

THOUGHTS FROM

TO
MAINTAIN
A TESTIMONY
FOR GOD'S
GRACE AND
TRUTH

FOUNDED
BY
PERCY W.
HEWARD

THE WORD OF GOD

AND

THE STUDENT OF SCRIPTURE

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SOME OF THE CONTENTS

Eternal Salvation	2
Rain	4
The Church in Revelation ...	5
Inspired Words Inspected ...	6
Jerusalem Prophecies	7
One is Hungry and Another is Drunken	9
The Mercy Seat	10
I have no Time	11
Readings and Notes	11, 12

"Watch ye, stand fast in the faith,
quit you like men, be strong."

1 Cor. 16 : 13.

"MY HELP COMETH FROM THE LORD,
WHICH MADE HEAVEN AND EARTH"

Whence shall there come all needed aid;
From mountain or from hill?
Nay, from the LORD Who all things made
Because it was His will.

My help is only in the Name
Of the eternal LORD;
For all the heavens and earth became
At His almighty Word.

Shouldst thou, my soul, then be afraid?
Thou mayest Him rely on.
The LORD Who heaven and earth hath made
Will bless thee out of Zion.

E.K.



WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

"Things which are behind . . . Things which are before." Believers are not encouraged in this present age to observe special days and seasons. "Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you," was Paul's word to those who were regarding "religious" appointments. Yet the thoughtful believer often becomes more thoughtful, as, entering upon a fresh year, he looks back upon the past, and sees the pathway strewn with failures, sins, and unaccomplished purposes. He cannot undo what has been done, nor recover lost opportunities, but, in the mercy of God, he can confess all to Him, and, confessing, prove that "He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from *all* unrighteousness.

What is he to do *then*? To forget the things which are behind, even though they be "good" things, for "the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles." The rest of our time can, by grace, be lived to the will of God (1 Pet. 4:2-3).

Dear fellow-saints, let us not brood over the past; that will hinder our testimony. An unknown length of days is before us, and the future is also hidden. We are only called to live one day at a time, yet each day we may be "reaching forth unto those things which are before"; we may, because of all-sufficient grace, "press toward the mark." "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ."

Poem to Help Christian Experience—No. 258.

"A bundle of myrrh is my Well-beloved unto me . . . My Beloved is unto me as a cluster of camphire."

What is the Saviour "unto me"?

I ask not what He is to others:

Ah! do I know His love so free,
Far, far beyond a brother's?

'Tis not enough for me to know
That He to many is a Saviour.

Doth He to me His mercy shew,
On me bestow His favour?

Yea, for His Spirit made me feel
The burden sore of my transgression:
His holy Law did but reveal
My sin, and wring confession.

Out from a wounded, broken heart
I poured my sorrowing complaining:
I sought the healing of my smart,
For sin within was reigning.

And—praise His Name—o'er all my sin
Abounding, grace in might o'erfloweth:
For grace alone could faith begin:
By grace alone faith groweth.

Now I no more in bondage lie:
Christ's precious blood alone redeeming
His gracious Spirit doth apply
To me, Himself esteeming.

So now the Saviour's Lovely Name,
As clusters of the sweetest savour,
Is ever "unto me" the Same.
O grace! O wondrous favour!

ETERNAL SALVATION, AND THE DANGER OF DENYING IT

PERCY W. HEWARD

The Grace of God can be turned to LASCIVIOUSNESS (Jude 4), even as sin takes occasion by the LAW, which is holy and just and good (Rom. 7:11-13). The mis-use of truth is no argument against truth. The contention of the Council of Trent against RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH illustrates the standpoint of the carnal man. He puts GRACE in a FLESHLY context, and then declares it to be dangerous. Many today will tell us that salvation by grace means a man can live as he likes afterwards. But they forget he is a new creation, and has put on the new man. Grace never excuses sin, but teaches us to live soberly, righteously, and godly (Tit. 2:12). This is fundamental. But although the mis-use of truth is no argument against the truth, it is an argument against the BOLD statement of truth, WITHOUT a right context. The flesh has a fleshly idea of salvation—it desires freedom from punishment: the flesh has a fleshly conception of heaven—a self-indulgent theory: the flesh has a fleshly theory of prayer—even an attempt to obtain blessings cheaply. But the flesh is NOT the NEW man, and the flesh has been judged, and not justified, and is to be treated as judged in our daily experience. GRACE is not given to the flesh.

We find no Scripture that relationship to Christ can be undone, or that "my" eternal life can be killed. For life is not only a general fact, it is a personal blessing. "I" am born again, "I" have life now (John 3:36; 5:24). Myriads who have never been born again assume this, and say, "Lord,

Lord," but they, as rocky ground hearers, shall perish. The engrafted branch that was never united must be cut off.

And the assurance and joy of salvation are NOT unconditional. The rewards and losses at the Judgment Seat of Christ are far more SERIOUS to a believer than most realize, "To a believer," for his Lord's joy is intrinsically more to him than his own (Matt. 25:21-23). Salvation is not a comfortable escape from wrath, it is far more, even a God-glorifying deliverance from SIN. The professor abhors wrath but loves some sin: the believer abhors sin, and HONOURS THE WRATH OF GOD. This is a heart-searching distinction.

Some have earnestly urged that a believer can be lost after he has been quickened from above. Quite apart from those who hold this as part of the sad doctrine that salvation is by man's effort and working, there are some who have grieved over the MIS-USE of grace, but their swing of the pendulum surely dishonours our Heavenly Father in ANOTHER way. MANY Scriptures warn as to loss at the Judgment Seat of Christ, MANY Scriptures show that many are only "believers" in name, MANY Scriptures urge godly concern and make clear that continuance in sin involves doom, but can a Scripture be found that one born again will THUS be left to continue in sin? I do not know one. The grace that plucks a brand from the burning is continued, and God will not suffer His faithfulness to fail, but will bring many sons into glory (John 10:28; Phil. 1:6).

And we would earnestly commend to dear and humble children of God, who, pained at the low standard of godliness today, have adopted this interpretation, a solemn Scriptural thought which seems to show that in seeking to avoid one error they have fallen into another. This is always the tempter's aim, is it not, beloved friend? He lays a trap for us on THE LINE OF OUR WISH to please God. And it is deeply important to learn the danger of opposing any error with OUR OWN WEAPON AND IN OUR OWN WAY. This is a common mistake. We try to protect God's truth instead of letting HIM be the Protector. We all bring in our reason rather than our reverence. Suffer the word of exhortation: it is in love.

The simple thought on my heart now is that the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the LAW OF SIN AND DEATH" (Rom. 8:2). Blessed be God, I am in a law to Christ (1 Cor. 9:21), and long to keep His commandments (Rom. 14:15), but I am not under law (Rom. 6:15), so that the wrath of God cannot be

against one in Christ Jesus. Now some dear believers have suggested that MY CONTINUANCE IN THIS DEPENDS ON MYSELF. If then by my actions I can bring myself under LEGAL WRATH, must it not be that my present obedience is LEGALLY ACCEPTABLE AND MERITORIOUS? IF the ABSENCE of my doing would mean penal judgment, it is my doing that prevents this: in other words my actions have a standing before God's holy law. Does that law admit LESS THAN PERFECTION? My obedience holds back wrath, my obedience is therefore my justification!—O beloved reader, do we not shrink with horror, from such a deadly mis-statement? Christ alone is our Righteousness if we are His, and we reject any other thought or claim.

One further word, in affectionate concern. If my disobedience brings into PENAL judgment, EACH sin would bring me into that overwhelming doom. ONE sin is enough to condemn, one omission is sufficient to ensure wrath. Do you not see the danger of such teaching? The believer holding it LOWERS GOD'S HOLY LAW. Earnestly would we plead with God's beloved children to accept the Scriptural standpoint that shows EACH DISOBEDIENCE IS SERIOUS, AND BRINGS CHASTISEMENT FROM OUR FATHER. Holiness is thus truly emphasized, without invalidating the precious and permanent work of our beloved and adorable Lord Jesus Christ.

YOUNG PEOPLES COLUMNS**RAIN**

Very few boys and girls, if any, love a rainy day. They like it still less if they are stopped by rain from an outing upon which their mind has been set. Older people, too, often grumble if the weather is not to their liking. Yet what should we do without the rain? Some heathen people have thought, in times of great dryness, that they can shoot an arrow upward and make a hole in a cloud, and so bring rain; but the prophet asks, "Are there any among the vanities of the Gentiles that can cause rain? Or can the heavens give showers?" (Jer. 14:22). No, the skies of *themselves* cannot give rain, but only when God commands them. "Thou, O God, didst send (shake out) a plentiful rain, whereby Thou didst confirm Thine inheritance, when it was weary" (Ps. 68:9). Then it is, "if the clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth" (Eccl. 11:3).

God's Promise to those who obey Him

"If ye walk in My statutes, and keep My commandments, and do them: then will I give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase" (Lev. 26:3-4). These words were spoken to Israel, but there came times in their history when they turned away from God, and so were punished by God holding back His rain (read 1 Kings 17). We read also, "When heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against Thee" (1 Kings 8:35). God kept His Word, and did punish Israel thus.

God's Will is over all

He can, and does, give or hold back the rain as He pleases. The clouds are His, and "it is turned round about by His counsels: that they may do whatsoever He commandeth them upon the face of the world in the earth. He causeth it to come whether for correction (a rod), or for His land, or for mercy" (Job 37:11-13). Thus God shews He can use the rain for three different purposes, and even as a rod to punish. Further, God not only sends rain AS and WHEN He pleases, but WHERE He pleases. "And also I have withholden the rain from you, when there were yet three months to the harvest: and I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city: one piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not withered" (Amos 4:7). So man has to depend upon God for earthly things. And, dear reader, so we depend upon the will of God for salvation and all heavenly blessings. We cannot claim anything. We can no more save ourselves than we can make it to rain. It is all of grace that anyone is saved. We read, "As the rain cometh

down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall My Word be that goeth forth out of My mouth: it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish THAT WHICH I PLEASE, and prosper in the thing whereto I SENT IT" (Isa. 55:10-11). O that God Himself may so speak to the hearts of my readers, applying His word to each, and revealing the Lord Jesus as the One and Only Saviour.

RAIN AS GOD'S JUDGMENT

God not only punishes men by holding back the rain, but by sending so much as to cause great harm and damage. We read of "a sweeping rain which leaveth no food" (Prov. 28:3). Very terrible was the storm that came down upon Egypt, when it "smote man and beast . . . and smote every herb of the field, and brake every tree of the field" (Exodus 9:25). Most terrible of all was the great Flood. Before that there had been no rain, so far as we can tell from reading our Bible. "The LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth . . . but there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground" (Gen. 2:5-6). But when men became so wicked, and did not repent even at the preaching of Noah, "the windows of heaven were opened, and the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights" (Gen. 7:11-12). None was saved except those in the ark which Noah had made.

Although God has said He will not again destroy men by a flood yet, every time it rains, we ought to think of what took place in Noah's day. In England last year the rains were very heavy, causing floods, loss of life, and doing much harm to the crops. Many of God's people think that He is speaking to the people of this land, and so rebuking them for neglecting or rejecting the truth of the Bible, and living as though there were no God. Thus God warns, in mercy, but few seem to heed the warning.

A future judgment awaits all who die without repenting, and with their sins unforgiven. "Upon the wicked HE shall rain fire and brimstone and an horrible tempest" (Psalm 11:6). And though men try to make their own place of safety, "the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place" (Isa 28:17). But there is a True Refuge, where one can be safe in the day when God pours out His wrath on a guilty world. "And a Man shall be as an Hiding Place from the wind, and a Covert from the tempest" (Isa. 32:2). That One is the Lord Jesus, to Whom

(Continued at foot of Page 5)



**THE CHURCH
IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION**
(Continued)

The Overcomers on the Sea of Glass

In Chapter 15, the prophet records, "And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having THE SEVEN LAST PLAGUES; FOR IN THEM IS FILLED UP THE WRATH OF GOD" (v. 1). It is desired to emphasize the latter part of this verse, for the plagues contained in the vials are not yet poured out, but are very shortly so to be. Before this takes place, a view of the saints in glory is given to John, and these include those who had "gotten the victory" over the Antichrist, and had therefore passed through the Great Tribulation. Similar language is used in chapter 20:4, and that in connection with the FIRST RESURRECTION. It must, therefore, be concluded that the position of the saints in chapter 15:2 indicates that the resurrection has taken place, and that *before* the "filled-up" wrath of God is poured out. "After these things I saw, and there was opened the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in the heaven" (15:5). That which follows (vv. 6 to 8) appears to connect with verse 1, the verses 2 to 4 being in parenthesis, this passage having reference to saints in glory, the resurrection having taken place *immediately prior* to the judgments of the "last hour," during which the vials (rather bowls) are quickly poured out, leading up to the final great earthquake (chs. 6:12; 11:13) and the recompense to "Great Babylon."

It might be questioned whether all the events could take place in the last hour. But God does not need a long period in which to perform "His work, His strange work, His act, His strange act." He is long-suffering, but when men have failed to learn by His *partial judgments* under the seals and the trumpets, then He will deal with them in the fierceness of His anger and the fulness of His wrath. But the saints—that part of the church existing in the last seven years—having endured great tribulation *at the hand of man*, instigated by Satan, will be in heaven when God will deal with the earth "in that day," "when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in

flaming fire taking vengeance" (2 Thess. 1:7-8). It will be observed that, *at that time*, the "tribulated" saints will have "rest" (note the beginning of verse 7). Thus there is a further stress on the fact of "the church" being still here, right up to but not in, the short time (the HOUR) when the wrath of God, in awful fulness, descends upon a guilty, unrepentant, and defiant generation of men.

Babylon

Babylon is not only a city (that it will be, and a great one) but is a system, so ancient and so inspired and promulgated by Satanic energy, that it will exert an evil influence right to the end. For the "ten kings" (ch. 17:12) only have power as such "one hour with the beast," and these are they who hate and destroy Babylon *as a system* (ch. 17:16). These are they also who, in their madness, "make war with the Lamb"; this appears to be after the resurrection, for "they that are with HIM are called, and chosen, and faithful," surely, from among the saints. Is not this war the same as "the battle of that great day of God Almighty" (ch. 16:14)? Also is it not that of chapter 19:19? These are final events, and it seems clear that raised saints are with their Lord when He goes forth to war.

An important point to notice is that "Babylon" is "drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of JESUS" (ch. 17:6). Note also the similar language of chapter 18:24, and the words, "all the saints." This could apply to all saints, from the time of Abel to the first resurrection, and therefore including "the church." Moreover, the phrase "martyrs of JESUS" can only apply to those who know Him as personal Saviour. This persecution continues until "The Harlot" as a system is destroyed, when the Antichrist stands supreme as the idol of men, and continues the "war with the saints." Hence, to the writer of this study, it seems plain that the church is not "taken away" until Babylon is about to be destroyed "in one hour," the last hour of God's indignation.

(If the Lord will, to be continued)

RAIN (Continued from Page 4)

the poor sinner may flee for refuge, and be sure of a welcome.

Let us also remember the man who built his house on the sand. "And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; AND IT FELL. And great was the fall of it."

Dear friend, have you a sure Foundation and a Place of Refuge?

INSPIRED WORDS INSPECTED

"And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight. And there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together. And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep; and as Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead."

Acts 20 : 7-9.

Here we have a short, but sufficient record of a primitive meeting of believers. They met on the "first day" (the Lord's Day) to "break bread," in the evening, that is, to observe "the Lord's Supper." The many lamps would probably cause heat. Hence the drowsiness of the young man.

In the following notes, the order of words in the Greek Text will be followed.

AND (de); conjunction meaning "but"; second word in sentence.

UPON (en); preposition meaning "in," governing always dative case.

THE FIRST (tei miai); article and numeral adjective, feminine; from heis, mia, hen (one). The cardinal number is used, as in Hebrew—"The evening and the morning . . . day one."

DAY (not expressed, but understood).

OF THE WEEK (ton sabbaton); article and noun, genitive, plural, neuter; literally, "of the sabbaths," a week being reckoned from sabbath to sabbath, that is, seven days. Just as we speak of "a fortnight," meaning fourteen days. Many go astray through not understanding the usage of the word "sabbaths" in this connection, and so are found stressing the seventh day of the week as the day on which Christians should meet. The Lord Jesus rested in the grave on the seventh, or Sabbath, day, and rose on the first day. See Matthew 28:1 (eis miai sabbaton), Mark 16:2 (in v. 9 the ordinal number is used), Luke 24:1; John 20:1-10; 1 Cor. 16:2.

WHEN (no word for this in text).

THE DISCIPLES (most manuscripts have "hemon" in place of this).

CAME TOGETHER (sunegmenon); participle, passive, perfect, genitive plural, from "sunago," compound of "sun" (together) and "ago" (I lead, bring, conduct). Hence "I lead or bring together."

WE (hemon); personal pronoun (see above under "disciples"). Genitive plural. This, taken with the preceding participle, is the form known as "Geni-

tive Absolute," and may be rendered, "When we had been brought together." Perhaps leading one's thought to the "drawing together" by the grace of God.

TO BREAK (klasai); verb, infinitive, aorist, from "klao" (I break off); used of the Lord's Supper, in which each participant breaks off for himself a portion of the loaf.

BREAD (arton); noun, masculine, accusative, from "artos" (bread, a loaf).

PAUL (ho Paulos); article and proper noun.

PREACHED (dielegeto); verb, imperfect, from "dialegomai" (I discourse, converse, address). Render, "was addressing," or "discoursing."

UNTO THEM (autois); personal pronoun, dative plural, meaning "to them."

READY (mellon); verb, participle, present, from "mello" (I am about to). Render, "being about to."

TO DEPART (exienai); verb, infinitive, present, from "exeimi" (I go out) from "ek" (out) and "cimi" (I go). This looks like "eimi" (I am) but the former word has a circumflex accent over the initial letters.

ON THE MORROW (tei epaurion); article, dative, and adverb. A form often found, as for example, "to nun" (the now).

AND (te); conjunction, second word in sentence.

CONTINUED (pareteinen); verb, imperfect, from "parateino" (I prolong); compound of "para" (beside, alongside, and in composition, suggesting motion BY or PAST any place) and "teino" (I stretch out). Hence our word means "to stretch out beyond" the time. This is exactly what Paul did. "He was prolonging."

HIS SPEECH (ton logon); article and noun, accusative, from "logos" (a word, utterance, speech, discourse, saying).

UNTIL (mechri); particle indicating an end; when used as a preposition, is followed by the genitive, as here.

MIDNIGHT (mesonuktiou); noun, neuter; a compound of "mesos" (mid, middle, midst) and "nux" (night).

AND (de); see above.

THERE WERE (esan); verb, imperfect, plural; from "eimi" (I am).

MANY (hikanai); adjective, plural, feminine, from "hikanos, -e, -on" (sufficient, enough).

LIGHTS (lampades); noun, feminine, plural, from "lampas" (a light, as a torch, lamp, or lantern). This word precedes "hikanai."

IN (en); preposition governing dative case.

THE UPPER CHAMBER (toi huperioi); dative article and noun, from huperioios (over, upper); usually of a room.

WHERE (ou); adverb modifying the verb following.

THEY WERE (hemen); verb, imperfect, first person, from "eimi" (I am). Translate, "we were." Luke includes himself.

GATHERED TOGETHER (sunegmenoi); participle, perfect, passive, from "sunago." Render, "having been gathered together."

AND (de); see above.

SITTING (kathexomenos); present participle, from "Kathexomai" (I seat myself); literally, "one seating himself."

A CERTAIN (tis); indefinite pronoun.

YOUNG MAN (neanias); noun, masculine, nominative. "Neos" means "young or new."

BY NAME (onomati); noun, neuter, dative, from "onoma" (a name). Interestingly, the "nom" part suggests the words, "nominal" and "name."

EUTYCHUS (eutuchus); proper noun.

IN (epi); preposition meaning "upon."

THE WINDOW (tes thuridos); noun, feminine, genitive, with article; from "thuris"; literally, "a little door or opening," being a diminutive of "thura" (a door); possibly here it may signify "the window cill."

BEING FALLEN (katapheromenos); participle, present, passive, from "kataphero," a compound of "kata" (down) and "phero" (I bear or carry); hence, the word may be rendered, "being borne down."

INTO (no separate word).

A DEEP (bathei); adjective, dative, from "bathus, -eia, -u."

SLEEP (hupnoi); noun, masculine, dative from "hupnos."

PREACHING (dialegomenou); participle, present, from "dialegomai" (see above).

PAUL (tou Paulou); article and proper noun, genitive. This word and the genitive participle preceding is an example of "Genitive Absolute." Render, "as Paul was preaching."

LONG (epi pleion); preposition and adjective, a phrase used adverbially; neuter, from "pleion" (more); literally, "on to more," meaning "at great length." Compare "continued," above. These expressions may imply a rebuke, as the primary object of the assembling was "to break bread."

HE SUNK DOWN (katanechtheis); participle, aorist, passive, from "kataphero," a compound of "kata" (down) and "phero" (I bear). See above. Render, "having been borne down."

WITH (apo); preposition, meaning "from"; governing genitive case; being overcome by sleep, from that condition resulted a complete "bearing down."

SLEEP (tou hupnou); article and noun, genitive. "The sleep," that already mentioned.

AND (not in text).

HE FELL (epesen); verb, aorist, from "pipto" (I fall).

FROM (apo).

THE THIRD LOFT (tou tristegou); article and adjective used as noun; a compound of "tris" (thrice, three times) and "stege" (a roof or covering). Hence, "three-roofed or "three-storied," the ceilings being probably meant. The fall was from the third storey, called also "upper chamber."

DOWN (kato); adverb, meaning "downwards."

AND (kai); conjunction.

WAS TAKEN UP (erthe); verb, aorist, passive, from "airo" (I raise or lift up).

DEAD (nekros); adjective, from "nekros, -a, -ov."

A literal rendering is:—

And a certain young man, Eutychus by name, sitting upon the window-cill, being overcome (or borne down) by a deep sleep, whilst Paul was preaching a long time, having been overcome (borne down from, or by reason of) the sleep, fell.

The main clause is, "A certain young man fell," all the intervening clauses being adverbial or adjectival.

JERUSALEM PROMISES

(Continued)

ROYALLY

"And it shall come to pass, when ye be multiplied and increased in the land, in those days, saith the LORD . . . At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the LORD, and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the Name of the LORD, to Jerusalem" (Jer. 3:16-17). Such a promise as this has not been fulfilled since Jeremiah uttered those words, and they do not refer to "Jerusalem which is above." And since that city is to be the throne of the Lord, it follows, surely, that HE is the King. The promise made to Mary concerning the Son Whom she should bear, confirms this. "Thou shalt call His Name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the LORD God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David; and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:31-33). The Son of God, Who became Man, is to be King over all the earth, but His throne will be in Jerusalem. "Behold, a KING shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment. And a MAN shall be as an Hiding-place" (Isa. 32:1-2). Our Lord spoke of

Jerusalem as "the City of the Great King" (Matt 5:35).

"Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a Righteous Branch, and a KING shall reign and prosper . . . and this is His Name, whereby He shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS" (Jer. 23:5-6). That Jerusalem will be His seat of government is made clear in many Scriptures, for example, in Isaiah 24:23. "Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the LORD of Hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients gloriously." The effect of the second advent upon the sun and moon comes before us again in chapter 30. In verse 19, we read, "for the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem," and then (v. 26), "Moreover, the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, in the day that the LORD bindeth up the breach of His people, and healeth the stroke of their wound." Once more turn to Isaiah. "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down . . . But there the glorious LORD will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams . . . for the LORD is our Judge, the LORD is our Lawgiver, the LORD is our King: He will save us" (33:20-22). And is it not a heart-warming and soul-moving thought to us who are among God's saved ones, that that "Messiah, the Son of the Blessed," who is to take the kingdom, and set up His throne in a restored Jerusalem, is the Lord Jesus, and none other than He? So that we have a two-fold desire for His return, that is, to take His Church to Himself, and to save all Israel. Surely, our heart is inditing (bubbling up with) a good matter, as we speak of the things touching the KING. From this part of our study, we naturally proceed to consider how the promises concerning Jerusalem will be fulfilled.

CENTRALLY

By this is meant that Jerusalem will occupy, in that Day, a central position in the earth. The whole world will be RULED from the Holy City. He Who reigns there is High Priest as well as King (Zech. 6:13). Those over whom He rules directly are circumcized in heart as well as in flesh. He has authority over the whole being of His willing subjects in the Holy City, that is, in things both spiritual and temporal. We read, "They shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." And of these, moreover, it is said, "After those days, saith the LORD, I will put My law in their

inward parts, and write it in their hearts" (Jer. 31:31-34). So, "Thy people shall be freewill offerings in the day of Thy power" (Ps. 110:3).

But the Law is not only in their hearts, for "Out of Zion shall go forth the Law, and the Word of the LORD from Jerusalem" (Isa. 2:3). By what means shall the Truth be sent forth? "It shall come," saith God, "that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come, and see My glory. And I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal, and Javan, to the Isles afar off, that have not heard My fame, neither have seen My glory; and they shall declare My glory among the Gentiles" (Isa. 66:18-19) "O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!" (Isa. 40:9). So the good news of salvation goes to the cities around, and spreads to the nations. "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth" (Isa. 52:7).

True, the Church has entered already into the blessing of the New Covenant, and into the privilege of carrying the good news of salvation and righteousness to the nations, but the New Covenant is first mentioned as "with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah." Therefore those houses, which shall be "one," must enter into the promised blessing.

Jerusalem will not only be the centre of a circumference, radiating its influence, but a centre to which all at the circumference will gravitate. "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths (Isa. 2:2-3). There will then be a house—a Temple. Its structure is described in the last chapters of Ezekiel, whilst in Zechariah, chapter 6 we read: "Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the Man Whose Name is THE BRANCH; and He shall grow up out of His place, and He shall build the temple of the LORD; even He shall build the temple of the LORD, and He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon His throne, and He

shall be a Priest upon His throne: . . . And they that are far off shall come and build in the temple of the LORD" (Zech. 6:12-15). Doubtless, these Scriptures have been much "spiritualized," and not unprofitably; but, as before mentioned, a "literal," and by no means impossible, interpretation, is of the earthly nation, described as Israel or Ephraim or Jacob, or Israel and Judah, which descriptions do not fit the Church. Surely, we must take as they stand the words near the end of Zechariah's prophecy: "And it shall come to pass, that everyone that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the king, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of Tabernacles." The fact that rainlessness and plague will be the punishment for disobedience to the command to do this yearly service seems to prove conclusively that—

- (a) not a heavenly scene is here contemplated;
- (b) the prophecy is as yet unfulfilled.

Thus we have sought to prove from Holy Scripture that there is a wondrous future for Jerusalem, and those who shall inhabit her. For when the glory of God fills that last and most beautiful house in the Holy City, "the Name of the City from that day shall be, The LORD is there" (Ezek. 48:35).

"ONE IS HUNGRY, AND ANOTHER IS DRUNKEN"

1 Cor 11 : 20-22

Strangely, some who read this Scripture deduce therefrom that the contents of the cup at the Lord's Supper must have been fermented wine. Such an inference is wrong for the following reasons:—

(a) The believers at Corinth were in an unsatisfactory condition spiritually. They *came together* not for the better but for the worse (v. 17). Also, "when ye *come together* . . . there be divisions among you" (v. 18). Further, "When ye *come together* into one place, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper" (v. 20). But was not that the professed object of their gathering? Yes, but the condition of heart really nullified the action. Baptism, for example, would be no baptism if there were not faith and regeneration preceding, and "whatsoever is not of faith is sin." The true inference is that what those in Corinth came "in church" to do, became an external act without obedience of heart.

(b) The Lord's Supper is here distinguished from "his own supper," which "each one" was "taking

*before,"** and the members were not tarrying "one for another" (v. 33). It would appear that some, perhaps all, brought food and drink into the meeting place, and partook of these *before* the "breaking of the bread." Some being less well supplied could be "hungry." Others would be "drunken," and "shame" those, probably slaves, who had not "houses to eat and drink in" (v. 22). The apostle's exhortation to such is, "And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation" (v. 34).

It is this failure to distinguish between "his own supper," which should have been eaten "at home," and the Lord's Supper to be observed "in church," that has given rise to the opinion that fermented wine was used in "the breaking of bread." Wine was certainly NOT USED by the Lord when instituting the Supper. It COULD NOT have been used, because "leaven," which is "fermentation," was prohibited at Passover Time. Moreover, our Lord never used the word "wine," but always "fruit of the vine." HIS words are conclusive, and should be final and binding upon every lover of Him.

One further word. There have been cases of reclaimed inebriates in whom the old craving has revived through a sip of "communion wine." Can we believe that the Lord Jesus would have appointed the use of a liquor so potentially dangerous?

However, the chief reasons for using unleavened symbols in the Lord's Supper are—

(a) Because the Lord Himself used them. Of this there can be no possible doubt.

(b) Because "leaven" and "ferment" are a symbol of sin, invariably in Scripture. Hence that which represents the Lord's body and blood, the bread and the cup, ought not to contain these things.

Finally, is it seriously thought that, when only one cup was used at the Lord's Table, and divided amongst many, drunkenness could be caused by thus partaking, even if fermented wine were used? May those who have used this argument meditate further on the Lord's own words, "THIS bread" and "THIS cup," included in His loving command, "THIS DO."

*The word "other" is not in the text.

THE MERCY SEAT

Exodus 25 : 10-22; 37 : 1-9

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine . . ." At the time those words were written, the word meant the earlier part—the Hebrew Bible, known today as "The Old Testament." But this part of Holy Scripture is not known or used as it should be, and some even decry the use thereof for the instruction of believers. Now, however, the canon of Scripture is complete, the later part—the "New Testament"—is an unfolding and an interpretation of the earlier part. Neither can be fully understood without the other. Hence, as God's children and the Lord's disciples, we need both. These introductory remarks may seem superfluous to some, but experience has taught that they are not so. The treasures of typical teaching are rich in spiritual profit, and the passages now being considered will, we think, illustrate the fact.

Doctrine taught by Symbol

Among the parts of truth typified by the ark and mercy-seat are the following:—

- (1) The obedience of Christ.
- (2) Atonement for sin, by His blood.
- (3) His humiliation and glory.
- (4) The entrance of the redeemed into the Holiest.
- (5) The inseparable union of Christ and His elect.
- (6) His constant presence with them in their pilgrimage.
- (7) Their delight in Christ's redeeming blood.
- (8) Their interest in one another.

The Obedience of Christ

That the ark and its mercy-seat were of peculiar value in God's sight is indicated by their being first mentioned in the Divine instruction to Moses. Here was God's Throne. His presence was there. (Ex. 25 : 22; Ps. 80 : 1). The ark made of wood and covered within and without with gold suggests the humiliation and glory of the Lord Jesus, for He *personally* is typified thereby. The tables of stone, written afresh by God after Moses had broken the first on seeing the wickedness of the people (Ex. 32 : 19), were to be placed in the ark. That which was "written and engraven on stones" *was yet to be given* (Ex. 25 : 21). From which may be learned two lessons: (a) that Christ was before the Law; (b) that He only could keep the Law, God foreseeing His people's utter failure. This is further stressed in Psalm 40 : 7-8. "I delight to do Thy will, O My God; yea, Thy law is in the midst of My bowels" (margin).

The Atonement

The mercy-seat of pure gold exactly fitted the ark, which, it may be noticed, had a *crown of gold*. The word is actually "place of covering," the word "cover" being that rendered "atonement." It is mentioned in Hebrews 9 : 5, where the word "mercy-seat" is the same as that rendered "propitiation" in Romans 3 : 25. Thus is confirmed the truth that Christ is typified.

Upon and before the mercy-seat was sprinkled the sacrificial blood on the Day of Atonement, the High Priest in his linen garments, and being entirely alone (Lev. 16 : 17) affording a further type of Christ, Who alone made an atonement, and that actively, of His own will, and yet in obedience to the Father (John 10 : 17-18). "It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul" (Lev. 17 : 11). This precious and basic part of truth is before us in the Epistle to the Hebrews (chs. 9 : 12, 22-24; 10 : 19).

The entrance of the redeemed into the Holiest of all

When the first parents of the human race were driven out of the Garden of the LORD, "He placed at the east of the Garden of Eden Cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the Tree of Life" (Gen : 3 : 24). We are not told the cherubim (probably two or more, for the word is plural) held the one sword. This may indicate that access to the tree of Life was barred to them, and that the sword turning all ways also hindered all mankind alike from such approach. But God, through His prophet, proclaimed: "Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, and against the Man that is My fellow . . . smite the Shepherd" (Zech. 13 : 7). The Lord Jesus declared this word to be fulfilled in and by Himself (Matt. 26 : 31). Having met the justice of God in His own Person, He has made the way of access to God. The sword has been sheathed in Him, never again to awake against those for whom He had made atonement.

Hence, may we not say that the presence of the cherubim on the mercy-seat in the Holiest of all, where the blood of atonement was sprinkled (Lev. 16) typified the truth of Hebrews 10 : 19-20? That there were two indicates Jew and Gentile, both redeemed by the same precious blood. "For through Him we *both* have access by One Spirit unto the Father" (Eph. 2 : 18).

The Inseparable Union of Christ and His Elect

"And he made two cherubim of gold, beaten out of ONE piece made he them, OUT OF (lit., see margin) the two ends of the mercy-seat; one cherub OUT OF the end on this side, and another cherub

OUT OF the other end on that side, OUT OF the mercy-seat made he the cherubim on the two ends thereof" (Ex. 37:7-8). The language of chapter 25 (see the margin for verse 19) confirms the thought that the mercy-seat and the cherubim were all of one piece. Thus is taught the wondrous truth that, not only are the redeemed caused to rest on Christ because of atonement, but they are one with Him, and that by an indissoluble union.

(It the Lord will, to be continued)

"I HAVE NO TIME"

How often we hear these words, "No Time" to read the Scriptures, "no time" to seek the Lord. But, dear reader, you will have to make "time" for death, one day—and it may be soon. The thought "I will wait till it comes" is only madness. "A prudent man foreseeth the evil and hideth himself; but the simple pass on, and are punished." This is one of the few proverbs that are *repeated* (Prov. 22:3 and 27:12). God's *emphasis* is thus made clear, and unless you find the Hiding Place now, you will seek a hiding place too late.

"No Time"—but you have time to eat, and drink, and sleep, and work, and talk, and laugh—ah, yes, you find time for your fellow men, you find time (although not so much as you wish) for yourself, but you have no time for God! And yet He is the One in Whose hand your breath is (Dan. 5:23), and Who makes His sun to shine upon you, and Who gives food to all, and to you among them, and before Whom you must soon stand, as your Judge, if you despise Him now!

"No Time," though any moment your heart may stop beating: "no time," though any day a sudden accident may, without warning, or time to repent, end your earthly life: "no time" though you walk on the edge of a precipice, and that precipice overhangs ETERNITY. "No time," although the Son of God came from heaven to bear and take away the sin of sinners from all nations (John 1:29). He Who upheld all things was willing to be brought to the dust of death, and even to be made a curse, to die for those who deserved a curse, and yet you have "NO TIME," because you have "NO LOVE" for Him.

Yet you have much time given you. It is *real*, though it is passing. It will soon be swallowed up in eternity. Eternity is real. You will indeed have "no time" then to repent, but only to regret time on earth mis-spent. A moment is coming when heaven's declaration will be made. "There shall be time no longer." But *that* will be your experience when you come to die. Time gone! Eternity your prospect! What will it hold for you?

P.W.H.

NOTES ON MEMORIZED VERSES

REVELATION 1

15. His feet, "as if they burned in a furnace," suggests rather "glowing brass." Compare 19:15 and Isa. 63:3. "Trodden." 16. "His right hand" (cf. Ex. 15:6). "His mouth" (ch. 20:21). His countenance—a blinding glory, yet see 2 Cor. 4:6 and ch. 22:4). 17. John's experience similar to Daniel's (ch. 10). The same hand that held all the stars was laid on John, strengthening (cf. Dan. 10:10). 18. That He lives should be an antidote to fear. 19. Write. A record needed for our comfort and instruction. 20. The Lord alone can explain mysteries.

REVELATION 2

1. The angel—a "messenger"—one with a message (Hag. 1:13) yet a "star," not one of the celestial inhabitants, but a *man* with a heavenly calling. The Lord "saith," "holdeth," "walketh." 2. "I know." He is omniscient. 3. Some good things existed, and were recognized by the Lord, the glorious One yet so gracious. 4. "But." Something not pleasing. A "leaving" not "losing." 5. "Remember." It is possible to "fall" (but not from saving grace). "First works" and "First love" are joined (cf. John 14:15). "Repent" or "Removal." 6. A closing commendation as also the letter began. The rebukes are wrapped up in love. 7. The Lord saith (v. 1); the Spirit saith. The Deity of Both emphasized. In these letters is a sevenfold encouragement to live overcomingly, with conditional promises. 8. "Smyrna" has the word "myrrh" in its midst, appropriately suggestive of suffering. The Lord therefore speaks of Himself as the One having suffered, and having overcome. 9. The Lord knows His own, and the evil of Satan's servants. 10. Hence, "Fear not," though suffering, perhaps death, lie ahead. Faithful unto DEATH will earn a crown of LIFE. 11. A fitting promise, yet a veiled warning. Do we overcome, and thus enjoy the promise? 12. "Pergamum," seat of the Babylonian "priest-King" and Satanic mysteries. 13. 14. Satan's seat. Hence a hard place in which to witness, yet "My Name" held fast, "My faith not denied." The church was honoured by Antipas' martyrdom. 15. 16. Sad tolerance of evil. Hence, "Repent or . . ." The sword (see v. 12). Thus the letter *begins* and *ends*. 17. Not a "general" promise, but one to overcomers. 18. Here we have a fresh description of the Lord—"Son of God," and this in the *central* epistle. Note the association with fire. 19. The last works more than the first, yet, 20. The Lord had somewhat "against" the "angel." Has He anything against us? 21. The "angel" tolerated evil, and the *offender* does not repent, though afforded "space." 22. A threatened judgment, "except they repent of her deeds." Fellowship with evil leavens (cf. 1 Cor. 5:6). 23. "All the churches." The lesson was to be enforced. 24. "You, the rest," contrasted with "you" previously mentioned. How often Satan's activities are before us in Revelation. 26. 27. A rod of iron (cf. Ps. 2 and Rev. 12:5). The overcomer shall rule with Christ in His kingdom. 28. 29. The Morning Star (see ch. 22:16).

REVELATION 3

1. Dead, though nominally alive (cf. Eph. 5:14; 1 Tim. 5:6). 2. *About* to die (cf. Rom. 8:13). 3. "Remember" (cf. ch. 2:5) and repent. 4. A few names, apparently a minority. 5. 6. A contrast with defiled garments. "I will not blot out." There is no inference herefrom of a possibility of a name being expunged, as the rulers in a church might blot out names from their register. 7. Philadelphia means "brotherly love," a hint that love prevailed, and Christ's love enjoyed (v. 9). 8. A little strength, yet "no

one can" neutralize that, for a mighty hand opened, and kept open, the door. 9. All adversaries shall be ashamed. 10. The faithful will not enter that "hour"—the last hour of this age, when the fulness of Divine wrath is poured out, yet, 11. A warning. 12. "My God." Thus the Lord Jesus speaks of the Father. 13. The hearing ear God hath made (Prov. 20:12). 14. "The Amen" (the Truth), the . . . True Witness. 15. 'Tis HE Who knows. 16. "Lukewarm." This is repugnant. Does such a word describe our condition of soul? Let us take heed. 17. "Thou sayest . . . knowest not." Ignorance and self-complacency twin evils. 18. Though "about to spue out," sentence is deferred by gracious counsel. "I love, I rebuke . . . repent." 20. The Lord's patience. A call to *individuals*. 21. 22. The Lord's overcoming and reward an Example. May we imitate Him!

REVELATION 4

1. "Come up hither" was said to John personally, and does not indicate the "rapture." 2. "In the Spirit," as Ezekiel. 3. "The Throne." The One there seated is The Father (see ch. 3:21). 4. Note how often the throne is mentioned. God rules.

SUGGESTED DAILY READINGS

"IF THE LORD WILL"—MARCH, 1959

Day	READING		LEARNING	
	Joshua	Titus	Genesis	Revelation
1	7 1-26	1 1-16	41 53	1 15
2	8 1-17	2 1-8	54	16
3	18-35	9-15	55	17
4	9 1-27	3 1-7	56	18
5	10 1-14	8-15	57	19
6	15-27	Philemon 1 1-13	42 1	20
7	28-43	14-25	2	2 1
8	11 1-23	Hebrews 1 1-14	3	2
9	12 1-24	2 1-18	4	3
10	13 1-14	3 1-19	5	4
11	15-33	4 1-16	6	5
12	14 1-15	5 1-14	7	6
13	15 1-15	6 1-20	8	7
14	16-63	7 1-14	9	8
15	16 1-10	15-28	10	9
16	17 1-18	8 1-13	11	10
17	18 1-14	9 1-14	12	11
18	15-28	15-28	13	12
19	19 1-16	10 1-13	14	13
20	17-31	14-25	15	14
21	32-51	26-39	16	15
22	20 1-9	11 1-12	17	16
23	21 1-16	13-23	18	17
24	17-31	24-40	19	18
25	32-45	12 1-13	20	19
26	22 1-20	14-29	21	20
27	21-34	13 1-12	22	21
28	23 1-16	13-25	23	22
29	24 1-10	James 1 1-11	24	23
30	11-21	12-27	25	24
31	22-33	2 1-13	26	25

SPECIAL READINGS FOR THE LORD'S DAY
March, 1959

1. Deut. 18:9-14. Isa. 8:19-20. 1 Chr. 10:13-14.
1 Tim. 4:1-8. 1 John 4:1-6.
8. Deut. 18:15-22. 1 Sam. 3:19-21. Isa. 11:1-5.
John 12:44-50. Luke 21:29-33.
15. Deut. 19:1-13. Josh. 20:1-9. Ps. 62:5-8.
Nahum 1:7. Heb. 6:17-20.
22. Deut. 19:14. Hosea 5:10. 1 Chron. 4:10.
Col. 1:12-18. 1 Pet. 1:3-5.

SPECIAL READINGS FOR THE LORD'S DAY
April, 1959

5. Deut. 20:1-4. 2 Chron. 20:1-24. 1 Tim. 6:12.
2 Cor. 10:1-6. Eph. 6:10-18.
12. Deut. 20:5-9. Judges 7:1-7. 2 Tim. 2:3-4.
1 Tim. 6:11-16. Rev. 17:14.
19. Deut. 21:1-9. Matt. 27:3-4, 22-26.
Acts 2:22-24, 36-40. Acts 5:28-32.
26. Deut. 21:18-21. 1 Sam. 15:22-23. 2 Thess. 3:10-15.
Titus 3:3-7. 2 Cor. 5:17-21.

SUGGESTED DAILY READINGS

"IF THE LORD WILL"—APRIL, 1959

Day	READING		LEARNING	
	Judges	James	Genesis	Revelation
1	1 1-20	2 14-26	42 27	2 26
2	21-36	3 1-18	28	27
3	2 1-23	4 1-17	29	28
4	3 1-14	5 1-20	30	29
5	15-31	1 Peter 1 1-25	31	3 1
6	4 1-24	2 1-12	32	2
7	5 1-16	13-25	33	3
8	17-31	3 1-12	34	4
9	6 1-14	13-22	35	5
10	15-27	4 1-19	36	6
11	28-40	5 1-14	37	7
12	7 1-14	2 Peter 1 1-12	38	8
13	15-25	13-21	43 1	9
14	8 1-17	2 1-8	2	10
15	18-35	9-16	3	11
16	9 1-21	17-22	4	12
17	22-41	3 1-10	5	13
18	42-57	11-18	6	14
19	10 1-18	1 John 1 1-10	7	15
20	11 1-27	2 1-17	8	16
21	28-40	18-29	9	17
22	12 1-15	3 1-12	10	18
23	13 1-14	13-24	11	19
24	15-25	4 1-21	12	20
25	14 1-20	5 1-21	13	21
26	15 1-20	2 John 1 1-13	14	22
27	16 1-14	3 John 1 1-14	15	4 1
28	15-31	Jude 1 1-8	16	2
29	17 1-13	9-16	17	3
30	18 1-13	17-25	18	4

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THOUGHTS FROM

TO
MAINTAIN
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FOR GOD'S
GRACE AND
TRUTH

FOUNDED
BY
PERCY W.
HEWARD

THE WORD OF GOD

AND

THE STUDENT OF SCRIPTURE

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FREE

SOME OF THE CONTENTS

The Mercy Seat	14
Nearness to God	15
Peter and Money	16
The Church in Revelation ...	17
Inspired Words Inspected ...	18
About to Die	19
As Becometh Saints	20
Forgetting our Calling	22
Readings and Notes	11, 12

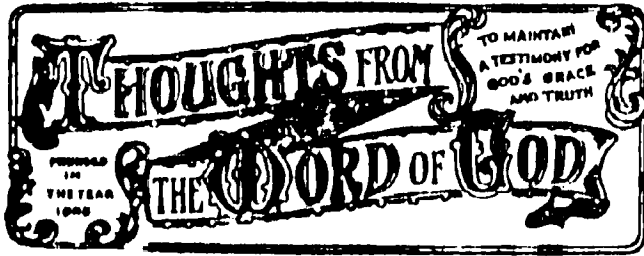
"The LORD taketh pleasure in them
that fear Him, in those that hope in
His mercy."

Psalm 147:11.

UNMERITED MERCY

On God I had no claim,
Yet my unworthy name
He chose to place—
O wondrous grace—
Upon the roll
Of His elect, nor will remove
My name, and thus His mercy prove.
His Son's redeeming blood
Hath made me near to God;
The work He will
In me fulfil,
Which He began,
In view of that soon coming Day
When Christ shall call His saints away.

E.K.



WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

"The LORD is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in Him." If this be true, the soul being taught so by the Holy Spirit, how restful should it make the heart! For if we have Him, we have all. The prophet speaks of an inward experience, for the utterance is of *the soul*. And surely this will be the response of such as desire the Lord, "Say unto my soul, I am thy Salvation."

It is well both to speak to our soul, and for the soul to encourage itself to say what the Lord is to us. So will He become more real to us, so will we enjoy communion with Himself.

Moreover, if there are trials and afflictions, suffering and loss, such as the inspired writer had been passing through, how good it is to remember the Lord has not deprived us of Himself. His presence compensates for the withdrawal of persons and things.

It is because of this persuasion of soul that the Lord's servant had hope. "Therefore will I hope in Him." A present realization of our heritage will tend to quicken the desire to enter upon its enjoyment, for it is associated with the joy of the Lord Jesus, Who is "Altogether Lovely," and to Whom we pray, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Poem to Help Christian Experience—No. 259.

"We have a great High Priest . . . Jesus the Son of God."

Lord Jesus Christ, our Great High Priest
Who walkest still amid Thine own,
Thy prayers for them have never ceased,
Nor will Thy pleadings at the Throne.

At the right hand of majesty
Seated art Thou, and dost expect
Thy glorious day, Thy victory,
Thy claiming all Thy loved elect.

Then grant us for that Day to yearn
With longing like, O Lord to Thine;
All sin and lawlessness to spurn,
To love the holiness Divine.

O, cause Thine altar-fire to burn
Upon our heart, unceasing prayer;
O may its fragrance upward turn
Toward the Holiest; Thou art there.

And if our lamp is burning dim,
And thus our witness here is low,
Fill us with holy oil, and trim,
That we may shine with heavenly glow.

And if Thy trimming causes pain,
O grant us grace to bear it well;
Since if we suffer loss, we gain
More than our finite minds can tell.

How near we are to that dear Land
That needeth neither sun nor moon
To shine therein. We there shall stand
With Thee our LORD. Thou comest soon.

THE MERCY SEAT

Concluded

The Constant Divine Presence with the Saints on their Pilgrimage

The ark and the mercy-seat, covered by the "veil," concealed by "badgers' skins," and having over all a cloth of blue, was borne on the shoulders of the Levites in the midst of the children of Israel as they walked through all "that great and terrible wilderness." The presence of God, Who dwelt between the cherubim (Ps. 80) was ever with them, for He was the "Shepherd of Israel," and "led them as a flock." HE declared to David, whose heart's desire was to build Him a house, "I have not dwelt in any house since the time that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day, but have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle . . . I have walked with all the children of Israel" (2 Sam. 7:6-7).

Surely here is a very lovely picture of God's un-failing interest in His people and His delight to be with them. One Name of the Lord Jesus is "Emmanuel"—God with us—indicating that He is with His own, even unto the end of the age." True it is, that this precious promise is to those who obey Him, yet if, dear fellow-saints, we take our true position as "strangers and pilgrims," making our "way through the wilderness of this world," we too shall know that His presence shall go with us, and He will give us rest—rest of heart and mind now, and finally, that "rest which remaineth for the people of God."

The Saints' Delight in Christ's Atoning Blood

"Their faces shall look one to another, and toward the mercy-seat shall the faces of the cherubim be" (Ex. 25:20; 37:9). Ever should the believer

"remember Jesus Christ," ever should his eyes be "looking off unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of faith." Oh, how he should value that precious blood by which he has been redeemed. *All trespasses have been forgiven*, and yet we are bidden to "walk in the light as HE is in the light," so that we may have fellowship one with another, and know the constant cleansing power of the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son (1 John 1).

The Saints' Delight in One Another

"Their faces shall look one to another." If the two cherubim represent Jew and Gentile one in Christ, have we not in type the truth of Ephesians 2:11-18. "There is neither Jew nor Greek . . . for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28). How often the phrase "one another" occurs in the Epistles, such as, "love one another," "forbearing one another," "forgiving one another," "teaching and admonishing one another." We are members one of another, being members of Christ. So then the union with Him should be manifest in the unity and mutual interest of the saints. May the Lord graciously grant this, for the glory of His Name. Amen!

NEARNESS TO GOD

In old time He characterized the children of Israel as "a people near unto Him" (Ps. 148:14). The psalmist, realizing this, said, "Praise ye the LORD." In the present dispensation, wondrous grace has been manifested to lost sinners out from Jews and Gentiles alike. "Sometimes . . . far off," such are "made nigh by the blood of Christ" (Eph. 2:13). This nearness brings before us the complete character of salvation. GOD's love and mercy have been graciously granted to the utterly undeserving. They are viewed in CHRIST. They are accepted in the Beloved. Their trials and difficulties they can bring to their heavenly FATHER. No good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly. In dealing with men they have many problems, but the way is open to the throne of grace. Everything has been done to make continual prayer possible, and to encourage believers in prayer as to everything (Phil. 4:6). GOD's infinite love is thus set forth. He has interest in the smallest concerns of His blood-bought people, and they can rejoice in this when all around seems alarming. Our gracious GOD is not harsh to His people when He chastens them. It is "for our profit that we might be partakers of His holiness" (Heb. 12:10) and this is very beautiful in connexion with the words, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten" (Rev. 3:19). How happy and trustful the people of the LORD should be. They are never disregarded, never unvalued, though in themselves, by nature, valueless. With CHRIST, our heavenly FATHER gives all things necessary, and in unailing grace. He has no fury toward any of His own. He does not banish, but *graciously forgives* confessed sin, and is *willing* to restore the joy of salvation.

P.W.H.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S COLUMNS

Peter and Money

We read much about Peter in the Bible, but what, you may ask, has he to do with money? Did he not say, one day, after the Lord Jesus had gone into heaven, "Silver and gold have I none"? This was not always so with him, though he was never a rich man. He earned his living by catching fish and he had a boat of his own (Luke 5:3); Simon was his first name. So he was not a poor man. He had "neither poverty nor riches." Yet what he did have he gave up to follow the Lord Jesus, when He called him. This meant he became a disciple of One Who was Himself poor (2 Cor. 8:9), Who had not where to lay His head.

Very soon Peter had to learn a lesson about money, for when the Lord sent forth His disciples to preach the gospel and heal the sick, He said they were to take NO MONEY in their purses. Why? Because the Lord wanted them to trust in God to meet all their need of lodging and food. And how faithful was God is seen by the words the Lord Jesus spoke to them, "When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye anything? And they said, Nothing" (Luke 22:35). This was good for Peter, because he was to live a life of faith in God, when the Lord was taken from Him and his friends.

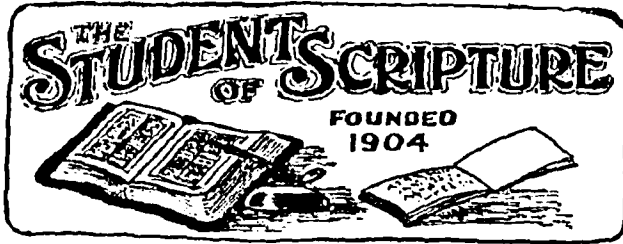
Once, when the time came for a certain tax to be paid, he had no money, nor had the Lord Jesus, Who wished him to pay, so as not to offend those who collected the tax. Said the Lord, "Go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a PIECE OF MONEY; that take and give unto them for Me and thee" (Matt. 17:27). This shews how the Lord knows everything, and provides *exactly* what is needed—no more and no less. And how gracious to join Peter to Himself, but He is first! It is not "thee and Me," but "Me and thee." Only those who are bought by His precious blood can be joined to Him, and that for ever and ever.

There was once a lame man who never had walked, to whom Peter (and John was with him) said, "SILVER AND GOLD have I none; but such as I have give I thee; in the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk" (Acts 3:6). And he did so, and went into the temple with them, "walking, and leaping, and praising God." Ah! Peter had that which MONEY CANNOT BUY. God had given him the power to heal, and he was ready and willing to give that, but only "in the Name of Jesus Christ."

Later on, when he went down to Samaria, because many people believed on the Lord Jesus and were baptized, he laid his "hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit." This caused a man named Simon, who also seemed to be a believer, for he too was baptized, to wonder. And not only to wonder, but "he offered them money," saying he wanted to have the same power to lay hands on people. "But Peter said unto him, THY MONEY perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the GIFT of God may be purchased WITH MONEY" (Acts 8:17-22). Peter called this "wickedness," and warned Simon to repent. There is even a word, "simony," to describe the sin of thinking any gift of God can be bought. All blessings from God are freely given, "without money and without price" (Isa. 55).

Going back a few chapters in Acts, we find that a man named Barnabas, "having land, sold it, and brought the MONEY, and laid it at the apostles' feet" (Acts 3:36-37). This was to help those who were poorer. "But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, and kept back part of the price . . . and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet." They pretended they had brought all, but Peter was able, by God's teaching, to see that they were not honest, and both husband and wife died there and then. God loves reality, and hates hypocrisy, which is really "acting a part." If they had *said* it was only a part, all would have been well. Though there may be many hypocrites today, they are not judged in the same way, but they will be in the great day of judgment. Oh my dear friends, are you sure whether you are really saved or only pretending to be?

Once more, let us turn to our Bibles, and find 1 Peter 1. There we read, "Ye were not redeemed (that is, bought) with corruptible things, as SILVER and GOLD, . . . but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot." For money cannot buy the most precious thing—forgiveness of sins and peace with God. We have "nothing to pay," if even such blessing could be bought. So, if you are troubled about your sins, and long to be saved, I can tell you that Christ receiveth SINNERS, He came to call SINNERS, and died on behalf of SINNERS. What a loving Saviour! Is He *your* Saviour?



THE CHURCH IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION

BABYLON (continued)

It was mentioned in the last section of this paper that saints—a part of the church—will be on the earth just prior to the destruction of Babylon. From chapter 18:4, we learn that some who are the people of God are found there, not, indeed, at the time of Divine judgment on that city, because they have received previously His command to abandon the great city—great in its wickedness. “And I heard another Voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, My people, that ye may have no fellowship with her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues” (18:4). The expression, “My people” cannot apply to Israel as a nation, because at that time, as now, they are Lo-Ammi—“Not My people” (Hosea 1). Moreover, these are not only thus addressed, but are capable of responding, recognizing the voice as Divine. There seems to be no alternative to the view that these are saints living in “this present evil age,” which does not terminate except in “that Day,” when the Lord takes His great power and reigns. The judgment of God, could not fall on Sodom until Lot “came out” (Gen. 19:22). Observe also how saints of all dispensations give praise to God, in fellowship with “heaven,” over Babylon’s doom. “Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye saints and apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you of her” (18:20). “And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of ALL that were slain on the earth” (18:24).

It is important to remember that it is a CITY which is the subject of this part of the prophecy, the SYSTEM having been made “desolate” by the ten kings, who give their kingdom unto the Beast, with whom they receive power “one hour” and make war with the Lamb (17:12-18).

“And after these things” (that is, the judgment on Babylon) “I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation and glory, and honour and power, unto the Lord our God. For true and righteous are His judgments, for He hath judged the Great Whore, which did corrupt the earth . . . and hath avenged the blood of His

servants at her hand” (19:1-2). The “much people” is the same phrase as “great multitude” in chapter 7:9. The saints at this time are then in heaven, as seems quite clear from the wording and context.

The Marriage Supper of the Lamb

At the same time, the “great multitude” (19:6), rejoicing in the reign of “the Lord God Omnipotent,” gives voice to the words, “Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, white and clean; for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints.” Since the wife of the Lamb is the Church, she is here seen in the holiest, in resurrection glory, dressed in a *righteousness made*, for so the word, “dikaioma,” signifies. It is that which *belongs to* the saints, having been “granted” (lit. “given”). It may also signify the righteousness which is required by *the holiest*, for so the word, “saints,” is rendered in Hebrews 10:19. The words of Ephesians 5:25-27 may be read in connexion with this part of the prophecy. What a contrast is here seen with the man who had not on the wedding garment (Matt. 22:11-14).

John then hears another voice, that of an angel—perhaps the one last mentioned (18:21). All that has passed before him in *vision* was, and is still, *future*. For, *at that time*, the angel reminds him that he is a *servant*, and is *brother* to others who have the testimony of JESUS. To this “brotherhood” and “bond service” the saints today belong. Thus are we one with all who have borne witness to Him Who died for us and rose again. But do the words, “Blessed are those who have been called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb,” imply that such form a company distinct from those called “the Lamb’s wife”? It is suggested this is not so, but that the words of verse 7 (ch. 19) and those of verse 9, refer to the same company, that is, “the church.” At the time John was given this revelation, the CALL was going forth, and has been, until this day, for “whom He called . . . them He also glorified.” There is already a spiritual union between Christ and His church, but this is to be consummated at the Marriage in heaven. Thus we have two aspects of the blessedness that awaits the “elect,” the “called of Jesus Christ.”

The Final Great Battle

Immediately following the account of the Marriage Supper, is that of the Lord going forth to make war with His enemies. He is not alone, for “armies” follow Him, arrayed, as the Bride, “in fine linen, white and clean.” Are not these the “called and chosen and faithful ones” of chapter

17:14? If so, it may be inferred that the judgment at the Bema of Christ had taken place. For the "saints" are to come with the Lord "in that Day" (Zech. 14:5) as well as "mighty angels" (2 Thess. 1:7). The Lamb shall overcome, and the Beast and his prophet will meet their doom in the lake of fire.

At that time, Satan will be imprisoned for one thousand years, during which period those who have part in the FIRST RESURRECTION will live and reign with Christ. *There is no resurrection before this*, except that of the Lord. "Christ the Firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming (parousia)" (1 Cor. 15:23). And included are those who have borne their witness during the sway of Antichrist (Rev. 20:1-6). Hence, this first resurrection cannot take place before the coming of that "Man of Sin." Hence, also, it is clear that a "remnant of her seed"—the church, will be here until, but not IN, the final hour of judgment.

Conclusion

The writer has never been able to find Scripture to support the view that our Lord will come "secretly" or "at any moment." Study of the Book of Revelation has but confirmed his opinion. He has no desire to cause pain to those who think otherwise; and as to believers who agree substantially, but are unable to endorse every statement in the foregoing, I can only request that they read carefully, comparing with the Bible; and then, if they so desire, to confirm, criticise, or make suggestions.

May God graciously forgive anything wrong in matter or manner, and what is pleasing to Him, use for His glory.

INSPIRED WORDS INSPECTED

No. 56

"What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For He saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show My power in thee, and that My Name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath He mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth."

Romans 9:14-18.

WHAT (ti); interrogative pronoun, neuter, from "tis, ti" (who, which, what?).

THEN (oun); conjunction, relating to what has gone before. Often rendered, "therefore."

SHALL WE SAY (eroumen); verb, future, from "eiro" (I say, speak).

IS THERE (no equivalent in text).

NOT (me); negative, denying possibility.

UNRIGHTEOUSNESS (adikia); noun, feminine, from "a" deprivative) and "dike" (justice); therefore (injustice, wrong, unrighteousness).

WITH (para); preposition meaning "beside" or "alongside." With dative case, as here, suggesting rest or position "near, beside, hard by, with" (see Luke 1:30; Rom. 2:11-13, for similar use before "God").

GOD (toi Theoi); article and noun, dative; "The God." That One of Whom the Apostle has been speaking. The whole sentence may be rendered, "There is no injustice with God, is there?"

GOD FORBID (me (see above) and genoito); verb, aorist, optative, from "ginomai" (I become); translate, "May it not have become," or as we might say in English idiom, "Let it never have come to this."

FOR (gar); conjunction; third word in sentence.

TO MOSES (toi Mousei); article and proper noun, dative, from "Mouses."

HE SAITH (legei); verb, present tense, from "lego" (I say).

I WILL HAVE MERCY ON (eleeso); verb, future, from "eleco" (to pity, or have mercy on).

WHOM (hon); relative pronoun, masculine, accusative, from "hos, he, ho" (who, or what, or which).

SOEVER (an); a particle, which may be thus translated when following a relative pronoun.

I WILL HAVE MERCY (eleo); verb, present, subjunctive. May be rendered, "I may have mercy." This does not imply Divine uncertainty, for He knows what He will do, but it may suggest that we do not know whom God is determined to bless.

AND (kai); conjunction.

I WILL HAVE COMPASSION (oikteireso); verb, future, from "oikteiro" (I pity, or have compassion on). This word, though similar in meaning to "eleco," "expresses subjective sympathy and distress on witnessing misfortune and calamity" (Webster). Perhaps the words of Judges 10:16 may illustrate.

ON WHOMSOEVER (see above).

I WILL HAVE COMPASSION (oikteiro); verb, present subjunctive. See remarks on this mood above.

SO THEN (ara oun); two words often together in Paul's writings. The first described as inferential particle, the second a conjunction; "then therefore," "so then."

IT IS (not in text).

NOT (ou); negative, denying a fact.

OF HIM THAT WILLETH (tou thelontos); article and participle, genitive, masculine, from "thelo" (I will, or wish).

NOR (oude); conjunction, denying absolutely and objectively.

OF HIM THAT RUNNETH (tou trechontos); article and participle, genitive, masculine, from "trecho" (I run). "Will" suggests purpose of mind, and "run" activity of the person. Esau "ran," that he might get the blessing; also he "willed" (Heb. 12:17) but was rejected.

BUT (alla); strong adversative conjunction; meaning practically, "on the contrary."

OF GOD (tou Theou). Article and proper noun, genitive.

THAT SHEWETH MERCY (eleontos); present participle, from "eleeo" "God, the One shewing mercy."

(If the Lord will, to be continued.)

"ABOUT TO DIE"

"I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly."

Romans 8 : 13. John 10 : 10.

How contrasted are these two Scriptures, and yet they concern the same people, called "brethren" in the first, and "sheep" in the second quotation. They bring before us two important parts of truth: (a) that life eternal is the gift of God to those given by Him to His Son (John 10:28-29); (b) that such life is to be in definite contrast with that of the "time past of our life" (1 Pet. 4:3).

The context of the passage in Romans 8 reads: "Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh; for if ye live after the flesh, ye are about to (lit.) die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."

The fact that those addressed are called "brethren" suggests they had been "born again"; this is implied also in the words, "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you" (v. 9). Moreover, as preceding chapters bring before us, they were persons who had been justified by faith. The righteousness of God had been imputed to them. Hence they could "rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (ch. 5:2). "For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the Image of His Son . . . He also called . . . He also justified . . . He also glorified" (vv. 29-30). Further, they were able, as the chapters following indicate, to receive

deep teaching as to God's sovereignty and His electing grace. Truly they, and we who have been led to the feet of the same Saviour, are a favoured people—a "people saved by the Lord."

Yet with all this blessedness and the promise, in varying words, of the final preservation of the saints, there is never any encouragement in Holy Scripture for *carnal* security. "We are debtors," saith Paul. We owe everything to God, and can never repay Him, though we have eternity wherein to serve Him. In the meantime, that is, whilst we await the coming of our Lord, we are told how we are to live. It is by faith. "The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me." It is a life "in the spirit." For we are not "to live after the flesh." It is with a prospect in view. We are to "live . . . looking for That Blessed Hope." Having been set free, our wills are to be set to do the will of God. For the believer, by grace, has indeed a "free will," and a solemn responsibility now rests upon him to glorify God in being an imitator of His Son (see 1 Pet. 2:21; 4:1).

Dear fellow-believers, it is a matter for searching of heart, whether, in our daily lives, we are living "after the flesh" or "after the Spirit." Before we knew the Lord, "when we were in the flesh," we "brought forth fruit unto death," for "they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh." This does not necessarily mean the practice of gross carnality. It may be just "carefulness" as to "what we shall eat, or what we shall drink, or what we shall put on," that is, "the desires of other things entering in." The saint has need of the same things for his earthly sustenance as "the man of earth," but he looks to, and receives all from, a heavenly Father, knowing that "the Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy, in the Holy Ghost" (Rom. 14:17).

But, supposing a saint does not *manifest* this life of faith, can he not be said to be living "after the flesh"? These words are not too strong, for Paul, when writing to another assembly of *believers*, asked, "Are ye not *carnal*, and walk as *men*?" If therefore, one having been "called by grace," yet failing "to go on unto perfection," and forgetting he was purged from his old sins (2 Pet. 1:9) lives much as the world lives, how will he be distinguished from the mass of mankind out from which he has been taken? It is because of such a low spiritual state that the apostle says, not "ye shall die," but "ye are about to die." Such a condition in the physical sense is pitiable. It may be called a "living death" when one is in the last stages of a loathsome disease. But in the spiritual

sense it is deplorable. "About to die," that is "just alive," and probably with no consciousness that one is in such a state. We fear that this is all too common, and may account for the failure in united testimony from the "church."

What does the Lord Jesus desire for His disciples? Why did He come and lay down His life for the sheep? Hear His own words: "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." Life indeed—the sovereign gift of God, but who is living "overflowingly"? A healthy child is sometimes described as "bubbling over with life." A wise parent would be concerned if there were a dulness or low-spiritedness. Dear fellow-saints, is our Heavenly Parent pleased with our manner of living? One is not pleading for an emotional exuberance sometimes expressed in certain religious gatherings, but which results often in a reaction of "flatness" and despondency. But are we recommending "the gospel of the glory of Christ" by a life of "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost"? We cannot work this up, but we can sadly hinder it by being, in any way, "after the flesh."

Before leaving this part of our subject, let us remind ourselves of two passages of Scripture that shew the possibility of a Christian getting into a "low" state. One is Ephesians 5:14: "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from among the dead ones" (lit.). Another is 2 Timothy 2:26: "And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken *alive* by him." How true it is that "the righteous with difficulty are being saved" (1 Pet. 4:18).

But to return to John 10:10. He Who spake as never man spake, contrasted the coming of the thief with His own coming. Those who came before Him, professing to be shepherds, were but thieves and robbers. They had nothing to give, but sought to deprive the sheep, and to despoil them. There are such today, professing to be "Christian" ministers, but intent on robbing saints of their heritage. Blessed be God, the sheep will not be allured by the voice of strangers, yet they can be, for a time, robbed by such thieves as are sent forth by the evil one. He cannot take away their life in God, but he can and does hinder their enjoyment of Him.

Ah! well we know some of the thieves that are thus so troublesome. They may be small, as "the little foxes that spoil the vines," and so check fruitfulness. Nay more! they may even cause that state of "living after the flesh."

What of our daily prayer? Do we neglect it for one day? We shall realize we have lost something, and if continued, others will know there is a lack in our witness. Prayerlessness is a great robber. *What of our attitude to the Bible?* Is it a dry book to us? Or do we, as Jeremiah, say "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart"? Lack of love to, and loss of appetite for, this heavenly manna, is indeed "a thief and a robber."

Again, an *undue pleasure in social intercourse* may insensibly deprive the soul of that "overflowingness" of life. No believer should desire worldly amusements. Such would not join in a game of cards for the sake of "sociability," for example. He would seek the society of those like-minded with himself. "They went to their own company" is the testimony concerning the early saints. When visiting relations, a believer would seek to be of some spiritual help and to bear witness for the Lord Jesus in a quiet way. But if there is a desire for company for its own sake, this, too, may be 'a' thief and a robber."

One last point, and here is a word especially to younger believers. Delay in confessing sin will hinder the enjoyment of the heavenly life. David's long period of silence after serious sin caused a kind of insensibility, yet he was physically restless, if not actually ill. Not until he made confession did he have again the "joy of salvation."

The writer would search his own heart, and confess his own failure, for "in many things we all offend," and like Paul who, however, reached a spiritual stature beyond that of the greater number of saints, we must ever say, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect." Yet, by ever-available Divine grace, we may add: "But I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:12).

"AS BECOMETH SAINTS"

The God and Father of those whom He has called His children—"born from above"—is not indifferent to their behaviour. They ought to BE the children of their Father Who is in heaven, that is, *manifestly* so. Was it not said of the apostles, "They took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus"?

Why did God elect and save His people? The believer at once thinks of his own deep and dire need, of that oppressive sense of sin, of the consciousness of having offended a holy God, of his just desert if he were driven from the presence of the Holy One. He remembers, too, how a view by

faith of a suffering Redeemer, dying on a cross in his stead, caused tears of joy and gratitude to flow from his smitten heart. For he saw on That One all his sins having been laid, all his guilt owned, all merited judgment passed. That Saviour is Jehovah-Tsidkenu—The Lord our Righteousness.

In the offering of Himself by the Son of God, the Father was glorified, for, justice having been satisfied, the Holy Spirit could dwell in the justified. This the believer learns as he grows in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (2 Pet. 3:18).

Yet there is an aspect of God's Salvation that is too often overlooked or under-stressed. It is that His work is all for His Own glory. Blessedly true it is that He loved with an everlasting love, and in loving-kindness drew to Himself "the vessels of mercy." "In His love and in His pity He redeemed them." But why? "To make Thyself a glorious Name" (Isa 63:9-14). And so in regard to that blessing into which the saints today are brought, in this "Day of Salvation." It is all "according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace," and that "we should be to the praise of His glory, who first trusted in Christ" (Eph. 1:5; 6:12).

"To the praise of His glory" the saints *shall be* in the day of the manifestation of the sons of God," when Christ "shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe" (2 Thess. 1:10); but what of *this day*? Are we to await the coming of the Lord ere we declare by our lives Whose we are and Whom we serve? Even here and now our Experience is to be that of "being changed into the Same Image" (2 Cor. 3:18). Behaviour is so important, that several words are used to describe what God desires in the way of spiritual deportment, as "becoming," "comely," "seemly," "fit," "worthily." A glance at some of these may, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, be helpful in awakening some of us from that "ordinariness" and complacency which seem to have spread a mildew, as a brother once expressed it, over the spirits of the saints.

Three times the word is used of the Lord Jesus. "Thus it *becometh* us to fulfil all righteousness." "It *became* Him . . . to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." "Such an High Priest *became* us" (Matt. 3:15; Heb. 2:10; 7:26). The Lord did nothing out of place. There was a *moral fitness* in all His saying and doing, as well as a perfect and exact obedience. He fulfilled righteousness and endured sufferings, and so is One "becoming" us, in that He is wondrously suited to our need.

We begin then by observing that our Lord is our Example. He did what was "proper" for Him, and all to the glory of the Father. One testimony, before He died, was, "This Man hath done nothing amiss." What then is "fit" or "comely" for the believer?

It is not "fit" that, having put his hand to the plough, he should look back; but have a *forward* look, praying, "Thy kingdom come" (Luke 9:52), humbly hoping for a share with other saints in that rule of Christ, so sure and so glorious. Spiritual movement must be onward and straight forward, as the ploughman, to make a straight furrow, fixes his eye on a point at the end of his field. "Forgetting the things which are behind, and reaching forth unto the things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:13-14).

Again, as salt, he should fulfil his function on this earth. Salt which has lost its savour is "fit" for nothing, but to be cast out and that by "men." An "unsavoury Christian" (paradoxical expression) will be discerned by those who observe him. The opposite should be the fact (1 Cor. 2:15). Unbecoming conduct, character, and conversation will find no favour even with the watching multitude. We are to "walk in wisdom toward them that are without." Those more prominent in "service" need to have "a good report of them that are without." "What you are," said one, "speaks so loud that I cannot hear what you say."

Hence the exhortation concerning speech in Ephesians 5. There are certain things which should not even "be named among you, as *becometh* saints. Foolish and unclean talk, even jesting, are not "convenient," a word which means, "to come up to." Does our everyday speech approximate to that of the unsaved, or does it "come up to" the high, holy and heavenly calling which is ours? A saint's talk ought not to be in words which have a veiled or double meaning, but in godly simplicity, out of a heart of godly sincerity. Let us not be afraid of the word "proper," though it is often used in a derogatory sense. What some have called "needless propriety" may indeed be spiritual dignity, such as becomes a believer. But it must be "fruit," and not the result of mere "effort"; nor is it to be confused with the aloofness which springs from religious pride and self-righteousness. It is so happily "natural" that it attracts, and does not repel.

"Let your conversation (citizenship) be as it *becometh* the Gospel of Christ" (Phil. 1:27), that is, "worthily," as explained by the words following; "that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel."

A manifest "one-ness" of believers will do much to recommend the one Gospel, for they are citizens of one heavenly Jerusalem, having one hope. How unbecoming is the present lack of unity amongst those who own the One Name of the Lord.

Reception of believers by a local church is a serious matter. In the case of Phoebe (Rom. 16:2), he who commended her was Paul himself, who well knew both her and her gracious ministry. She was "a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea." Not all are thus worthy of commendation; also the character, not merely the name, of the one commending needs to be regarded. But when such an one as Paul writes a letter of commendation, he exhorts, "Receive her in the Lord, as *becometh* saints." And what was the conduct thus fitting? "That ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you." So when Paul sent Timothy to Corinth, he wrote, "See that he may be with you *without fear*, for he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also do" (1 Cor. 16:10). Again, the Philippians were asked to receive Epaphras, "in the Lord with all gladness" (Phil. 2:29). Assistance, encouragement, joy; these *become* saints when the ministers of Christ come to them. "We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellow-helpers to the Truth" (3 John 8).

The Lord enable us, by the enabling of the Holy Spirit, thus to "walk circumspectly."

THE FAITH OF GOD'S ELECT

An old writer pointed out it is not the election of God's faithful ones. Nay, we were children of wrath even as others; nothing but God's sovereign mercy is the cause of our salvation. If human merits have contributed to our deliverance from the wrath of God, we may boast; but if not, we can only boast in Christ. Had He died to save us from every sin but unbelief, as some affirm, we should still be dead and lost. He died to save us from our unbelief, and will not fail as to the work He so graciously took in hand. Natural faith can be made; the faith of God's elect is spiritual and fixed upon Him. All God's elect receive it; they believe according to the working of that mighty power which was shewn when Christ was raised (Eph. 1:19-20). Theirs is "faith of the operation of God" (Col. 2:12), and the whole grace-through-faith-salvation is the gift of God (Eph. 2:8). Thus it is impossible for this faith to die, nor shall anything be laid to the charge of God's elect. We rejoice, and rest in His loving purpose, amid a world of confusion and ruin and despair.

P.W.H.

"IF I DO THE BEST I CAN"

What then? Have you a guarantee of blessing? You say, "I think so." THINKING IS NOT KNOWING. What is your RESTING place? And there is another question, "Have you not put a big 'IF' above?" Have you ever met a man who invariably did the best he could? It is easy to fence with the question, but THAT is not honest. If you THINK

you are doing your best NOW, and that you cannot be responsible for what you do not know, you ignore the solemn fact that we have all neglected opportunities of knowing, in the past at least. And "the past" is as much PART of our life as to-day. WE HAVE NOT DONE THE BEST WE COULD. The man who boasts thus does not know himself. It is an affront to all honesty to make such a claim, and

AN AFFRONT TO GOD.

If then I have failed, what hope can I find? Perhaps the heart rebels against the thought of judgment, and a man does not see why there should be punishment. Such rebellion is not only powerless, it excuses sin, it is immoral. Chafing against the sentence will not dethrone the Judge.

But it may be, the reader has another plea: God is merciful! There is a very striking record in 1 Kings 20. The king of Syria had been defeated, and his servants said to him, "Behold, now, we have heard that the kings of the house of Israel are merciful kings: let us, I pray thee, put sackcloth on our loins, and ropes upon our heads, and go out to the king of Israel: peradventure he will save thy life" (verse 31). The king was spared, but God soon indicated that this was NOT righteous. Benhadad was guilty and condemned (42), and "mercy" that ignores righteousness is human, not Divine. Sackcloth is good when there is atonement, but, dear reader, VAIN when there is no atonement.

Many are hoping in vain when they think God will break His truthfulness to save one sinner. The words "When I appointed to utter destruction" in 1 Kings 20 still ring out, and unless I have a Holy Substitute I am deluded when I imagine mercy, to undo God's warnings. The law must take its course! But, blessed be God, the law has taken its course on Christ, and therefore, if I believe in Him, I am free, not only pardoned but made righteous. BUT NOTHING ELSE CAN HONOUR GOD.

'Tis not my best, but God's gift. Instead of my doing, there is God's giving. And if I, as a troubled broken-hearted sinner, rest on the Lord Jesus, I have a salvation that cannot be undone, and an eternal life that cannot be taken away. The glories of God's grace are wondrous. Salvation is NOT a theory: it is a fact. Believers are "in Christ Jesus," and they view their own natural "best" with holy disdain. God's work alone can meet the need, and God's work has met the need. "My best" bears NO comparison with the work of Christ. I could not for a moment suggest a make-weight to His work. Christ alone, Christ altogether, Christ as the One Who lived and died and rose for me is my

only ground of hope, and in Him I have redemption through His blood the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace (Eph. 1:7). Dear reader, have you the SAME sure and certain hope, or do you rest on a foundation which has NO foundation beneath ITSELF, and which is ONLY A SHADOW?

P.W.H.

NOTES ON MEMORIZED VERSES

REVELATION 4

5. The centrality of the Throne. It is "set" (v. 2), surrounded by all that is suitable thereto, from it emanates majesty and judgment; before it and in its midst there is nought unsuitable to its glory. Lamps (suggesting light); fire (warmth); burning (continuance). 6. Glass, reflecting glory. 7. Living ones—the cherubim (cf. Ezekiel). 8. Six wings (cf. Isa. 6). Eyes before, behind (v. 6) and within, indicating intelligence and readiness. 9, 10. United worship and humble homage, such as befits creatures, though fitted to be in the Divine Presence. How much more should this be the attitude of saints on earth. 11. Creation all because of His pleasure (will, lit.).

REVELATION 5

1. A roll or scroll, the parts of which could be successively unrolled as each seal was opened. 2, 3. An open challenge that none could take up, save ONE. 4. John's deep sorrow, but 5, removed by a "Behold," and, 6, a sight of the Lamb (indicating weakness, 2 Cor. 13:4) but prevailing (the Lion). 'Tis He also Who possessed and promised the Spirit. 7, 8. Taking the book evokes the praise of the beholders. 9. "Thou art worthy." Why? Because of redeeming blood, and, 10, His workmanship. 11, 12, 13, 14. The song taken up in heaven and universally. "Amen" and worship.

REVELATION 6

1. "Come" (not "come and see"). None of the four horsemen could come until the word of command. 2-8. All the horsemen, including the first, appear to be sent forth in judgment. 9. "Under the altar," not the brazen, but the golden. Therefore they were in the holy place, awaiting, as we, the entrance into the holiest of all. 10. A cry for judgment, such as we on earth may not utter yet. 11. This verse shews the first resurrection is future, for those called "their brethren" have yet to suffer martyrdom. 12-14. Compare similar language in ch. 16, latter part. 15. See Isaiah 2:17-21 and Hosea 10:8. Note it is the Wrath of the LAMB, a solemn fact. 16, 17. "Who may stand in Thy sight when once Thou art angry?" (Ps. 76:7).

REVELATION 7

1, 2. Angels are continually before us in this last book of Scripture, doing God's pleasure, and proclaiming His will. 3. Judgment held back for the sake of elect ones. 4-8. The tribes are all known to God, though lineage is obscured today. "A remnant shall be saved," but that will be "all Israel" in that Day. 9. Not a few, but a number, uncounted by man, but each known to God. 10. Salvation ascribed to God—the throne denoting sovereignty, "the Lamb" reminding of redemption by His blood. 11. Worship universal in heaven. 12. A sevenfold ascription

of praise (cf. ch. 6:12). 13. "One of the elders." They are therefore individuals. 14. "The great tribulation" (Matt. 24:21). But it may also refer to that mentioned by Paul in Acts 14:22—"many tribulations." 15. The reward for having suffered, yet "the blood of the Lamb" gave them the right to be there. 16. "The Lamb . . . shall shepherd them"—a lovely picture of "the rest that remaineth." 17. GOD shall wipe away tears. These verses remind us that saints must suffer—even hunger and thirst and exposure to the elements. These explain the "tears."

REVELATION 8

1. "Half an hour." Probably when the Bema of Christ is set up, and perhaps the marriage supper. 2-4. The prayers of all saints, suggesting they are still on the earth, prevailing by virtue of the incense, a type of the merit of Christ. Mentioned prior to the sounding of "judgment" trumpets, for the saints are ever in God's thoughts. 5. The altar speaks of atonement, because of the fire consuming the sacrifice, but the same fire can bring judgment. Either the sinner or his sin must bear judgment. 6. "They prepared themselves" to do God's service.

SPECIAL READINGS FOR THE LORD'S DAY

- May
- 3. Deut. 21:22-23. John 12:31-36. Acts 13:27-30. Gal. 3:10-13. 1 Pet. 2:21-24.
 - 10. Deut. 22:1-4. Prov. 3:3-4. Luke 15:1-7. 1 John 3:16-18. Phil. 2:4-5.
 - 17. Deut. 22:5. Prov. 31:10, 21-25. 1 Tim. 2:8-10. 1 Cor. 11:2-16. 1 Pet. 3:1-6.
 - 24. Deut. 22:6-8. Prov. 11:17. 2. Sam. 22:25-27. Rom. 14:13. Gal. 5:22-23.
 - 31. Deut. 22:9-12. Neh. 10:28-31. 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1. Eph. 5:6-14. Heb. 7:25-27.

June

- 7. Deut. 23:3-6. Num. 23:16-21. Ruth 2:1-13. Mark 7:24-30. Eph. 2:11-22.
- 14. Deut. 23:7-8. Isa. 19:18-25. Acts 10:15, 34-35. Eph. 2:1-9. 1 Pet. 2:9-12.
- 21. Deut. 23:15-16. Philemon 8-18. Gal. 5:1-6, 13. Rom. 6:15-23. 1 Cor. 6:20; 7:21-24.
- 28. Deut. 23:24-25. Matt. 12:1. Rom. 7:7-13. Acts 20:32-35. Luke 12:15-22, 31-34.

SUGGESTED DAILY READINGS

"IF THE LORD WILL"—MAY, 1959

SUGGESTED DAILY READINGS

"IF THE LORD WILL"—JUNE, 1959

Day	READING		LEARNING		Day	READING		LEARNING	
	Judges	Revelation	Genesis	Revelation		1 Samuel	Matthew	Genesis	Revelation
1	18 14-31	1 1-20	43 19	4 5	1	12 1-25	6 19-34	44 16	6 11
2	19 1-12	2 1-29	20	6	2	13 1-23	7 1-14	17	12
3	13-25	3 1-22	21	7	3	14 1-18	15-29	18	13
4	26-30	4 1-11	22	8	4	19-35	8 1-17	19	14
5	20 1-13	5 1-14	23	9	5	36-52	18-34	20	15
6	14-25	6 1-17	24	10	6	15 1-14	9 1-13	21	16
7	26-37	7 1-17	25	11	7	15-35	14-26	22	17
8	38-48	8 1-13	26	5 1	8	16 1-23	27-38	23	7 1
9	21 1-25	9 1-21	27	2	9	17 1-19	10 1-20	24	2
10	Ruth 1 1-12	10 1-11	28	3	10	20-37	21-42	25	3
11	13-22	11 1-19	29	4	11	38-58	11 1-15	26	4
12	2 1-14	12 1-17	30	5	12	18 1-16	16-30	27	5
13	15-23	13 1-18	31	6	13	17-30	12 1-21	28	6
14	3 1-18	14 1-20	32	7	14	19 1-24	22-37	29	7
15	4 1-10	15 1-8	33	8	15	20 1-23	38-50	30	8
16	11-22	16 1-21	34	9	16	24-42	13 1-15	31	9
17	1 Samuel 1 1-18	17 1-18	44 1	10	17	21 1-15	16-30	32	10
18	19-28	18 1-24	2	11	18	22 1-23	31-44	33	11
19	2 1-17	19 1-21	3	12	19	23 1-15	45-58	34	12
20	18-36	20 1-15	4	13	20	16-29	14 1-21	45 1	13
21	3 1-21	21 1-14	5	14	21	24 1-22	22-36	2	14
22	4 1-22	15-27	6	6 1	22	25 1-17	15 1-14	3	15
23	5 1-12	22 1-21	7	2	23	18-44	15-28	4	16
24	6 1-21	Matthew 1 1-25	8	3	24	26 1-25	29-39	5	17
25	7 1-17	2 1-23	9	4	25	27 1-12	16 1-12	6	8 1
26	8 1-22	3 1-17	10	5	26	28 1-14	13-28	7	2
27	9 1-14	4 1-25	11	6	27	15-25	17 1-13	8	3
28	15-27	5 1-16	12	7	28	29 1-11	18 1-17	9	4
29	10 1-13	17-32	13	8	29	30 1-31	18-35	10	5
30	14-27	33-48	14	9	30	31 1-13	19 1-15	11	6
31	11 1-15	6 1-18	15	10					

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THOUGHTS FROM

TO
MAINTAIN
A TESTIMONY
FOR GOD'S
GRACE AND
TRUTH

FOUNDED
BY
PERCY W.
HEWARD

THE WORD OF GOD

AND

THE STUDENT OF SCRIPTURE

EDITED BY E. KIRK

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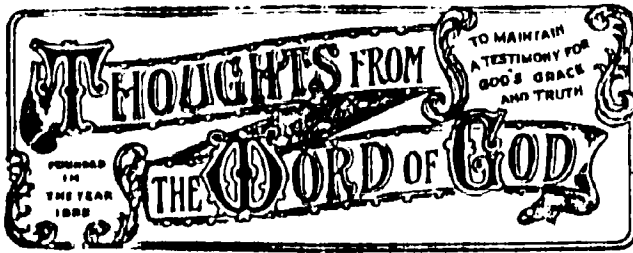
SOME OF THE CONTENTS

Knowledge	26
To and Fro	28
Kohathite Service	29
Inspired Words Inspected ...	30
Power of Scripture	30
Not on the Roll	32
Dead and Buried	34
Puritans on Prayer	35
Readings and Notes	35, 36

"LORD, Thou hast heard the desire of the humble: Thou wilt prepare their heart, Thou wilt cause Thine ear to hear."
Psalm 10 : 17.

"JESUS . . . suffered without the camp. Let us therefore go forth unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach."
(Heb. 13:12-13.)

"Without the camp," that is the place for me, But "unto HIM," the LORD I do not see, Nor have seen, yet 'tis Him my soul doth love; For did He not, descending from above, Live in this world, hated without a cause, The SON OF GOD, obeying all His laws, Because He loved, delighting in His will, And His eternal purpose would fulfil? His love men disregarded, and with hate The LORD OF GLORY thrust "without the gate." Though wicked hands were laid upon Him, man Did but accomplish God's determined plan. There did the Saviour give His precious blood, And all His chosen sanctified to God.



WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

"The Lord shall open unto thee His good treasure." (Deut. 28:12)

This promise to Israel was *conditional*. It was dependent upon, "If thou shalt hearken" (vv. 1, 2, 13), and would not hold good, "If thou wilt not hearken." They had been set free, life in the persons of their firstborn had been redeemed by the blood of the passover lamb; and, when all appeared to be frustrated by the seemingly impassable Red Sea, and their bitter enemy close on their heels, they could do nothing but, "stand still and see the salvation of the LORD." Not a finger could they lift to help themselves. Deliverance came only by the mighty hand and outstretched arm of God. That is sovereign grace, and all to the glory of His Name (Isa. 63:12-14). Now were they *free*, yet *bound* to obey Him with gladness of heart.

All of which things, historically true, yet are allegorized (cf. Gal. 5:24). A believer is one redeemed by the precious blood of Christ. Sovereignly made "free" (and this includes his will), his choice should be *all for Christ*. "If thou wilt hearken" is a word also to *present day saints*. The Lord JESUS has His "ifs" in His discourses to disciples (Matt. 5 to 7; John 13 to 16). Do we desire that God will open to us "His good treasure"? In Christ are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Col. 2:3). There is untold wealth in the Scripture. The Key to the treasure house is, "If thou wilt hearken" and "Be ye doers of the Word."

The very warnings and Divine conditions are but *encouragements* to a spiritually healthy child of God to "follow on to know" Christ and His words.

"If thou wilt hearken . . . the LORD shall open to thee His good treasure, the heavens to give . . . and to bless . . ."

Poem to Help Christian Experience—No. 260.

PRAISE TO THE TRIUNE GOD

Praise, all ye saved ones, the Father in heaven Who chose you;

Gratitude give for unmerited mercy He shews you.

Lift up your voice,
Be glad in Him and rejoice;

He saves, though nothing He owes you.

Praise ye the Son, Who hath bought you unending salvation,

When, as "Sweet Saviour" He offered Himself an oblation.

Lift up your voice,
Be glad in Him and rejoice.

Ye who deserved condemnation.

What had ye known, if the Spirit of grace ne'er had taught you,

What if the message of mercy He never had brought you?

Lift up your voice,
Be glad in Him and rejoice.

For to this end He hath wrought you.

Now to your God—The Tri-une One—be joyous thanksgiving,

Hymn the Almighty, All-seeing, eternally Living.

Lift up your voice,
Be glad in Him and rejoice.

All glory due to Him giving.

KNOWLEDGE

PERCY W. HEWARD

A *fallen* world is a sphere of *unsatisfied* longings. Everything without God is incomplete, and in how many thoughts and actions GOD is *not*. There exists a common wish to get *knowledge*, but how many seem to forget that knowledge of *itself* is nothing, and that it may be less and worse than nothing; all depends on *what* is known and *how* it is known.

Craving for knowledge of all kinds of things is seen in Genesis 3; in connexion therewith Eve was deceived. She *liked* the wicked promise: "Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Yet the seeking goes on, and ever seems to increase. Of how many it might be said, "Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee" (Isa. 47:10). Yes, the knowledge is often of *sin*, and, openly or covertly, against GOD. And the words are again illustrated, "They are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge" (Jer. 4:22). Alas, as to such a *large* portion of knowledge, ignorance is wisdom (Rev. 2:24).

But some may think these criticisms are too wide. They recognize that there are *bad* books and *bad* things, but are there not many, they ask, which, though not exactly concerning GOD, are, in their way, excellent? They have literary power, or reveal deep meditation, or record great discoveries. Let those who fear HIS NAME beware of the usual accompaniments of this argument.

Shall *classic* writing atone for “abominable idolatries,” and shall “chaste” language gloss over unchaste thoughts? Or, if the sphere be changed, can it be said that most scientific literature exhibits the fear of the LORD which is the beginning of knowledge (Prov. 1:7)? Even an *insinuation* against Scripture is the serpent’s lie again (Gen. 3:1). The world by wisdom has never known God (1 Cor. 1:21). And sin has corrupted and tainted far more than most conceive. We do not plead for all ignorance, but there is such a wrong perspective today. An assemblage of books contains more an assemblage of sin than at first sight seems possible. GOD does not esteem man’s fallen reasoning, “for it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent” (1 Cor. 1:19).

Furthermore, “useful” knowledge will not satisfy. The King of Israel who was most wise, said, “My heart had great experience of wisdom and knowledge, and I gave my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly: I perceived that this also is vexation of spirit. For in much wisdom is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow” (Eccl. 1:16-18). Yet, though it will not satisfy, knowledge will cause pride. “Knowledge puffeth up” (1 Cor. 8:1). Thus apart from the evil character of much knowledge, there are evil associations in not a few cases. Hence the solemn words, “Let not the wise man *glory* in his wisdom” (Jer. 9:23).

How blessed it is, for God’s people, to be able to turn from this sad contemplation. Not a few who read this may, by His grace, have been brought to see their ruin and helplessness, and His unerring way of salvation. To *such* we would especially address ourselves now. The *added* words of Jeremiah 9:23-24, also need emphasis: “Let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the LORD, Which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things do I delight, saith the LORD.” Happy are they who have received the *gift* of life eternal (Rom. 6:23), that they might know GOD (John 17:3). Should not such, saved by the precious blood of Christ, recollect His warnings as to *what* and *how* His people hear (Mark 4:24; Luke 8:18), and apply them to *reading* also? Is it not possible to crowd out and “choke the Word” (Matt. 13:22), by other things, including present-day literature?

Dear fellow-believer, is it not sadly possible to forget the words of God’s lips, and so to wander into the paths of the destroyer (Ps. 17:4)? Where, in these last days, have we the *enthusiasm* to fol-

low on to know the LORD (Hos. 6), and the glad venture of faith to count all things but refuse with a view to *knowing* Christ (Phil. 3:6-10)? The knowledge of God and of His ways (Rom. 11:33) is more wonderful than a merely mental knowledge of His works, and how much beyond the knowledge of human history and skill! The Book of Proverbs definitely encourages to acquaintance with the things of God again and again: “Get wisdom, get understanding: forget it not: neither decline from the words of My mouth.” “Wisdom is the principal thing: therefore get wisdom, and with all thy getting, get understanding.” “Wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.” “A man shall be commended according to his wisdom.” “The wise in heart shall be called prudent.” “The lips of knowledge are a precious jewel.” Those who are *born* from above can rightly appropriate the “my son” of that wonderful book, and to them its preface is indeed strikingly suggestive: “The Proverbs of Solomon, the Son of David, King of Israel; to know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding; to receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity; to give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion. A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels; to understand a proverb and the interpretation; the words of the wise and their dark sayings. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.”

How precious is the Word of GOD, yet most esteem it not, and see no beauty in IT, any more than Israel saw beauty in HIM, who died for sinners, that they should desire Him. But the beauty *was*, and *is* there. And our heart’s desire is that some may have their eyes opened, and be brought to value the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus. Such will know Him as SAVIOUR and know Him as LORD, seeking to make manifest, and glad to make manifest, their delight in God’s Word and Will which He revealed, and which should ever characterize His redeemed. So will there be a contrast with those who thirst for unsatisfying earthly knowledge, and for the romances and imaginations of fallen men. The saved one’s heart will lovingly enter into the precious aspiration, “My soul thirsteth for GOD, for the living GOD” (Ps. 42:4). Thus will His Name be honoured and exalted in a sin-stained world, and a godly consistency will be seen. But without this consuming passion for the things of God, is there not at least the appearance of *hypocrisy*?

YOUNG PEOPLE'S COLUMNS TO AND FRO

How often these three short words are used in everyday talk. They speak of movement forward and backward, and may denote restlessness, a zeal for doing good or doing harm; sometimes they are used of one deep in thought, slowly walking up and down. Again, they may bring before us an earnest seeking after something good and longed for. Further, there is a tossing to and fro of those on a ship at the mercy of wind and wave.

Now these words occur several times in the Bible with such meanings as these. We may therefore learn some useful lessons. But let us ask God Himself to teach us, and to so order our minds that we may learn our lesson well.

The Restless Raven

When the great flood began to go down, Noah sent forth a raven out of the ark. It went "TO AND FRO, until the waters were dried up from the earth" (Gen. 8:7). Why did it not come back? Because as it fed on flesh it could satisfy itself from the many dead bodies. This reminds us of the sinner, dead in trespasses and sins, who finds pleasure in those who are like him. But he has no rest. How different was the dove which Noah then sent forth. "She found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned," and Noah "put forth his hand, and took her and pulled her in unto him into the ark." There she had shelter, safety, rest, and food. The dove is like an awakened sinner, who can find no rest in this world, and so comes to the Lord Jesus, Who draws such unto Himself, the True Ark of Safety. There is no salvation outside of Him.

A Restless Evil Spirit

No evil spirits are at rest, and this is true of Satan, who "goeth about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pet. 5:8). Twice did God ask Satan, "Whence comest thou?", and received the same answer: "From going TO AND FRO in the earth, and from walking up and down in it" (Job. 1:7; 2:2). What is his purpose? To get to know a great deal about us, what things we like, so that he may tempt us where we are most likely to fall. Sometimes like "a roaring lion," sometimes "as an angel of light," he goes TO AND FRO in the world, with many evil spirits at his bidding, helping in his wicked work. But he is only a creature, and can do no more than God allows. Job was brought very low through Satan's spite. Even then God over-ruled all that man of God went through for his blessing. At the "end," Job was more greatly blessed than he was at the beginning. Also he knew God better than before.

No Christian can escape being tempted, but each should remember the words of 1 Corinthians 10:12-13, and that "the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly" (Rom. 16:20).

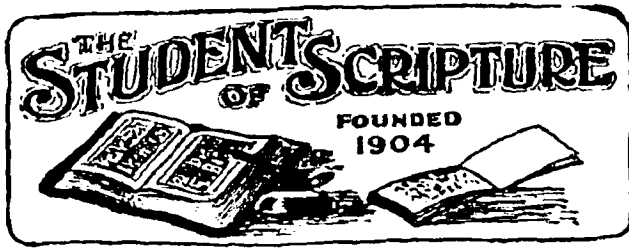
The Drunkard's Distress

When the writer was a boy, he often saw drunken men staggering along the street, and sometimes falling. It was a sad sight. And yet the Bible twice mentions this effect upon men, to picture (a) the helplessness of sailors and their danger in a storm at sea, and (b) the effect upon the earth of God's judgments in the last day.

"For He (the LORD) commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble. They reel TO AND FRO, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end" (Ps. 107:25-27). So it is sometimes with people on the sea of life, when troubles come, and they seem tossed up and down, and cannot find rest. But our Psalm goes on to say, "THEN they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and He bringeth them out of their distresses . . . He bringeth them unto their desired haven," and thus "are they glad." So we learn that God does hear the cry of those in trouble, and we know He listens to those who cry for mercy when they are troubled about their sins. You cannot be truly "glad" until you know that the waves of God's anger rolled over the Lord Jesus in your place. If you, in God's mercy, come to know Him as your Saviour, you also will be "quiet" and restful and glad.

A day is coming when God will raise up the wind and waves of His anger against a sinful world. Then "the earth shall reel TO AND FRO and stagger like a drunkard . . . and it shall come to pass in that day, that the LORD shall punish" (Isa. 24:20-21). It will be a dreadful day for unforgiven sinners. I wonder how many of my readers will be able to stand "IN THAT DAY."

(If the Lord will, to be continued)



KOHATHITE SERVICE ITS TYPICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Introduction

God's appointments for Israel under the Law, for their reverential worship and due service to Him, are full of lessons for those who, having "no confidence in the flesh" (Phil. 3 and context) or in "carnal ordinances," yet "worship God in spirit," or by the Spirit. God is holy, and will be sanctified by all who come near to Him. And that awful holiness is emphasized by the frequent use of the words, "lest he die," "that they die-not," in connection with the service of priests and levites in their mediatorial office on behalf of the people of Israel.

The nation consisted of three distinct sections: "the common people," or people of the land (Lev. 4:27), the Levites, and the Priests, including the High Priest, "Aaron the Levite" (Ex. 4:14). Israel was then a theocracy, God was their King, approached only through the mediation of the priesthood. Therefore the tribe of Levi furnished judges of the people (Deut. 17:9) and expounders of the Law (e.g., Deut. 24:8; 33:10). When Jacob was approaching his "end," he prophesied what would "befall" his family "in the last days," but probably did not know how literally his words concerning Levi would be fulfilled (Gen. 49:5-7); for indeed they (the Levites) were scattered in Israel, yet it was for the accomplishing of the Divine purpose, which was ever for the good of His people, amongst whom the Levites had no inheritance. Herein also is an instance of God's Sovereignty, for, from one of such unpromising character, He raised up a tribe to be specially near to Him, to be dedicated wholly to His service. Such is the grace of God!

The Tribe of Levi

Levi was the third son of Jacob. His genealogy commences in Genesis 46:11, and is more fully set forth in Exodus 6:16-27. The second son of Levi was Kohath, whose first son, Amram, was father of Aaron, Moses and Miriam. His second son was father of Korah and his three brothers; so that Moses and Korah were first cousins and both Kohathites, a fact that needs to be remembered as our studies proceed.

Kohath, with his brothers Gershon and Merari, gave their names to the three orders of Levites, the Gershonites, the Kohathites, and the Merarites; and, although the subject of this essay is mainly the service of the Kohathites, these differed in no way from their brethren in regard to the Divine choice and claim, and their cleansing and consecration. This is recorded chiefly in the Book of Numbers.*

When the tribes were numbered, the Levites were not included (1:47-49; 2:33); but the number "twelve" was maintained by the division of Joseph into Ephraim and Manasseh. Yet the Levites were numbered, and that separately (3:14-16), also each section was numbered (3:22, 28, 34). At the same time all the firstborn of Israel were numbered (3:40-43). Now the firstborn belonged to God in a special way: "Because all the firstborn are Mine; for on the day that I smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, I hallowed unto Me all the firstborn in Israel, both man and beast: Mine shall they be: I am the LORD" (3:13). Yet they must be "redeemed" (Note Ex. 13:13), even though they were His by choice. In His wisdom, and in accord with His holy will, the Levites were accepted *in their stead* (3:12, 41, 45).

The number of the Levites, however, fell short of the number of the firstborn by two hundred and seventy-three. Therefore, since God claimed *all* the firstborn, some means must be found for the "redemption" of these, and this, by the commandment of God, was by the payment of "five shekels apiece," which was given to Aaron and his sons (3:46-51). Probably this was silver, as in the case of the "atonement-money" (Ex. 30). Thus, at the outset, the Levites afforded a type of substitution and redemption, although, like all types, it falls short; for the redemption of the spiritual "firstborn" could not be by man or by money, but with the precious blood of Christ, Who alone has been accepted, because of His finished work, in their stead. The elect are "accepted in the Beloved."

Nevertheless, whenever one of Israel's "firstborn" looked upon a Levite, he saw in him one who was his "substitute" before God, and, in a sense, one by whom he had been redeemed. Hence we read that God said, "The Levites shall be Mine." "Mine shall they be. I am the LORD" (3:12-13). "For they are wholly given unto Me from among the children of Israel . . . and I have taken the Levites for all the firstborn of the children of Israel" (8:16-18).

It is worthy of note that the Divine choice of the Levites and their separation and service unto GOD, their appointed dwelling in relation to the Tabernacle, and their respective positions on the march

*Hence all references, unless otherwise indicated, will be to that book.

through the wilderness, all have a place in the record prior to their public call and ordination. So it is in respect of the "church of firstborn ones." They are foreordained personally to Salvation and to service, but the call by grace into justification and sanctification comes with certainty at the day and hour of God's choosing. So it is with respect to Service. God's servant Paul being an example (Gal. 1:15-16), outstanding indeed, but illustrating the Divine pattern and procedure.

(If the Lord will, to be continued.)

INSPIRED WORDS INSPECTED

No. 56

(concluded)

FOR (gar).

THE SCRIPTURE (he graphe); article and noun, feminine. Lit., "the Writing," applying to God's word written.

SAITH (legei); see above. A "vivid present" used, to remind that God and the Scripture still speak. To both godly and ungodly come the voice of the Living God, and the Word Which liveth and abideth.

TO PHARAOH (toi Pharaoi); article and proper noun.

THAT (hoti); not translated, but serves as introduction to a sentence, which it virtually puts into inverted commas.

EVEN (not in text).

FOR THIS SAME PURPOSE (eis auto touto); "eis," preposition meaning "into," but often having the sense, "with a view to"; auto, accusative neuter of personal pronoun, "autos aute, auto" (self, or he, she, it); touto, accusative, neuter, from demonstrative pronoun, "houtos, haute, touto" (this). So the phrase may be rendered, "with a view to this very (or self-same) thing."

I RAISED UP (exegeira); verb, aorist, from "ex-geiro"; compound of "ek" (out or out of) and "egeiro" (to excite, arouse, awaken, raise up); hence to "raise up out of." This word only occurs elsewhere in 1 Cor. 6:14, where it denotes the raising of believers out from the dead, by the power of God. The word in this connection is remarkable, Pharaoh is, as it were, a signpost to warn, or an apparition to alarm.

THEE (se); personal pronoun, accusative, from "su" (thou).

THAT (hopos); as an adverb, meaning, "in what manner," but here as a conjunction meaning, "in order that."

I MIGHT SHEW (endeixomai); verb, aorist, subjunctive, from "endeiknumai," a compound of "en" (in) and "deiknuo" or "deiknumi" (I point out, shew); hence (to point out in, shew forth). The word occurs in ch. 2:15; 9:22; and Eph. 2:7, and a few other places.

IN (en); preposition, governing dative case. Note "en" comes twice, here and in the verb.

THEE (soi); personal pronoun, from "su."

MY (mou); personal pronoun, from "ego" (I).

POWER (ten dunamin); article and noun, feminine, accusative, from "dunamis" (power, might, force); "dynamic" is derived herefrom. The phrase is literally, "the power of Me."

AND (kai).

THAT (hopos); see above.

MIGHT BE DECLARED (diaggelei); verb, aorist, subjunctive, from "diaggello"; compound of "dia" (through) and "aggello" (I announce as a messenger); hence, "I announce throughout."

MY (mou); see above.

NAME (to onoma); article and noun, neuter.

IN (en) (see above).

ALL (pasei); adjective, dative, from "pas, pasa, pan" (all).

THE EARTH (tei gei); article and noun, dative, feminine; from "ge" (earth, land). Compare geology, geography.

THEREFORE (ara oun); see above.

HATH HE MERCY ON (eleei); verb, present, from "eleeo."

WHOM (hon); see above.

HE WILL (thelei); verb, present tense.

HAVE MERCY (not in text).

AND (de); conjunction; second word in sentence, meaning "but."

WHOM (hon); see above.

HE WILL (thelei).

HE HARDENETH (sklerunei); verb, present, from "skleruno" (I make unyielding, I make dry and hard). Our word "sclerosis" derived herefrom.

Note.—The Septuagint reading in Exodus 33:19 agrees with the New Testament, but in Exodus 9:16, it agrees only as regards the last clause. The middle clause almost agrees.

THE POWER OF SCRIPTURE

The root of a growing plant is hidden in the earth, but in due time its fruit is seen. Thus the "goodness" of the root is evidenced. Concerning men, Christ said, "By their fruits ye shall know them." Even so Scripture speaks of Scripture. Where there is a meditating therein day and night (Psalm 1 and Joshua 1) the leaf is green, fruit is brought forth in its season. The Scripture needs

to be "applied" by the Holy Spirit if its power and fruit are to be known; and this fact needs to be carried in the mind when speaking of the *power* of Scripture. "What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord. Is not My Word like as a fire, saith the Lord, and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" (Jer. 23:28-29).

From this brief introduction, let us proceed to a consideration of some leading facts set forth by the written words of God.

(1) "*The Word of God is Living and Inworking*" (Heb. 4).

Living because God speaks therein today. Consider such texts as, "Wherefore, as the Holy Ghost saith" (Heb. 3:7). It is to be expected that what God hath breathed (2 Tim. 3:16) should be living, even as man became a living soul when God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life (see Gen. 2).

Inworking (or energising) because it is God's appointed means of exercising the heart and directing the will and affection toward Him. "Remember the word unto Thy servant upon which Thou hast caused me to hope." "I will never forget Thy precepts, for with them Thou hast quickened me." (Psalm 119:49 and 93.)

From 2 Timothy 3:16 we see that it has a correcting power, and thus prevents one-sidedness ("that he may be complete").

(2) "*The Seed is the Word of God*" (Luke 8:11).

What power lies hidden in a seed! Yet it must be sown, if fruit is to appear. The germ of *life* is in the small seed. Hence the wisdom of God is seen in the choice of such a figure. The parable of the "Sower and the Seed" reveals that not all the ground on which the seed is sown is profitable; yet the good ground, prepared beforehand, does yield fruit, though it may be greater or lesser according to the quality and condition of the ground, not according to the quality of the seed. The Word is the same, but the state of heart, even of believers, varies. Some bore thirtyfold, some sixty, and some an hundred. How deeply searching!

(3) *The Scripture has a "voice."*

"Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not *hear* the law? . . . What *saith* the Scripture?" (Gal. 4:21 and 30).

From Hebrews 10:15 it is clear that the Holy Spirit works by means of the Scripture, usually, and thus the *power* is learned, because, as the Lord Jesus in the wilderness did not act without the written Words, so the Holy Spirit is pleased to use them, and thus to bring to remembrance (John 14:26), instead of working independently.

This was evidenced in the days of Josiah

(2 Chron. 34:14-35) when revival was the result of finding and believing the Scripture. So Daniel's prayer (ch. 9) was the effect of the promise believed, and that, too, led to a reviving.

(4) *The Scriptures are liberating*" (John 8:31-32).

Where the Word of truth has gone forth and has been accepted, its liberating effect has been seen. In later years, the Reformation was initiated and carried through by means of those who had felt the power of Scripture in their own experience, and desired to spread the truth by means of translating the Scriptures in a language that all could understand. The reviving amongst children of God about the year 1936 in Dublin and elsewhere was the direct result of the felt power and realised authority of God's Book, and though there was failure to follow on to a fuller realisation of His will, yet there was very much to refresh in that gracious work. Where, however, the Scriptures are withheld from the people, there is bondage; and even true believers, under such conditions, do not usually progress, as they should, in the things of God. As there is a sense of freshness and freedom in the open air, so those who breathe the atmosphere of God's Truth have a conscious sense and enjoyment of Spiritual freedom.

(5) *The quiet power* of Scripture is set forth in such words as those in Deuteronomy 32:2. How powerful in their effects are the silent processes of "nature." The gentle rain, the noiseless dew, bring blessing upon the earth (see Heb. 6:7). So with the snow (Isa. 55:10-11). The manna—beautiful type of the Scriptures as well as of Him who is the Living Word—came silently down from the heaven and such was its sustaining power that Israel were nourished upon it for forty years. Moses and Caleb continued strong upon this food (Deut. 34:7; Jos. 14:10-11).

(6) *The Scriptures have a stabilising power.*

There are many winds of doctrine (Eph. 4:14). There are many voices in the world, as that, for instance, which calls "passengers that go right on their ways" (Prov. 9:15). There are disturbing influences in national and international affairs, but the soul that rests upon and feeds upon the words of the living God is kept in "peace, peace," for his mind is stayed upon God. The student of Scripture is aware of the things coming upon the earth, for God has shewed them in the Book. He is therefore not *troubled*—*agitated* (Matt. 24:6).

(7) *The Scriptures satisfy.*

A book of mere human authorship is soon read, and often fades from the memory, if it does not defile the mind, in which case it does not easily thus fade. But in any case, that which men esteem

the finest literature and most beautiful language does not satisfy the whole being. The Scriptures are the food of God's people, who are never surfeited, for the satisfied soul still yearns for a deeper appreciation and assimilation of truth. They satisfy to the full, but never cloy. The Scriptures are as "honey" (Ps. 119:103), as "milk" (1 Pet. 2:2) and as "strong meat" (Heb. 5:14).

(8) *The Scriptures have a sanctifying power.*

"Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy Word is truth" (John 17:17). "Sanctify" is "to make holy." This has been effected through the work of the Lord Jesus (Heb. 10:10) as far as acceptance of the believer with God is concerned. But he is "being sanctified" (Heb. 10:14 lit.) in his experience and the written word is the means by which the Holy Spirit accomplishes the sanctification of the redeemed soul.

To have a copy of the Bible and yet not to be holy shews —

- (a) The Book is neglected, or
- (b) The Book is read without reliance upon the Holy Spirit to teach and cause understanding, or
- (c) There is unwillingness to obey the truth.

Glad and humble submission to truth, as well as instruction by the Holy Spirit are both needed and where this is the experience, sanctification will be the effect, without the sanctified one being aware of it (Exodus 34:29).

ing to his works. In the writing up of David's mighties, the name of Joab is conspicuous by its absence; while that of Nahari the Beerothite (never heard of before) is found in the place of honour. What a contrast is here! But there is more than a contrast. There is the highest incentive to devoted service for Christ. Your name, beloved child of God, may be unknown in Israel; you may be "only an armour-bearer"—obscure, forgotten, and never even mentioned in connection with public testimony for God. But be not discouraged. *The roll is not written up yet!* If, with singleness of eye, you seek to serve the Lord Christ, rest assured that such service shall not be forgotten by Him with Whom "a cup of cold water" (Mark 9:41) shall not lose its reward.

The Master's "well-done" will not be proportioned to the brilliancy of our service—not even to its seeming success; but to the purity of the motive with which we have made it our aim to *please Him*. The day is coming when the Lord's "hidden ones," who trod the path of lowly service, shall shine forth. The day is nearing when they shall be acknowledged in the presence of an assembled world. Against that day is being treasured up each word of love, each look of sympathy, each act of silent sacrifice and patient suffering, for Him we seek to serve while passing through this wilderness below. Therefore encourage your hearts in God, ye obscure "armour-bearers" in the service of the King. There is room on the great roll of the faithful for all who are willing to be *all for Christ*. Dazzling abilities may have weight with men; but it is the devotion of the heart that counts with God.

Selected. 1893.

"MAY I BELIEVE?"

Yes, dear anxious reader, you are welcome. God HAD everything against you, but (wondrous fact) He HAS nothing against you, if you are brought to the precious resting-place of His Beloved Son. Is it possible that you will keep on trying some OTHER remedy for your heart-anguish? In mercy you have been awakened, and you do not desire now the world's empty pleasures INSTEAD OF Christ. Business to CROWD OUT the Lord of glory is madness to you. But you are afraid to trust. Afraid to trust the Only Faithful One: afraid to rest on Him, though you can see nothing else is possible. And He says "COME." The blood of Christ is SUFFICIENT WARRANT for a sinner today!

P.W.H.

CHARLES HENRY STOCKS

Probably few readers of this magazine realize how much manual work is necessitated by the despatching and distribution of its successive issues. At one time it was even greater than at present, not only by reason of a larger circulation, but because the printer delivered each number in flat sheets. The folding, stitching and trimming was the work of the brother whose name appears at the head hereof. He was then the trusted helper of the late Percy W. Heward, since whose decease he rendered loyal and loving help to the present editor and publisher.

About two years ago, Charles had to retire owing to bodily weakness, which gradually increased until his departure to be with Christ on February 11th, leaving a widow, but no family.

The writer of this memoir greatly misses the brother in whom he had much confidence, and with whom he had many seasons of prayer and conference concerning the work of the Lord.

The "sowing" took place in the presence of several relatives and friends, at the City of London Cemetery on February 16th, and the following is the gist of an address then given.

I am my Beloved's, and His desire is toward me"
(Song 7:10).

Such is the humbly confident language of the Church and, indeed, of every individual believer. "Thou Whom my soul loveth" is a word oft repeated in the Song of Songs, expressive of the affection of a saved one for the Saviour. 'Tis not a mere mental admiration of that Blessed Person, nor a soul-less appreciation, but a love springing up from the depths of the soul, "Him Whom my soul loveth." Not always was it thus with the redeemed. Once He was despised from the soul (Isa. 49:7 margin). No beauty was seen in Him that He should be desired, but now "He is altogether lovely," the One Beloved and the Friend. "My Beloved is mine, and I am His. He feedeth among the lilies." "I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine. He feedeth among the lilies." How perfect is the union, how joyous the harmony, how gracious is the leading and the feeding! He is both Bridegroom and Shepherd.

"I am my Beloved's." How many can speak with such blessed assurance? Yet is it true of every one "born of God." "Ye belong to Christ," and how and why? Because the Father gave them to Him. They were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and presented as a gift from the Father to His Son. "Thine they were, and Thou gavest them Me." "I pray for them . . . which Thou hast given Me; for they are Thine.

And all Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine; and I am glorified in them."

But He has established His right to them by purchase. This the Father foresaw, for they are "redeemed . . . with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by Him do believe in God, That raised Him up from the dead, and gave Him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God." Hence He speaks of them as "My Sheep," "His own sheep," because for them He laid down His life. "I am the Good Shepherd and know My sheep and am known of mine." "My Father, Which gave them Me is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand."

Further, the saints belong to Christ, because they have been "born from above." They are in the heavenly family, and are called His brethren, "Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling." Thus, in this threefold way, a believer can say, "I am my beloved's." Belonging to Him, He also is our Portion, and all that He has is ours. Is it not said, "All things are yours, whether . . . the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and *ye are Christ's*, and Christ is God's"? Truly, "ye belong to Christ." "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, *we are the Lord's*. For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that He might be Lord both of the dead and living." And in regard to resurrection it is, "But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward *they that are Christ's* at His coming."

"I am my Beloved's, and His desire is toward me." What! Can so holy and glorious an One have any desire toward such as by nature are worthless and unlovely; are not all our righteousnesses but as filthy rags? True, indeed, yet saints are lovely in His sight, for He has not only removed their sins by His having borne them Himself, as well as their judgment; but He has made them comely with His own comeliness. They are adorned with garments of salvation, and a robe of righteousness. Moreover, the love of God is poured out into their hearts. Their prayers and praises are a delight to Him. Not only does He say to His church, "Thou art all fair, My love, there is no spot in thee," but also, "Let Me see thy countenance, let Me hear thy voice, for sweet is thy voice and thy countenance is comely."

Could there be more endearing words than these? Should not the heart of the believer leap for joy to realize his Saviour loves him so? When the time draws near for the soul to leave this body, when, as Job puts it, "till my change come," the voice of the Son of God will be heard; "Thou shalt call, and I will answer Thee: *Thou wilt have a desire to the work of Thine hands.*"

Such a call our dear brother has heard and answered. The call by grace came when he was young, and he never doubted that he has been "bought with a price"; he sought to please Him to Whom he belonged. He would never have claimed sinless perfection. He was too well aware of having come short of the glory of God. Nor would he have wished for any praise to be lavished upon him. Yet he would have desired that, in this solemn assembly, some present could hear the voice of the Son of God and live. Blessed, indeed, would it be, if, in this scene of death, some soul entered into life, eternal life, so as to be able to say:

"In peace let me resign my breath,
And Thy Salvation see.
My sins deserved eternal death,
But Jesus died for me."

DEAD AND BURIED

"Have you heard anything of 'X' lately?", one friend may ask another concerning a mutual acquaintance. "Why," may be the reply, "have you not heard? He is dead, and buried." Why the last two words are added, as they often are, is scarcely understandable, since in this land, interment follows fairly soon after decease. No doubt, the desire is to emphasize the fact—the fact of death, and the removal out of sight of the body from which life has departed.

But what is so common *naturally* is true *morally*. All mankind is not only dead, but buried. "Dead in trespasses and sins"; "she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth"; "Alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them"; are a few passages from the Bible stressing the fact of universal moral death.

Furthermore, when you pass through a "cemetery," you may know, or perhaps not, that that word is derived from a Greek one, found in the Bible. "The whole world LIETH (a cemetery word) in the evil one." The world then is one vast moral cemetery. When Martha heard the Lord Jesus telling certain ones to take away the stone covering her brother's grave, she said, "Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days." But for nigh six thousand years man has been thus

morally, and the stench of his sin dreadfully offensive to a holy and righteous God.

Such language may offend the ears, especially those of self-righteous persons, but surely it is better to know the worst about oneself than to go on carelessly, and finally to awake to a judgment fixed, unalterable, and everlasting.

“What horror shall roll
O'er the godless soul,
Waked from its deathlike sleep;
Of all hope bereft,
And to judgment left
For ever to wail and weep.”

The condition of Lazarus, however, was not beyond the power of Christ. When He said, “Take ye away the stone,” He knew what He would do. He cried with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come forth,” and he that was dead came forth. Such is the power of Christ today. Those “dead” in sin, and “buried” in the evil one, have been caused to pass out of death into life. And why may this not be true of you, dear reader?

If anything has been written in this tract which may be compared to a “taking away of the stone,” that is all the writer can do. But if the Lord Jesus says, “Come forth” to the reader, and he is enabled to respond by the same power, reader and writer would rejoice together.

“The hour is coming, AND NOW IS, when the dead shall hear the voice of the SON OF GOD, and THEY THAT HEAR SHALL LIVE” (John 5:25).

“For the Scripture saith, WHOSOEVER believeth on HIM shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same LORD over all is rich unto ALL that call upon HIM. For WHOSOEVER shall call upon the Name of the LORD shall be saved” (Rom. 10:11-12).

NOTES ON MEMORIZED VERSES

REVELATION 8

7. The first trumpet heralded judgment on the EARTH; 8, 9. The second on the SEA; 10. 11. The third on the WATERS. 12. the fourth on the HEAVENS. Notice a stress on the *third* part; devastating indeed, but not *fulness* of judgment. These four are marked off from the remaining three. The “sevens” in this Book are in many cases divided thus into “fours” and “threes.” Significantly these multiplied are “twelve,” a characteristic number in this Book. 13. “Woe, Woe, Woe,” thus the remaining three are to be more intense.

REVELATION 9

1. A Fallen star. Is this a moral fall? 2, 3. A dread view of the abyss (see 9:11; 11:7; 17:8; 20:1-3), where Satan is to be bound, and whence issue hordes of evil spirits. 4-6. Now MEN are caused pain, so that they wish for death as an escape from their torments. 7-9. This is how John saw them, but will they be thus visible to men? 10. Five months only, mercy remembered in judgment, and space to repent. 11. Satan the head of this army. 12. The respite not for long. 13. 14. The sixth trumpet heralds the loosing of “bound” (fallen) angels. 15. Again, a *third* part—this time death (see also v. 18). 16-19. Will men see these evil creatures, or do they represent plagues of destruction? 20. 21. Yet the remainder repent not, though spared.

REVELATION 10

It is not until ch. 11:14, that the second “woe” (ch. 9:13-21) is said to be past. It would seem then that the events of ch. 10:1 to 11:14 are in some part parenthetical, as the command to John (ch. 10:8-11) and in part occurring during the second “woe,” as the third “woe” comes quickly thereafter.

1. An angel of God, by appearance, and, 2, 3, his authority. 4. Writing forbidden (cf. 2 Cor. 12:4). 5. A solemn oath, 6, in the Name of the Creator, announcing the near close of this age. 7. The “last trump,” soon to sound; “the mystery of God” is apparently the Church (cf. Eph. 3:3-6). 8, 9. A voice from heaven (cf. Acts 11:9), commanding. 10. Obedience (as in Ezekiel 2:8-3:4). 11. Did John prophesy orally, or is the Book of Revelation the fulfilment of these words?

REVELATION 11

1. What is “measured” is accepted of God. 2. What is unmeasured is temporarily rejected, that is, for forty-two months. 3. A thousand and two hundred and sixty days is the same period of time, and equals the last three and a half years of this present age. 4. The fulfilment of Zech. 4, the sphere of the prophecy being “the holy city” (v. 2), called the “great city” (v. 8), plainly Jerusalem.

5. 6. The miracles of judgment recall those on Egypt. 7. But their service will finish, by God's enabling, for they cannot die until then; an encouragement to all labourers, for God will keep them alive until their task is finished. 8. The holy city has become morally Sodom (cf. Isa. 1:10) and Egypt, rejecting God's people and His testimony—a solemn future state of Israel in unbelief. 9. 10. A short-lived rejoicing, for, 11, 12, Resurrection takes place (see 1 Thess. 4:17). 13. The earthquake (cf. 6:12-17; 11:19; 16; 17; 18), a climax. 14. The third woe cometh, apparently close on the heels of the second. 15. The seventh, and therefore "the last trump" (1 Cor. 15:52). The resurrection of saints, and their Lord taking the kingdom, closely linked in time. 16-19. The great event hailed in heaven and testified by signs in the earth.

REVELATION 12

1. The word "wonder" is "sign," often translated "miracle." 2. A woman in heavenly places, having heavenly glory (cf. 1 Cor. 15:40-41), a picture of the church, and yet in travail. 3. 4. Another "sign," depicting Satan, in deadly opposition to the woman and her expected "fruit."

SUGGESTED DAILY READINGS

"IF THE LORD WILL"—JULY, 1959

Day	READING		LEARNING	
	2 Samuel	Matthew	Genesis	Revelation
1	1 1-27	19 16-30	45 12	8 7
2	2 1-17	20 1-16	13	8
3	18-32	17-34	14	9
4	3 1-21	21 1-16	15	10
5	3 22-39	17-32	16	11
6	4 1-12	33-46	17	12
7	5 1-25	22 1-14	18	13
8	6 1-23	15-33	19	9 1
9	7 1-17	34-46	20	2
10	18-29	23 1-12	21	3
11	8 1-18	13-26	22	4
12	9 1-13	27-39	23	5
13	10 1-19	24 1-14	24	6
14	11 1-13	15-31	25	7
15	14-27	32-51	26	8
16	12 1-14	25 1-13	27	9
17	15-31	14-30	28	10
18	13 1-20	31-46	46 1	11
19	21-39	26 1-16	2	12
20	14 1-20	17-30	3	13
21	21-33	31-46	4	14
22	15 1-18	47-56	5	15
23	19-37	57-75	6	16
24	16 1-23	27 1-12	7	17
25	17 1-14	13-25	28	18
26	15-29	26-38	29	19
27	18 1-17	39-53	30	20
28	18-33	54-66	31	21
29	19 1-15	28 1-8	32	10 1
30	16-30	9-15	33	2
31	31-43	16-20	34	3

SPECIAL READINGS FOR THE LORD'S DAY

- July, 1959
 5. Deut. 24:8-9. Lev. 13:1-8, 45-46. Num. 12:1-10, 15.
 2 Chron. 26:1-4, 16-21. Luke 17:11-17.
 12. Deut. 24:16. 2 Kings 14:1-6. Ezek. 18:19-24.
 Rom. 3:10-20. 2 Cor. 5:17-21.
 19. Deut. 24:17-22. Ruth 2:1-10, 15-17, 23. Heb. 13:1-3.
 Jas. 1:27; 2:1-5, 15-16. Phil. 2:1-11.
 26. Deut. 25:1-3. Luke 12:40-48. Ps. 103:8-12, 17, 18.
 2 Cor. 2:5-8. 1 Pet. 2:20-24.

SPECIAL READINGS FOR THE LORD'S DAY

- August, 1959.
 2. Deut. 25:13-16. Amos 8:4-7. Ps. 11:4-7.
 Luke 6:36-38. Rom. 14:7-8, 16-19.
 9. Deut. 26:1-11. Ps. 96:1-9. Heb. 12:22-24.
 Rom. 11:32-12:1. Heb. 13:11-15.
 16. Deut. 26:12-15. Heb. 14:1-3. Neh. 8:9-12.
 1 John 3:14-18. 2 Cor. 8:1-9.
 23. Deut. 26:16-19. Ex. 19:3-6. Rom. 9:25-26.
 2 Thess. 2:13-17. 1 Pet. 2:9-10.
 30. Deut. 27:1-8. Jos. 8:30-35. Hab. 2:2-3.
 2 Pet. 1:8-15. 2 Tim. 3:14-17.

SUGGESTED DAILY READINGS

"IF THE LORD WILL"—AUGUST, 1959

Day	READING		LEARNING	
	2 Samuel	Mark	Genesis	Revelation
1	20 1-13	1 1-15	47 1	10 4
2	14-26	16-31	2	5
3	21 1-22	32-45	3	6
4	22 1-16	2 1-13	4	7
5	17-35	14-28	5	8
6	36-51	3 1-21	6	9
7	23 1-39	22-35	7	10
8	24 1-25	4 1-20	8	11
9	1 Kings 1 1-14	21-41	9	11 1
10	15-40	5 1-20	10	2
11	41-53	21-43	11	3
12	2 1-18	6 1-13	12	4
13	19-34	14-29	27	5
14	35-46	30-44	28	6
15	3 1-15	45-56	29	7
16	16-28	7 1-13	30	8
17	4 1-21	14-23	31	9
18	22-34	24-37	48 1	10
19	5 1-18	8 1-21	2	11
20	6 1-13	22-38	3	12
21	14-22	9 1-13	4	13
22	23-38	14-32	5	14
23	7 1-22	33-50	6	15
24	23-37	10 1-16	7	16
25	38-51	17-26	8	17
26	8 1-21	27-40	9	18
27	22-43	41-52	10	19
28	44-53	11 1-19	11	12 1
29	54-66	20-33	12	2
30	9 1-14	12 1-17	13	3
31	15-28	18-34	14	4

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THOUGHTS FROM

TO
MAINTAIN
A TESTIMONY
FOR GOD'S
GRACE AND
TRUTH

FOUNDED
BY
PERCY W.
HEWARD

THE WORD OF GOD

AND

THE STUDENT OF SCRIPTURE

EDITED BY E. KIRK

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FREE

SOME OF THE CONTENTS

Psalm 34	34
Preparing for the Kingdom	39
To and Fro	40
Kohathite Service	41
Inspired Words Inspected	42
Naomi	43
Heavenly Treasure	45
The Living God	45
Readings and Notes	47, 48

"Surely the righteous shall give thanks
unto Thy Name; the upright shall
dwell in Thy presence."

Psalm 140 : 13.

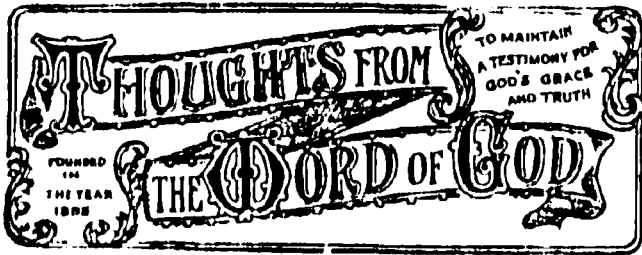
"AND HE GAVE THEM THEIR REQUEST; BUT
SENT LEANNESS INTO THEIR SOUL."

Psalm 106:15.

Earthly cares and comforts tend
To a moral meanness,
Holy Father, from such end
Save me, lest in leanness
Of my soul I e'er may go
Far from Thee, and colder grow,
Then in sorrow come to know
What it is to be brought low.

Satan would my heart divide
From my Lord and Saviour,
Though in Him I would abide,
Happy in His favour.
In my sorrow and my woe,
In my pilgrimage below,
Ah! to whom else should I go
But to Him Who loves me so?

"Lord, to whom shall we go?
Thou hast the words of eternal life."



WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

"So fearful . . . The tender rebuke, given by Him **No faith.**" into Whose lips grace was poured, was truly merited by the "fear-full" disciples. Yet their peril seemed so real and menacing; their Master was asleep and, to their troubled hearts, not caring that they were perishing. But how wrong they were, and how wrong are we, who have lesser dangers to face. And apart from these, do not our hearts sometimes sink under the pressure of unaccountable and unnameable fears? Why are we "so fearful"; how is it we have no faith? The cause is not in Him that we thus fail. 'Tis ever in ourselves. The disciples were just as safe whilst He slept as at all times, though they were not sensible of their security. How could they perish so long as He was with them! And He is WITH us and FOR us "all the days."

Let us self-reprovingly confess our doubtings and anxieties, our failure to confide fully in our loving Lord; and let us, as David, encourage ourselves in the Lord our God.

Poem to Help Christian Experience—No. 261.

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." Romans 8:28.

But all things work together for thy good.

What! All things? Yea!

For God hath said it, and His Word hath stood,
And will for aye.

But I am full of faults; my life so marred
By many a flaw.

Can these the Righteous Father disregard,
Who all foresaw?

Nay, He will not excuse, but over-rule
To His Own praise.

'Tis by repentance and in sorrow's school
We learn His ways.

Arise, then, from depression and despair,
Yet hear the rod.*

He will forgive, and listen to thy prayer--
The Faithful God.

With strength renewed, fight thou the noble fight,
And run the race,

And press toward the mark. Forth in His might,
The might of grace!

* Micah 6:9.

PSALM 34 : 4

"I sought the LORD, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears."

PERCY W. HEWARD

David's experiences were very remarkable, but he ever proved that God is faithful. Nor is He changed today. The heading of this Psalm reminds us that David sometimes had painful fears, and thus arranged for himself, and thereby difficulties were great. "And David arose, and fled that day for fear of Saul, and went to Achish, king of Gath" (1 Sam. 21:10). "And he changed his behaviour before them and feigned himself mad" (v. 13). Thus this poem of praise seems written to condemn these doubts, and this dissembling. This background adds force to the words, "O fear the LORD, ye His saints: for there is no want to them that fear Him." It is a mercy to be saved, but we need, for the glory of God, a deliverance from "fears." When there are fears, we dishonour Him, and compromise. Nor is there the bright record of His encouragements granted to faith. Natural timidity is very real, but God is more real, and it is the writer's desire to be set free at all times from *natural fears*. The words, "I, even I, am He that comforteth you: who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die?" (Isa. 51:12), are refreshing; we have no reason for fear. The constantly repeated *command*, "Fear not," finds a climax in Matthew 10:26, 28, 31, and since "He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee"—"we may boldly say, The Lord is My Helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me" (Heb. 13:5-6). "God hath not given us the spirit of cowardice" (2 Tim 1:7). He encourages His people to enter into the words, "He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the LORD: his heart is established, he shall not be afraid" (Ps. 112:7-8). Nor would we forget those of Proverbs 1:33: "Whoso hearkeneth unto Me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil."

Thus there seems so much in Scripture to draw us away from the fear of man which bringeth a snare (Prov. 29:25). How often we have held back from doing the will of God because of this fear. Thus timidity puts man in the place of God, and exalts the creature. Hence the command, "Sanctify the LORD of hosts Himself, and let Him be your Fear" (Isa. 8:13). If there is fear, the heart is kept from the "peace, peace" of Isaiah 26:3; it is kept in alarm and suspense, and there must be worry, which is as much forbidden as open acts of sin. Worry is unbelief, worry is looking to man, as if the king's heart were not in the hand of the

LORD, and as if there were actions too hard for the LORD. Hence it puts aside God's authority, God's love, God's care. It cripples as to much usefulness, and there is not the true witness of a robust faith. We want these words to be our joy: "The LORD is my Light and Salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the Strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" (Ps. 27:1).

When Peter saw the winds and waves, he began to sink: we must be "looking off unto JESUS." David shews by contrast, the root of the trouble in the very next verse (Ps. 34:5). "They looked unto Him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed." If we do not look unto Him we shall be darkened, and our faces *will* be ashamed. Our Heavenly Father is not honoured when His people look as if they were alarmed. Let us listen to the Divine encouragement which was given to Jeremiah, "Gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee; be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them" (Jer. 1:17). We must set our faces as flint and "know we shall not be ashamed" (Isa. 50:7). Our Heavenly Father knows the end from the beginning; He knows of what things we have a need; He cares and loves with a love beyond all human measuring. Shall we untruthfully imply by a face of doubt that He has forgotten to be gracious? If we thus misrepresent His love, we disgrace Him. Not only because peace of mind is enjoyable, but for the glory of God we should hate worry, and hate any *look* of anxiety or despondency, though it is equally important to hate flippancy or frivolity, to hate that carelessness which can go on in disobedience *without worrying*, and from which we would be delivered in the power of the Holy Spirit.

PREPARING FOR THE KINGDOM

Then if it be true that upon our progress in holiness depends possibly our place in the Redeemer's kingdom, certainly our happiness here, and the glory of God in us, the subject of this volume* cannot be unimportant to the believer. The time is short—how short God only knows—but short certainly: our sun perhaps is already on the horizon; or before it has reached the noon, some untimely blighting has chilled our frame, and left but little vigour for the task, which in our days of capability we have done so idly; or if it is not so as yet, it would be unwise to wait till it shall be:—there are mornings of life which never have an evening. Shall we be content, when JESUS comes, to take the lowest and the farthest seat, while some who in knowledge and profession

seem below us now, "are bidden to go up higher"? This is, indeed, to want ambition such as saints may feel. But "already is the kingdom within us"; the days are lost that we delay to claim its freedom and to share its bliss. That heaven we anticipate, is but the perfecting of a bliss begun; every step we advance in holiness brings us nearer to the enjoyment of it. If we have not tasted it, it is because we have not reached after it. We have gazed so long upon our own deformity, we have forgotten the beauty we are required to transcribe into our bosoms. We have become so low, so indolent, under the sense of our own weakness, we have forgotten that in Jesus we have strength for everything.

How, then, is man to find out God? Where are we† to see, that we may copy it, the likeness in which we were created, and to which we are redeemed? In the abstract idea of God there is nothing that humanity can compass. HIS creative power, His all-disposing wisdom, His undeserved bounty, and resistless vengeance—these are all we know of God, and these we cannot imitate, for they are the attributes of Deity. But as God has manifested Himself to us in the humanity of Jesus Christ, we have a perfect pattern, by which we may fully know what He would have us to be. In proportion as we resemble this, we are holy in His sight; and in proportion as we are holy, we are happy. If it be but some faint, imperfect feature that we catch graven by His Spirit on the heart, it will be a great gain on our abundant wretchedness.‡ But He has promised more. He has commanded more; and though of ourselves we can do nothing, we are to act as if we could do all. When the artist puts the pencil in the pupil's hand, and bids him copy what he sees, he knows he cannot do it, but he means to teach him. So when our Heavenly Father places Himself in characters of humanity before us, and bids us "be holy as He is holy, and pure as He is pure," He knows we cannot, but He intends to lead us forward, by almost unconscious steps, to the attainment of that which He requires. He sets before us the object§ of imitation, that, with the eye intently fixed upon its beauty, we may love it more the longer we behold it, and grow insensibly to the likeness of what we love—still longing, still proceeding, but then only "satisfied, when we awake after His likeness."

*"Christ our Example."

†That is, believers.

‡This word doubtless used in the sense of Romans 7:24. §One would have preferred the use of the masculine, not the neuter, gender, for it is Christ, the "Altogether Lovely" One, to Whom we are to direct our spiritual eyes (see 2 Cor. 3:18). We love a Person, and long to be like Him.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S COLUMNS

To and Fro

In our last talk, we spoke about some places in the Bible where these three words are used, and we thought of how they tell of restlessness and trouble. But they are used in other ways, from which we may learn useful lessons. Let us listen and learn.

The Meditations of a Man of God

There once lived a great woman, whose name we do not know, who lived in the city of Shunem. She was a godly woman, and she asked her husband to make a little room where the prophet Elisha could rest. So kind was she that God kindly gave to her a baby son, but when he grew a bigger boy, he died. His mother was very full of sorrow, and after laying the child on the prophet's bed, she took a long journey to see him, and tell him of her grief. The prophet sent his servant Gehazi on before, telling him to lay his staff on the face of the child, but this did not bring him to life. The man of God then came himself, and went into the little room, and "shut the door . . . and prayed unto to LORD." Then he laid himself upon the child, and put his mouth, and his eyes and his hands upon the mouth and eyes and hands of the boy; and he stretched himself upon the boy, whose flesh then became warm. "Then he returned, and walked in the house TO AND FRO; and went up, and stretched himself upon him; and the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes."

Elisha, who was "a man of God," was a man of prayer, and I suppose he was praying and waiting on God as he walked to and fro. He could not himself give life, but God was able to do this in answer to his prayer and his actions. When Lazarus died, the Lord Jesus alone could bring him back to life, but the people with the Lord *could take away the stone* from the way into the grave.

So God's people today may pray very earnestly that He would give heavenly life to some people, young and old, whom they love and long to be saved. That is all they can do, besides shewing the way of salvation through the finished work of Christ.

Seeking the Word of the LORD

The prophet Amos, who lived amongst the people of Israel at a time when they sinned greatly against God, said the words of God to them, "I know your . . . mighty sins." He also warned them, "Behold the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD; and they shall wander from sea to sea, and

from the north even to the east, they shall run TO AND FRO to seek the Word of the LORD, and shall not find it" (Amos 8:11-12). Remember, this was said to people who were not obeying God's Word; and if God's message of mercy is not heeded, there may come a time when it will not be heard or even desired. God says, "NOW is the day of salvation." What does the reader think of the words of God? Does he or she believe them and love them?

The Need of Being Steadfast

God's servant Paul prayed much and often for God's children, that they might not be weak in the faith, nor stand still, but be strong and also grow. The Christian life must be a steady going forward, and never giving up. Among the many encouragements that Paul, by the Spirit of God, wrote in his letters which we have today, are these words: "That we henceforth be no more children (babes), tossed TO AND FRO, and carried about with every wind of doctrine" (Eph. 4:14). To help toward "the perfecting of the saints," God gives "pastors and teachers." But there are wicked men, and they are many today, who are like fierce winds beating upon a ship, raising up great waves, and tossing it to and fro. O dear young friends, keep close to those who love the Word of God, who pray for you, and shew you the way of salvation through the precious life and death of the Lord Jesus. The false teachers would drive you, like the winds, out of a true course toward heaven, so keep close to the Bible, the Word of God.

The Eyes of the LORD

But we will close our little talk with a very precious promise. "For the eyes of the LORD run TO AND FRO throughout the whole earth, to shew Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him" (2 Chron. 16:9). What an encouragement to trust Him! Wherever in this wide world is found a believer, there God's eye is upon him, and there God's strength is for him. But you, dear reader, is your heart perfect toward Him?



KOHATHITE SERVICE:

ITS TYPICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Manner of Their Appointment

We have seen that God chose and claimed the whole tribe of Levi. They were elect within the elect. Yet were they to be publicly called, and manifestly shewn to the rest of Israel to be those made especially "near unto Him" Who chose them. Their "ordination" is described in chapter 8 in the Book of Numbers. "Take the Levites from among the children of Israel, and cleanse them." In this cleansing, they were both passive and active. To Moses came the word of the LORD, "Thus shalt thou do unto them, to cleanse them: Sprinkle water of purifying upon them." The work of the mediator came first, as ever it must be when God chooses and appoints His servants. "It pleased God, Who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the heathen," saith Paul. "Called to be an apostle, separated unto the Gospel of God." "He is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My Name." "The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know His will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of His mouth, for thou shalt be His witness" (Gal. 1:15-16; Rom. 1:1; Acts 9:15; 22:14-15). Behold a "Levite" indeed, bearing an ever-precious burden, the Name of that Righteous One.

Having submitted to cleansing by the hand of another, through the Divinely-appointed water of purifying, the Levites were then to "make themselves clean." They were consciously, deliberately and actively, to set themselves apart for God. "Let them shave *all their flesh*." This symbolic act suggests that all that is of mere natural growth is not acceptable in the service of God. "God is a Spirit; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." "For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh" (John 4:24; Phil 3:3). It is sadly true that there is often much fleshly energy in "Christian" service and "worship," as the use of modern methods, wide advertizing, music and films. Where Christ

is preached we rejoice, for God is sovereign and can use, without approving, all such means to call sinners to the Saviour. But should there not be absolute dependence on the Holy Spirit?

Further, the Levites were to "wash their clothes." Thus there was to be "cleanness" in that which was not seen, but also in that which was seen. "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the *flesh and spirit*, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor. 7:1). "Let thy garments be always white" (Eccl. 9:8). "Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy" (Rev. 3:5).

A Reminder of Atonement

The Levites, although having been cleansed, both in the passive and active sense, were not yet fitted for the ministry to which they were fore-ordained. It was needful (a) for the children of Israel to be identified with them, and (b) for them to be reminded of the work of atonement. "And thou shalt bring the Levites before the tabernacle of the congregation; and thou shalt gather the whole assembly of the children of Israel together; and thou shalt bring the Levites before the LORD; and the children of Israel shall put their hands upon the Levites" (8:9-10). By this action, Israel acknowledged the Levites as being accepted by God in their stead (8:16-18) and shewed themselves in line with God's purpose and plan. Moreover, this action was one of identification and responsibility, which was practically manifested in the provision, by all the tribes, of cities and suburbs for the Levites, and the paying of tithes for their sustenance (see chapter 18).

"And Aaron shall offer the Levites before the LORD for an offering of the children of Israel, that they may execute the service of the LORD" (8:11). But before this could take place, a sin offering and a burnt-offering needed first to be offered, "to make an atonement for the Levites" (8:12). No service acceptable to God could be rendered at any time by any persons unacquainted with, or unaffected by, the atoning work of the Son of God.

Symbolically, the Levites were both justified—through the sacrifices, and sanctified—through the washings. Then were they accepted by God, separated from the rest of Israel; and said God, "The Levites shall be Mine." "And *after that* shall the Levites go in to do the service of the tabernacle" (8:15, 22). This service is sometimes described as "warfare." Hence it was rendered only by such as were in the full vigour and strength of manhood, that is, between the ages of twenty-five and

fifty. "My brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might." "Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus." The Levites have their spiritual counterpart today, though, indeed, every believer is a priest, enabled to offer spiritual sacrifices. Still, the Lord has marked off some by endowing them with peculiar gift and calling them to service, of which the Levitical ministry was but a shadow. To Timothy were written words which remind us of God's commands concerning the Levites. "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear unto all." "Make full proof of thy ministry." We remember also the words, "And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it" (Col. 4:17).

(If the Lord will, to be continued)

INSPIRED WORDS INSPECTED

No. 57

"Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchizedek, of Whom we have many things to say, and hard to be understood, seeing ye are dull of hearing. For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness; for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."

Heb. 5 : 10-14.

CALLED (prosagoreutheis); verb, participle, aorist, passive, from prosagoreuo [I speak to, name, nominate, declare, designate (as by addressing by a certain title)]. Compound of "pros" (toward) and "agoreuo" (to speak). The Lord Jesus is addressed by the Father by the title of Priest.

OF (hupo); preposition, meaning under, but used to denote agency, followed by genitive.

GOD (tou Theou); article and noun, genitive, masculine. The sense is that God is the Agent from *under* Whose hand the appointment is given.

AN HIGH PRIEST (archiereus); noun, masculine; compound of "arche" (beginning, in the first place); hence used to denote dignity and primacy. "Hier-eus" means priest.

AFTER (kata); preposition, meaning "down" or "down along." With accusative case means "according to."

THE ORDER (ten taxis); article and noun, feminine; from taxis (order, or arranging); from "tasso" (I set in order, arrange).

OF MELCHIZEDEK (Melchisedek); proper noun, not declinable.

OF (peri); preposition, meaning "around." With genitive case means "about" or "concerning."

WHOM (hou); genitive of relative pronoun, "hos, he, hon."

MUCH (polus); adjective (polus, polle, polu).

BY US (hemini); personal, pronoun, dative, plural, from "ego" (I).

THE DISCOURSE (ho logos); article and noun, masculine. "Logos" means "a word." Compare lego (I speak). The word spoken may be a discourse. Literally, the sentence reads, "concerning whom the discourse by us (is) much," that is, "we have much to say."

AND (kai).

HARD (dusermeneutos); adjective; the form being the same for all genders; from "dus" (a particle meaning difficult), and hermeneuo (to interpret); hence, "difficult to interpret."

TO SPEAK (legein); verb, infinitive, present, from "lego," I speak). The writer therefore had "discourse to speak"; it was lengthy and not easy to interpret; not from his standpoint, but because of the dulness of his hearers.

SEEING (epoi); conjunction, meaning "since" or "because."

DULL (nothros); adjective, meaning "blunt," hence "dull, slow."

YE ARE (gegonate); verb, perfect, from "ginomai" (I become); hence "ye have become."

OF HEARING (tais akoais); article and noun, feminine, dative, plural; from "akoe" (hearing, a report, what is heard); but sometimes, as here, the organs of hearing; hence, "with the ears." Thus, failure to "exercise their senses" (v. 14) led to this condition.

FOR (gar); conjunction.

EVEN (kai); conjunction, "and"; may sometimes be rendered "even."

WHEN YE OUGHT (opheilontes); participle, present, from "opheilo" (I owe, ought); hence, "ones owing."

TO BE (einai); infinitive verb, from "eimi" (I am).

TEACHERS (didaskaloi); noun, masculine, plural, from "didaskalos" (a teacher).

FOR (dia); preposition, "through"; when followed by accusative case, as here, is translated "because of."

THE TIME (ton chronon); article and noun, masculine, accusative, from "chronos"; hence our words "chronic" and "chronometer."

AGAIN (palin); adverb, meaning "back, again, back again," used "of a repetition of the same journey in the same direction."

A NEED (chreia); noun, feminine, accusative, from "chreia" (a need or necessity).

YE HAVE (echete); verb, present, from "echo" (I have).

OF (tou); article, genitive, meaning, literally, "of the."

TO TEACH (didaskain); verb, infinitive, present, from "didasko" (I teach); compare "didaskalos" above.

YOU (humas); personal, pronoun, accusative, plural.

SOMEONE (tina); indefinite pronoun, accusative, singular from "tis" (someone, a certain one); "didaskain . . . tina," is an instance of the accusative being the subject of an infinite verb, an idiom peculiar to the Greek. Compare "einai hemas" (that we should be) in Ephesians 1:4. The sentence reads therefore "Ye have need of (this)—someone to teach you."

WHICH BE (not in text).

THE PRINCIPLES (ta stoicheia); article and noun, neuter, from "stoicheion," meaning (lit.) "a little step, pin, peg," perhaps used in giving elementary instruction. Hence meaning "elements" or "rudiments," and so as translated.

(If the Lord will, to be continued.)

NAOMI

Introduction

Reading the book of Ruth, one is chiefly attracted by the personality of the "Moabitish damsel," whose sorrows and faith were so happily consummated in her union with Boaz. Yet, surely "The Man," as he is so often called in the record, ought to be most prominent in the thoughts; for is he not a remarkable type of Christ, even as Ruth is of the church, which Christ loved and for whom He gave Himself? Yes, indeed, and yet the other characters, Naomi in particular, and the "young men," the reapers, are by no means unimportant. The former was an essential link in the Divinely-ordered chain of events that led to the marriage and to the birth of a son, to Naomi's deep satisfaction and joy. So the book which begins with famine and death ends with life and abundance. What can we learn, then, from the character and experience of—

Naomi

This woman, with her husband and two sons, belonged to Bethlehem, but a famine having arisen, they left that town, and went to the country of

Moab, where they "dwelled" several years. No other families appear to have taken the same course, as *may* be inferred from the fact that, on returning to her native city, with Ruth, "all the city was moved about them."

Were they right in seeking the food they needed in a country where God was not honoured and worshipped? The Scripture says, "they came into the field (lit.) of Moab, and WERE there (margin)." Should they not have remained in Bethlehem and have shared the hardship and discomfort resulting from famine? Who was foremost in proposing a removal, even though temporary, Naomi or her husband, Elimelech? We are not told, but, in the action, *they were one*, and what may have been intended as a temporary expedient was protracted to a stay of "about ten years" after the death of Elimelech. It is often the case that believers move away into a quiet country spot, ostensibly for the benefit of the family health, and find themselves cut off from fellowship with saints, sometimes with undesirable effects upon the children, and a general lowering of the spiritual temperature. May the lesson from Naomi's experience not be lost upon saints today, even though bereavement be not in God's plan of chastening.

To her lasting credit, Naomi did not forget her God. Else how can Ruth's words be explained, "Thy God" shall be "my God"? Naomi's spiritual perception and faithfulness probably exceeded that of her husband and sons, since the latter took Moabitish wives, contrary to the Law of Moses. Naomi speaks reverently of the LORD (1:6, 8, 9, 13, 21), and the Almighty (1:20, 21), and Ruth takes the same sacred Name upon her lips (1:17). Observe the words (ch. 1:5): "THEN she arose," directly following the record of her triple bereavement, suggesting she took immediate steps to return to Bethlehem. Indeed, all that is said about Naomi tends to confirm the thought that she feared the Lord and honoured His Word.

A Revival

"With mercy and with judgment my web of time He wove, and aye the dews of sorrow were lusted with His love," are words that seem to illustrate the gracious way of God in leading Naomi back to Bethlehem. "Mercy," because "the LORD had visited His people in giving them bread." "Judgment," because He permitted death, in a three-fold way, to visit the family. "And Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died; and she was left, and her two sons." "And Mahlon and Chilion died also both of them; and the woman was left of her two sons and her husband." "Desolation" is associated with "widowhood" (1 Tim. 5:5), and here are

three widows. It is no marvel, then, that Naomi said, "It grieveth me much for your sakes that the hand of the LORD is gone out against me." Yet even in this utterance His mercy is seen, inasmuch as the Lord's hand is recognized, and there is thought for others rather than for self.

The Wisdom of God's Way

It may be asked, would the desire to be again amongst her own people have been awakened in Naomi's heart solely on hearing the report of God's mercy upon the dwellers in Bethlehem. One may hear of blessings bestowed on others without having any desire to share therein. It may require the invasion of death or some other form of Divine visitation to combine with conveyed knowledge of fact. So that it does appear that two such factors were used by a gracious God in reviving the soul of this dear servant of His, for such her words and behaviour shewed her to be; she was in the line of His will, which was to bring about the union of Boaz and Ruth, of which she may not have been aware, at the outset, as being His purpose.

The Return

"Is this Naomi?" asked the people of Bethlehem. "And she said unto them, Call me not Naomi (pleasant), call me Mara (bitter); for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full, and the LORD hath brought me home again empty: why then call ye me Naomi, seeing the LORD hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me." We are not, surely, to assume this was spoken complainingly. Rather let us rejoice in her perception of the hand of God in all her sad experience. Yet it was true the LORD had "brought her home again," a blessing in itself. O how many "wanderers" have cause to thank God for bringing them back to Himself, even though they come home "empty." Some believers, backsliding, have remained in a wilderness for years, yet in the grace and power of God, have returned to their "first love." None of the sheep of Christ shall perish, though they may wander far. Yet how sad the loss, and what injury to the witness! Moreover, there is the Judgment Seat of Christ, before which every elect one must stand (2 Cor. 5:10).

It is not suggested that Naomi was personally a backslider, but her experience illustrates the danger to believers of leaving God's appointed place for them, and leaning to their own understanding (Prov. 3:5-6).

"Home Again Empty"

Thus felt and spoke this godly woman; empty, indeed, compared with her former state, and as regards earthly things and physical needs. But

not empty, seeing Ruth was with her; Ruth, who, through her example, had come to trust under the wings of the LORD God of Israel. Bethlehem was now the home of both mother and daughter-in-law.

A Wise Instructor

Ruth, unlike many young people today, was ready to listen to one older than herself, and to act upon good advice and gentle reproofs. How greatly privileged was she to be under the spiritual care of so wise a counsellor as Naomi, who had profited by her own experience! To Ruth's remark (mistaking or misinterpreting the words of Boaz, "Abide here fast by my maidens") "He said also unto me, Thou shalt keep fast by my young men," Naomi replied, "It is good, my daughter, that thou go out with his maidens, that they meet thee not in another field." Perhaps here there is an allusion to her own experience in the field of Moab. However, Ruth was obedient. "So she kept fast by the maidens of Boaz to glean unto the end of barley harvest and of wheat harvest; and dwelt with her mother-in-law."

Naomi's solicitude for Ruth reminds of Paul's yearning over the saints, whom he desired to "present as a chaste virgin to Christ" (2 Cor. 11:2) and to "present every man perfect in Christ Jesus" (Col. 2:28). "My daughter, shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee?" Such is the language of a pastoral heart. The mark of a true shepherd is a concern for the spiritual welfare of the flock in the midst of which he is a God-appointed overseer. Rest for their souls by a realized fellowship with their Saviour and Lord, is the desire of such an one. To bring about the union of Ruth with Boaz was Naomi's all-absorbing purpose. The advice she gave, strange as it may seem to conventional ideas, was implicitly followed by Ruth, who acted in faith. She believed that Boaz would deal honourably with her, and so placed herself unreservedly in his hands. And is not this exactly what God requires of men, that is, to "believe that He is, and that He is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek Him"? Faith is abandonment to God, and Ruth's faith was not disappointed. Humanly speaking, she would never have arrived into this happy relationship, had it not been for Naomi. And yet it was not her planning. God was over-ruling all failures, and graciously, quietly, and yet purposefully, making His counsel to stand and doing all His pleasure.

In this lovely record of a human love, we see the sovereignty of Divine grace, and praise Him for so precious an illustration of His ways with those whom He has purposed to save, and to unite forever to His beloved Son.

HEAVENLY TREASURE IN EARTHEN VESSELS

2 Corinthians 4:7

In the presence of death, as we read these words, the phrase, "earthen vessels" first strikes us, for our dear brother exemplified this in great measure during the last year of his life. The body is indeed well described thus. Is not each believer exhorted to "possess his vessel in sanctification and honour"? Should he not be "a vessel unto honour, sanctified and meet for the Master's use"?

The child of God (and all should recognize the fact) can say, "Thy hands have made me and fashioned me." "I . . . am formed out of the clay." "I am fearfully and wonderfully made." Says Isaiah on behalf of a repentant Israel, "But now, O LORD, Thou art our Father; we are the clay, and Thou our Potter; and we all are the work of Thy hand."

But there are "vessels of wrath fitted to destruction." 'Tis all of grace if any do not come in this category. Such are called "the vessels of mercy, which He (GOD) had afore prepared unto glory." Such, too, was our brother, to whom God will "make known the riches of His glory," having already made him partaker of "the riches of His grace."

The term "earthen" belongs to all men without exception, for the Divine pronouncement is "For dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return." Hence, as Abraham, we bury our dead out of our sight. But that is not the end. "The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second Man is out from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the Heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the Image of the Heavenly." Our brother has now laid aside the first, and, in Paradise, is awaiting, as we, the Coming of the Lord Jesus to transform him and us into the likeness of Himself.

But what is the secret of this "sure and certain hope"? Is it not in that the perishing casket contained a Treasure? And what is that Treasure, and how came it to find a place in the earthen vessel? For its possession is not relegated to the future. "We have this treasure." True, all that is connected therewith is "of God and not of us." Sovereign grace is the cause. "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our heart, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." That is the treasure. We have a know-

ledge because of Divine enlightening; it is a knowledge of glory—"the glory that excelleth" to do with "the ministration of righteousness," which also "we have" (2 Cor. 3:9-10; 4:1), and 'tis all "in the face of Jesus Christ." If thus we have "seen Jesus," we shall also be able to say, "As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake with Thy likeness."

The above is the gist of a message given at the "sowing" of the body of Alfred Howe at Grove Park Cemetery on February 25th, 1959.

THE LIVING GOD

"But the LORD is the True God, He is the Living God, and an Everlasting King; at His wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide His indignation."

"I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel; for He is the Living God, and stedfast for ever, and His Kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and His dominion shall be even unto the end."

"For who is there of all flesh, that hath heard the voice of the Living God speaking out of the midst of the fire, and hath lived?"

"And Joshua said, Hereby ye shall know that the Living God is among you, and that He will with-out fail drive out from before you the Canaanites . . . Behold the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth passeth over before you into Jordan."

"And David spake to the men that stood by him, saying . . . Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the Living God? . . . Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear, and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the Living God."

"It maybe the LORD thy God will hear all the words of Rab-shakeh, whom the King of Assyria his master hath sent to reproach the Living God . . . wherefore lift up thy prayer for the remnant that are left."

"And Hezekiah prayed . . . LORD, how down Thine ear, and hear; open, LORD, Thine eyes, and see; and hear the words of Sennacherib, which hath sent him to reproach the Living God."

"And the burden of the LORD shall ye mention no more: for every man's word shall be his burden; for ye have perverted the words of the Living God, of the LORD of hosts, our God."

"My soul thirsteth for God, for the Living God; when shall I come and appear before God."

"My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth, for the courts of the LORD: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the Living God."

"And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not My people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the Living God."

(Jer. 10:10; Dan. 6:26; Deut. 5:26; Josh. 3:10; 1 Sam. 17:26, 36; 2 Kings 19:4, 16, and Isa. 37:4, 17; Jer. 23:36; Ps. 42:2; 84:2; Hosea 1:10.)

In these days of growing apostasy, increasing defiance of God and His laws, and appalling ignorance of the Bible, the sound of these words, "A Living God" is refreshing and heartening to those who "sigh and cry" for the abominations done everywhere. Idolatry is by no means a thing of the past. Thousands still adore their images and fetishes in uncivilized lands; and in those parts of the earth favoured with the sound of the Gospel, many are trusting in "dead works," lifeless idols, and superstitious rites. English-speaking nations are on the "down-grade." Materialistic philosophy governs the thoughts of elected rulers of the peoples. "What shall we eat, what shall we drink, what shall we put on," is the prevailing cry, and the God in Whose hand their breath is they do not glorify.

Goliath may defy His armies, Rabshakeh may reproach Him, even the "prophets" may pervert His words, but the LIVING GOD surveys all from His almighty throne, and is not dismayed nor taken by surprise. Moreover, He still has His Davids, His Isaiahs and Hezekiahs, who not only know how to pray, but, with weapons that are not carnal, wage war with the principalities and powers, yea, and the lusts which war against the soul. Moreover, He still has His Daniels, to whom one may say, "O Daniel, servant of the Living God, is thy God, Whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee?" O fellow-saved-ones, do we covet such a character as this, even though, as his friends said in an earlier day, "Our God Whom we serve is able to deliver us . . . and He will deliver us . . . but if not . . . we will not serve thy gods"? We may not have such a tribute as a king paid to Daniel, or rather to the God of Daniel, as that "He is the LIVING GOD," but we would long to merit such a testimony.

The first occurrence of this phrase is in Deuteronomy 5:26. God spoke to His people out of the midst of the fire at Sinai, yet they died not. Deeply impressed by the fact they still lived, even though

they had heard the voice of the Living God, they still were fearful lest the fire should consume them. Hence their desire for Moses to act as mediator, concerning which, as expressed in words, God said "They have well said all that they have spoken." For man needs a "Daysman," and "there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus."

The ark of the covenant at the crossing of Jordan was an assurance to the people of Israel that the LIVING GOD was among them, and that certain victory over their enemies He would give them. So it proved, and they possessed the Land. But the ark, in and of itself, accomplished nothing. 'Twas the presence of the Living God indicated thereby that assured them of success in all their endeavours. Hence, when Israel put their trust in the ark itself, they suffered, not only defeat in war, but the temporary loss of the ark (1 Sam. 4). It is well to learn from past history, it is well to recollect previous experience of God's dealings with us, but we must use such wisely. To dwell overmuch on past seasons of blessing is like a man living on his capital, and not using the present time to earn by his efforts. This is the tendency of those of us who have passed the "threescore years and ten." Let us, therefore, seek for an increasing acquaintance with, and communion with, the LIVING GOD, so that, as age grows upon us, "our inward man may be renewed day by day," and that there may be a freshness in our conversation that will refresh, comfort, and encourage others.

What confidence was begotten in the hearts of those old-time saints who knew that the One in Whom they trusted was the LIVING GOD. The nations had their "gods many and lords many." They *seemed* at times to prosper. So it has always been, and so it will be in the coming days (how soon they may come!) when a "cruel lord" and "an idol shepherd" will "practise and prosper." The confidence of many will then be shaken, but "he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved." Why? Because his trust is in the LIVING GOD.

Finally, we remember that the people who heard the voice of the Living God speaking out of the midst of the fire, and greatly feared, and promised obedience, later apostatized, and earned for themselves the name "Lo ammi"—"Not My people." But the last occurrence of the phrase before us is found in Hosea 1:10: "It shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the Living God." Blessed prospect for Israel!

"The LORD liveth; and blessed be my Rock; and let the God of my salvation be exalted" (Ps. 18:46).

entirely responsible for these. In explanation, he would mention defective eyesight as being the cause. Cataracts on both eyes blur the vision, and affect both reading and writing. He would value prayer, as he wishes to continue this form of ministry so long as God provides the means, and enables in the preparation of matter for each issue.

Warm thanks are extended to the many who have written so appreciatively, and for the many gifts, some anonymous, received from time to time.
E.K.

NOTES ON MEMORIZED VERSES

REVELATION 12

5. A man-child, not a symbol of individuals, but of a united moral expression of Christ—a last reviving which will be caught up to God. 6. The woman—the church—having brought forth what is acceptable at God's righteous throne, has to flee, but God watches over her. 7, 8. Satan's last hour in the heavenlies. 9. His future activities confined to earth. 10. Whose voice? Perhaps that of those under the altar (6:9). Note the word "brethren" in both passages. 11. Christ's atoning work first, then their own testimony, accompanied by a disregard of their own souls (cf. John 12:25). 12. A time of Satanic wrath, but not of the "filled-up" wrath of God. 13. When the Christ-life is unitedly manifested by the church, then will come persecution. 14. Three and a half years—a "short time" (see verse 12 and compare Matthew 24:22). 15. A flood. Is this figurative of the ungodly (Ps. 93:3)? 16. Yet the "earth" is on her side. 17. War (see 13:7 and Dan. 7:21) against the church, for it is she who has "the testimony of Jesus."

REVELATION 13

1. And *he* (not I) stood (that is, the dragon). The sea must be the Mediterranean (called "the great sea," Dan. 7:2-3). 2. This beast a composite of those in Daniel 7. 3. A travesty of Christ's death and resurrection. Hence the wonder, and 4, the worship of Satan and his willing servant. 5. A short time, forty-two months, three and a half years (ch. 12:14) and twelve hundred and sixty days (12:6). 6, 7. (Compare Daniel 7:20, 21, 25). 8. "Earth-dwellers," having no interest in the heavenly country or city. 9. "Having an ear," contrasted with the foregoing. 10. "Here," in this present scene and in these testing circumstances. 11. A third person, thus completing the travesty of the Tri-une God. 12, 13. Thus the devil will deceive by a "copy" of what the Holy Spirit has done and is doing. 14. The willing heart of the unregenerate will welcome the deception. 15. A contrast with the formation of the image of Christ in the believer. 16, 17. Solemn testing times lie ahead, and how soon they may overtake us! 18. The number of a "man"—"the man of sin."

REVELATION 14

1. The Lamb (cf. Rev. 5:6). Whatever be the significance of the number, here is a select company. "His Father's Name," suggesting the present dispensation, though the heavenly Sion (Heb. 12:22) is before us. 2, 3. Only the redeemed can sing the new song. 4, 5. Virgins (see 2 Cor. 11:2). No defilement, no falsehood, no blemish, but redeemed, therefore "first fruits" and "followers." 6, 7. An everlasting Gospel, seemingly the last proclamation ere "the hour of His judgment." 8. The

TO OUR READERS

Some errors were discovered in the last issue of this magazine, a particularly glaring one being on page 31, where 1930 should be 1830. The editor is

"hour" has arrived. 9, 10, 11. The irrevocable and unchanging condemnation and penal suffering of the worshippers of Antichrist. 12. "Here," the place and time for obedience and faith and patience. 13. "From henceforth." Is this "death" the "reward" of the patience and the "rest" because of the obedience? 14. "Son of Man" (ch. 1:13). 15. "On the earth." This reaping seems to be of ripened grain, that is, the saints. 17, 18. Angels, not the Son of Man; one of these bids the other to reap the fruit of "the vine of the earth." 19. "Into the earth," where "transgressors have come to the full" (fully ripe). 20. The winepress (see ch. 19:15).

REVELATION 15

1. For a fulness of iniquity there is a "fulness" of Divine wrath. 2. A resurrection scene. 3. Moses and the Lamb. Does this suggest saints who belonged to both dispensations? 4. A millennial scene, judgments having been manifested. 5. The temple opened for God's agents of judgment to issue forth. His temple is holy, He is holy, His wrath is holy.

SPECIAL READINGS FOR THE LORD'S DAY

- September, 1959
 6. Deut. 27:9-15, 26. 1 Sam. 15:10-11, 17-23. Jer. 11:1-8. Gal. 3:10-14. John 14:21-24.
 13. Deut. 28:1-14. Ps. 84:4-5, 9-12. Matt. 5:1-12. Eph. 1:3-14. Tit. 2:11-14.
 20. Deut. 28:15, 20-29. Isa. 5:8, 11, 18, 20-24. Luke 6:24-26. Matt. 23:34-39. 2 Cor. 5:10-21.
 27. Deut. 28:47-52, 58-64. Neh. 1:1-7. Dan. 9:3-14. Luke 19:41-44. 1 Pet. 2:1-10.

SPECIAL READINGS FOR THE LORD'S DAY

- October, 1959
 4. Deut. 29:1-9. Ex. 15:1-6, 11-13. Isa. 63:7-9. Matt. 4:1-11. Phil. 4:9-20.
 11. Deut. 29:10-19. Jer. 31:31-34. Rom. 11:25-27. Heb. 12:14-17. Luke 22:14-20.
 18. Deut. 29:22-29. Ps. 25:10-14. 1 Cor. 2:6-14. 1 Pet. 1:3-12. Matt. 11:25-30.
 25. Deut. 30:1-10. Ezek. 18:25-32. Rom. 2:26-29. Gal. 6:12-16. Mark 12:29-34.

SUGGESTED DAILY READINGS

"IF THE LORD WILL"—SEPTEMBER, 1959

SUGGESTED DAILY READINGS

"IF THE LORD WILL"—OCTOBER, 1959

Day	READING		LEARNING		Day	READING		LEARNING	
	1 Kings	Mark	Genesis	Revelation		2 Kings	Luke	Genesis	Revelation
1	10 1-15	12 35-44	48 15	12 5	1	4 1-30	7 19-35	49 23	13 17
2	16-29	13 1-20	16	6	2	31-44	36-50	24	14
3	11 1-22	21-37	17	7	3	5 1-27	8 1-18	25	2
4	23-43	14 1-16	18	8	4	6 1-18	19-40	26	3
5	12 1-15	17-31	19	9	5	19-33	41-56	27	4
6	16-33	32-45	20	10	6	7 1-20	9 1-22	28	5
7	13 1-19	46-59	21	11	7	8 1-15	23-42	29	6
8	20-34	60-72	22	12	8	16-29	43-62	30	7
9	14 1-16	15 1-14	49 1	13	9	9 1-16	10 1-16	31	8
10	17-31	15-28	2	14	10	17-37	17-24	32	9
11	15 1-15	29-47	3	15	11	10 1-17	25-42	33	10
12	16-34	16 1-20	4	16	12	18-36	11 1-20	50 1	11
13	16 1-20	1 1-20	5	17	13	11 1-21	21-36	2	12
14	21-34	21-40	6	13 1	14	12 1-21	37-54	3	13
15	17 1-24	41-63	7	2	15	13 1-25	12 1-21	4	14
16	18 1-16	64-80	8	3	16	14 1-16	22-40	5	15
17	17-29	2 1-17	9	4	17	17-29	41-59	6	16
18	30-46	18-35	10	5	18	15 1-22	13 1-17	7	17
19	19 1-21	36-52	11	6	19	23-38	18-35	8	18
20	20 1-15	3 1-18	12	7	20	16 1-20	14 1-14	9	19
21	16-30	19-38	13	8	21	17 1-23	15-35	10	20
22	31-43	4 1-15	14	9	22	24-41	15 1-10	11	15 1
23	21 1-29	16-32	15	10	23	18 1-16	11-32	12	2
24	22 1-17	33-44	16	11	24	17-37	16 1-17	13	3
25	18-36	5 1-17	17	12	25	19 1-19	18-31	14	4
26	37-53	18-39	18	13	26	20-37	17 1-19	15	5
27	2 Kings	6 1-16	19	14	27	20 1-21	20-37	16	6
28	1 1-18	17-36	20	15	28	21 1-15	18 1-14	17	7
29	2 1-25	37-49	21	16	29	16-26	15-30	18	8
30	3 1-27	7 1-18	22	17	30	22 1-20	31-43	19	9
	4 1-17				31	23 1-11	19 1-10	20	10

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THOUGHTS FROM

TO
MAINTAIN
A TESTIMONY
FOR GOD'S
GRACE AND
TRUTH

FOUNDED
BY
PERCY W.
HEWARD

THE WORD OF GOD

AND

THE STUDENT OF SCRIPTURE

EDITED BY E. KIRK

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SOME OF THE CONTENTS

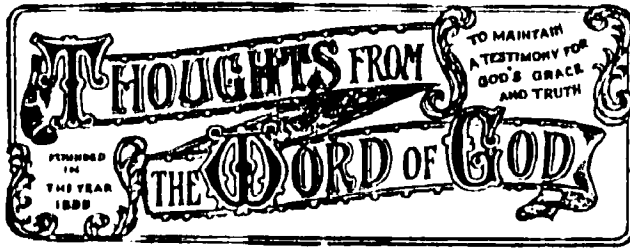
The Image of His Son	50
Living on One's Capital	51
Two Short Prayers	52
Kohathite Service	53
Inspired Words Inspected	54
Boaz and His Reapers	55
A Perpetual Incense	56
Gnosticism	58
Readings and Notes	59, 60

"And now, O Lord GOD, Thou art
That God, and Thy words be true, and
Thou hast promised this goodness unto
Thy servant." 2 Sam. 7 : 28

"At Thy right hand there are
pleasures for evermore."

Ah! Sin hath pleasures that appeal;
Seductive, yet they surely steal,
Like Absalom, the heart.
A season they may be enjoyed,
But ended, they will leave a void,
And oft a venom'd dart.

But pleasures that are evermore
Hast Thou, our Father, kept in store
For those who truly love
And wait for Thee. None comprehend
The Joys that earthly joys transcend
Awaiting saints above.



WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

"Behold, a ladder . . . It is an incomparable
Behold, the angels . . . mercy to have the "eyes
Behold, the LORD" of the heart enlight-
 Gen. 28 : 12-13. ened" (Eph. 1 : 18), such

mercy as only those who were "once darkness, but are now light in the Lord" realize. Jacob received communications from God in a dream, but "we see Jesus," and should be praiseful and grateful for the gift of "the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of HIM. God came to Jacob just where he was. That which he first saw was a stairway from there to heaven. "This is . . . the gate of heaven," said he. Thus was his thought directed upward. And then, "Behold, the angels," those heavenly beings sent forth to minister to those about to inherit salvation. But neither the stairway, symbolizing a way of access, nor the holy angels, so cheering to the sight, were intended by God to be other than means to an end. "Behold the LORD." That is the Divine objective. And all blessings, heavenly and earthly, are not meant to be resting places, but to lead to the heart-longing, "That I may know HIM", that, finally, we may say, "As for me, I will behold Thy Face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness."

Now to Thy household I belong;
 Though only one amid the throng
 Of those that form Thy family,
 Thou thinkest, gracious God, on me.
 Eternal life do I possess;
 And, in Thy Spirit, have access,
 Through Thy dear Son, O God, to Thee.
 Him face to face soon shall I see.

Poem to Help Christian Experience—No. 262.

"No more strangers and foreigners, but
 . . . of the household of God."

"No more a stranger"— Can it be
 Thou speakest thus, O God, of me,
 Whose heart was enmity and strife,
 Alienated from Thy life?
 Thy covenants with Israel
 Was I outside, and O, as well,
 Apart from Christ, apart from Thee,
 A worldling, living hopelessly.

An outcast—for there was a bar
 "Twixt Israel "near" and me "afar"—
 For in her commonwealth no share
 Had I; of righteousness was bare.
 But now, though once far off, am I
 To Thee, O gracious God, brought nigh
 By Christ's own precious blood once given,
 United to the Lord of heaven.

LIVING ON ONE'S CAPITAL

Materially, many upright people, who have lived honourable and useful lives, are in this circumstance. The spread of the socialistic spirit (which often manifests very little "social" concern) has resulted in hardships to not a few. The believer, however, knows that, whatever the economic conditions, he has a Father in heaven Who knows all his needs, and will supply them out of His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

But is there not such a thing as "living on one's capital" in a spiritual sense? Those of us who have reached or passed the "three-score years and ten" are in grave danger of this experience, because it is oft accompanied by that of Samson, who "wist not that the Lord had departed from him." It is, indeed, a happy thing to recall the early days when "first we saw the Lord," and that "soul-refreshing view of Jesus and His Word." Yet to be continually speaking of them, and often to the same persons can have a "dulling" effect upon the sensitive spiritual feelings, and rob one of that freshness and spiritual joy, as expressed by the words, "our inward man is being renewed *day by day*."

And not only does the person himself thus decline in the consciousness of communion with God, but he can become very tedious and even a "bore" to those around him, and to whom he should be able to witness and to minister out of the

(Continued on page 59)

YOUNG PEOPLE'S COLUMNS

Two Short Prayers

When people pray, it is because they have a "need." You do not ask your mother for something to eat or drink unless you are hungry or thirsty. It is then you have a "need," and mother is the best one to whom you may go. The Lord Jesus once said, "They that are whole have no need of a physician (a doctor) but they that are sick. Needs are of many kinds. When the Lord Jesus was on earth, many came to Him because of their "need of healing," for some were blind, some deaf and dumb, others lame or sick, or having evil spirits. But there was no case ever so hard that He could not heal.

We have just said that the Lord spoke of those who had NO NEED. There are many such in the world today. They do not feel a sense of sin, and how far off from God they are. They are like people who have a disease, and because it is not seen, do not know that it is in their bodies. Sometimes it gets worse, so that it is too late to be helped by any cure. This is very sad but it is more sad when anyone, grown-up or younger, goes on in life without knowing they are sinners before a holy God, and so never ask God to forgive and save them. I do hope some of my readers will not be like these.

But let us think of two persons who felt their need and cried to the Lord Jesus, each speaking to Him with three short words. One is spoken of in chapter 14 of Matthew's Gospel, and the other in chapter 15. One was a man, the other a woman; one was a Jew, the other a Gentile; one had a need for himself, the other a deep need for her little girl; one had "little faith," the other had "great faith." One said "Lord, save me"; the other "Lord, help me." And both prayers were answered.

"LORD, SAVE ME"

The Lord Jesus once came to His disciples, who were in a ship on a very stormy sea, walking on the water; they were full of fear, for they thought they saw a spirit (or phantom). They were quite wrong, for it was the Lord Jesus, who said, "Be of good cheer; It is I; be not afraid." Peter wanted to do what the Lord was doing, but would not until the Lord said, "Come." Of course, we should all wish to be like Him, but we cannot even begin until He says "Come," and His voice sounds in our hearts. Have you heard that loving word of His, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest"?

Peter "walked on the water, to go to JESUS, but when he saw the wind boisterous, he was

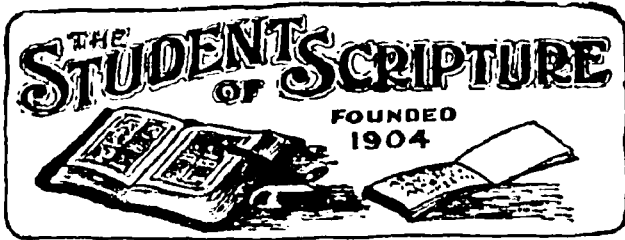
afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, LORD, SAVE ME; and immediately Jesus stretched forth His hand, and caught him." So, although he had "little faith," it was faith, because he looked only to the Lord to save him. You may feel you are beginning to sink, and you may have fears in your mind. What else then can you do but cry to the Lord Jesus to save you?

LORD, HELP ME

This gentile woman prayed thus, but her prayer was for her daughter, in whom was an evil spirit. At first the Lord Jesus took no notice of her, then He said words that some might think were unkind. "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel," and "It is not meet to take the children's bread, and cast it to the dogs." Did the Lord call the woman a "dog"? No, He used the word "doggies," the little ones that came into the houses, and were petted by the children. Of course, the big, fierce, quarrelling dogs were always kept in the streets. The Lord knew what was in the woman's heart, so He said "doggies," and that was because He would rather encourage her, since the children liked to let fall some crumbs for the puppies. So the woman asked the Lord for blessing, even though it would only be as "crumbs" compared to the great blessings He could give.

Now this was faith, humble faith too, but the Lord Jesus loved to see it. He said, O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour." When the mother went home, she found her child no longer troubled and restless, but lying on her bed.

What a mercy it is to have a praying parent! What a mercy also if the sense of sin makes one troubled and restless! Then there is hope, because it is a work of God to make sin a burden. To such He makes known a great Saviour, the Lord Jesus, Who bore sins in His Own body on the tree. What is that Saviour to you?



KOHATHITE SERVICE

Its Typical Significance (Continued)

God's Choice of, and Provision for, the Levites

The purpose of God's choice of the Levites was that they should "do service," the word used suggesting they were His bond-servants, a term in which Paul delighted to describe himself in relation to Jesus Christ. Indeed, "election" is with a view to this very thing. "Ye have not chosen Me," said the Lord Jesus, "but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit" (John 15:16). "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10).

Levitical service is comprehensive. It is "to execute the service of the LORD," "to do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation," "to do the service of the children of Israel in the tabernacle of the congregation, and to make an atonement for the children of Israel" (Num. 8:11, 15, 19). The order is significant—The LORD, the tabernacle, the people. But all is rendered through relationship to Aaron the High Priest, to whom God gave them as a gift (8:19; 18:6), and to whom they were joined (Num. 18:2-4). And when it is remembered that the separation of the tribe of Levi was prophesied by Jacob (Gen. 49) and by Moses (Deut. 33) the spiritual analogy is apparent (Ephesians 1:1-6). For the saints today are indeed "a holy priesthood," to offer spiritual sacrifices. Yet in a sense they resemble the Levites, since they are "given" to Christ, their High Priest, and are "joined" to Him by an everlasting covenant, becoming His willing bondservants (see John 17).

God's Provision for the Levites

The Tribe of Levi were not to have any division of the land of Israel allotted to them. "Among the children of Israel they have no inheritance" (Num. 18:23-24). Yet were they provided for in God's grace and wisdom. "Command the children of Israel, that they give unto the Levites of the

inheritance of their possession cities to dwell in; and ye shall give also unto the Levites suburbs for the cities round about them" (Num. 35:2). This command was faithfully obeyed by Joshua (ch. 21) who gave them forty-eight cities, including the six cities of refuge (Num. 35: 6, 13).

Provision was also made by God for their daily sustenance, and this again was through the Divinely-appointed gifts from the children of Israel. "And, behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Israel for an inheritance, for their service which they serve, even the service of the tabernacle of the congregation" (Num. 18:21-24). Thus were the Levites kept in dependence upon God, yet at the same time, they had their "suburbs," apparently having land to be cultivated, and demanding a certain amount of labour. If this were so, it would remind of Paul who, though he had authority to look to the saints for means of support, yet chose to labour with his own hands, so as to provide for himself and those with him.

Then the Levites were not allowed to forget that God was to be "honoured with their substance"; for, of the tenth received from the nation, they were to give a tenth to the Lord. "Thus speak unto the Levites, and say unto them, When ye take of the children of Israel the tithes which I have given you from them for your inheritance, then ye shall offer up an heave offering of it for the LORD, even a tenth part of the tithe." All this Divine ordering was meant, not only to keep the Levites dependent, but to keep them, so closely connected with the worship due from Israel, in a condition of worship themselves. How important is this lesson for those who are in any measure called to serve the Lord in ministry to the saints. The principle is emphasized by Paul in 1 Corinthians, chapter 9, and is also contained in the words, "Thou therefore that teachest another, teachest thou not thyself?"

(If the Lord will, to be continued)

INSPIRED WORDS INSPECTED

No. 57

(concluded)

THE FIRST (*tes arches*); noun, feminine, genitive, from "arche" (beginning, as in John 1). Hence the last four words mean, "the elements of the beginning," so that "the first principles" expresses the meaning.

OF THE ORACLES (*ton logion*); article and noun, neuter, genitive, from "logion" (something uttered); the verb "lego" means to "speak." The word is used of God's Word, Acts 7:38 (Living Oracles); Rom. 3:2 (Oracles of God). Perhaps, in this occurrence (the text now being analysed), the word has reference to our Lord's teaching (cf. ch. 2:3-4).

OF GOD (*tou Theou*); article and noun, genitive singular, from "Theos."

AND (*kai*).

ARE BECOME (*gegonate*); verb, perfect, second person, from "ginomai" ("I become"). Render, "ye have become."

ONES HAVING (*echontes*); participle, present, plural, from "echo" (I have).

NEED (*chreia*); this word precedes "echontes."

OF MILK (*galaktos*); noun, neuter, genitive, from "gala" (milk). Cf. 1 Cor. 3:2 and 1 Pet. 2:2, for a similar figurative use of the word.

AND (*kai*).NOT (*ou*); negative particle.

OF STRONG (*stereas*); adjective, genitive, feminine, to agree with the noun it qualifies; from "stereos, -a, -ov" (stable, firm, solid). In regard to food, opposed to that which is liquid.

MEAT (*trophes*); noun, feminine, genitive, from "trophe" (food, nourishment); derived from "trepho" (I nourish).

FOR (*gar*); conjunction, second word in sentence.EVERY ONE (*pas*); adjective, meaning "all."

THAT USETH (*ho metechon*); article and participle, present, from "metecho," compound of "meta" (with) and "echo" (I have); therefore (to have with, share in, partake of). Translate, "partaketh of."

MILK (see above).

IS UNSKILFUL (*apeiros*); adjective, from "a" (un- or in-) and *peira* (trial, experience, attempt). Therefore, "inexperienced." As skill is by constant attempts and experience, the translators apparently considered the rendering, "unskillful" as suitably conveying the sense.

IN THE WORD (*logou*); noun, masculine, genitive, from "logos" (word). The use of the genitive may seem clearer if "apeiros" be rendered "without experience."

OF RIGHTEOUSNESS (*dikaiosunes*); noun, feminine, genitive, from "dikaiosune" (righteousness).

FOR (*gar*); conjunction; second word in sentence.

A BABE (*nepios*); adjective used as noun, from "nepios, -a, -on," compound of "ne" (-un or -in) and "epos" (derived from *cipon*) thus meaning something spoken. Hence our word means "non-speaking," therefore an "infant" or "babe." Here it is figurative of one never having progressed spiritually, or having reverted to a former state of immaturity.

HE IS (*estin*); verb, present, from "eimi" (I am).BUT (*de*); conjunction; second word in sentence.

THE STRONG MEAT (article, adjective and noun—see above).

BELONGETH TO (*estin*); see above.

THEM THAT ARE OF FULL AGE (*teleion*); adjective used as noun, genitive, plural, from "teleios, -a, -on" (derived from "telos" (end). Hence, "What has reached its end or goal." Applied to persons, it means "full grown," "adulthood," mentally mature. Here it means spiritual stature. The use of the genitive suggests "belonging to."

EVEN THOSE (*ton*); article, genitive, plural. Literally "of the ones."

BY REASON OF (*dia*); preposition meaning "through." With accusative case, means "because of."

USE (*hexin*); noun, feminine, accusative, from "hexis" (habit, or habitude, as the result of long practice or exercise).

HAVE (*echonton*); participle, present, from "echo" (I have). The article "ton" (above) belongs to this plural participle.

THEIR SENSES (*ta aistheteria*) article and noun, neuter, from "aistheterion" (seat of the senses) from "aisthanomai" (to perceive with the senses). Hence our word means "the faculty of perception."

EXERCIZED (*gegumnasmena*); participle, accusative, plural, neuter, passive, thus agreeing with the gender of the preceding word, from "gumnazo" (I exercise). Translate, "having been exercised."

TO (*pros*); preposition, meaning "toward," but having sometimes, as here, the thought of "with a view to," or "resulting in."

DISCERN (*diakrisin*); noun, feminine, accusative, from "diakrasis" (a distinguishing, a discerning clearly). The verb, "diakrino" means "to separate throughout." In the mental sphere seems to contain the thought of ability to sift evidence.

BOTH . . . AND (*te kai*); two conjunctions, sometimes thus together, sometimes separated, each meaning "and," but to be translated "both . . . and," as also "kai . . . kai."

GOOD (kalou); adjective used as noun, genitive case, from "kalos," -e, -on (good).

EVIL (kakou); adjective used as noun, genitive case, from "kakos," -e, -on (evil). The genitive case is used after words denoting perception.

These two words are alike on the outside, perhaps a reminder that "evil" sometimes *appears* as "good." The difference is in the centre. "K" falls short of "L" in the alphabet, a further reminder that evil, though not gross, yet falls short of "what is good."

BOAZ AND HIS REAPERS

Ruth 2

The chief instrument or agent used by God in fulfilling His purpose concerning the union, by marriage, of Boaz and Ruth, was Naomi, her mother-in-law. In this most winsome and tender record, are not Boaz, the "mighty man of wealth," and Ruth the Moabitess, types of Christ and His bride, the Church? Naomi, in her solicitude for Ruth, calls to mind the yearnings of a faithful pastor, such an one as Paul, whose great desire and endeavour is to bring the souls of his hearers into experimental union with the risen Lord, of course, in utter dependence upon the Holy Spirit.

The marriage of Boaz and Ruth presents one aspect of truth concerning the relations between Christ and His church. But those between Boaz and his servants, the reapers, present another. Christ the Lord has His servants, bondmen or slaves, as the word means. They also had some share, though less considerable, in bringing about the happy culminating event.

Boaz owned fields wherein he grew barley and wheat, and the time of the return of the two widows coincided with that of "the beginning of barley harvest" (1:22). Happy indeed was the spirit of fellowship between master and men. "And, behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem, and said unto the reapers, The LORD be with you. And they answered him, The LORD bless thee." Here was a fellowship in the LORD, yet the master's word was respected. "Have I not charged the young men that they shall not touch thee?" So is it between the Lord Jesus and those to whom He said, "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth received wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal; that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together. And herein is that saying true, One soweth and another reapeth. I

sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours" (John 4:35-38). Boaz's servants are not said to have done any sowing, but his "young men" were reapers, and in obeying the charge of the master they were unconsciously helping to fulfil the Divine plan. What a privilege it is to be "workers together with God." He alone is the True Sower, though He commits the seed to His servants. "The seed is the word of God." And "they that sow in tears shall reap in joy." "In due season we shall reap if we faint not." Some of God's obscure servants will have happy surprises in the coming great harvest day, when they meet with some in heaven who were led to Christ through their unconscious daily testimony.

The master and his reapers were not permitted by Divine Law to glean in their fields. Such as was left lying on the field was for "the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow" (Deut. 24:19-21), and Ruth was thus amongst those in the forethought of God. And yet, to make ample the fulfilling of this promise by commandment, Boaz bade his reapers to "let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her." And this they did willingly, as is seen by the yield of the gleanings, "about an ephah of barley." So may the Lord's servants be used to make real the precious promises to seeking souls, if what they do is at the bidding of their LORD.

It was the "young men" also who drew the water by which Ruth quenched her thirst. Beside them, the reapers, she sat. It would seem that, in her humility, she looked no higher than to be noticed by one of them, but it was Boaz who "reached her parched corn," so that "she did eat and was sufficed, and left." The "young men" were useful in their sphere, doing the bidding of their master. So may servants of the Lord Jesus, delighting to do His Will, be used to help and encourage those who need leading on in the way of truth. They do not preach themselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and themselves but servants for Jesus' sake. No one in the service of Christ desires, or should desire, to attract to himself. The exaltation of HIM must be pre-eminent in all their thought and purpose. Like John, they must say, in all sincerity, "He must increase, but I must decrease."

May the Holy Spirit, by Whose inspiration this true history is given, enlighten the "eyes of our heart," to see even more beauty in the unfolding of its typical teaching, that our souls may be refreshed, and above all, our God be glorified.

**"A PERPETUAL INCENSE BEFORE
THE LORD"
Exodus 30 : 8**

The Law of God given to Israel had "a shadow of good things to come," but "the body is of Christ" (Col. 2:17). Therefore, now that Christ hath come and hath fulfilled the Law, saints in this present dispensation are in a position, by grace, to understand and appreciate the significance of those types and shadows, because their LORD and Saviour's incomparable Person and character are there pictured. May the Holy Spirit illuminate the hearts of both readers and writer, as we endeavour to trace That Person and character in the Divine instructions concerning—

The Sweet Incense

It is thus described many times in the pentateuch. Other names are as the heading, and as "pure incense of sweet spices." A special article of the tabernacle furniture was Divinely-appointed for the offering of incense. That was the golden altar, which occupied a central position before the beautiful veil separating the "holy place" from the "holy of holies."

The first mention of incense is in Deuteronomy 33:10, wherein is recorded the blessing of Moses the man of God concerning the tribe of Levi. "They shall teach Jacob Thy judgments, and Israel Thy law; they shall put incense before Thee, and whole burnt sacrifice upon Thine altar." These words relate exclusively to the ministration of Levi to the house of Israel, but in the coming age of the Lord's reign over the whole earth shall the prophecy of Malachi be fulfilled: "For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, My Name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto My Name, and a pure offering; for My Name shall be great among the heathen, saith the LORD of hosts" (Mal. 1:10). This is the last mention of incense in the earlier Scriptures. Spiritually, it may be said, this has a pre-fulfilment in the spread of "the word of the truth of the Gospel," for today, in many nations of the world, are to be found those who offer the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving (Heb. 13:15) through Christ, and whose prayers are accepted as "pure incense" because of His merit (Rev. 8:3-4).

The Composition of the Incense

Five substances were used in making this "perfume, a confection after the art of the apothecary" (Ex. 30:35). Three of them—stacte, galbanum, and pure frankincense—appear to have been yielded by trees. Of that called "onycha," there is uncertainty concerning its origin. The fifth substance was salt

(see Ex. 30:35 margin). Can anything be learned from the Hebrew words for the sweet spices? "Stacte" is derived from a word signifying "to drop," and it is supposed that it was an aromatic gum exuding in drops from a tree. This word is used in Ezekiel 20:46 and 21:2: "Drop thy word toward the south, and prophesy against the forest of the south field"; "Drop thy word toward the holy places, and prophesy against the land of Israel." Here it is surely employed in the sense of speaking the Word of the LORD by inspiration.

"Galbanum" comes from a word meaning "fat, rich, and choice," rendered "best" and "finest" (see Psalm 81:16; 147:14). Hence there is the thought of that which is surpassingly good, superlatively excellent.

"Frankincense" also (like galbanum) an aromatic gum is, in the Hebrew, a word signifying "whiteness," and is akin to "Lebanon," the white mountain. These three substances, with "onycha," were in equal quantities: "of each there shall be a like weight" (v. 34), and all four were "tempered (salted) together, pure and holy."

This sweet incense, so made according to a commandment from the LORD to Moses, was to be regarded with great respect by the people of Israel, who were forbidden to make anything like it, on pain of being "cut off" from the people. "It shall be unto you most holy." "It shall be unto thee holy for the LORD."

In order that the full fragrance of the incense might be brought out, two actions were necessary: that of pressure, and again of fire. "And thou shalt beat some of it very small" (v. 36). "And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the LORD, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the vail: and he shall put the incense upon the fire before the LORD" (Lev. 16:12-13). See also Numbers 16:46-48.

A Prophecy in Type and Symbol

From all the foregoing details, can we discern a foreshadowing of the coming Messiah? "In His temple every whit of it uttereth His glory" (Ps. 29:9 margin). And must not this be true also of the tabernacle? Then we expect a fore-shewing of the glory of Christ; nor shall we be disappointed.

Take, firstly, the several parts that composed the whole. "Of each shall there be a like weight." In the blessed Person of the Lord Jesus, all possible graces were in beautiful proportion. As with the fine flour, there was an evenness seen only in Him Who is "Altogether Lovely." In Him "are hid all the treasure of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. 2:3).

Then consider each of the constituents separately. The "stacte" reminds of speech by inspiration, and at once we think of Him, for "never man spake like This Man." "Grace is poured into Thy lips." "His lips are like lilies, dropping sweet-smelling myrrh." "His mouth is most sweet." All that He uttered, whether in gentleness or sternness, whether in teaching or warning, was of heavenly wisdom, and exactly suited to the moment. The Father's testimony is, "This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him."

The "galbanum" tells of His richness and fullness—"An only-begotten of a Father, full of grace and truth." "Behold My Servant, Whom I uphold; Mine Elect in Whom My soul delighteth." "That in all things He might have the pre-eminence." He is the Father's choicest Gift—"His unspeakable Gift." And because He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, the Father has "highly exalted Him, and given Him the Name which is above every name."

"Frankincense"—that pure white substance, brings before us the holiness of Christ, and His righteousness. Though men saw no beauty in Him that they should desire Him, He could ask them, "Which of you convinceth Me of sin?" "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth." Only He "Who knew no sin" could become a Sin-offering on behalf of sinful men. But not only does the whiteness symbolize his sinlessness. He was positively righteous, for He came to do the will of the Father. He became voluntarily under the Law, keeping it both in the letter and the spirit, and this to "redeem them that were under the Law." Hence, He is "the Lord our Righteousness." "For He hath made Him, Who knew no sin, to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

The "tempering together" by the use of salt reminds us that He is incorruptible both in body and soul. On the earth, He was as light condemning man by its awful purity. The devil failed to seduce Him from the path of obedience, His "relatives" could not turn Him from His holy purpose. Even His disciples needed reproof, and Peter in particular, urging his Master to pity Himself, was met with the stern rebuke, "Get thee behind Me, Satan: thou art an offence unto Me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." Morally, He was incorruptible, and, although He died, His body saw no corruption, for it was foretold, "Thou wilt not leave My soul in sheol, neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption."

What of that substance—"onycha," concerning

the origin of which there is some uncertainty? Should it cause undue concern that our knowledge is imperfect? Can we possibly know Christ in all His perfection? "No man knoweth the Son but the Father." "Now I know in part; but then shall I know even as I am known." "This is life eternal that (in order that) they might know Thee the Only True God, and Jesus Christ, Whom Thou hast sent."

The incense was not to be imitated, or made by any man for himself. The penalty for so doing was a "cutting off." There is but one Christ, "one Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom are all things, and we by Him"; there is "One Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus." Some may preach a "different Gospel" and "another Jesus," but a dreadful judgment awaits all such. Israel will accept Antichrist, but his doom is already pronounced, and that of those who receive him. O how we need to be quite sure that the voice we have heard is the voice of the Son of God!

The Kindling of the Incense

The fire that was ever-burning on the altar of burnt-offering (Lev. 6:13), and that alone, supplied the "burning coals," upon which the sweet incense was placed. This is confirmed by Moses' command to Aaron in Numbers 16:46. So there is close connection between the burnt-offering, from which ascended a sweet savour to God, and the pure incense. Both speak of the Lord Jesus, Who made an atonement for sin, and the eternal efficacy of Whose work is symbolized by the "perpetual incense." Both the "beating small" and the application of fire should remind us of the great cost of our redemption. The Lord Jesus was afflicted by the hand of man. "Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered." He endured also the pressure of the hand of God, when He suffered vicariously for His elect. "Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief." Thus, and thus only, could He bring us to God.

Each morning and each evening, when Aaron attended to the lamps of the "golden candlestick," he burned incense on the golden altar. Here is a further illustration of the constant care of the Lord Jesus for His redeemed. Satan may "accuse day and night," but Christ ever liveth to make intercession for them. "And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous."

The writer does not claim to have "expounded" the subject of the Sweet Incense, but to have shewn how it is an illustration of the holy character of "The Incomparable Christ."

A HUMAN PHILOSOPHY REPROVED GNOSTICISM

Foreword

The following essay was written forty-seven years ago, but it is deemed worthy of being reprinted, because this false philosophy underlies some of the systems wrongly taking the name of, and assumed by some, to be but branches of, Christianity. One such is "Christian Science", so-called. The epistles of Paul, as Colossians, and those of John, remarkably confute this error without advertizing it, as merely human writings tend so to do. Thus the believer is warned against error without having his curiosity aroused in such manner as to lead to unprofitable investigations. Truly, the Scriptures are wondrous in their wisdom and simplicity, but should we be surprised, seeing that "All Scripture is God-breathed"? E. K.

Notes on Gnosticism

Percy W. Heward

Our subject is saddening: may the Lord give grace. *Gnosticism* was long in solution ere it cystallized: the mysteries of iniquity ever *inwork* before they are revealed. But GOD, Whose eyes are as a flame of fire, and Who seeth the end from the beginning, judges the beginnings of sin, and has in Scripture anticipated the developments of Gnosticism, Romanism, Rationalism, and every human scheme; to prepare His people for withstanding in the evil day.

The philosophy before us, falsely called "Knowledge" (Gnosis, 1 Tim. 6:20), was the result of an inquisitive mind as to the origin of evil, and a desire to appear wise beyond what is written. Moreover, it was one form of that awful sin which has many disguises—*identification with the ungodly, and worldliness*. The believer must be unworldly in *reason*, as well as in garb and in use of time, if he would please the LORD, and this humbling lesson is only slowly learnt by some of His dear people. Is it any wonder that false professors of the faith never come to its knowledge?

The root idea of Gnosticism was mystic pantheism, and secondly, antagonism* between the earlier and later Holy Scriptures. Many were the fruits of these evils. Some, viewing the universe as one "soul" excused all iniquity as part of its "development", a wicked principle not unheard today. Others, believing in two independent and eternal principles of right and wrong, associated the wrong with *matter* and everything material, and occasioned a Stoic asceticism and disregard of feelings. Thus the same primary sin brought some

to licentiousness, and others to a "neglecting of the body" (Col. 2:23).

Do we not see varied parallel departures from the truth in "Christian Science" and "Spiritism", and kindred false religions? But we shall find the iniquity yet closer upon us, and nearer to us, as we prayerfully continue the study.

A favourite word with Gnosticism was "Pleroma" or "Fulness", and in allusion to its "vain deceit," we have the striking testimony of Scripture where the very term is employed. "And of HIS fulness have we all received." "That ye might be filled with all the fulness of God." "For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell." "For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (John 1:16; Eph. 3:19; Col. 1:19; 2:9). We rejoice that all true fulness is in CHRIST; we need nought else. Gnosticism, furthermore, had its æons or emanations linked with this "pleroma," supernatural beings, as the "demons" of a more open heathenism. Hence the Scriptural declaration that GOD made the real "æons" or "ages," as the term rightly signifies, and, in His perfect wisdom, fitted them together (Heb. 1:2; 11:3). But this word also suggests, as our version renders it, "the worlds," though this suggestion is only *secondary*. However, a second denial of man's philosophy is important. Gnosticism viewed the Creator of the material world as *unwise* and inferior to GOD, giving to Him the name of Demiurge, and viewing Him as the Deity of the Jews. This very word is taken up and used contrastedly by the Holy Spirit in Hebrews 11:10, concerning the heavenly city, whose Builder and Maker (demiourgos)† is GOD.

Again, among the so-called "æons" of ever-changing Gnosticism were Life and Light. Hence the opposed application of such titles to our beloved Lord, in Whom is found, as His people have realized, all the fulness (John 1:4).

There is not any doubt that a system of evil which developed into this "Gnosis" is attacked in Colossians 2. There we have its dogmas (dogma, verse 20), and its asceticism (vv. 21, 23); and the Holy Spirit shews its tendency by the final words, which should be preceded by a pause:—"not in any honour—(but actually) to the satisfying‡ of the flesh." The intruding demonism linked therewith is Divinely judged (Col. 2:18).

It is remarkable how the ancient Gnostic doctrine, that separates the person of our beloved Lord into a man "Jesus," and an emanation "Christ" has been partly revived in the teaching of some

†Literally, "working for the people."

‡"Plesmone," a saddening "fulness" and climax.

*that is, as supposed by these "philosophers."

today. Sin often repeats itself. The ancient lie was that "Christ" came on "Jesus" at baptism (hence the contrasted stress of John 1:32-33) and left Him ere He died for our sins. The wondrous words, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" were misused to support this iniquitous conception, with its denial of atonement. Against it John the apostle set forth truth in 1 John 5:6, which may be literally rendered thus, the words in brackets being only explanatory. This is He Who came *through* water and blood, JESUS CHRIST (not two persons, but one), not in the water only (at baptism) but in the water and in the blood (when Jesus Christ died); and the Spirit is the Witnessing One (that is, at baptism, the Spirit, not an emanation) because the Spirit is the truth." Verse 8 adds, concerning these three witnesses, that "the three are with a view to the oneness (eis to hen), that is, they alike emphasize the oneness of Jesus Christ. The "through" (dia) of this passage sets aside the dream of Gnosticism, and the believer praises God for the precious wealth of a single preposition.

We have already mentioned 1 Timothy 6:20 (science falsely so called). But it is worthy of notice that the word "oppositions" (antitheseis) was the very name of one of Marcion's books, Marcionism being among the most "successful" branches of this tree of iniquity. The "genealogies" of Titus 3:9 included, probably, Gnostic dreams and mysteries. Thus God fore-arms His own: He never leaves, never misleads.

The immoral tendencies of Gnosticism are doubtless brought before us in 2 Peter 2 and Jude, as well as in the churches in Pergamum and in Thyatira (Rev. 2). False doctrine ever guides to false practice. One is never by itself. Let us, if in Christ Jesus, learn this lesson and be humbled.

Thus, whether we consider the speculative or the practical character of this religion, we must abhor it; and the will of God is plain as to resisting so awful a counterfeit of true Christianity, which often comes in with apparent "wisdom of words" and "fair speeches," and sometimes is helped by an ultra-dispensationalism which distinguishes unduly between the earlier§ and later§ Scriptures. While saying this, we would earnestly acknowledge God's distinct methods of dealing with His people, contrasted with the ideas of contradictions or of mere development. This is necessary to a right understanding of His wondrous plan, in which His redeemed can now rejoice, praying, in the Holy Spirit, for His preserving grace, lest they dishonour Him, either in belief or action.

§The Old and New Testaments.

LIVING ON ONE'S CAPITAL

(Continued from page 51)

riches of past and present ever-fresh experiences of the abundance of God's grace and gifts. Did not George Muller pray to be kept from being worthless in his old age? "O Lord, save us from the proximities of on-coming years," prayed an elderly brother. One well-known brother, useful in the ministry, but now with the Lord, recording this, added, "And how fervently I said Amen to that prayer."

Beloved fellow-pilgrims well advanced on the upward way, let us pray for one another, and exhort one another, that our later years may be more full of fellowship with Christ, more happy in witness for Him. May it be true of us, "They shall bring forth fruit in old age."

Let us grow old, not only gracefully, but usefully, in the power of the Holy Spirit, and to the glory of our gracious God.

NOTES ON MEMORIZED VERSES

REVELATION 15

7. Full of the wrath of God. How solemn! 8. Smoke: compare Ex. 19:18 and Isa. 6:4. From the glory and power of God, for "our God is a consuming fire."

REVELATION 16

1. God gives the word, until which His wrath is held back. 2. Beginning at rebellious men. 3. The Sea; universal death. 4, 5, 6. Righteous judgment. Blood to drink by those who have shed blood. 7. A confirming voice from the "altar." 8, 9. Men complain unreasoningly of the weather today. So under intensified conditions they become worse. 10, 11. Darkness causing physical pains and sores, yet they blaspheme and do not repent. Let us be a contrast, and humble ourselves under God's mighty hand. 12. There is a River Euphrates. Hence the drying up must be literal. 13, 14. The last great battle on earth instigated by Satanic powers. 10. A warning (cf. Luke 21:34-36). 17. Why on the "air," since the devil has been cast down to the earth? Man boasts of his conquest of the air. Perhaps this is the Divine reply to such boasts. 18. The earthquake a climax, as in previous chapters. 19. Babylon, therefore, continues until this climax. 20, 21. The earthquake (v. 19) and the hail both mark the "end" (cf. ch. 12:19).

REVELATION 17

1. This is apparently not in chronological order, because judgment has already been mentioned (16:19). 2. The Babylonian system will dominate the whole earth. 3. John, "in the spirit," saw what can only be perceived spiritually today. 4. The adornment of Babylon should make believers pause before using such decorations. 5. God's view of the world's false religious systems. 6. Babylonianism cannot tolerate the saints. 7, 8. A mystery explained. One who has had a former existence excites the wonder of those who names are not in the book of life. 9. Some regard the seven mountains as those upon which the city of Rome is built, but, 10, 11. The "seven" has reference to kings. 12, 13. These ten kings have an existence, apparently subsequent to the "seven," but concurrently with the "beast." Power (authority) only for "one hour." 14.

The triumphing of the wicked is short. The victory of the Lamb is certain. Who would not desire to be "with Him"? 15, 16. The system, though closely associated with the city, is destroyed by those she dominated. 17. But God is ever in control, "to fulfil HIS mind," and to fulfil HIS words. 18. The destruction of the city is at the "end."

REVELATION 18

1, 2. The destruction of the city, having dominated as the system, is final and never to be cured. 3. False religion and trade. The Ephah (Zech. 5) a symbol of commerce. 4. Yet some of God's people are there, and hear a call to "come out." 5. It is a fearful thing to have one's sins remembered by God. 6. Eating the fruit of her own ways. 7. Glorified herself; luxurious living. What a contrast should be a child of God! 8. In one day. 9, 10. In one hour. Because strong is GOD Who judgeth. 11, 12. Treasures on earth gone in an hour. 13. Material things and "bodies and souls." A revival of slavery? 14. "No more at all." 15. Weeping, not for sin, but for material loss. 16. Compare ch. 17:4). 17. One hour. God will make a short work. 18, 19. In one hour desolation, never to be otherwise throughout the millennium. 20. Divine vengeance a cause for rejoicing.

SPECIAL READINGS FOR THE LORD'S DAY
November, 1959

- 1. Deut. 30:11-14. Ps. 147:15-20. Jer. 15:16. Rom. 10:1-3. Phil. 2:5-13.
- 8. Deut. 30:15-20. Prov. 3:1-6. Matt. 22:34-40. Matt. 28:19-20. John 14:21-24. Eph. 6:10-18. Heb. 13:5-8.
- 15. Deut. 31:1-8. Ps. 27:1-6. Heb. 11:24-27. Jude 3-5, 17-21. 1 Cor. 11:1-2, 23-34.
- 22. Deut. 31:9-13. Isa. 8:16-20. Phil. 4:8-9.
- 29. Deut. 31:14-29. Ps. 19:7-14. Ezek. 3:16-31. Acts 20:25-32. 1 Pet. 1:1-11.

SPECIAL READINGS FOR THE LORD'S DAY
December, 1959

- 6. Deut. 31:30-32:1-18. Num. 20:2-12. 2 Sam. 23:1-4. Ps. 62:5-7. 1 Cor. 10:1-11.
- 13. Deut. 32:44-47. Ezek. 33:7-9, 30-33. Luke 6:46-49. John 6:63-69; Rev. 15:2-4.
- 20. Deut. 32:48-52. Deut. 34:1-7. Deut. 18:15-19. Luke 9:28-36. Heb. 3:1-6.
- 27. Deut. 33:1-5, 26-29. Ps. 33:4-12. Isa. 63:7-14. Luke 2:25-32. 1 Pet. 2:5-10.

SUGGESTED DAILY READINGS

"IF THE LORD WILL"—NOVEMBER, 1959

SUGGESTED DAILY READINGS

"IF THE LORD WILL"—DECEMBER, 1959

Day	READING		LEARNING		Day	READING		LEARNING	
1	2 Kings 23	Luke 19	Genesis 50	Revelation 15	1	1 Chronicles 17	John 5	Psalms 124	Revelation 17
2	27-37	28-48	22	8	2	16-27	17-31	1	3
3	24 1-20	20 1-18	23	16 1	3	18 1-17	6 1-21	2	9
4	25 1-17	19-26	24	2	4	19 1-19	22-36	3	10
5	18-30	27-47	25-26	3	5	20 1-8	37-52	4	11
6	1 Chronicles 1	21 1-15	Psalms 120	4	6	21 1-17	53-71	5	12
7	35-54	16-28	2	5	7	18-30	7 1-17	6	13
8	2 1-33	29-38	3	6	8	22 1-19	18-36	7	14
9	34-55	22 1-23	4	7	9	23 1-32	37-53	8	15
10	3 1-24	24-38	5	8	10	24 1-31	8 1-20	125 1	16
11	4 1-23	39-53	6	9	11	25 1-31	21-40	2	17
12	24-43	54-71	7	10	12	26 1-12	41-59	3	18
13	5 1-26	23 1-17	121 1	11	13	13-28	9 1-21	4	18 1
14	6 1-48	18-31	2	12	14	29-32	22-41	5	2
15	49-81	32-45	3	13	15	27 1-15	10 1-21	126 1	3
16	7 1-20	46-56	4	14	16	16-34	22-42	2	4
17	21-40	24 1-12	5	15	17	28 1-21	11 1-19	3	5
18	8 1-40	13-35	6	16	18	29 1-13	20-36	4	6
19	9 1-26	36-53	7-8	17	19	14-30	37-57	5	7
20	27-44	John 1	122 1	18	20	2 Chronicles 1	12 1-19	6	8
21	10 1-14	19-34	2-3	19	21	1 1-17	20-41	127 1	9
22	11 1-19	35-51	4	20	22	2 1-18	42-50	2	10
23	20-47	2 1-12	5-6	21	23	3 1-17	13 1-17	3	11
24	12 1-22	13-23	7	17 1	24	4 1-22	18-38	4	12
25	23-40	3 1-21	8	2	25	5 1-14	14 1-14	5	13
26	13 1-14	22-36	9	3	26	6 1-21	15-31	128 1	14
27	14 1-17	4 1-26	123 1	4	27	22-42	15-31	2	15
28	15 1-29	27-38	2	5	28	7 1-22	15 1-14	3	16
29	16 1-22	39-54	3	6	29	8 1-18	15-27	4	17
30	23-43	5 1-16	4	7	30	9 1-14	16 1-16	5	18
					31	10 1-19	17 1-13	129 1	19
									20

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THOUGHTS FROM

TO
MAINTAIN
A TESTIMONY
FOR GOD'S
GRACE AND
TRUTH

FOUNDED
BY
PERCY W.
HEWARD

THE WORD OF GOD

AND

THE STUDENT OF SCRIPTURE

EDITED BY E. KIRK

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SOME OF THE CONTENTS

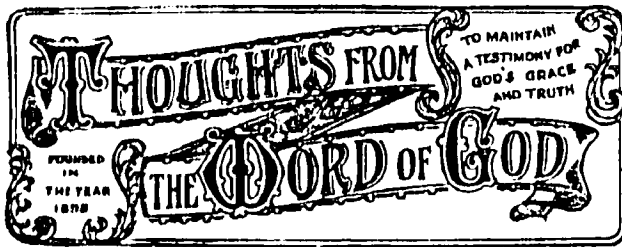
	<i>Page</i>
The Living God	62
One by One	64
Kohathite Service	65
Inspired Words Inspected	66
The Coming of the Lord	67
By their Fruits ye shall know them	69
The Signs of the Times	70
Literality of Genesis 1	70
Purpose of Scripture	71
Readings and Notes	71, 72

"And now, O Lord GOD, Thou art
That God, and Thy words be true, and
Thou hast promised this goodness unto
Thy servant." 2 Sam. 7 : 28

"At Thy right hand there are
pleasures for evermore."

Ah! Sin hath pleasures that appeal;
Seductive, yet they surely steal,
Like Absalom, the heart.
A season they may be enjoyed,
But ended, they will leave a void,
And oft a venomed dart.

But pleasures that are evermore
Hast Thou, our Father, kept in store
For those who truly love
And wait for Thee. None comprehend
The Joys that earthly joys transcend
Awaiting saints above.



WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

"Our sufficiency is of God" (2 Cor. 3:5) "All things are of God." The last two words, pregnant with meaning, are often found in Scripture; and in one place, at least, the phrase "In Christ" follows, words equally full in meaning. The former stress the *origin* of free grace, the latter its *object*. God is the Cause and Causer of all blessing. His purpose is being fulfilled in bringing many to be "in Christ"—to be "a new creation." The thought is both heart-humbling and soul-sustaining, for what *have* we that we have not received? And what *are* we but for the grace of God?

The work He has initiated He will not abandon. His faithfulness is such that He cannot forsake the work of His Own hands; yet He has appointed means whereby His chosen shall persevere unto the end, for they are "kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." "Being confident of this very thing, that He Which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

From His standpoint, there is no doubt of the accomplishment of His purpose, but we, in "pressing toward the mark," are aware of our own weakness. Hence we may take comfort from the words, "And God is able to make *all* grace abound toward you; that ye *always* having *all* sufficiency in *all* things, may abound to *every* good work."

Poem to Help Christian Experience—No. 263

"IT PLEAS'D GOD . . . TO REVEAL HIS SON IN ME"

(Gal. 1:15-16)

God of mercy, Infinite,
Wondrous is Thy dealing
With the souls of Thine elect,
Truth and grace revealing.
Thou didst shew me all my heart,
All its vain dissembling;
And the sight of evil there
Filled me then with trembling.
But, in mercy, Thou didst shew,
By Thy Holy Spirit,
What I ne'er by nature saw—
My Redeemer's merit.

Ah! The Loveliness of Christ
Didst Thou then discover
To my opened, wond'ring eyes—
The Eternal Lover.

I am my Beloved's now,
And He hath desiring
To His own unworthy one,
In His "good" attiring.

So I would in Him abide,
Ever from Him learning,
Walking with Him all the days
Till His blest returning.

THE LIVING GOD

"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the LIVING GOD."

"Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that Thou art That Christ, the Son of the LIVING GOD."

"Sirs, why do ye these things? . . . Ye should turn from these vanities unto the LIVING GOD, Which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein."

"Ye turned to God from idols to serve the LIVING and TRUE GOD, and to wait from His Son from heaven."

"How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the LIVING GOD?"

"And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not My people; there shall they be called the children of the LIVING GOD."

"Manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the LIVING GOD; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart."

"For ye are the temple of the LIVING GOD; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people."

"Thou thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the LIVING GOD, the pillar and ground of The Truth."

"But ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the LIVING GOD, the heavenly Jerusalem."

"For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the LIVING GOD, Who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe."

"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the LIVING GOD, Who giveth us richly all things to enjoy."

"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the LIVING GOD."

"It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the LIVING GOD."

"And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the LIVING GOD . . . Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads."

(Matt. 16:16; John 6:69; Acts 14:15; 1 Thess. 1:9; Heb. 9:14; Rom. 9:26; 2 Cor. 3:3, 6:16; 1 Tim. 3:15; Heb. 12:22; 1 Tim. 4:10, 6:17; Heb. 3:12, 10:31; Rev. 7:2).

How strengthening should those words, A LIVING GOD, be to His people. Yet it is most probable that the fulness of their meaning, and their stabilizing effect on the hearts and minds of saints are not the rich experience of us all. And yet, "when all around our soul gives way" should not this phrase be a "strength and stay?" Trials are real, discouragements are many; prevailing conditions and trends tend to make the soul sink in depression, but surely the antidote to such "infirmity" (Ps. 77) is to "remember the years of the right hand of the Most High," that He is the Living God.

The first occurrence of this phrase is in Matthew 16:16 in the later part of Scripture, but probably the first time it was written therein was when Paul wrote his first letter to the Thessalonian saints. He had so preached the gospel of GOD to those former idol-worshippers that their hearts were drawn away from such superstitions, being brought, by the mighty power of the Holy Spirit, to admire the loveliness of the Divine Being, and to worship a LIVING GOD. Prior to this, the apostle and Barnabas had preached the gospel in Lystra, the message being confirmed by a notable miracle. So great was the impression made upon the people that they thought the servants of the Lord were "gods" come down from heaven in the likeness of men. Calling upon the people to "turn from these vanities unto the LIVING GOD," "scarce restrained they the people, that they had not done sacrifice unto them."

Yet these Gentiles, content with their idolatry and lifeless worship were no more in need of "the gospel of GOD" than the people of Israel, for did they not also need "the blood of Christ" to "purge" their "conscience from dead works to serve the LIVING GOD"? True, their "worship" was "respectable," but it was just as unprofitable, and unacceptable to God.

And the Living God has a SON, Who also hath life in Himself, Who bore witness to the Father

that He is the everliving One. "As the LIVING FATHER hath sent Me, and I live by the Father." These words were fresh in the mind of Peter when he said, "Lord, to whom shall we go? . . . Thou art That Christ, the Son of the LIVING GOD." And so it is, that "He is not ashamed to call them brethren." for they also, whether Jew or Gentile, who, at one time were "Not My people," now are called, "Sons of a LIVING GOD." Truly, beloved fellow-saints our position, by grace, is wondrous, our blessedness is great, to be thus brought into relationship with a Living God. Do we realize such condescension, do we wonder at such love and mercy?

Are we an "epistle of Christ"? It is because we have been "written . . . with the Spirit of the LIVING GOD." Are we "temples of the LIVING GOD"? It is because "Ye are God's building," as "living stones being built up a spiritual house." Are we privileged to be "a house of God, which is a church of a LIVING GOD, a pillar and ground of The Truth" (lit.)? How then ought we to know how to behave ourselves!

And let us remember what we have "anticipatively reached" (ephthasamen. Phil 3:16). Among the blessings awaiting us, and the inheritance of which we already have the "title-deeds," is a place in "the city of the LIVING GOD, the heavenly Jerusalem." The Lord grant us grace to say with truth and spiritual conviction, "Here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come," and to "look for the city which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God."

These meditations should help us to "trust in the LIVING GOD," whether we be poor in this world's goods or in greater possession of those things which He giveth us richly to enjoy. Yet there is a warning to us who are "brethren" in Christ. All that has been written before has been for the children of God, and they need to walk carefully and trustingly, and to "make their calling and election sure." Hence the need for such an exhortation: "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the LIVING GOD." Rather, "let us have grace, whereby we may serve GOD acceptably with reverence and godly fear."

Interestingly, the last use of this expression is in relation to the twelve tribes of Israel, of whom are sealed one hundred and forty-four thousand, and that with the seal of the LIVING GOD. For God hath not cast away His people. He has unchanged and unchanging purpose concerning Israel, who will yet enter, by sovereign grace, into all

Continued at foot of page 71

YOUNG PEOPLE'S COLUMN

"One by One"

Whenever this phrase is used, we are reminded that, although millions of people have lived, and still millions are living on the earth, each one is a person, whose life and thoughts are all known to GOD. Each one of us is himself or herself and not anyone else, nor can be. Each one must, in a great day coming, give account to God. None of us really *like* to think of "that Day," because we know enough about ourselves to make us, or some of us, fear lest we should not be able to stand before the Judge of all the earth, and answer "one by one." These words, so far as the writer can find out, come five times in the Bible. Let us look at the texts, for we shall find them interesting.

One Among a Thousand

"Behold, this have I found, saith the preacher, counting ONE BY ONE, to find out the account, which yet my soul seeketh, but I find not: one Man among a thousand have I found" (Eccl. 7:27-28). In one other place, we read of "One among a thousand," and also we find the words, "The Chiefest among ten thousand" (Job 33:23; Song 5:10).

Do not these words remind us of the Lord Jesus? The preacher was searching for Someone. He could not find Whom he desired, until he found ONE Who satisfied his heart. Job also spoke of such an ONE, who was able to shew unto man *His* uprightness, and to be a gracious Deliverer, because of a ransom (an atonement, as the margin puts it).

I wonder how many readers have "found" That Wondrous Saviour? If so, it is because He first sought and found, and you can say, "My Beloved is . . . the Chiefest among ten thousand."

Conviction of Sin

Some proud men once brought to the Lord Jesus a person who had committed a great sin. They told the Lord that the Law of Moses said such sin should be punished by stoning, but "What sayest Thou?" they asked. The Lord did not argue with them about the Law, but said very wisely and simply, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." "And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out ONE BY ONE, beginning at the eldest even unto the last." The quiet reply of the Lord had great power to cause a sense of sin, and make them leave His holy presence. But how sad it will be, in the future great day, when unforgiven sin will cause sinners to go away from the Son of God for ever.

When those proud men went out, the Lord Jesus was left alone with the poor sinner. He asked, "Woman, where are those thine accusers? Hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." What words of comfort were these! The Lord alone could speak them because He had come into the world to save sinners, and *that* by dying on the Cross, and *there* bearing their sins and the judgment they deserved. "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God" (Rom. 8:34).

A future gathering of Israel

It is often forgotten that God still loves the nation of Israel, and that He will make them once more His people, never again to be called Lo-ammi (Not My people). They are today scattered in many parts of the world, but God knows just where they are, and has fixed the day and hour when they will repent and turn to Him. The "nation shall be born at once" (Isa. 66:8), and yet each man and woman, boy and girl, shall be brought to know Him. Three thousand men were saved at once on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2) yet each one was the object of God's love and teaching. The time of blessing for Israel *shall* come, so God has said, "Ye shall be gathered ONE BY ONE, O ye children of Israel" (Isa. 27:12).

Fear of Betraying Christ

"In the evening He cometh with the twelve" to keep the Passover. "And as they sat and did eat, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, One of you which eateth with Me shall betray Me. And they began to be sorrowful, and to say unto Him ONE BY ONE, Is it I? and another said, Is it I?" (Mark 14:18-19). It must have caused the Lord pain to say such words. Indeed, John tells us "He was troubled in spirit." Each one of the disciples trembled to think of being so base toward the Lord they knew and loved, so all asked in turn who it should be. And should not every child of God dread the thought of acting or speaking wrongly of the Lord Jesus, Who gave Himself for his redemption? It is sadly possible for a believer to deny Christ, even without a desire to do so, but if there is in the heart a true hatred of sin, that will be a great help toward living to God's glory.

Ministry in the Church

In the early days, before the New Testament was written, there were "gifted" persons called "prophets" who taught the saints by means of messages given to them by the Holy Spirit. In the assembly

Continued on page 70



KOHATHITE SERVICE Its Typical Significance (concluded)

The males belonging to the three families of the Levites were all appointed to service in connection with the Tabernacle. The Gershonites and the Merarites shared the burden of the Tabernacle structure, and were provided with wagons and oxen for the conveyance thereof throughout their journeying to the promised land (Num. 7:1-8). "But unto the sons of Kohath he gave none: because the service of the sanctuary belonging unto them was that they should bear upon their shoulders" (v. 9). Separated as they were, like all the Levites, they yet were brought nearer than their fellows, because of the preciousness of the things they bore. Thus we are reminded that, although every believer is made near to God, some are separated for special service, as Paul, to bear the name of the Lord Jesus (Acts 9:15). This special nearness of the Kohathites was the subject of Moses' rebuke to Korah and his company when they sought a position higher than that to which they had been appointed.

The Holiness of God

The nearer a person is brought to God for privilege and service, the greater is his spiritual "danger". This was illustrated when Uzza put forth his hand to steady the ark (2 Sam. 6). So jealous was God of His Own honour, yet so gracious toward His servants, that He again and again warns of the peril of failing to realize the holiness of Himself and all of His appointing. This is stressed in the words following: "They shall not touch any holy thing lest they die" (4:15). "Cut ye not off the tribe of the families of the Kohathites from among the Levites, but thus do unto them, that they may live and not die, when they approach unto the most holy things; Aaron and his sons shall go in and appoint them everyone to his service and to his burden: but they shall not go in to see when the holy things are covered, lest they die" (4:17-20). "The tribe of Levi . . . they shall not come nigh the vessels of the sanctuary and the altar, that neither they, nor ye also, die" (18:2-3). Even believers, made nigh by

the blood of Christ, need the exhortation, "Let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: for our God is a consuming fire" (Heb. 12:28-29).

Service was not self-chosen

Aaron and his sons appointed to each one his burden, and that may not have been the same always, though it was always within the same limitations. Obedience and readiness for any task given them should have characterized them. Philip at one time speaks to a whole city, at another to a solitary man. "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it."

The service of the Kohathites seems to have been the hardest. Everything had to be carried on the shoulders, and some things were weighty—burdens in a real sense. Patience and cheerfulness were needed, and some realization of the preciousness of what they bore. Outwardly, it was not attractive, for all was covered, yet from size and not too well defined outline, the identity of the furniture or vessel would be known. The ark would be definitely known by its covering "wholly of blue". The typical significance of these may be gathered from the later part of Scripture, and those who read therein may see a foreshewing of Christ and His mediatorial work. Yet, although much has been revealed, we still only know in part. The Kohathite did not know that all he carried spoke of a coming and suffering, yet glorified Messiah; so, in a sense, he walked by faith. Kohathite service was chiefly rendered in the wilderness. Their precious loads were in the very midst of Israel on the march, and so the rest of the nation had cause for encouragement as they looked upon those tokens of God's presence. Thus the value of such service was enhanced, and so will be all ministry by those whom God calls and chooses to bear a testimony, more or less public, for Him. Often such ministry will be unattractive naturally, and oft burdensome, but when borne cheerfully and obediently, because it is for a loving Master, other saints will thank God and take courage.

The Lesson of Fellowship

The carrying of the holy vessels through the wilderness required the co-operation of at least two, and probably four persons. The Ark, the Table, the Golden Altar, and the Brazen Altar, each had two staves. This would need four men, two in front and two behind. The Candlestick was put upon a bar, as were also the "instruments of ministry," which were placed in a cloth of blue, covered with "badgers' skins". Each of these bars

needed two men. So, in all probability, twenty Kohathites were thus employed. The foremost would set the pace, and they did not view what they were carrying. The hindmost saw their burden, but must keep step with their fellows. All twenty men must travel at the same rate, and their steps would synchronize with those of the multitude of men, women and children.

All this is very suggestive to our hearts, and stresses the need of harmony amongst the people of God today, as well as the great responsibility of "leaders" to be themselves a pattern to the sheep of Christ, as they are walking through "the wilderness of this world" to the heavenly country.

Doubtless, much more, in the way of analogy, will occur to the minds of readers, but enough has been written to shew the wondrous harmony of Scripture, and the value of studying the types. If anything in the foregoing has interested the hearts of God's children, to Him be all the glory.

INSPIRED WORDS INSPECTED

No. 58

"Another parable put He forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field. Which indeed is the least of all seeds, but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof."

"Another parable spake He unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened."

Matthew 13:31-33.

ANOTHER (allen); adjective, feminine, accusative, from "allos, -e, -ov, (another, or another of the same kind); qualifying "parable."

PARABLE (parabolen); noun, feminine, accusative, from "parabole," a compound of "para" (beside or alongside) and "ballo" (I cast or throw); hence, a casting alongside, or a placing beside. Thus, a comparison or similitude.

PUT HE FORTH (paretheken); verb, aorist, from "paratithemi," a compound of "para" and "tithemi" (I place, set, put); hence, "I put alongside."

UNTO THEM (autois); personal pronoun, dative, plural, from "autos, -e, o-."

SAYING (legon); present participle, from "lego" (I say).

LIKE (homoia); adjective, feminine, to agree with "kingdom," from "homoios, -a, -ov" (like or resembling).

IS (estin); verb, present tense, from "eimi" (I am).

THE KINGDOM (he basileia); article and noun, feminine, nominative.

OF HEAVEN (ton ouranon); article and noun, masculine, genitive, plural, from "ouranos" (heaven). The plural form is constantly used by Matthew.

TO A GRAIN (kokkoi); noun, masculine, dative, singular, from kokkos (a seed, grain, or kernel).

OF MUSTARD SEED (sinapeos); noun, neuter, genitive, from "sinapi" (mustard plant).

WHICH (hon); relative pronoun, accusative, referring to "a grain"; from "hos, he, ho" (who or which).

HAVING TAKEN (labon); participle, aorist, from "lambano" (I take or receive).

A MAN (anthropos); noun, masculine, nominative.

SOWED (espeiren); verb, aorist, from "speiro" (I sow).

IN (en); preposition, followed always by dative case.

THE FIELD (toi agroi); article and noun, dative, singular, from "agros" (a field); masculine gender.

OF HIM (autou); personal pronoun, genitive, singular. "His field," or "the field belonging to him."

WHICH (ho); relative pronoun, nominative, neuter.

SMALLER (mikroteron); adjective, comparative, of "mikros" (small); neuter gender.

IS (estin).

INDEED (men); conjunction, often followed by "de," as here, and thus pointing forward to an antithesis.

OF ALL (panton); adjective, plural, genitive, from "pas" (all).

SEEDS (ton spermaton); article and noun, genitive, plural, neuter, from "sperma" (seed) derived from "speiro"; hence "something sown," the purpose of the giving of seed.

BUT (de); conjunction following "men" (see above).

WHEN (hotan); adverb, compound of "hote" and "an," meaning "whenever"; "hote" by itself means "when."

IT IS GROWN (auxethei); verb, aorist, subjunctive, passive, from "auxano" (I grow); the word here may be rendered, "shall have been caused to grow."

GREATER (meizon); adjective, neuter, comparative, from "megas" (great). "Micros" and "megas" are used as prefixes, as "microphone" and "megaphone."

AMONG HERBS (ton lachanon); article and noun, genitive, plural, from "lachanon" (a herb or garden plant); neuter gender. It is derived from "lachaino" (I dig or till).

AND (kai).

BECOMETH (ginetai); verb, present, from "ginomai" (I become).

A TREE (dendron); noun, neuter, nominative. Note the Divine distinction between the herb and the tree in Genesis 1. Hence the inference that the herb "became" what it was not at first. The spiritual teaching is clear, namely, the development of the "church" into "christendom," later emphasized by the birds lodging in its branches.

SO THAT (hoste); conjunction.

THE BIRDS (ta petaina); article and noun, neuter, plural, accusative case, being the subject of the infinitive verb, "elthein" (for "birds" and what they represent, see verses 4 and 19).

OF THE AIR (tou ouranou; article and noun, genitive, singular; literally, "of the heaven" (see Gen. 1:20).

COME (elthein); verb, aorist, infinitive, from "erchomai" (I come). This is the predicate of the accusative case of the noun (ta petaina).

AND (kai).

LODGE (kataskenoin); verb, present, infinitive, from "kataskenoo" (I plant down a tent, to lodge, to sojourn).

IN (en).

THE BRANCHES (tois kladois); article and noun, plural; dative because following "en." From "klados" (a branch); masculine gender.

THEREOF (autou); Lit. "of it."

ANOTHER PARABLE (see above).

SPAKE HE (elalesen); verb, aorist, from laleo (I speak).

UNTO THEM (see above).

LIKE IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN (see above).

TO LEAVEN (zumei); noun, feminine, dative, from "zume" (leaven or sour dough).

WHICH (hen); relative pronoun, referring to leaven, and therefore feminine; accusative because the object of "took."

A WOMAN (gune); noun, feminine, nominative.

TOOK (labousa); verb, infinitive, feminine, aorist; from "lambano" (see above); lit., "having taken."

AND (not in text).

HID (enekrupsen); verb, aorist, from "egkrupso," compound of "en" (in) and "krupso" (I hide), therefore "hid in."

INTO (eis); preposition, meaning, not "in," but "into."

THREE (tria); numeral adjective, neuter, accu-

sative (because following "eis"); from "treis" (three).

MEASURES (sata); noun, neuter, plural, from "saton," equivalent to Hebrew "seah." This, according to the Rabbis, was the third part of an ephah. Hence the "three measures" would be the same as the ephah in Zechariah 5, where also a woman is found, and that within.

OF MEAL (aleoursou); noun, genitive, neuter, from "aleuron" (fine meal or flour) derived from "aleo" (I grind).

TILL (heos); adverb of time, modifying "was leavened," yet having almost the force of a preposition, an object being in view. The "hou" following, makes the sense equivalent to our "until that."

THE WHOLE (holon); adjective, neuter, nominative, the noun, "mass," being understood. From "holos, -e, -on."

WAS LEAVENED (ezumothē); verb, aorist, passive, from "zumoo."

THE COMING OF THE LORD IN THE THESSALONIAN EPISTLES

Introduction

It is generally accepted that the first epistle to the saints in Thessalonica was the beginning of those Spirit-breathed letters that came to the Church through the pen of Paul. That being so, it is most significant that each chapter—though these divisions are not inspired—should close, or almost close, with a stress on the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. This aspect of truth is not specifically Pauline. All the other writers of epistles lay the same emphasis on the second advent of the Lord. In this, they are but following the Lord Jesus, Who not only said, "I will come again," but told His disciples of His return and reign in glory, even when the Cross was yet to be endured. It may be said that "That Blessed Hope" colours all the epistles, as, indeed it should enter deeply into the lives and affect the characters of all saints.

Waiting for His Son from heaven

In chapter one, we have a veritable epitome of truth; for "the election of God," the power of the Holy Spirit, His effectual working causing a reception of the truth in the hearts of those who heard, and the practical out working thereof, by example and word in their lives, are set forth. The loveliness of the Divine Being, Whom Paul preached as the "Living and True God," attracted the hearts of some Thessalonians so powerfully that they turned to Him, away from their idols to serve Him. From the very beginning of conversion, it would appear that truth concerning the coming of Christ was brought before them as that which

was "profitable" and a part of "all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:20-27). Their attitude was to be one of "waiting" for The Son of God from heaven. The word signifies the expecting of one who is coming. There is no mention here of intervening events, though such are referred to in the second epistle, chapter two. The desire of the apostle was that there should be love to the blessed Person—"God's Son"—and a yearning desire to see Him, "even JESUS." Was it not at His ascension that the angels announced to the apostles, as they gazed upward, "This same JESUS, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." And how should a believer look forward with joy to seeing Him Who "rescueth us out from the wrath that is coming." Thus the "first love" of this infant church is connected with the hope of their Lord coming. Is that hope real in our heart's experience?

Service in view of The Parousia

The word "Parousia" (Presence) means literally, "a being beside or alongside," and is used in chapter 2:19; 3:13; 4:15; and 5:23; as well as in other places in Scripture.

Paul seems at times to project himself into the day of the Lord, and from there to look back, so to speak, on his life's work. For example, in Philippians 2:16, he hopes, "that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain." So in I Thessalonians 3:5, "I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour be in vain." This is the language of a true shepherd of souls, such as other servants of God speak." They watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you." So says Paul, "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ AT HIS COMING?" He "laboured more abundantly" than all the other apostles, and the souls he had won, by his Spirit-enabled ministry, for Christ, were to be "in that day" his "glory and joy," even as, in present experience, he could say, "ye ARE our glory and joy." Thus we have an example of how, in this day, we should serve our Lord, that is, with the hope of His coming ever in view, for He has said, "Behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." And what gladness would be ours if, when we arrive into the presence of our Lord, we should there meet some who had been led to Christ through our testimony!

Brotherly love and godly behaviour in view of the Parousia

It must be sorrowfully acknowledged that the coming of Christ, though held mentally, and as an essential part of truth, by saints generally, the effect on their lives and character is often not very manifest. Yet Scripture plainly declares, "And every man that hath this hope on Him purifieth himself even as He is pure." There is a close connection between "the Hope" and true holiness. Thus at the end of chapter three, we read, "And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you; to the end He may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, AT THE COMING of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints."

"Who is sufficient for these things?", we may well ask ourselves. But it is, "*the Lord make you.*" All is of grace, and the Spirit's enabling. Love is to increase and overflow among the saints. It is to extend to others, and the example is that of Paul himself, who had confidence in God's gracious in-working and power to produce such love, "shed abroad in the heart."

But there is a yet higher purpose. It is God's will that the heart be "firmly fixed," not only here and now, but found "unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the COMING of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints." We shall not be suddenly transformed into holy persons just before our Lord's return: what we would desire to be then, "found of Him in peace, without spot and blameless" (2 Pet. 3:14) we should be practising now, that is, purify ourselves as He is pure. Love to the saints and to all men is so closely connected with holiness before God, that we dare not be complacent. The Lord enable us to "search and try our ways . . . let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heavens."

Comforting one another

Chapter four is so well known that little can be said that has not been told over and over again. The object of the apostle is to assure the hearts of the bereaved that their sorrow was not hopeless, as that of the world. Indeed, "we who are alive and remain unto THE COMING OF THE LORD" would not be "changed" until the "dead in Christ" should be raised. Then will be the final "gathering together unto Him." "And so shall we ever be with the Lord." Affliction is a necessity for all saints. Some are suffering intensely, for the word of their testimony, in other lands. Some are in great pain of body, and long for "release." Tribulation will be "great" in a soon-coming day.

Then will the hope of the Lord's return be an "antidote to fear," and the Spirit-breathed words will then encourage with fresh power—"Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

Entire Sanctification

Holiness in view of "That Day" is the theme of chapter 3:15, as also there is a stress on the in-working and power of God to "make" the saints what He would have them to be. Chapter 5:23-24 enlarges thereon. The whole man is to be entirely sanctified. The saint is described as made up of "spirit and soul and body." In no other place in Scripture do we find these three words together. Unregenerate man is "soulish, not having spirit" (Jude 19), but believers are such as have a "new spirit." And yet the whole person needs the grace of "Himself the God of the peace," not only for sanctification, but for preservation right up to the COMING OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. There are many commands preceding the verses before us, leading up to the words, "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly." How dependent we are upon Him! And will He empower and enable? Perhaps an answer depends largely on obedience to the "commands" in the context. But if the heart is right toward Him, the promise is sure, "Faithful is He that calleth you, Who also will DO." There is no "it," for the emphasis is on Him Who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think. He is faithful. Are we, His people, faithful to Him? "That day" is nearing. Shall we then be found "blameless"?

(If the Lord will, to be continued)

"THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES"**(Matt. 16 : 3)**

PERCY W. HEWARD

We must not confuse two thoughts. Special and final signs were before the minds of the disciples in Matthew 24:3 (compare Luke 21:11, 25).* But, apart from these, there are *continual* signs of the times, that is, indications of the dispensation in which a man is living, and of the character of its goal. "Man's day" (1 Cor. 4:11, margin), has its definite marks, and we need eyes to see them, and to be separate from the spirit of the age.

Doubtless both of the aspects were before the Lord Jesus in Matthew 16, and our condition is grievous if we do not discern the signs. The words of the Pharisees plainly shewed a heart like that which still says, "Shew me a miracle"—unmindful of the *many* miracles of God's glorious work, visible on all hands.

And the Lord Jesus emphasized the signs that the appointed time was fulfilled for the first Coming of Messiah (Mark 1:15; Gal. 4:4). Yet Israel did not know by books (Dan. 9:2 with 25). Alas! How blind is the human heart! The leaders of religion professed their willingness to be convinced (compare Matt. 27:42) but they were not open to conviction. So was it with the mass of the nation (John 6:29-30).

But do we perceive the signs of the times? Do we realize that this is not a dispensation for earthly gain and greatness? Do we see that the image of Daniel 2 is not yet complete, and that the day of the Lord's glory is not yet reached? Do we willingly take a path of separation from a judged world (John 12:31), while we wait for our Lord's coming? Do we see that all around is heading up to the unveiling of the "Man of Sin" in his times (2 Thess. 2:7), that we may cry yet more fervently, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus!"? Oh that there may be this spiritual perception. We know earthly things. We know much of this world's arrangements. But let us seek to shew we have the mind of Christ," taking *His* standpoint, and thankful to view things from their heavenly aspect, that our life may be henceforth well-pleasing unto the Lord.

**THE LITERALITY OF GENESIS
CHAPTER ONE****"The testimony of the Lord is sure
making wise the simple"**

Genesis chapter one is not poetical language to be loosely interpreted. Neither is it an allegory, nor was it written to suit *primitive* minds.

Such thoughts generally spring from unconscious pride or from credence to evolutionary theories.

There was no life in, or life continued from the chaos described in verse two. Whatever age fossils may be thought to be, there is no living link between them and this present creation, neither with regard to the vegetable kingdom nor the animal kingdom. It is precluded, for life as we see it today began subsequent to this chaos, and was consequent upon the spoken word of God.

The ordering of the evening and the morning (and there was evening and there was morning, one day . . . a second day . . . the sixth day) including the appointing of the sun to rule the day and the moon to rule the night, and to be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and for years, exclude the thought that the evenings and the mornings, or the days were each long periods. Such reasoning is not only unnecessary, but it brings confusion to the record especially with regard to the functions of the heavenly bodies as detailed in verses 14-19, and even as they function today, the sun rising and setting bringing day and night in continuous succession.

Man in his creation was only one, unique in dignity and honour. There was no help meet for him, or answering to him. (R.V. margin.) There were no "contemporary men or women," on which evolutionary theories depend. "Adam was first formed, then Eve." (1 Tim. 2:13.)

Man's image and likeness was not taken from anything on earth, but in contrast thereto, from heaven, even God's own image and likeness. "And God said, Let us make man in our image after our likeness." "And God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him."

Let us not degrade the one lest unwittingly we degrade the other.

R.L.W.

servant Paul wrote to them thus: "For ye may all at Corinth, there was a need for order, even though there was the working of the Holy Spirit. So God's prophesy ONE BY ONE, that all may learn, and all may be comforted" (1 Cor. 14:31). It is not seemly that all speak at once, but "all things be done decently and in order" (v. 40).

But from this both older and younger persons may learn to use their ears more, and to be slower to speak, to be more ready to be taught than too forward to teach; also to be courteous toward those with whom we meet. "Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak."

THE PURPOSE OF SCRIPTURE

The Holy Scriptures are a gift from God, and should be highly esteemed by those who have been born from above (Job 23:12). Is it clearly understood why this gift has been granted by God? Let the words of Scripture speak for themselves, and be it noted that, in many of the quotations that follow, the word "that," signifying "in order that" occurs, shewing thereby God's purpose in this written revelation.

Firstly, the Scriptures were written *with a view to Christ*. (John 5:39; Luke 24:27). "In the volume of the Book it is written of me" (Psalm 40). But Christ has come. All God's will concerning the redemption of His people has been accomplished by His Son. What of the purpose of the Scriptures in relation to the Redeemed?

(a) *They are written with a view to them*. In Psalm 102:18, there is mentioned, "a generation to come," and "the people that shall be created." The context points to a restored Israel, but the believers of today anticipate, in experience, the spiritual blessings which shall be the portion of that people, and so what is recorded is for "their sakes" (Rom. 4:23-24; 1 Cor. 9:9-10) for "their learning" (Rom. 15:4) for "their admonition" (1 Cor. 10:11).

(b) *They are written so that there might be a standard of reference*. (Isaiah 8:20; Psalm 36:9). They record the terms of God's covenant with Israel (Ex. 34:27) as a witness against that nation (Deut. 31:19 and Isa. 30:8). The Bereans searched the Scriptures daily (Acts 17:11) to ascertain the truth of what they had heard. The "searching" of the Jews in John 7:52 was not, however, with the same earnestness or ready acceptance of truth.

(c) Sometimes the record was primarily written *for the sake of an individual* (Ex. 17:14; 1 Tim. 3:14-15) though blessing may be, and has been, granted, in God's gracious intention to many others by means of the same words.

If the Lord will, to be continued

the blessings of the New Covenant. "For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?"

In the meantime, as we await the coming of our Lord, let us, by the enabling of the Holy Spirit, live upon our LIVING GOD.

NOTES ON MEMORIZED VERSES

REVELATION 18

21. The absolute and final overthrow of the city was foretold by Jeremiah (52: 63-64). There the book sank because of a stone bound to it. The words live, though the city perishes. "The word of the Lord shall rise for ever." 22, 23. All earthly delights, even "good" ones, pass away (contrast Psalm 16:17). 24. Yet earthly pleasures do not lessen hatred of God's people (contrast Heb. 11:25).

REVELATION 19

1. "Much people" (raised saints) ascribe salvation to God (cf. ch. 7:11-12). 2. Yet glorify God because of His righteous acts in judgment (see Rom. 2:2). 3, 4, 5. Thrice "Allelulia." God's victory and rule. 7. The church will make herself ready. So will each member thereof (1 John 3:3). 8. The latter words may be rendered, "the righteous requirements of the holy place"; perhaps meaning imputation of the merit of Christ. 9. "Those who are called," another *description* of the redeemed, *not* another company. 10. A definite forbidding of worship paid to the creature, however exalted. All idolatry, including mariolatry, thus forbidden. 11. A view of the Lord Jesus. "Faithful and True" (cf. ch. 3:7). 12. His eyes (cf. ch. 1:14 and 2:18). 13. "Dipped in blood (cf. ch. 14:20). 14. Heavenly armies, consisting of saints (Zech. 14:5). 15. Compare Psalm 2 and Isaiah 63). This book is consistent with the rest of Scripture. 16. This title is mentioned in ch. 17:14 and is a proof of His Deity (see 1 Tim. 6:14-16). 17, 18. The Great Supper, contrasted with the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. 19. The height of folly, for who hath hardened himself against God and hath prospered? 20. "Was taken," for "he shall come to his end," as will all who follow him (cf. Matt. 25:41). 21. (see Ezekiel 39:17-20).

REVELATION 20

1-3. The bottomless pit is the Devil's prison for 1,000 years, but the beast and the false prophet have already entered their eternal, inescapable doom. 4. "They" and "beheaded ones," and "non-worshippers of the beast" all living and reigning. 5. Then there are two resurrections, separated by 1,000 years. 6. May this be the longed-for attainment of all the redeemed (note Phil. 3:10-11). 7, 8. Gog and Magog are seen fighting against God in Ezekiel 38 and 39, but there it is just *before* the 1,000 years begin. 9. After 1,000 years of benevolent rule, man is unchanged in heart, and ready to obey Satan. 10. A Final and Eternal doom. 11. The earth and the heaven fled, but the throne stands firm. 12. The books remind that works are recorded. "After death the judgment." 13. A further emphasis on judgment according to works. 14. A second death; hence death is not extinction. 15. But there is a book of life, and names, apart from works, are inscribed therein (see Phil. 4:3).

REVELATION 21

1. "I saw"—cf. "we look for" (2 Pet. 3:13). 2. To this city the saints have come (Heb. 12:22, but the city itself is to come down, to be with men. As Babylon is a system and a city, so the Bride is a people and a city. 3. A wondrous fellowship between God and redeemed men. 4, 5. All things new, because (v. 3) former things passed away. 6. A link with chapter one and chapter 22:17. "I will give," "let him take" the water of life. 7. A final stress on overcoming (cf. chs. 2 and 3). 8. "Cowardly" and unbelieving, and with what sins these are classed! 9. The angel's contrasted ministries. But the angels do God's will,

THOUGHTS FROM THE WORD OF GOD

whatever it be. 10. A further view of the descending city. 11. Light and Preciousness. 12-14. A fivefold stress on "twelve." Israel and the church both represented and in union. 15, 16. How often "foursquare" comes before us in tabernacle and temple. It suggests stability. Length, breadth, height (cf. Eph. 3:18). 17, 18. A wall, but not without gates. 19, 20. Twelve precious stones. Compare the High Priest's breastplate (Ex. 28:17-21), also bearing names.

SPECIAL READINGS FOR THE LORD'S DAY

January

4. 1 Pet. 1:1 (part). 2 Pet. 3:2. 2 Cor. 11:13. Matt. 7:20-21.
Peter an apostle of Jesus Christ.
11. 1 Pet. 1:2 (part). Rom. 8:29. John 10:26. Isa. 46:10. Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.

SUGGESTED DAILY READINGS

Ready to be revealed in the last time.
"IF THE LORD WILL"—JANUARY, 1960

18. 1 Pet. 1:2 (part). Rom. 15:16. Psa. 2:2. Isa. 66:20. Through sanctification of the Spirit.
25. 1 Pet. 1:2 (part). 2 Thess. 3:16. Isa. 57:21. Isa. 26:3. Grace be unto you and peace be multiplied.

SPECIAL READINGS FOR THE LORD'S DAY

February

1. 1 Pet. 1:3 (part). Eph. 1:3. John 4:22. Eph. 3:14. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.
8. 1 Pet. 1:3 (part). 1 Pet. 1:21. Eph. 2:12. Job 31:24. Which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.
15. 1 Pet. 1:4 (part). 2 Tim. 4:8. Job 21:30. Matt. 6:19. To an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away reserved in heaven for you.
22. 1 Pet. 1:5 (part). Rom. 8:38-39. 2 Pet. 2:21. Jude 21. Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.
29. 1 Pet. 1:5 (part). 2 Tim. 4:8. 2 Thess. 1:9. 2 Pet. 1:10-11.

SUGGESTED DAILY READINGS

"IF THE LORD WILL"—FEBRUARY, 1960

Day	READING		LEARNING	
	2 Chronicles	John	Psalm	Revelation
1	11 1-23	17 14-26	129 2	18 21
2	12 1-16	18 1-18	3	22
3	13 1-22	19-40	4	23
4	14 1-15	19 1-18	5	24
5	15 1-19	19-32	6	19 1
6	16 1-14	33-42	7	2
7	17 1-19	20 1-23	8	3
8	18 1-16	24-31	130 1	4
9	17-34	21 1-25	2	5
10	19 1-11	Acts 1 1-26	3	6
11	20 1-17	2 1-21	4	7
12	18-37	22-47	5	8
13	21 1-20	3 1-26	6	9
14	22 1-12	4 1-17	7	10
15	23 1-21	18-37	8	11
16	24 1-14	5 1-11	131 1	12
17	15-27	12-28	2	13
18	25 1-13	29-42	3	14
19	14-28	6 1-15	132 1	15
20	26 1-23	7 1-20	2	16
21	27 1-9	21-41	3	17
22	28 1-15	42-60	4	18
23	16-27	8 1-17	5	19
24	29 1-19	18-40	6	20
25	20-36	9 1-16	7	21
26	30 1-12	17-31	8	20 1
27	13-27	32-43	9	2
28	31 1-21	10 1-18	10	3
29	32 1-20	19-33	11	4
30	21-33	34-48	12	5
31	33 1-25	11 1-17	13	6

Day	READING		LEARNING	
	2 Chronicles	Acts	Psalm	Revelation
1	34 1-13	11 18-30	132 14	20 7
2	14-22	12 1-25	15	8
3	23-33	13 1-15	16	9
4	35 1-27	16-37	17	10
5	36 1-13	38-52	18	11
6	14-23	14 1-18	133 1	12
7	1 1-11	19-28	2	13
8	2 1-42	15 1-12	3	14
9	43-60	13-29	134 1	15
10	61-70	30-41	2	21 1
11	3 1-13	16 1-18	3	2
12	4 1-24	19-40	111 1	3
13	5 1-17	17 1-21	2	4
14	6 1-22	22-34	3	5
15	7 1-28	18 1-11	4	6
16	8 1-20	12-28	5	7
17	21-36	19 1-20	6	8
18	9 1-15	21-41	7	8
19	10 1-17	20 1-16	8	10
20	18-44	17-38	9	11
21	Nehemiah 1 1-11	21 1-19	10	12
22	2 1-20	21-40	112 1	13
23	3 1-16	22 1-16	2-3	14
24	17-32	17-30	4	15
25	4 1-23	23 1-15	5	16
26	5 1-19	16-35	6	17
27	6 1-19	24 1-16	7-8	18
28	7 1-38	17-27	9	19
29	39-73	25 1-12	10	20

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