.

(If the Lord will, to be continued).

Concordance to the Lord's Prayer in John 17

(continued).

Abbreviations used: A., Accusative; Aor., Aorist; D., Dative; F., Future; G., Genitive; Gr., Greek; I., Imperative; Im., Imperfect; In., Infinitive; M., Middle; N., Nominative; Neu., Neuter; P., Perfect; Pa., Participle; Pass., Passive; Pl., Plural; Pr., Present; S., Subjunctive.

Note.—When two words are joined with a hyphen they denote one word in the original: this helps to show emphasized nominative pronouns, for the hyphens then omitted.

HE, THEY (continued).
 12 I was with **them** (G.)
 12 I kept **them** (A.) in
 12 None of **them** (G.) is lost
 14 I have given to **them** (D.)
 14 Hath hated **them** (A.)
 15 Shouldest take **them** (A.)
 15 Shouldest keep **them** (A.)
 17 Sanctify **them** (A.)
 18 Have I sent **them** (A.)
 19 For **their** (G.) sakes I
 19 That **they** (N.) also
 20 Through **their** (G.) word
 21 That **they** (N.) also
 22 I have given **them** (D.)
 23 I in **them** (D), and
 23 Hast loved **them** (A.), as
 26 Declared to **them** (D.)
 26 Love . . in **them** (D.)
 26 And I in **them** (D.)

HOLY. Hagios (1).

11 Holy Father, keep

HOUR. Hora (1).

1 The hour is come

I.* Ego (N. 15 times; other cases 24). See "We."

Nom.—

4 I have glorified
 9 I pray for **them**
 11 I come to Thee
 12 I kept **them** in
 14 I have given **them**
 14 I am not of the world
 16 I am not of the world
 18 So have I also sent
 19 I sanctify Myself
 21 And I in Thee
 22 I have given **them**
 23 I in **them**, and Thou
 24 With Me, where I am
 25 I have known Thee
 26 And I in **them**

* Nominative pronouns are very emphatic in Greek, hence we have put the list of "I" and "Thou" separately. The glory of the Lord shines out. (In verses 11, 18, 21, 26, "I" is united with the word "and").

Other cases:—

4 Thou gavest **Me** (D.)
 5 Glorify Thou **Me** (A.)
 6 Thou gavest **Me** (D.)
 6 Thou gavest **them** Me (D.)
 7 Thou hast given **Me** (D.)
 8 Thou gavest **Me** (D.)
 8 Thou didst send **Me** (A.)
 9 Thou hast given **Me** (D.)
 11 Thou hast given **Me** (D.)
 12 Thou gavest **Me** (D.)
 18 Thou hast sent **Me** (A.)
 20 Believe on **Me** (A.)
 21 Thou, Father, art in **Me** (D.)
 21 Thou hast sent **Me** (A.)
 22 Thou gavest **Me** (D.)
 23 And Thou in **Me** (D.)
 23 Thou hast sent **Me** (A.)
 23 Thou hast loved **Me** (A.)
 24 Thou hast given **Me** (D.)
 24 Be with **Me** (G.) where
 24 Thou hast given **Me** (D.)
 24 Thou lovedst **Me** (A.)
 25 Thou hast sent **Me** (A.)
 26 Thou hast loved **Me** (A.)

IN. En (16).
 See "Into" (verse 23).

10 Glorified **in** **them**
 11 No more **in** the world
 11 These are **in** the world
 11 **Through (in)** Thine own
 12 Kept **them in** Thy Name
 13 I speak **in** the world
 13 Joy fulfilled **in** themselves
 17 **Through (in)** Thy truth
 19 **Through (in)** the truth
 21 Thou, Father, art **in** Me
 21 And I **in** Thee, that
 21 They also may be **in** Us
 23 I **in** **them**, and Thou
 23 **In** Me that they may be
 26 May be **in** **them**
 26 And I **in** **them**

INTO. Eis (4).

18 Sent Me **into** the world
 18 Sent **them into** the world
 20 Shall believe **on (into)** Me
 23 Perfect **in (into)** one

JESUS. **Iesus** (1).
 3 **Jesus** Christ Whom Thou
 JOY. **Chara** (1).
 13 Have My joy fulfilled
 KEEP. **Tereo** (4).
 6 **They-have-kept** (P.) Thy word
 11 Holy Father, **keep** (Aor. I.)
 12 I **kept** (Im.) them
 15 That **Thou-shouldest-keep** (Aor. S.)
Phulasso (1).
 12 I-**have-kept** (Aor.), and
 KNOW. **Ginosko** (7).
 3 That **they-might-know** (Pr.)
 7 Now **they-have-known** (P.)
 8 **Have-known** (Aor.) surely
 23 The world **may-know** (Pr. S.)
 25 World hath not **known** (Aor.)
 25 I **have-known** (Aor.)
 25 These **have-known** (Aor.)
 LIFE. **Zoe** (2).
 2 Give eternal **life**
 3 This is **life** eternal
 LOSE. **Apollumi** (1).
 12 None of them is **lost** (Aor. M.)
 LOVE (verb). **Agapao** (4).
 23 **Thou-hast-loved** (Aor.) them
 23 **Thou-hast-loved** (Aor.) Me
 24 **Thou-lovedst** (Aor.) Me
 26 **Thou-hast-loved** (Aor.) them.
 (Noun). **Agape** (1).
 26 The **love** wherewith Thou
 MAKE PERFECT. **Teleioo** (1).
 23 **Made-perfect** (P. Pa. Pass.)
 MAN. **Anthropos** (1).
 6 Thy Name to the **men**
 MANIFEST. **Phaneroo** (1).
 6 I-**have-manifested** (Aor.)
 MORE. **Eti** (1), "Still."
 11 I am no **more** in
 MY (MINE). **Emos** (4).
 10 All **Mine** are **Thine**
 10 And **Thine** are **Mine**
 13 **My** joy fulfilled
 24 May behold **My** glory
 MYSELF. **Emautoo** (1).
 19 I sanctify **Myself** that
 NAME. **Onoma** (4).
 6 Manifested **Thy** Name
 11 Through **Thine** own Name
 12 Kept them in **Thy** Name
 26 Declared unto them **Thy** Name
 NO (NOT, NEITHER). **Ou** (9).
 9 I pray **not** for the world
 11 Now I am **no** more
 14 They are **not** of the world
 14 Even as I am **not**

15 I pray **not** that Thou
 16 They are **not** of the world
 16 Even as I am **not**
 20 **Neither** (But **not**) pray
 25 The world hath **not** known
 NONE. **Oudeis** (1), "Not one"
 (See both these words).
 12 **None** of them is lost
 OUT OF (OF). **Ek** (8).
 6 **Out-of** the world
 12 **None** of them is lost
 14 **Not of** the world
 14 **Not of** the world
 15 **Out-of** the world
 15 **From** (out of) the evil
 16 **Not of** the world
 16 **Not of** the world
 NOW. **Nun** (3).
 5 And **now**, O Father
 7 **Now** they have known
 13 And **now** come I
 OF (FROM). **Para** (2), with G.
 See with D. ("with").
 7 All things . . . of **Thee**
 8 Came out **from** **Thee**
 ON. **Epi** (1). (Verse 20,
 diff. word).
 4 Glorified **Thee** on the
 ONE. **Hen** (5). **Neuter**.
 11 That they may be **one**
 21 That they all may be **one**
 22 They may be **one**
 22 As **We** are **one**
 23 **Made** perfect in **one**
 ONLY. **Monos** (1).
 3 The **only** true God
 PERDITION. **Apoleia** (1).
 12 The son of **perdition**
 POWER. **Exousia** (1).
 "Authority."
 2 Given Him **power**
 PRAY. **Erotao** (4), "Ask."
 9 I **pray** (Pr.) for them
 9 I-**pray** (Pr.) not for
 15 I-**pray** (Pr.) not that
 20 **Neither** **pray-I** (Pr.)
 RECEIVE. **Lambano** (1).
 8 **They-have-received** (Aor.)
 RIGHTEOUS. **Dikaios** (1).
 25 O **righteous** Father
 SANCTIFY. **Hagiazo** (3).
 17 **Sanctify** (Aor. Im.) them
 19 I **sanctify** (P.) **Myself**
 19 May be **sanctified** (P. Pa. Pass.)
 SCRIPTURE. **Graphe** (1).
 12 That the **Scripture**

SEND. **Apostello** (7).
 3 Whom **Thou-hast-sent** (Aor.)
 8 **Thou-didst-send** (Aor.) Me
 18 **Thou-hast-sent** (Aor.)
 18 So **have-I-sent** (Aor.)
 21 **Thou-hast-sent** (Aor.)
 23 **Thou-hast-sent** (Aor.)
 25 **Thou-hast-sent** (Aor.)
 SON. **Huios** (3).
 1 Glorify **Thy** **Son**
 1 That **Thy** **Son** also
 12 The **son** of perdition
 SPEAK. **Laleo** (1).
 13 These things I-**speak** (Pr.)
 SURELY. **Alethos** (1), "Truly."
 8 **Have** known **surely**
 TAKE. **Airo** (1).
 15 **Thou-shouldest-take** (Aor. S.)
 THAT. **Hina** (19), "with the
 object that."
 1 That **Thy** **Son** also may
 2 **That** He should give
 3 **That** they might know
 4 **To** (that I should) do
 11 **That** they may be one
 12 **That** the **Scripture** might
 13 **That** they might have **My**
 15 **That** **Thou** shouldest take
 15 **That** **Thou** shouldest keep
 19 **That** they also might be
 21 **That** they all may be one
 21 **That** they also may be
 21 **That** the world may believe
 22 **That** they may be one
 23 **That** they may be made
 23 **That** the world may know
 24 **That** they also whom **Thou**
 24 **That** they may behold
 26 **That** the love wherewith
Hoti (10).
 See also "for," "because"
 (Same word, 4 times).
 7 They have known **that** all
 8 **Have** known **surely** **that**
 8 **Have** believed **that**
 21 **That** **Thou** hast sent Me
 23 **That** **Thou** hast sent Me
 25 **That** **Thou** hast sent Me
 THE. **Ho, He, To**. (51).
 Hour (1), Son (1, twice), Eternal
 life (3), Only True God (3), earth
 (4), work (4), glory (5), world
 (5), was (5, In.). Name (6), Men
 (6), world (6), word (6), words (8),
 world (9), Mine (10), Thine (10),
 world (11), Name (11), Name (12),
 son (12), perdition (12), **Scripture**
 (12), world (13) My joy (13, re-
 peated), word (14), world (14, -3
 times), world (15), evil (15), world

(16 twice), truth (17), **Thy** word
 (17, repeated), world (18, twice),
 believe (20), word (20), world (21),
 glory (22), world (23), My glory
 (24, repeated), world (24), Name
 (26), love (26).

THEMSELVES. **Heautous** (1).
 13 Fulfilled in **themselves**
 THEY (THOSE). **Ekeinos** (1).
 24 That **they** also whom
 THINE. **Sos** (5).
 6 **Thine** they were, and
 9 For they are **Thine**
 10 All **Mine** are **Thine**
 10 And **Thine** are **Mine**
 17 **Thy** word is truth
 THINE OWN SELF.
Seauton (1).
 5 With **Thine-Own-Self**
 THIS. **Houtos** (5).
 3 **This** is life eternal
 11 **These** are in the world
 13 **These** things I speak
 20 For **these** alone, but
 25 **These** have known that
 THOU (THEE, THY).
Su (N. 7: other cases
 18 times).

Nom.:-
 8 **Thou** hast sent Me
 5 Glorify **Thou** Me with
 21 **Thou**, Father, art in Me
 21 **Thou** hast sent Me
 23 **Thou** in Me that they
 23 25 **Thou** hast sent Me
 Other cases:-
 1 Glorify **Thy** (G.) Son, that
 1 May glorify **Thee** (A.)
 3 They might know **Thee** (A.)
 4 I have glorified **Thee** (A.)
 5 Which I had with **Thee** (D.)
 6 Manifested **Thy** (G.) Name
 6 **Have** kept **Thy** (G.) word
 7 All things . . . are of **Thee** (G.)
 8 I came out from **Thee** (G.)
 11 And I come to **Thee** (A.)
 11 Through **Thine** (G.) own Name
 12 Kept them in **Thy** (G.) Name
 13 Now come I to **Thee** (A.)
 14 Given to them **Thy** (G.) word
 21 I in **Thee** (D.) that they
 25 Hath not known **Thee** (A.)
 25 I have known **Thee** (A.)
 26 Unto them **Thy** (G.) Name
 THROUGH. **Dia** (1).
 20 On Me **through** their word
 TO. **Pros** (2).
 11 And I come to **Thee**
 13 Now come I to **Thee**

TRUE. **Alethinos** (1).
3 The only true God

TRUTH. **Aletheia** (2).
17 Sanctify them in Thy truth
17 Thy word is truth

WE. **Hemeis** (3). See "I."
11 Be one, as **We** (N.) are
21 That they may be in **Us** (D.)
22 Even as **We** (N.) are One

WHATSOEVER. **Hoson** (1).
7 All things whatsoever

WHERE. **Hopou** (1).
24 Be with Me where I am

WHILE. **Hote** (1).
12 While I was with them

WHO (WHICH, THAT).
Hos (13).
2 As many as (which, Gr.) Thou
3 Whom Thou hast sent
4 Finished the work which
5 The glory which I had
6 Which Thou gavest Me
8 The words which Thou
9 Which Thou hast given Me
11 Those (or which, D. Sg.) Thou
12 Those that (or D. Sg.) Thou
22 The glory which Thou
23 They also whom Thou
24 Which Thou hast given
26 Love wherewith (with which)

WILL. **Thelo** (1).
24 Father, I-will (Pr.) that

WITH. **Meta** (2), with G.
12 I was with them
24 That they . . . be . . . with Me

Para (2), "Beside" with D.
5 With Thine own self
5 Which I had with Thee

WORD. **Logos** (4).
6 Have kept Thy word
14 To them Thy word
17 Thy word is truth
20 Through their word

Rhema (1).
8 Given them the words

WORK. **Ergon** (1).
4 Have finished the work

WORLD. **Kosmos** (18).
5 Before the world was
9 Pray not for the world
6 Out of the world: Thine
11 No more in the world
11 These are in the world
13 I speak in the world
14 The world hath hated them
14 Are not of the world
14 I am not of the world
15 Not . . . take . . . out of the world
16 Are not of the world
16 I am not of the world
18 Sent Me into the world
18 Sent them into the world
21 That the world may believe
23 That the world may know
24 Foundation of the-world
25 The world hath not known

If the Lord is "above the circumstances," why should I speak of doing this or that "under the circumstances?" This expression implies a measure of forgetfulness of Himself, and of His power ever to give more encouragement than we have as yet experienced. Faith has a wealth of promises on which to rest.

There is nothing more perilous than pride of truth, and accuracy. Even pride as to humility may be nurtured, and, beyond this, a pride in discerning such pride. But introspection in itself is not the remedy; communion with God is essential. Only where there is love's repentance and attachment to His will can there be godly introspection in its true proportion, and in the enabling of the Holy Spirit.

Past failure is not to make us doubt God, but to lead to godly repentance which trusts Him more fully.

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The Student of Scripture.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"The Lord is gracious and full of compassion . . . He sent redemption unto His people: He hath commanded His covenant for ever: holy and reverend is His Name." Psalm 111. 4, 9

A Word of Introduction.

IN the Name of the Lord Jesus, and in humble dependence upon Him, we would send forth these pages. Christendom has failed, but Christ is the same. Many may find fault with those who take His Name, but He was, and is, faultless. And if every sentence exalts Him, this is the good pleasure of God the Father. The Holy Spirit glorifies Him (John 16. 14). Without the Lord Jesus there would be no salvation. If He is in the background, everything is vain. Religious reform and activity on the one hand, orthodoxy and accurate learning on the other, must fail, and fall powerless. We need HIMSELF, and then the Scriptures and godly service have their right place. May every article in this Magazine have Christ for its Centre, and may we ever seek the unity among His own for which He prayed (John 17. 31).

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Why Continue in Prayer?

GOD is our Heavenly Father, if we have believed into the Lord Jesus Christ. His love and interest are far beyond all human parallels. And it is easy to misuse His wonderful love, and to become somewhat careless, expecting His loving-kindness whatever we do. This is a serious mistake, a serious SIN, and indicates a lack of love to Him. And if we do not show love to Him, what evidence have we that we are His

children? A few words on such a subject will surely awaken the concern of His own to please Him more.

The tendency to bring everything to a human parallel, and to reason from imperfect knowledge of His ways, may lead some to undervalue prayer. They may think thus—God is graciously carrying out His purposes. If we ask Him *once* for that which is good, why should we need to ask again? We ask for spiritual victory, growth in grace, and blessing. Is not our Father willing to bestow? Undoubtedly. Why then do we need to *continue* in prayer?

How often we forget that a blessing may be more than undone by a wrong attitude when we have received it. And if we are self-satisfied, if we use the blessing to please ourselves, what is the permanent profit? And if the answer always comes at once, what exercise of soul do we have? Prayer would become merely a quick method of obtaining what we wish, and of avoiding God's training in the appointed path. Our gracious God and Father is too wise to allow this. He knows our real need far better than we do. And though He can grant at once, and sometimes does, He often withholds awhile that we may learn to wait on Him, in the power of the Holy Spirit, and that we may be drawn aside from the things of this earth.

Hence continuance in prayer is not only an evidence of faith and love, but a blessing to the one who continues. And this, in its turn, becomes a blessing to others, and further, the objections and mockeries of the ungodly as to prayer and its answers are answered.

The linked commands, "Ask, seek, knock" are very precious. Our Father does not become weary of our intensity. He waits that we may learn He has something to teach us first. The enemy will seek to bring about depression through the delay, or to cause a gradual carelessness, and forgetfulness of our very wish. But the heart that can change its desires lightly, and forget what was sought, knows little of intensity, and can hardly be entrusted with some of God's treasures. If I assume that the seeming lack of response must be refusal, I make a grave error. Let me not only trust God sufficiently to set aside all thoughts that doubt Him generally, but also trust Him enough to expect the best from Him, and to anticipate a wondrous blessing in *every* seeming disappointment, because He will not wound His own without a purpose richer in blessing than the immediate granting of their request would be. If I have asked for that which is not God's will let me confess sin, and be thankful He has not given me a stone; but if I have asked for that which is His will desiring this as soon as I am prepared to receive it, let me pray for the preparation also, and rejoice in His supply of *both*, and the fruit to His glory thereby.

The Parables of Matthew 13.

Continued.

After the searching message of the hid leaven, with its climax affecting the "whole" (verse 33) we find a change both of place and of persons. The Holy Spirit separates the second set of four parables by a quotation from Psalm 78, and by the words, "Then Jesus sent the MULTITUDE away, and went into the HOUSE." Henceforth we have the disciples alone, and fittingly the first words are interpretation. We have already meditated on these. The general principles, the dispensational setting, and the call to bring forth fruit, and to hate iniquity, here set forth, are ever important. The contrasted prospects, even the furnace of FIRE, and the shining forth as the SUN must speak to our hearts. "Why," I would ask myself, "Why am I not more earnest in view of all that has been revealed?" The words of the Lord Jesus are ever practical, and again the *present* tenses are before us, "Who hath ears to hear, let him hear." THIS link with Revelation 2 and 3 is suggestive.

The first parable in the house concerns a field, but not with regard to plant life; the earlier fruit parables thus stand alone, none of the latter are similar. Although the treasure is paired with the pearl, there is also, as we have seen, a structure, whereby the two central parables (4th and 5th) deal with a "hiding." But in the second we have the hiding of that which is precious. The kingdom, as explained to the multitude, might (and would) become corrupted, but the Lord's purpose cannot be broken. Hence the disciples are told of His true people. The treasure was one, though possibly of many parts. We are not told by whom it was first hidden, or when, or why. An eastern may hide his possessions through fear, and for his own use, and another, in finding, may not be entitled to claim. But as to all these things there is an INSPIRED silence, suggesting, it would seem, an appointed contrast with usual reasons of hiding, etc. May we not have here God's loving purpose, hiding His elect people, with a view to the work of His beloved Son, Who came as a Man, at the appointed time, to find, and hide awhile, until returning to claim the purchased land? This seems helped by the rendering "Hid in THE field" (44. see 38). The birds of the air and the leaven cannot destroy His chosen people. The finding preceded the purchase: there is no indication of a display then, rather the opposite. He alone "found," and we have just one illustration in John 1. 43. Another aspect of His finding is suggested by Luke 15. 4. From the standpoint of God's election, His people are a treasure: in their personal condition, they are lost; in both ways the Lord Jesus "finds." God's chronology is not ours, and thus, as the parables of the Sower

and of the Wheat and Tares view the fruit at the end from the one sowing, so all the treasure was, as it were, visible to the Lord Jesus. In like manner, all His people's sins were laid on Him. This difficulty is one from the human viewpoint: but to God all things are present.

(If the Lord will, to be continued.)

"FOR it is not subject to the Law of God."

(Romans 8. 7).

EVERY word of the Holy Spirit is precious, and will bear the fullest investigation. Where there is insubordination to God's law there is ENMITY against Him. This is a matter of the deepest importance. The word "subjection" is unpopular to-day, but there is a Divine beauty in it. The Lord Jesus, in the days of His flesh, illustrated holy subjection perfectly (Luke 2. 51), and thus showed the sanctity of God's arrangement of the home, and the evil of breaking its bonds. The "freedom," so-called, of children to-day is a curse, and not a blessing. The theory that "subjection" is unlovely, and not home-like, is an opinion that nothing but selfishness would beget, and disseminate. It is a precious home-word, and belongs to the relation of the wife to the husband (Eph. 5. 24) as well as of the children to the parents. Every believing wife who ignores this, or goes against it, shows a strange antipathy to her own blessedness and glory. "Self" imagines that subjection is slavery, because "self" wants to bring all into slavery to itself. There is nothing against "love" in the word "subject." Only when the added words indicate "under His feet" (Eph. 1. 22), or something similar, have we a sphere of repression in judgment. Love and subjection harmonize perfectly; as Ephesians 5. 24, 25 has shown us, and this beautiful relationship is to be sought between Christ and His people.

But the mind of the *flesh* is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the *law* of God. If we put aside God's *words* we put aside Himself. The opposite of enmity is love, and if a man loves the Lord he keeps His words, and this means holy and glad subjection. The wondrous deliverance from the dominion of law (Rom. 7. 1) by the death of Christ is that we should belong to ANOTHER (Rom. 7. 4), and this marriage relationship includes, as we have seen, love's continual "subjection." Not subjection without love, not subjection instead of love, but subjection as the fruit and evidence of love, in the gracious working of the Holy Spirit.

The things of God are, indeed, precious, but we must never let them take the place of Himself, and His will.

FIVE LINKED PARABLES.

Continued.

The two messages, though distinct, have the same thought, Christ's work is necessary in its completeness. Any incompleteness in viewing the work before He died, or in appropriating but part of it afterwards, would nullify the whole effect. "It is the blood that maketh an atonement" was prophetic of His precious blood, and in days when this is set aside, definitely or virtually, we cannot be too earnest in emphasizing that "Christ died for the ungodly." We may own our garment is ragged, we may confess that we need Christ, we may work hard in sewing*, yet all is vain unless we acknowledge our utterly lost condition. The man who had not on a wedding garment comes to mind. The Holy Spirit brings before us "the righteousness of God by faith of Jesus Christ," and we rejoice. Every theory falters, but God's purpose of grace stands. When men snatched at the kingdom of the heavens before the Lord Jesus died (Matt. 11. 12), they illustrated the same tendency to deny the utter ruin of the sinner. We cannot die to law except by the body of Christ (Rom. 7. 4), and the law hath dominion until there is death, hence Luke 16. 18 is linked with verses 16 and 17, to show the wish, namely an escape from law without atonement. Men were forcing themselves into the kingdom (16) but John clearly showed, through the type of baptism, that there could be no real entry except *via* "death" and the complete setting aside of the flesh. This denial of the utter fall is Satan's effort. Evolutionary theories cast it aside altogether. The thought of the improvement of the world is linked. The present idea of salvation by a man doing "his part" ignores the lost condition of a sinner. The conception of falling from salvation implies that something of a man's own power guarantees eternal life, and this, traced to the root, unconsciously minimises the fall. The tremendous, and yet precious, responsibility of a believer, does not need a grievous error to prop up its message to a humbled heart. The sad practice of "Infant sprinkling" puts aside the believer's typical judgment and burial of the whole flesh. May our hearts be drawn to realize God's truth, and to rejoice in His glorious salvation.

If the life of the Lord Jesus would rend that which is old, showing its defects, and while His complete work does not agree with anything of the flesh, it is blessed to know that He came for His people's sake, and any poor, guilty, troubled sinner is now welcome to the whole of that accepted "robe." Such an one, by mercy, "agrees not" with his own labours and efforts, but casts them all away (Isa. 2. 20 is a helpful parallel), and looks only to Christ—only to Christ. If such an one reads

*Observe the reminder of Genesis 3. 7.

these pages, may he find joy and peace in believing even now! The veil of the tabernacle was called a "division," but when rent it became the open door, and the word "mercy seat" contains the same letters as this word "division" graciously re-arranged, to show the life of the Lord Jesus would shut us out apart from His death, but the same gracious One brings us within His ever precious blood. "Thanks be unto God for His Unspeakable Gift."

Let us ever remember this in the testimony of the gospel whether at the street corner or in our home. Let the little ones early be brought to know the need for the work of Christ. Every attempt apart from Him, makes the rent worse, even as the last state of the swept and garnished house was worse than the first. Reformation and education, without Christ, will end in a climax of iniquity. There may seem to be "temporary blessing" from social reform, but those who urge this forget the solemn utterances of Christ as to the reaction.

The message of the new wine continues the testimony as to God's putting aside of the flesh. There is no thought of bringing old wine, until the last parable of Luke 5. 39. The wine is fresh and good, but if the wine skin has been used before, it cannot be cleansed by human skill. Water will not suffice. Nor can we purify the flesh to receive the precious doctrine of Christ, and the application of His finished work. A glass bottle may be scoured, but the usual eastern bottle is skin (cf. Ps. 119. 83), and contains the ferment in every part. And as we need a newness upon us, even the righteousness of God, so we need a new life within to receive the wine of the gospel (Isa. 55. 1). The "must" of Christ's death and of the new birth are alike before us in John 3. 7. 14. Happy are they who have, by grace, learnt this.

But if we attempt the impossible, the old wine skins change and ferment the testimony of the Lord, to their utter ruin. It is a dangerous thing for a soul to trifle with God's testimony. To go to Him one's own way is to risk Korah's death, and to take the gospel to the flesh is to rush oneself into judgment. But present-day teaching often encourages this. We seem afraid of broken hearts, in which God delights. He has no cheap gospel, only a free one. He wounds, and He heals, He kills and He makes alive. The wounded and helpless man on the way to Jericho was ready for grace; the poor, maimed, halt and blind welcome the Saviour. Saul of Tarsus was cast down and blinded. There is a majestic laying low in the sovereign grace of God.

The beautiful harmony of these parables is now before us. And every one exalts the Lord Jesus, showing the vanity, and sin, of self-confidence. The clothing tells of God's work WITHOUT the new wine, in the new wine skin, of His work WITHIN. Righteousness is not imputed apart from

regeneration, nor can we have regeneration without righteousness. There is a completeness in all that is of God. The spoiling and spilling of the new wine seems clear; the rending of the skins is not so manifest. But it would seem that if the unquickened sinner claims the promises of the gospel, he not only changes its character to that which (as we shall soon see) is more palatable to men, but does this to his own destruction. But he cannot in reality accommodate himself to his altered gospel, nor suit its message to himself. If he has ever received its message without a right attitude before God, there is a terrible rending, and his condition is, indeed, pitiable. Many do not illustrate this solemn message, because they alter the gospel BEFORE receiving it, yea, many who preach have modified God's witness, and to unsaved souls no longer declare the humbling gospel of the grace of God. The words of the Lord Jesus show the peril of listening to a holy ministry of truth, without a broken spirit, and we do well to realise this danger, that we may warn souls the more earnestly, lest mere profession take the place of a true acknowledgment of God's testimony with simple faith in the finished work of Christ.

We have already noticed that there is no thought of bottling the old wine. The Lord Jesus definitely sets this aside. HIS gospel is altogether without ferment. It is the unveiling of the glories of the True Vine, and in Him we rejoice. But as nothing can be more easily fermented than new wine, so nothing can be more "easily" altered than His gospel, and we do well to be on our guard that we may hold fast the faithful word. When a believing heart—a new wine skin—receives God's message in a godly way, there is a perfect harmony, and "both are preserved." The word of the Holy Spirit in the gospel, and His work in the heart are in complete concord.

We have observed elsewhere the bearing of this passage on the often disputed fact that unfermented WINE is called wine. The question seems to be settled for disciples, and also the fact that such wine is obtainable by the simple testimony of the Lord Jesus. One word from His lips sets aside all the reasonings of theologians, and the assertions of scientists. It is a remarkable evidence of the poverty of human wisdom that on this, as on most subjects, learned men differ, and great names can be produced on both sides of the "question." But for the humble believer the name of the Lord Jesus Christ is enough, and instead of an open question he can rejoice in a precious answer, and find food for his heart thereby.

The final parable is brief. "No one having drunk old wine straightway wishes new; for he saith, The old is agreeable" (Luke 5. 39 lit.). At last the drinking of old

wine is before us, and it seems to be viewed as agreeable to the natural wish. It is plain in the earlier verses that the new wine and skin are parallel with the good garment which must not be rent, and that the old wine is parallel with the RAGGED CLOTHING, a point which those who, alas, think that old wine is appointed in the Lord's Supper and elsewhere often overlook.* The same teaching seems to be continued. The natural man does not desire the real gospel. The message of salvation breaks self down, it is not agreeable to human pride. But if, in mercy, we have been brought to own His testimony against ourselves, we shall no longer wish for the man-pleasing and palatable words of men. The Lord Jesus will be our one Hope and Resting Place, and we shall delight to hear of Him. Happy are those who have been drawn by grace to that which at first was not agreeable, and which had nothing to flatter, but which now reveals, not only the laying low of self, but One in Whom there is Righteousness and Strength, One Who is all our Salvation and all our Desire. May our grateful hearts be more occupied with Him, and may these pages be graciously used to cause a deeper love unto Himself, as the Holy Spirit takes of the things of Christ in the Scriptures, and shows them to us, in their living power.

* Here the Lord Jesus avoids even the generic word "wine," and speaks only of the produce of the vine, in which ferment is not found. Unless we use in the Lord's Supper that which is unfermented, can we say that we have a command of our beloved Lord for our action? But to act WITHOUT His precept, and thereby to omit His precept, must pain many a humbled heart.

CONTRASTED WORSHIP.

The times of the Gentiles begin with worship; the first king (Nebuchadnezzar) ordered universal worship of his image. They will end with worship; "they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast?" Yea, universal worship will be commanded, and the false prophet "causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast." Yea, an image will be made, and he will "cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed" (Rev. 13. 3, 12, 15). The parallel is intensified; if we have the "cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of music" in Daniel 3. 5, 7, 10, 15, we have the music of Babylon in Revelation 18. 22. But thanks be unto God for the contrast in Revelation 5. The Lamb is the Centre of worship, and the harps are used in holy praise alone.

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