

 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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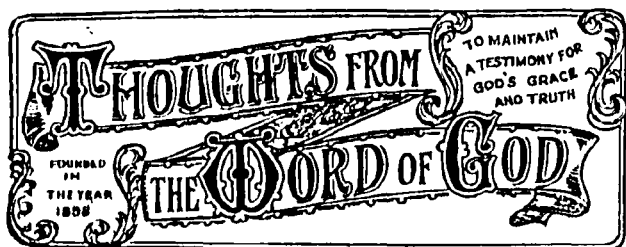
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"That in the ages to come, HE might
show the exceeding riches of HIS grace
in His Kindness toward us through
CHRIST JESUS." Eph. 2 : 7.

"THE PORTION OF A DAY IN HIS DAY"
Exodus 16 : 4 (margin)

Hast Thou a portion, gracious Lord,
Within the pages of Thy Word,
To meet my inmost need?
O, by Thy Spirit shew to me
The pastures green prepared by Thee,
Wherein to lie and feed.
Then, strengthened by that heav'nly Food,
I rise, O gracious Lord, and would
With patience run the race
That endeth at the home above,
Where Thee, Whom now my soul doth love,
I shall see face to face.



WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

"Be of Good Cheer" In a time of great distress, Acts 27 : 22, 25. these words from a faithful servant of God fell on the ears of a company of nigh three hundred storm-tossed men. A warning of impending danger, of harm and loss, had not been heeded, but very soon afterwards its truth was verified, and "no small tempest lay on" them. Soon, "all hope that we should be saved was then taken away," and then it was that he who had warned was able to encourage a despairing people. One among them all was able, because in fellowship with God, to speak such words of comfort, adding, in quiet confidence, "I believe God, that it shall be, even as it was told me."

This true history may be allegorized, for we, too, have been warned that, in the last days perilous times shall come. Saints are being persecuted in some lands. In this country, at present, there is an easy tolerance, not because saints are loved, but because of a general apathy born of material prosperity and an increase of "amenities."

Yet the "south wind" is "blowing softly." Conscientious workers are despised, the "closed shop" in industry robs some of God's people of employment in their particular line, and the "strike menace" often places them in difficulties which their fellow-workers neither understand nor allow for. But an "Euroclydon" may break upon us sooner than we expect. The past year has been full of threats of war and the turbulent rising of nationalism. Not only the "fig-tree," but "all the trees" are "budding"; and what will be the end thereof? What will this new year bring forth?

Now is the time to trust our Lord's words, "See that ye be not troubled." The world loves its own. It does not love us. We cannot be its friends, and so constitute ourselves the enemies of God. How soon the church will have to face its full enmity we know not. Listen, however, to the Lord Jesus—"In the world ye shall have tribulation; but BE OF GOOD CHEER; I have overcome the world."

Poem to Help Christian Experience—No. 276.

"WHO IS LIKE UNTO THEE, O LORD?"

"Immutable"! Ah, wondrous word!
There are no changes with the LORD.
He Who from everlasting lives
Will ne'er repent of that He gives.
He giveth life and breath to all,
Though ruined still by Adam's fall;
But to His chosen He imparts
New life, new spirit, and new hearts.

"Impossible" for God to lie,
The God of Truth, the LORD most high!
He doeth whatsoever He will
And His whole purpose must fulfil.
He gave His Word, He gave His oath,
Of His free changeless will are both;
And these to comfort His elect!
'Tis more than they could e'en expect.

"Unspeakable" His Gift of love!
His Son, descending from above
To die for them, He freely gave,
A mighty multitude to save.
To Him let hearts and voices sing—
The LORD omnipotent, the King
Eternal and Immortal! Then
Be ageless praise to Him! Amen.

THE IMPRECATORY PSALMS

R. L. WHEELER

The imprecatory psalms are psalms invoking judgment on others. Some have felt difficulty in regard to these psalms. Are they, it is questioned, in keeping with the revealed character of God?

The following notes may help to distinguish things that differ, as well as to see the unity and progressive revelation of the gospel of God's grace and truth in Christ Jesus.

In pondering this subject we must not forget that similar apparent difficulties present themselves in the New Testament writings. "If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received," writes the apostle, "let him be accursed." And again, "If any man love not our Lord Jesus Christ let him be anathema" (accursed). Are any words in the imprecatory psalms more solemn than these? (Gal. 1:8-9. 1 Cor. 16:22).

Somewhat similarly, although in heavenly scenes, the Christian martyrs who have died in the Lord during the end tribulation period are heard crying out and longing for God's vindication, and for His arising in judgment to lay low his enemies (Rev. 6:9-11).

Thus there is a similarity between the imprecatory psalms, and the New Testament in this respect. And such Scriptures and many others, need to be remembered, especially in these modern days of psychological perversions regarding sin and righteousness, and when an emasculated gospel is preached which leaves out the need of repentance, and the coming judgment of God, "upon every soul of man that doeth evil." None spake more solemn words on this subject than the Lord Himself. (Rom. 2:8-11; Matt. 18:1-11; Luke 16:19-31).

We may also wisely remind ourselves of the unity of the Old Testament and the New Testament revelation. They comprise one progressive revelation of the gospel of God's grace from the first promise in Genesis 3:15, until the new heaven and the new earth are created. Also the promises of the gospel embrace all who have lived by faith under both covenants. The "old" foreshadows and anticipates the "new," and the "new" authenticates and completes the "old." Let us not think that the Old Testament gives a lower standard than the new. The words, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind," are in both Testaments, and both were written for this supreme and gracious end.

It is clear that in former times as well as in latter times God's people were not to have any personal enmity in their hearts. "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart" (Lev. 19:17-18.) Also, "If thou meet thine enemy's ox or ass going astray thou shalt surely bring it back to him" (Ex. 23:4-5.) Good had to be returned for evil. "If thine enemy hunger feed him. If he thirst give him to drink." And "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." are also words found in both Testaments.

There is however an essential difference between Israel of old and God's people since the Lord Jesus died and rose again, as to their outward order and privileges. Israel was a theocracy having an earthly kingdom and glory to sustain, and through whom God desired to work and bring blessing to all nations. Thus those who were the enemies of Israel, desiring their destruction, were the enemies of God, and imprecatory expressions imply longings for God's vindication and subduing of the wicked. The imprecatory psalms were not the cry of the ungodly, but of the godly within the nation, and who had God's honour and glory at heart.

Furthermore God used His people Israel to make His judgments known in the earth, as in the destruction of the defiled nations of Canaan when their iniquity had come to the full, and whose children also God took away from scenes of degradation and iniquity. God once cleansed the earth with a flood of waters. He has rained fire and brimstone from heaven to destroy morally corrupt cities, and the Lord is to visit and cleanse the earth again with sore judgments when iniquity and apostasy have come to the full in this modern age, as the following Scriptures foretell (2 Thess. chs. 1 and 2; Rev. chs. 13 and 19).

In contrast to Israel's kingdom, God's pilgrim people in this gospel age do not bear the sword of the Lord as Israel once did, though it has sometimes been claimed and wielded by ecclesiastical powers. The weapons of God's saints, though mighty, are not carnal. The authority to rule has been given by God to governments among nations. They are God's ministers to execute judgment (Rom. 13). The taking of human life is the prerogative of God, and of those to whom this is delegated, for the preservation and sanctity of human life. Those who seek to set aside the primeval law, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed," under the guise of superior wisdom, professing to be wiser than God as regards human government shall surely reap their reward. Like marriage, also largely set aside, both laws are, "from the beginning."

Retribution is righteous. Without it life would be irrational, and a mockery, though God alone is able to exactly assess men's guilt.

At the consummation of this age, when the Lord arises in judgment to overthrow the wicked, climaxed commercially and ecclesiastically in mystery Babylon the great, the harlot mother and her daughters, we read that the holy apostles and prophets, yea all heaven, are called upon to rejoice in, and give God praise for, her destruction (Rev. chs. 17, 18, 19).

The psalms have not been given to us to sing without any discrimination, though because of the unity of the redeemed in all ages, through God's regenerative work by His Spirit in the heart (John ch. 3), they largely give expression to our Christian experiences, and to our deepest spiritual desires.

YOUNG PEOPLES' COLUMNS

BROKEN SHIPS

In Psalm 48:7, we read, "Thou breakest the ships of Tarshish with an East wind." The word denotes strong ships to go on long voyages or the word may be the name of a place to which the ships went. It is not certain where this place was, because some think it was a port in Spain; others think it might be in North Africa; yet others, that it was in Ceylon. But wherever it was, we know that King Solomon's "ships went to Tarshish with the servants of Hiram; every three years once came the ships of Tarshish, bringing gold and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks" (2 Chron. 9:21). For Solomon had been made very great by God, as the next verse states, "And King Solomon passed all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom." These ships made their voyages in safety, for it seems God withheld His east wind, so that they were not broken.

But a good king of Judah, named Jehoshaphat, also made ships of Tarshish to go to Ophir for gold; but they went not; for the ships were broken at Ezion-gebes" (1 Kings 22:48). Why was this? We are told, in 2 Chronicles 20:35-37. This good king joined in this work with "Ahaziah, king of Israel, who did very wickedly." "They made the ships in Ezion-geber," and there they were broken. A servant of God came with a message from God—"Because thou hast joined thyself with Ahaziah, the LORD hath broken thy works." The wicked king tried to persuade this good king to make a second attempt to send ships to Tarshish. "Let my servants go with thy servants in the ships. But Jehoshaphat would not" (1 Kings 22:49). So this good king learned his lesson. It seems he made two mistakes: first, that his kingdom and himself were far below the glory which God gave to Solomon, and that what was right for Solomon to do was not right for him. It may be there was some pride in his heart, especially as he was seeking for gold. Secondly, he made friends with a very wicked man, and tried to work with him, and this displeased God. There are lessons here for us—to beware of pride and wrong friendships. It is written, "Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."

A Ship that was like to be broken

Before we think of another ship that went to pieces, let us think of one that was saved from this fate in a very wonderful way. Strangely, Tarshish again comes before us. You have all heard the story of Jonah. He did not want to do what God had told him to do; so he went in the

opposite direction, and found just what he wished—a ship going from Joppa to Tarshish. But he never got there, for God "sent a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken." The sailors were full of fear. They did what they could. They cried each one to his god. They threw the cargo overboard, but all to no purpose. Then they awakened Jonah, who was fast asleep, and said, "What meanest thou, O sleeper? Arise, and call upon thy God." What a solemn rebuke to a servant of God from those who did not know God! Then, casting lots, they found that Jonah was the cause of their distress. "What shall we do unto THEE, that the sea may be calm unto US?" they asked. To their surprise, he told them to throw him into the sea; at first they would not, but rowed hard to get the ship to land. But nothing they could do was able to save them, so at last Jonah was cast overboard, and at once there was a calm.

Here is a wonderful picture of God's salvation. Nothing these sailors could do was able to stay the storm, but the suffering of Jonah brought peace. So, nothing we can do will save us from God's judgment, but the death of the Lord Jesus alone is able to save. Because of His work only can anyone have peace with God.

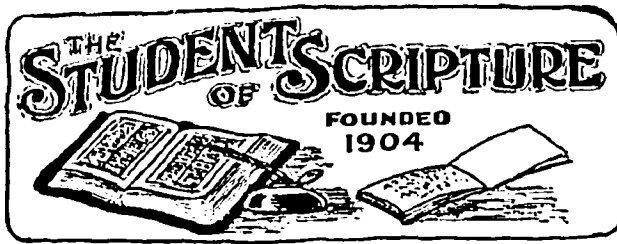
THE DAY OF THE LORD

Continued from page 6

hasting unto the coming of the Day of God" (see Rev. 16:14 for this phrase, "the Day of God," and note Rev. 6:17). And judgment is again brought into holy prominence in 1 John 4:17 and Jude 6.

Now it is the evil day (Eph. 6:13) but soon there will be the great change. Blessed are they who, in the mercy of God, redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, can humbly say that their sins are forgiven, and that nothing can separate them from His love.

O that each believing heart may leap for joy, and, in the quickening power of the Holy Spirit, seek to "live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world (age); looking for that Blessed Hope, and the glorious appearing of the Great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Titus 2).



THE DAY OF THE LORD

(continued)

Through this study of *present* privileges and responsibilities, we have already seen something of "the Day of the LORD." Often it is brought before us in the earlier part of Scripture as "darkness," and linked with "wrath" (Amos 5:18, 20; Zeph. 1:14-16). "That Day" is frequently mentioned in Isaiah and Zechariah, and its characteristic is seen in Isaiah's *first* mention:—"The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that Day" (2:11, 17). And this is plain also from the latter part of the Scriptures. It is clear from Revelation 6:1-11 that there are *premonitory* displays of God's power, but man is *not* humbled. On the contrary, this age ends with Antichrist still in the ascendant, still on the throne. The *decisive* conflict of Revelation 16:14, is definitely reserved for "The Day of God Almighty." It would therefore seem that, as the Coming of Christ, *immediately* after the tribulation of those days (Matt. 24:29-31) is the *beginning* of "The Day" (2 Pet. 1:19), and that the temporarily terrified men of Revelation 6:15, 16, express a tremendous fact when they cry, "The great Day of His wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?" this *day* is marked by the *sitting down* of Christ (Ps. 110:1; Heb. 1:3); but *then* He will have risen up (Luke 13:25). (From verse 24, it is important to observe that the *present* dispensation is associated with the *narrow gate*). When the Lord standeth up to judge (Isa. 3:13), it will be "The Day of His power" (Ps. 110:3), "The Day of His wrath" (v. 5). This is a totally different aspect from the present age. Now we are to give place to wrath, "for it is written, Vengeance is Mine; I will repay, saith the Lord" (Rom. 12:19). "I will repay;" the future is certain, but it remains future, and a careful study of Scripture will shew that the words "wrath" and "indignation," as being from God, are *not* used by the Holy Spirit in the Book of Revelation *before* the time of the sixth unsealing. The previous period does NOT belong to "the Day of vengeance of our God," and it is quite compatible with the grace thus empha-

sized, if not *necessarily* linked, that the saints of the *present dispensation* should be found on earth so long as this long-suffering and grace of God are being shewn. To take them away *before* the time of wrath would almost involve a contradiction. Hence we find (2 Pet. 1:19) they are regarded as having the word of prophecy, and still surrounded by "a dark place" *until* the Day dawns. They are the objects of God's interest, and He leads them to spiritual and "unworldlike" repentance ("us-ward" or "you-ward") and *then* the Day of the Lord will come (2 Pet. 3:9-10); (verse 14 implies a position amid earth, "in peace" of heart, up till that time; the words would lose much force otherwise).

In accordance with this, we find that *as soon as* the Day of the Lord commences there are definite dealings with ISRAEL. At once there is the sealing of the tribes (Rev. 7) and the tribes of the land mourn (Matt. 24:30; Rev. 1:7, lit.). Thus will be fulfilled the prophecy of Zechariah 12:10-14. Nothing will be before the appointed period, nothing will be too late. Everything will be by God's appointment. The "Third Day" (Hos. 6:2) will have begun, and the words of Isaiah 61:2-3, will be, strictly, and blessedly for Israel, carried out:—"And the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto all them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes."

Deeply important is the promise of Christ, repeated four times in the 6th Chapter of John's Gospel (verse 39, 40, 44, 54), to raise up His beloved people "in the last day." We do well to ponder the word, "Last," as in 1 Corinthians 15:52. It is beautiful to see Martha's appreciation of His testimony, when Christ led her to realize yet more of Himself. We ask, "What day?" and we find in John 12:48 another statement, namely, that the ungodly will be judged "in the last day." Is not this the Day of the Lord? A word may be uttered in passing against the unholy and unfounded doctrine which sets forth the judgment as an opportunity in which the majority will be *blessed*. The context in John 12 combines with chapter 5:29 to refute this sinful interpretation. Let us not encourage the ungodly by setting aside the tremendous facts of God's great wrath. Reader, if your sins are not blotted out, you are now in the greatest peril. But to return, since believers are raised "in the last day," and we also read, "The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, *before* that great and notable day of the Lord come" (Acts 2:20), have we not His own

instruction as to their presence on earth until the sixth unsealing, and His own explanation as to the time when the Day starts?

There is *nothing* between "man's day" and the Day of the Lord! Changed characteristics are very marked in Scripture. We have already seen that He alone shall be exalted. In accord with this, we find that the judgment which is now held back (John 12:47) will *then* be manifested (verse 48, "in the last Day"). "Jesus Christ . . . shall judge the quick and the dead *at His appearing and His Kingdom*." (2 Tim. 4:1, and compare 1 Pet. 4:5; Jude 6). But believers will have boldness amid all; "that we may have boldness in the Day of judgment, because as He is, so are we in this world" (1 John 4:17); for they will not come into judgment (John 5:24), since so wondrously saved in Him Who took their demerits, and in Whose merits they stand accepted. Hence the fulness of the description already noticed in Isaiah 61:2, namely, "the Day of Vengeance" (of ch. 59; 17; 63:4). To the unsaved sinner judgment must mean *vengeance*. This twofold aspect, of wrath and mercy, is remarkable in these passages:—"The year of My *redeemed*," is God's own title for that which is also, in blessing, a year of His goodness as to products of a sin-cursed earth (Ps. 65:11, margin). When His indignation is known toward His enemies, His hand will be known toward His servants (Isa. 66:14). Happy indeed are *they*!

Should it not be said that this removes an error respecting the Lord's address on the Mount? Some have transferred its teaching to the Day of the Lord. But how inappropriate, for the redeemed will be exalted *when* their Lord is exalted. In like manner the suggestion that the *quite* different expression—"The Lord's Day" (Rev. 1:10) means "The Day of the Lord," not only puts aside the verbal exactness of Scripture, but makes Rev. 2:10, for example, unfitting. Persecution may be expected now, but "That Day," though darkness to the ungodly (Amos 5:18, 20), will be light to His beloved people (2 Pet. 1:19). The *twofold* prophecy:—"The watchman said, the morning cometh, and also the night" (Isa. 21:12)—will be illustrated. And which will it be to us?

Thus we see that Scripture bears a consistent testimony as to the *nature* of the Day and *when* it begins. It will be well, in closing, to look through the epistles, and notice the precious and solemnizing allusions. Readers who are believers may be able to work out more fully their different aspects. In Romans 2:5, we have "The Day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of

God." The anger *exists*, but is not yet *revealed*. (Compare Rom. 1:18). Verse 16 speaks of "the Day when God shall *judge* the secrets of men by Jesus Christ." There will be no hiding away from Him. But the People of the Lord are encouraged with the precious thought that "the night is far spent; the Day is at hand" (Rom. 13:12). Believers will be "blameless (uncharged) in the Day of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 1:8), where others will be charged or called into judgment, as the word used by the Holy Spirit implies. Concerning the judgment seat of Christ, a totally different thought (see 1 Cor. 3:15), we read, "Every man's *WORK* shall be made manifest, for the Day shall declare it" (1 Cor. 3:15). The context speaks of the children of God only. There is *discipline* with a view to That Day (1 Cor. 5:5 and see ch. 11:30-32). Yet there will be mutual rejoicings "in the Day of the Lord Jesus" (2 Cor. 1:14). *Then* will be granted the redemption of the body" (Eph. 4:30; Rom. 8:23). In Philippians 1:6, we read, "Being confident of this very thing, that He Which hath begun a good work in you will perfect it until the Day of Jesus Christ"—a word full of comforting assurance and holy confidence (note this with verse—"from the first day"). Verse 10 looks forward in prayer, "That ye may be sincere and without offence till the Day of Christ;" and in chapter 2:16, we again see the happy boasting in what the Lord has caused. In 1 Thessalonians 5:2-8, is an explanation why those who are "of the Day" will *not* be *overtaken* by the Day of the Lord; on the contrary yet more *grace* is to be brought to them (1 Pet. 1:13). Thus in every way, there will be in their experience, a contrast with the thought of—"as a thief." The Lord's glory amid His saints "in that Day," is before us in 2 Thessalonians 1:10, whilst the next chapter reveals how the Day of the Lord cannot set in before an awful climax of evil (2:2 lit.). "That Day" is again before us in 2 Timothy 1:12, 18 and 4:8, as the time of reward for saints. Hebrews 4 refer to precious types of the millennial rest, and in chapter 10:25, believers are seen to be gathering together more earnestly as they see the Day approaching. The dawning of the Day is set forth in 2 Peter 1:19, but to the ungodly its terrors are emphasized, for to such it will be "a day of judgment" (ch. 2:19), and "a day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men" (3:7). The next verse refers to the times and seasons in the words, "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day." Verse 12 describes what should be the believer's intense attitude in "looking for and

Continued on page 4

INSPIRED WORDS INSPECTED

No. 68

(concluded)

AND (kai).

HAVING (not in text).

A HIGH PRIEST (hierea megan); noun and adjective, masculine, accusative; from "hiereus" (priest); "hierarchy" is derived herefrom. The adjective is "megas—ale—a (great); occurs in "megaphone" and other words. Here the greatness is in person, position, and power.

OVER (epi); preposition, meaning "on" or "upon" or "on to," and may be followed by accusative or genitive or dative case. Here it governs the accusative, usually signifying "motion on to." Our Lord occupies a position of authority over His house. Compare chapter 3:6, and contrast Moses, a servant in IN God's house, but Christ OVER His house.

THE HOUSE (ton oikon); article and noun, accusative, masculine, from "oikos" (house).

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

LET US DRAW NEAR (proserchometha); verb, present tense, subjunctive, from "proserchomai," a compound of "pros" (toward) and "erchomai" (to come); hence, "to come toward" or "to approach." The tense allows of the rendering, "we may draw near" or as here rendered. Compare Romans 5:1, which may be rendered, "Let us have peace."

WITH (meta); preposition, signifying companionship. Here it is followed by the genitive case, and denotes the condition of heart which must go together with an approach to God.

A TRUE (alethines); adjective, genitive, feminine, from "alethinos, -e, -on" (true). It means that which is real, genuine, and unfeigned.

HEART (kardias); noun, feminine, genitive, from "kardia" (heart). In languages, there are similarities, with regular changes, as "k" replaced by "h"; for example, "bishop" for episkopos. Compare Scandinavian, "fisk" for "fish." So "kardia" becomes "heart" in English, "coeur" in French. "Kardiac," of course, is derived from the Greek word.

IN (en); preposition, meaning "In," governing dative case. Thus there is not only a "with" (company) but an "in" (sphere).

FULL ASSURANCE (plerophoriai); noun, feminine, dative, from a verb compounded of "pleres" (full) and "phoreo" (to bear); hence, "to bear or bring fully." In N.T., it has the thought of full assurance (see Col. 2:2; 1 Thess. 1:5; Heb. 6:11). The word is not found in non-Christian writings,

but the verb is used. It pictures a ship well-laden and on a steady course, perhaps with the wind in its sails, bearing it along.

OF FAITH (pisteos); noun, feminine, genitive, from "pistis" (faith). The genitive may denote the character, and, perhaps, the source of the assurance—faith.

HAVING BEEN SPRINKLED (rerantismenoi); participle, perfect, passive, from "rhantizo," (to sprinkle). The word occurs in ch. 9:19. The perfect tense denotes a past action with a present effect.

OUR HEARTS (tas kardias); noun, feminine, plural, accusative, from "kardia." Render, "the hearts."

FROM (apo); preposition, meaning "from" or "away from," with the thought of separation. It is followed always by the genitive case.

AN EVIL (poneras); adjective, genitive, feminine, qualifying "conscience," which precedes it in the text; from "poneros, -a, -on" (evil).

CONSCIENCE (suneideseos); noun, feminine, genitive; from "suneidesis," a compound of "sun" (with, together with) and a word derived from "oida" (to know or perceive). Hence, "a knowing together with oneself." "Con-science" is similar in construction. The word occurs in ch. 9:9, 14 and 10:2. A conscience of sins is an evil one, and needs "purging" or "cleansing," which could not be effected by the Law. Only the blood, of sprinkling can effect such purging, and that is "the blood of Jesus." The Law, when applied by the Holy Spirit, operates on the conscience, which cannot be relieved or tranquilized until the same Holy Spirit shews the value and efficacy of the precious blood of Christ to the troubled conscience of a conscious sinner.

AND (kai).

HAVING BEEN WASHED (léloumenoi); participle, perfect, passive; from "louo" (to wash, bathe). It is used to denote the washing of the whole body. It is the first of the words, "wash" in John 13:10; the other word, "nipto" is used for washing part of the body. The perfect tense, as already mentioned, signifies a past action with a present effect. The same participle is used in John 13:10 as in this verse (Heb. 10:22). The Lord's words, "needeth not" give point to this.

OUR BODIES (to soma); article and noun neuter, singular. Though the A.V. renders the phrase by the plural, the literal translation is, "the body." The verb is plural, for a company is addressed, but the noun is singular, perhaps to stress the individual aspect.

WITH (not in text); it is implied by the dative in the following words.

PURE (katharoi); verb, dative, to agree with "water," which it qualifies; from "katharos, -a, -on" (pure). This is an instance of the dative of instrument.

WATER (hudati); noun, neuter, dative (of instrument), from "hudor" (water). Water is mentioned in Eph. 5:26, to do with *sanctifying* and cleansing. The priests of old were washed all over at their *consecration*. Both thoughts may be before us, for saints are "a holy priesthood." Let it again be stressed that "sprinkled" and "washed" mean that which has been done, with the thought of fixity and abiding result. The fact that both words are passive emphasizes that the subjects are vessels of Divine mercy.

COVENANT—TRUTH

The Covenant of Works

In Galatians 4:22-31, it is written that there are "the two covenants; the one from the Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage," and under which are all "born after the flesh." It is commonly called "The Law," and "The Law was given by Moses," "ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator" (John 1:17; Gal. 3:19). The awe-inspiring accompaniments were so fearful, that even "Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake" (Heb. 12:21). The record is found in Exodus, chapters 20 to 24. After the proclamation of "the ten words," amid "the thunderings and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the smoking mountain," the people "removed and stood afar off." "And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die" (Ex. 20:18-19). In chapters 21 to 23, the ten commandments are elaborated, slavery, manslaughter, and theft being mentioned with their penalties. Then "Moses came and told all the words of the LORD, and all the judgments; and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the LORD hath said will we do" (Ex. 24:3). "And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people, and they said, All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient" (v. 7). Previously, burnt offerings and peace-offerings had been sacrificed, and "Moses took half the blood, and put it in basins." Now, he took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words" (v. 8). To this the epistle to Hebrews alludes—"Whereupon neither the first (covenant) was dedicated without blood" (Heb. 10:18-21). Moses, on the

threshold of the promised land, "in the fortieth year," reminded the children of Israel of these days. "The day when thou stoodest before the LORD thy God in Horeb" (Deut. 4:10). "These words (the ten commandments) the LORD spake unto all your assembly in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice; and He added no more. And He wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto me" (Deut. 5:22).

It has already been mentioned that Moses was the mediator of this "old covenant." The people themselves desired this—"Go thou near, and hear all that the LORD our God shall say; and speak thou unto us all that the LORD our God shall speak unto thee; and we will hear it and do it." This desire of Israel was Divinely approved. "I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken unto thee; *they have well said all that they have spoken*. O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear Me, and keep all My commandments always" (Deut. 5:27-29). The words, "And He added no more," referring to "the ten words" would appear to emphasize the convicting power of the last commandment—"Thou shalt not covet," which words Paul found so revealing. "I had not known sin, except the Law had said, 'Thou shalt not covet.'" Other words *did* follow, but, as already pointed out, they were expository of the Law.

The Covenant broken

After the giving of the Law, and its confirmation by the sprinkling of blood, Moses went up into the mountain to receive further Divine instruction for the good of the people. But the fear that possessed them under Mount Sinai so recently, and their more recent promise of full obedience had faded from their minds. They broke the first commandment, and the second, and Moses' act in casting down the two "tables of the covenant" and breaking them beneath the mount symbolized the breaking of the whole law (cf. Jas. 2:10). The people were, on the pleading of Moses, restored to God's favour, but not apart from severe chastisement. Again and again, they provoked God to anger throughout their history. Idolatry is found in the house of an individual, Micah of Mount Ephraim, with the encouragement of his mother. His images were stolen by the tribe of Dan, who, with the help of a Levite, set them up in their midst (Judges 17 and 18). But, sad to say, it was in the latter part of the reign of Solomon, that his heart was turned away after other gods. The "abominations" of the Zidonians, the Ammonites, and the Moabites, Ashtoreth, Milcom, Chemosh,

and Molech, all found a place "in the hill that is before Jerusalem" (1 Kings 11:4-8). Intermarriage with Gentile women—a thing forbidden under the "covenant"—was practiced by the king, whose reign in the end became oppressive. The division of the nation into the Northern and Southern Kingdoms, called "Israel" (or "Ephraim") and "Judah," which followed the death of Solomon, led to idolatry in the former, becoming so flagrant that God sent the Assyrians to chastise them, and take them into captivity. Prior to this there were times when God could say through His prophet, "Ephraim compasseth Me about with lies, and the house of Israel with deceit; but Judah yet ruleth with God, and is faithful with the saints," yet there was a warning, "Let not Judah offend" (Hosea 11:12; 4:15).

(If the Lord will, to be continued.)

AN AGED PILGRIM'S TESTIMONY

Psalm 71

Whoever the writer was, and it may have been David, he was an aged person, and, as is often expressed, "feeling the weight of his years." "Cast me not off in the time of old age" (v. 9), and, "I am old and gray-headed" (v. 18), make this clear. Hence, his experience of the ways of God with him must encourage, as well as interest, those who, like the writer of these lines, have passed the "three score years and ten." Younger saints too, if they will, can profit by the words of those who have lived near to God, and are well advanced on the pilgrim way.

A Retrospect

The writer takes a retrospective view. He looks back to his younger days. "For Thou art my hope, O Lord GOD; Thou art my trust *from my youth*" (5). "O God, Thou hast taught me *from my youth*; and hitherto have I declared Thy wondrous works" (17). How many of God's people have cause for gratitude for the call by grace that reached them in youth, so that they have known the Lord Jesus as Saviour, and served Him as Lord from early days. They are being "Kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (1 Pet. 1). "Not unto us," they say, "not unto us, but unto Thy Name give glory." The psalmist trusted God and was taught by Him. Faith and Divine instruction are twin blessings, and this he had proved "from my youth."

A Life-long Witness

Moreover, what he thus learned he was ready to make known to others. He was God's witness. "Hitherto I have declared Thy wondrous works" (17). His theme is God's righteousness and salvation. "My mouth shall shew forth Thy righteousness and Thy salvation all the day; for I know not the numbers thereof. I will go in the strength of the Lord GOD; I will make mention of Thy righteousness, even of *Thine only*" (verses 15, 16). Like Isaiah, he would confess *his own* righteousnesses to be filthy rags. What he knew of imputed righteousness through the work of Another as his substitute, we may not know in full, but it is clear that God's "salvation" to him was not apart from "righteousness." And see Psalm 32:1-2 with Romans 4:6-8 on this subject of imputation. These early saints knew more than we realize.

Divine Sovereignty

Our psalmist not only traces the hand of God with, and upon, him from youth. He sees God working for him prior to his birth. "By Thee I have been holden up from the womb; Thou art He that took me out of my mother's bowels; my praise shall be continually of Thee" (6). He is not alone in this confession and acknowledging of such providential mercy and predestinating love. Jeremiah (ch. 1:5) and Paul (Gal. 1:15) are one with him in these respects. They were chosen vessels to declare the word of God, and was not this true of *him* also? In our measure, too, dear fellow-believers, we are God's witnesses, for we have been chosen, not only that we might be saved from everlasting punishment, but that we might "be to the praise of His glory; who first trusted in Christ" (Eph. 1:12), here and hereafter.

What is so refreshing in this godly man's testimony is that his love for God and His truth has not weakened as he grows older. He still brings forth fruit in old age. His spiritual and mental vigour have not declined, "My praise shall be *continually* of Thee" (v. 6). "Let my mouth be filled with Thy praise and with Thy honour *all the day*" (8). "But I will hope *continually*, and will yet praise Thee *more and more*" (14). "*All the day*" again in verse 15. "My tongue also shall talk of Thy *righteousness all the day long*" (24). And, realizing his age, he says, "O God, forsake me not; until I have shewed Thy strength unto this generation, and Thy power to every one that is to come" (18). So keen is his desire to serve his God, he has already besought Him, "Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth" (9). He has a concern for "this generation"

and for that that is to come. He is not self-centred, nor does he look down on younger men and women. He would, though conscious of failing powers, manifest to them the strength that is made perfect in weakness, realizing also that he needs the constant presence of the LORD. For this he prayed.

Tribulation

In his own experience, he had proved in time past, the imparted power of God. Hence, he could speak for the encouragement of others. The afflictions he had passed through were by Divine permission; "Thou . . . hast shewed me great and sore troubles" (20), and even *as he penned these words*, he knew that "the hand of the wicked . . . the hand of the unrighteous and cruel man" was against him (4). He had "enemies" and "adversaries" that spoke against him, that sought his hurt, assuming that "God hath forsaken him" and "there is none to deliver him" (verses 10-13, 24). Yet, amid all, he cries to God for help and deliverance; and, certain that God is not far from him, and will make haste to help, he, with all calmness, utters a confident note, "But I will hope continually" (14). He turns from man to God, His righteousness and His salvation. What an example to us, whose trials are so much smaller than his!

A Prospective View

We have seen how this servant of God, looking back, traces the hand of God throughout his life. He tells of present experiences of sore trials, yet there is nothing of pessimism, nothing of bitterness, nothing of faithlessness, but rather hopeful buoyancy, despite his age. When this psalm was written, the Gospel had not shed its light on "life and immortality" (2 Tim. 1:10); yet the psalmist seems to have an *expectation of resurrection*; "Thou, Which hast shewed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth." In those days, the souls of the saints went to Sheol (Hades); but at the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, they were transferred from thence to Paradise (Heb. 2:14-15). The word, "deliver," contains this thought of change from one place to another. Our psalmist was a subject of Divine teaching. Hence the assurance with which he speaks. His hope of future blessedness may be inferred from that which follows; "Thou shalt increase my greatness, and comfort me on every side" (v. 21). And although verses 21-22 speak of musical instruments such as were known and used by the saints of old in their

worship of the LORD, the words, being those of an aged one, rather look on to a heavenly scene (Rev. 15:2).

Conclusion

Who can read this Psalm unmoved, or fail to take courage, even though the pressure of tribulation and trials be keenly felt? Shall we not lay our burden on the Lord, and make the words of verse three our prayer? "Be Thou my strong habitation, whereunto I may continually resort: Thou hast given commandment to save me; for Thou art my Rock and my fortress."

NOTES ON MEMORIZED VERSES

ZECHARIAH 9

1. The eyes of man, as of . . . Israel, toward the Lord. This seems to look on to the day of the Lord. 2-7. From Damascus, on the north east to the coast line of the Great Sea, God will deal with the enemies of His people. 8. God's "I will." "I have seen" (cf. Ex. 3:7). 9. This was fulfilled at the first coming of Messiah (Matt. 21:5; John 12:15). 10. This looks on to the second coming and the universal rule of the Lord Jesus. 11. "The blood of thy covenant" reminds of Hebrews 13:20, which alone effects a release. 12. "Double" (cf. Isa. 40:2). 13. God will again take up His chosen—"for Me." 14. The LORD fighting for them. 15. The LORD defending them. 16. The LORD shall save them. "In that Day," is surely the day of the Coming of Christ. 17. The joy of a restored people because of the goodness of God.

ZECHARIAH 10

1. A *Timely* message about showers (of blessing). 2. Diviners and dreamers, but no shepherd. How like the present day! 3. Yet there were shepherds, false ones. But God will shepherd His own. 4. "Out of him." Whom? Apparently the Lord, because, 5. the Lord is with them, giving them victory. 6. How plain are these words, telling of God's purpose to restore Israel. 7. The theme continued—Israel's future joy. 8, 9. God's "I will," "I have redeemed," "they shall." The Divine purpose concerning Israel must be fulfilled. 10. "Out of" and "into," as when God worked through Moses (Exodus). 11. As then, He will deal with His and their enemies. 12. Strength and activity, all by grace.

ZECHARIAH 11

1-3. Divine judgments on Israel's land (Lebanon, Bashan, Jordan). 4. Yet there is a flock known to God, liable to slaughter, and poor (verses 7, 11). 5. Prophetic of the Roman occupation. They were the "sellers," and Israel's own shepherds failed (see the Gospels). 6. The fall of the nation under Titus (A.D. 70). 7. Yet "the flock" is fed (see John 10)—a remnant. 8. "Shepherds" who despised Messiah, as the Jewish leaders. 9. This again refers to the siege of Jerusalem as foretold by the Lord (Luke 21:20-24). 10. "Beauty" (the comeliness of Israel) (Ezek. 16:13-14). "Bands" (the oneness of the nation), the brotherhood (v. 14). 11. Broken, to symbolise a broken covenant

(see Ezek. 16:8). The poor of the flock had understanding. 12. 13. These words confirm that the prophecy relates to Messiah's first coming and the forty years following (see Matt. 27). 14. The action symbolised the division into the northern and southern kingdoms. 15-17. Appears to foretell a false shepherd, who will be "idolised," but will know Divine judgment. Is not this the Antichrist?

ZECHARIAH 12

1. The Great Creator speaks. 2. We are now directed to the days preceding the second coming of Messiah. 3. The nations will bring on themselves a burden by their antagonism to God's city and people. 4. "In that Day"—a time mark. God will stand up for them. 5. Trust in the

city, not in the Lord, but, 6. God will act for them, and give them victory. "In Jerusalem." Can words be plainer? They refer to Jerusalem on earth. Note, "again." 7-8. Judah first, then Jerusalem. Strength for the feeble. 9. Destroy ALL. 10. Grace causing true prayer, and a revelation of a once crucified Saviour, and heart-sorrow. Then A time of godly sorrow, leading to repentance. Then will be the confession of Isaiah 53:1-6.

ZECHARIAH 13

1. "In that Day"—frequently mentioned. The last Day, when Christ comes again. A Fountain opened. The value of Christ's atoning work will then be unveiled and trusted in by Israel, "beginning at Jerusalem."

SUGGESTED DAILY READINGS

"IF THE LORD WILL"—APRIL, 1962

Day	READING		LEARNING	
	Exodus	Matthew	Zechariah	Hebrews
1	14 19-31	20 17-34	11 3	9 10
2	15 1-27	21 1-16	4	11
3	16 1-18	17-32	5	12
4	19-36	33-46	6	13
5	17 1-16	22 1-14	7	14
6	18 1-27	15-33	8	15
7	19 1-25	34-46	9	16
8	20 1-26	23 1-24	10	17
9	21 1-17	25-39	11	18
10	18-36	24 1-13	12	19
11	22 1-13	14-28	13	20
12	14-31	29-40	14	21
13	23 1-17	41-51	15	22
14	18-33	25 1-13	16	23
15	24 1-18	14-30	17	24
16	25 1-16	31-46	12 1	25
17	17-30	26 1-13	2	26
18	31-40	14-25	3	27
19	26 1-13	26-35	4	28
20	14-25	36-50	5	10 1
21	26-37	51-61	6	2
22	27 1-21	62-75	7	3
23	28 1-14	27 1-11	8	4
24	15-29	12-23	9	5
25	30-43	24-33	10	6
26	29 1-14	34-44	11	7
27	15-30	45-56	12	8
28	31-46	57-66	13	9
29	30 1-21	28 1-10	14	10
30	22-38	11-20	13 1	11

SUGGESTED DAILY READINGS

"IF THE LORD WILL"—MARCH, 1962

Day	READING		LEARNING	
	Genesis	Matthew	Zechariah	Hebrews
1	45 16-28	8 1-17	9 1	7 20
2	46 1-10	18-34	2	21
3	11-20	9 1-13	3	22
4	21-34	14-26	4	23
5	47 1-14	27-38	5	24
6	15-31	10 1-15	6	25
7	48 1-22	16-28	7	26
8	49 1-15	29-42	8	27
9	16-33	11 1-15	9	28
10	50 1-26	16-30	10	8 1
11	Exodus 1 1-22	12 1-21	11	2
12	2 1-25	22-37	12	3
13	3 1-22	38-50	13	4
14	4 1-17	13 1-15	14	5
15	18-31	16-30	15	6
16	5 1-23	31-44	16	7
17	6 1-15	45-58	17	8
18	16-30	14 1-21	10 1	9
19	7 1-25	22-36	2	10
20	8 1-15	15 1-14	3	11
21	16-32	15-28	4	12
22	9 1-16	29-39	5	13
23	17-35	16 1-12	6	9 1
24	10 1-13	13-28	7	2
25	14-29	17 1-13	8	3
26	11 1-10	14-27	9	4
27	12 1-17	18 1-14	10	5
28	18-36	15-35	11	6
29	37-51	19 1-15	12	7
30	13 1-22	16-30	11 1	8
31	14 1-18	20 1-16	2	9

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THOUGHTS FROM

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FOR GOD'S
GRACE AND
TRUTH

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BY
PERCY W.
HEWARD

THE WORD OF GOD

AND

THE STUDENT OF SCRIPTURE

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FREE

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"Giving thanks always for all things
unto GOD and the FATHER in the
Name of our LORD JESUS CHRIST."

Eph. 5 : 20.

"LOVEST THOU ME MORE THAN THESE?"

"Hast thou friendly love to Me?"

Hear thy loving Saviour speak

Even, O my soul, to thee,

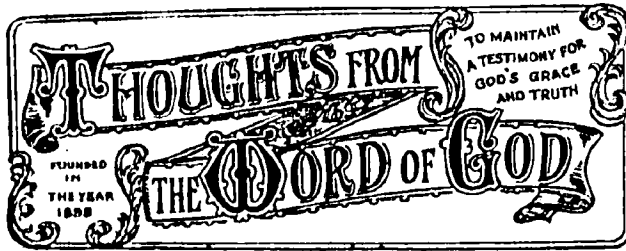
Words so tender, gracious, meek,

His strong love, a golden bond,

Thee to Him hath bound for aye.

"I lov'st thou Me all things beyond?"

O my soul, what wilt thou say?



WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

"Know therefore that the LORD thy God, He is God, the faithful God."

To a chosen people, "loved" and "redeemed" and about to enter upon the fulfilment of the promise made to their fathers, were spoken these words of encouragement and exhortation. And may not we, who are blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies see in them a word to ourselves?

"He is GOD." That is the central thought. He is the Creator, and the Sustainer, of all. "There is nothing too hard for the LORD." "He IS," and is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." HE is God, not an impersonal power, but a glorious Living One Who loved and loves.

"He is the faithful God." How often, in the epistles we find the words, "God is faithful." He cannot lie, He cannot deny Himself. So, very often, we read, "Faithful is the word." He will not alter the thing that has gone out of His lips. And "This God is our God for ever and ever. He will not fail us nor forsake us.

We are exhorted, to know Him, for He is "thy God." The word is personal. "Know therefore" Him who "loved" and "redeemed." To this end we have been given eternal life—"in order that they might know Thee, the ONLY TRUE GOD, and JESUS CHRIST, Whom Thou hast sent" (John 17:3). May the Holy Spirit cause an increase of such knowledge in experience!

Poem to Help Christian Experience—No. 277.

"Let me find grace in thy sight, my lord, for that thou hast comforted me."

Ruth 2:13.

Let me find grace in Thy sight, gracious Lord.
For Thou dost comfort me;
Yea, Thou dost speak to me a kindly word,
Even although I be
A stranger to the house of Israel,
And but a Gentile born.

Thy righteous judgment I deserved well,
Yet am not left forlorn.

I may but glean, great Boaz, in Thy field.
Provision Thou didst make
In time gone by—'tis in Thy Law revealed—
That such as I might take
Comfort therefrom, a needy one and poor,
And of Thy grace receive.
To Jew and Gentile both is Christ the Door.
The promise I believe.

By faith Thou givest I am joined to Thee.
Be Thou my glorious Head.
Thy righteousness imputest Thou to me—
Thy raiment overspread.
Though to the world I am a stranger still
I am not thus, O Lord,
To Thee. Thou makest known to me Thy will,
And teachest me Thy Word.

I am but one of that great multitude
Whose robes are clean and white,
Washed in Thy blood. With bodies all renewed
And lovely in Thy sight,
When Thou dost come to claim Thy chosen bride
Them shalt Thou take away
From this drear scene; with Thee they shall abide
O haste that glorious Day.

SPECIAL NOTICE

Owing to the Editor not being well, the May-June number of this magazine may not be issued. It is hoped that subsequent issues will be sent forth as usual, "If the Lord will," and prayer is much valued.

"A SWEET SAVIOUR OF CHRIST"

2 Corinthians 2:15

4—THOUGHTS—

LS

This word (Euodia) only occurs in three verses in the later part of Scripture. In Ephesians 5:2, it sets forth the beautiful fragrance of the work of Christ for His people's redemption; in 2 Corinthians 2:15 and Philipians 4:18, their resulting acceptability in spiritual service. It is a term which reminds of a sacrifice, and only because of The Sacrifice are we welcomed. The merits of Christ make possible the worship and service of His redeemed. And more than "possible!" It is wondrous indeed that those who were, by nature, unholy and rebellious, have been brought into a living union with the Lord Jesus, and are so privileged that they can draw near as purged worshippers (Heb. 10:2-22). In like manner we read of the sacrifice of "praise".

(Heb. 13:15), because our praise is in, and led by, our adorable Lord (Heb. 2:12), and based on His finished work. It is so painful to find in oneself, and see around, a forgetfulness of this high and heavenly calling, and a tendency to grasp the shadows of earth, instead of a holy fulness of purpose to live with and unto Him in Whom we are so richly blessed. Surely our hearts should ever pray, "Wilt Thou not revive us again that Thy people may rejoice in Thee?" (Psalm 85:6). We rob ourselves of many enjoyments because we hesitate as to complete devotedness.

In 2 Corinthians 2 the word is joined with another (osmee), which is rendered "saviour" (verses 14, 16—twice). This word is also found in Ephesians 5:2 and in Philippians 4:18, and thus repeats and emphasises the thought of *fragrance*. Its only other occurrence is in John 12:3—"The house was filled with the odour of the ointment." The prayerful reader will observe in this record a depth of love, costly and manifest, *unto the Lord*, and the thought of that which is *precious before Him*. Ah, how we would keep this in view! Our preaching and our giving (for the latter is *exalted* by these expressions in Philippians 4) are not only for the profit of others, but *unto the Lord*. Worship is to pervade our life. We are to act as those who belong to the temple. Israel's gifts of old were accepted by God, and so are ours. Humanitarianism and kindness must not become our centres of meditation. The will of the Lord is our law, and the pleasing of the Lord our delight. It is a joy to contemplate the Philippians giving, with love, to *Paul's* need, but he describes the action as—

- (1) Fruit, the expression of spiritual life.
- (2) Something entered in the Lord's account with a view to recompense in that Day, even "treasure in heaven."
- (3) A sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God. This third aspect is the climax. The labour of love of believers is thus dignified. A true gift is not only "money"; it is pleasant fruit, it is a good investment, and it involves an act of definite spiritual devotion. If a child of God fails to exercise his privileges, or loses awhile his appointed motives, how can he expect to have the joy of the Lord?

But there are also allusions, as we find frequently to the earlier parts of Scripture. First, we

think of Cain, who brought fruit, and ignored sacrifice. How sad to see Adam, Eve, and Cain all misusing earthly fruit! God, in wondrous wisdom, gave instructions to Israel, ever referring back to this solemn failure. The people of the favoured nation were to bring fruit, but resting it upon a sacrifice. Exodus 23:19 follows teaching as to salvation by blood. We also think of Leviticus 7. And, when we come nigh with spiritual fruit, we should remember Him in Whom we are made nigh. O how great are *our* advantages, how exalted are *our* blessings! Let us exalt the Name of the Lord.

Further, the very words which come together in these verses, quoted from the epistles, are together in Leviticus 1:9 (Septuagint)—"a savour of a sweet smell"; the Hebrew also indicates a savour of rest—of rest because fixed on atonement. Nor is this passage exceptional. The same link is in Genesis 8:21, Exodus 29:18, and in such passages as Numbers 28 and 29. The sad contrast is found in Ezekiel 6:13. In other words, there is either the "acceptability" aspect, continual, before the Lord; or an unholy opposition, before idols. How precious is our height of privilege; but how awful is the depth of iniquity which can make a sweet savour to *demons*, for an idol itself is nothing and cannot smell (Ps. 115:6)!

We would, indeed, be grateful that our gracious God has associated this aspect of service with actions which are peculiarly "manward," as preaching and giving. If these are "unto the Lord," surely others, as prayer and praise, are manifestly so. Yea, the people of God are *themselves* to be a sweet savour. 'Tis not only that their godly works are to be thus glorifying God. *Their whole being* is to magnify Him. We remember the words, "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless His holy Name"; "Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God" (Ps. 103:1; Rom. 12:1). "A sweet savour of CHRIST." If we are occupied with the words, "a sweet savour," and forget HIM, we shall become proud, and the reverse of fragrant (see Isa. 65:5—"a smoke in my nose"). Christ must be the Centre and Circumference of our devoted lives. With the apostle, we would seek grace to say, and to say truthfully, "Christ liveth in me," and "to me to live is Christ" (Gal. 2:20; Phil. 1:21).

YOUNG PEOPLE'S COLUMN**Broken Ships**

Last time we were thinking of a "ship that was like to be broken." No doubt it would have been dashed in pieces, and the sailors' lives lost, had not the casting of Jonah into the sea caused the storm to cease. From this true history we learned a very beautiful lesson of how the Lord Jesus went under Divine Judgment to save a great multitude of sinners from being lost for ever.

Now, we are to think of a ship that really was broken in pieces. Paul and two of his fellow-workers were on a ship, part of its course being through the Adriatic Sea. Paul foresaw, because he was in touch with God, that they would meet with very stormy weather and advised the officers not to leave the harbour in the island of Crete. But his warning was not heeded, and although the captain of the ship thought all was well when "the south wind blew softly," they very soon ran into a very fierce wind and storm, and "all hope that we should be saved was then taken away." It was then that Paul reminded them of his unheeded warning. How foolish are most people when hearing the words, "flee from the wrath to come," they believe something different and the words of false teachers, who say there is no such place as hell, and there is no danger. The people around Noah did not believe his words about a coming judgment, "They knew not until the flood came and took them all away."

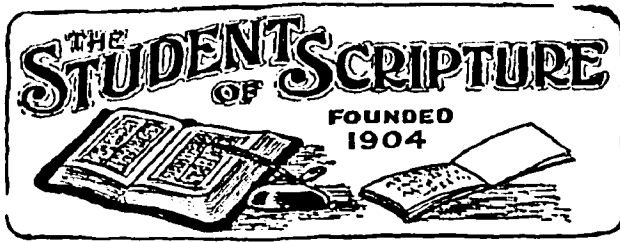
But Paul encouraged them, when they were so hopeless, by saying, "There shall be no loss of any man's life among you." The storm, however, grew worse and worse. The people on board had already lightened the ship and cast overboard the tackling. Now, even the shipmen lost faith in Paul's words, and began to let down the boat to try and save themselves; but Paul said to the officer and soldiers, "Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved." He knew, because God had told him, how they were to be saved, so all attempts on the part of some to save themselves would fail. And that is an important lesson for you and me. God has one way, and one way only, of salvation. It is through the Saviour Who loved, and gave Himself for, sinners. Do not believe people who tell you to do your best, and hope that all will come right in the end. Paul's "Except . . . ye cannot be saved" should ring in our ears. The Lord Jesus said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God"—"he cannot enter

the kingdom of God." "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." It is a sad mistake that many are making in regard to this all-important matter of salvation. Oh do not let yourself be deceived. "It is the blood (of Jesus) that maketh atonement for the soul."

The soldiers cut the ropes and let the boat fall off. It was then that Paul again bade them, "Be of good cheer." He took bread, and gave thanks to God in presence of them all, and when he had broken (the bread) he began to eat; then were they all of good cheer, and they also took some meat." Then they further lightened the ship, by casting the wheat, their food, into the sea. Then, having hoisted up the mainsail, they made toward the shore, and ran the ship aground. "And the forepart stuck fast and remained unmoveable, but the hinder part was broken with the violence of the waves."

The soldiers wanted to kill the prisoners, of whom Paul was one, but their officer, for his sake, "kept them from their purpose." Some on board were able to swim and get to land. "And the rest, some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship, and so it came to pass, that they escaped all safe to land."

God purposed to save this company of men, in number two hundred and seventy-six. He made known His purpose to Paul, whose faith enabled him to say, "I believe God that it shall be even as it was told me." And although it seemed at times that his words were not proving true, in the end God did give to him "all that sailed" with him. Nothing can frustrate God's purpose, and if, dear reader, you have, by grace, committed yourself to Him, be assured He will preserve you unto His heavenly Kingdom. Those men who were saved had nothing to rest on but a word of God, spoken through Paul. All that was in the ship had to go, the ship itself became a useless wreck, but there was no loss of any man's life. It was all a work of God's grace. They had nothing of which to boast, except the mercy of a mighty God. And so it is with that wondrous salvation which is in Christ Jesus the Lord. We cannot, we must not, trust in anything of ourselves. All must go, so that the anxious soul may rest wholly on God and His Word. May it be so in every reader's experience, by the grace of God.



COVENANT—TRUTH (continued)

There was never a revival in Israel, but there were revivals in Judah under godly Kings, as, for example, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah. At other times, in the history of Judah, as constantly in that of Israel, the LORD God, in sorrow and anger, uttered through His servants, such words as, "They kept not the covenant of God, and refused to walk in His law," "For their heart was not right with Him, neither were they steadfast in His covenant" (Ps. 78:10, 37). "They have broken My covenant because of all your abominations" (Ezek. 44:7). Prior to the reign of Josiah, the Book of the Law had been lost, but was found when the temple building was being restored and prepared once more for the worship of Jehovah. When Josiah heard the words read, he was deeply moved, and the King gathered the people and the priests and levites, "great and small, and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant that was found in the house of the LORD, and the King stood in his place, and made a covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD, and to keep His commandments, and His testimonies and His statutes, with all his heart, and with all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant which are written in this book; and he caused all that were present in Jerusalem and Benjamin to stand to it. And the inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the covenant of God, the God of their fathers" (2 Chron. 34:30-32). This revival was followed by a relapse which developed into rank rebellion ended only by the captivity by Nebuchadnezzar.

The Old Covenant is "The Law"

This is plain from all that has gone before. It is indeed a "covenant of works." As one has expressed it, the Law may be summed up thus—"THIS DO and LIVE; THAT DO and DIE." Israel voluntarily entered into this covenant, and remains thereunder. So does Christendom, and whether men like it or not, the law is still binding. If it be said that the Law was given to Israel only, the inhabitants of this land may be reminded that the "Ten Commandments" stand at the head of all the Laws of England. Islam is bound by them, for the pro-

fessors of that religion acknowledge the Scriptures. Indeed, every person who seeks the eternal favour of God as a reward for his own works takes the same position as Israel under Mount Sinai.

Summarising what has been previously stated or implied, we may say:—

(a) Man under the old covenant can never be accounted righteous or regarded as one having righteousness, for the word is written, "And it shall be our righteousness, IF we observe to DO ALL these commandments before the LORD our God, AS He hath commanded us" (Deut. 6:25).

(b) Man under the old Covenant can never reach a definite goal, for "The Law made *nothing perfect*." "For the Law . . . can *never* with those sacrifices, which they offered year by year continually, make the comers thereunto *perfect*. . . . But in those sacrifices there is a *remembrance again made* of sins every year" (Heb. 7:19; 10:1-3). So there could never be certainty, or rest of conscience.

(c) Man under the old covenant can never attain to life. "Ye shall therefore keep My statutes, and My judgments: which IF a man DO, he shall live in them. I am the LORD." (Lev. 18:5 quoted in Romans 10:5) Paul discovered the searching truth of these words—"And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death" (Rom. 7:10). The Law is holy and righteous and good, but "is weak through the flesh." Man's imperfect obedience will never give him a title to life.

(d) Reformation of the life and character can never remove past guilt. Man under the "covenant of works" is in debt to God, and has "nothing to pay."

(e) In His sermon on the mount, the Lord Jesus shews that outward conformity to law is not enough. A look or a thought can break a commandment. In another place, He declares that the Law is based on "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God," and "thou shalt love thy neighbour." Conscience alone should convince men that they have "come short of the glory of God."

How hopeless then is man under the "Covenant of Works"! How appropriate are the words, "all their lifetime subject to bondage" and "the spirit of bondage."

When, after breaking the first two tables of stone, Moses received from God two fresh ones written by the finger of God, they were placed in the ark, which retained them, and is therefore called, "the ark of the Covenant." The ark is a type of Christ, Who kept the Law (Ps. 40 and Heb. 10) and so made and presented to the Father a righteousness. And surely, "the Man *having done*

these things *shall live* in them," is none other than Christ Himself, the Mediator of the New Covenant, which He has confirmed by His own precious blood. He alone is the Hope of the sinner convicted by the Law of God. To Him be glory!

INSPIRED WORDS INSPECTED

No. 69

"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

1 Corinthians 1:18.

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

THE PREACHING (ho logos); article and noun, masculine, nominative, meaning, literally, "the word," derived from "lego" (to speak). The message concerning the cross is a word from God. The Lord Jesus has the name, "The Word"; God has spoken in His Son.

OF THE CROSS (ho tou staurou) nominative article (ho), genitive article and noun, all masculine. "Stauros" means literally, "a pointed stake," "an upright pole," derived from "histemi" (to make to stand). Hence, the word means simply, "something upstanding." The idea of a transverse piece (to form a cross) is not contained in the word itself. The cross is sometimes called "the tree," and may be equivalent to the "pole" on which Moses erected the brazen serpent. It is well to bear these facts in mind because the image of the cross has become, in many parts, an object of worship. This phrase "the of the cross" (lit.) is adjectival, qualifying "the word."

IS (estin); verb, from "eimi" (I am). It comes at the end of the clause.

ON THE ONE HAND (men); conjunction meaning "indeed," but as "de" occurs further on (and these two words often come together thus), they convey the thought, "on the one hand," "on the other hand." The word is not translated in A.V.

TO THEM THAT PERISH (tois apollumenois); article and participle, dative, plural; from "apollumi," a compound of "apo" (away or away from) and "ollumi" (to destroy, lose, perish, die). Hence, "to destroy away, to lose away, etc.," implying a completeness. The participle before us is present tense and passive voice, and may be rendered, "to the ones perishing," or "being lost away." It does not mean "annihilation," for the Lord uses the word—"the lost sheep of the house of Israel," to whom He was sent.

FOOLISHNESS (moria); noun, feminine, nominative; meaning, "foolishness or absurdity." Yet see the adjective, found in verses 25 and 27.

BUT (de); conjunction (see on "men," above).

TO US (hemin); personal pronoun, dative, plural.

WHICH ARE SAVED (tois sozomenois) article and participle, dative, plural, present tense, passive voice; from "sozo" (to save). "Hemin" is in apposition. So the phrase may be rendered, "to us, the ones being saved." "Salvation" is past, present, and future, for the individual believer. He has passed from death unto life, and is daily being kept, and that with a view to "salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (1 Pet. 1:5).

IT IS (estin); see above; the last word also in this clause. Thus in both sentences, "IS" occupies an emphatic position.

THE POWER (dunamis); noun, but no article. This does not imply indefiniteness, but rather essentiality.

OF GOD (Theou); noun, genitive, masculine. This phrase occurs in Romans 1:16, so "the Gospel" is "the word of the cross."

"THE SON OF MAN HATH NOT WHERE TO LAY HIS HEAD"

Matthew 8:20; Luke 9:58.

"HE BOWED HIS HEAD AND GAVE UP HIS SPIRIT"

John 19:30.

R. L. WHEELER

The Lord at His baptism was called to His Messianic office that He might become manifest to Israel. Former associations were left; His home and His subjection to parental authority.

More than once His kinsfolk sought to press on Him former relationships, but the Lord would not recognise their solicitations. Called of His Father to prophetic office He had put His hand to the plough and would not look back (Matt. 12:46-50; Mark 3:21-35).

Thus in a very real way it appears that the Lord had not where to lay His head. His nights of prayer alone may also be an incidental witness to His need sometimes in this respect (John 7:53, 8:1; Luke 21:37). How welcome then and how needed must have been the ministrations of the women, like Martha and Mary, who from time to time ministered to Him and gave to Him of their substance (Luke 8:2, 3; John 12:2).

We cannot but be impressed by the above Scriptures; "The Son of Man hath no where to lay His head." and, "He bowed (laid) His head and gave up His Spirit." The same word in the Greek. Only after the Lord's cry, "It is finished," after He had accomplished the work which His Father gave Him to do did He lay His head in repose. Interestingly

the same Greek word is used in both the following Scriptures:—"Abide with us for the day is *far spent*," (declining) and, "When the day began to wear away" (draw to a close). (Luke 9:12; 24:29.)

The Lord's last utterance on the shameful tree expresses complete tranquility and communion with His Father. "Father into Thy hands I commit My Spirit." As it is written, "Therefore doth My Father love Me because I lay down My life that I might take it again" (John 10:17, 18).

And we may also call to mind the closing words of Psalm 110 foretelling of the Lord's coming exaltation, "Wherefore shall He lift up the head," when in everlasting renown, His head adorned with many diadems, the nations of the earth and the people of Israel no longer gathered together against the Lord as formerly, shall bow down before Him, and serve Him, and call Him blessed (Acts 4:27, 28; Ps. 72).

To have, "No where to lay the head," were the words spoken by the Lord to one as the cost of discipleship and the same challenge remains with us today, for the disciple is not above his Master, nor the servant above his Lord. "It is enough (sufficient) for the disciple to be as his Master, and the servant as his Lord" (Matt. 10:24, 25).

THE CHERUBIM as seen by Ezekiel in Vision INTRODUCTION

The Cherubim are mentioned in several parts of Scripture, not always by name, but by description, as "living creatures" in Ezekiel (ch. 1 and 10, for example) and as "Beasts" in Revelation, chapters 4 and 5; there, however, the word is, literally, "Living ones."

They are first seen in Genesis 3:24, where they are "at the east of the garden." There also was "a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the Tree of Life."

Then they are next seen in Exodus, occupying a place in the Holiest of all in the Tabernacle. There, made of pure gold, they are not only on the mercyseat, but of one piece therewith. If, as the writer believes, they represent the redeemed—Jew and Gentile, for there are two—they are no longer at the east of Paradise, but within the very holiest. Surely this must be because of the sacrificial blood there sprinkled. And may we not infer that the flaming sword (Gen. 3:24) was to awake, as God foretold through Zechariah; "Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, and against the Man that is My Fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts: smite the Shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered" (Zech. 13:7).

The ark, with its mercy-seat and two cherubim, are, in Solomon's day, brought within the holiest in the temple, and, in addition, two cherubim, made of olive-tree wood covered with gold, were also placed therein (1 Kings 6; 2 Chron. 5:7, 8). Thus, it would seem, there were now *four* representatives of these beings, so preparing for the vision of *four* living creatures, given to Ezekiel by the river of Chebar, and John in the Isle of Patmos.

Thus, there is stressed a *twofoldness*, symbolizing Jew and Gentile one in Christ, and a *fourfoldness*, reminding that Messiah, the Servant of Jehovah, was to be His "salvation unto the end of the earth." The redeemed are "out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation," from which phrase it may be remarked, the number "four" is again before us.

Ezekiel and his contemporaries

Three men were witnessing for God at the time of the nearing end of Israel as a nation in their own land. A partial captivity of Judah, including her king, Jehoiachin, had taken place at the hand of Nebuchadnezzar. Ezekiel was called to his ministry in the fifth year thereof.

Daniel had been in Babylon about thirteen years and, though in that great city, was not of its spirit. He bore a faithful testimony to the heathen rulers whom he served.

All this time, Jeremiah was prophesying and urging the Kings and people in Judah and Jerusalem to obey the voice of God and submit to the Chaldeans. But neither they nor their fellow-nationalists in captivity listened to the voice of God speaking through His servants. The patience and long-suffering of a God of grace shine out in His dealings with Israel in these last years of their existence as a nation. The words of Hosca come to mind—"How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee, Israel? . . . Mine heart is turned within Me, My repentings are kindled together" (Hos. 11:8). Jeremiah and Ezekiel were both priests, but their ministry was not at the altar. The priests generally were as disobedient as the people, as Jeremiah, in particular experienced, for he was opposed by them. So God left Himself not without witness in a degenerate age. Neither will He in "this present evil age."

The Call of Ezekiel to the Service of God

This was in the fifth year of Jehoiachin's captivity. The thirtieth year" (ch. 1:1) was probably his own year, for the priests entered upon their service at that age. Compare also Luke 3:23. But how different was the ministry to which he is now called. Its exacting nature was not at once realized,

but God revealed to him that those to whom he was sent were "impudent and stiff-hearted," that they, although his brethren according to the flesh, would not listen to the words spoken by God through him. At the outset the LORD shewed him plainly the hardness of the task committed to him. So it was with Isaiah; so it was with Jeremiah, so it was with Paul. (Isa. 6:9-12, Jer. 1:17-19; Acts 9:16.)

But the prophet was graciously prepared by the "visions of God." Before looking more closely into these, it is interesting and encouraging to observe two factors in them reminding of the faithfulness of God. In chapter 1:13, it is recorded that Ezekiel saw the appearance of "burning coals of fire," and "the appearance of lamps; it went up and down among; the living creatures." The prophet, being a priest, was doubtless acquainted with the Law. Would not there occur to his mind the narrative of Genesis 15? There, amid similar manifestations, God made a *covenant* with Abraham. Furthermore, in Ezekiel 1:28, are the words, "As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD." Surely, the prophet would remember the Divine word in Genesis 9:8-17. Thus, it would seem, God gave to His servant a double token of His covenant-faithfulness. He was chastening His people sorely, but He had not cut them off altogether. The LORD'S glory and His faithfulness are seen together. 'Tis no wonder the prophet says, "when I saw, I fell upon my face."

Moreover the LORD had a further experience appointed for His servant, in order that he, "a man of God, might be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." He was to receive and assimilate the words God had written. "Open thy mouth, and eat that I give thee. And when I looked, behold, an hand was sent unto me, and, lo, a roll of a book was therein; and He spread it before me; and it was written within and without; and there was written therein lamentations, and mourning, and woe. Moreover, He said unto me, Son of man, eat that thou findest; eat this roll, and go, speak unto the house of Israel. So I opened my mouth, and He caused me to eat that roll. And He said unto me, Son of man, cause thy belly to eat, and fill thy bowels with this roll that I give thee. Then did I eat it, and it was in my mouth as honey for sweetness (ch. 2:9 to 3:3). Sad and unattractive as the words may have seemed, yet the prophet fed upon them (cf. Jer. 15:16) and his

inner being was nourished by them; for were they not the very words of a living and faithful God? Herein is a lesson for all who would serve their Lord. Only those who have a *love* of the truth can speak with conviction and power. They need to "read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them."

Thus, by a revelation of the magnitude of the task, a vision of the majesty of the LORD, an assurance of His covenant-faithfulness, and a ready acceptance of God's Truth, all of the wisdom and sovereign purpose and acting of God, was Ezekiel prepared for His service.

The Living Creatures

The "living creatures" were seen in vision by Ezekiel and, centuries later, by John the apostle. The similarity, as well as certain marked contrasts, illustrate the wondrous unity of Holy Scripture. Ezekiel saw the "living creatures" *beneath* the firmament, which was over their heads (Ezek. 1:22, 23). Above them was the sapphire throne, whereon was seated "the likeness of the appearance of a Man." But the glory there manifested was "the appearance of the likeness of the glory of JEHOVAH" (vv. 26-28). Here, surely, is a pre-incarnation manifestation of the Son of God and an allusion to His Deity. But the "living creatures," though "in heavenly places," are separated from the throne by an expanse (firmament) like "the colour of the terrible crystal." This may symbolize the awful purity and holiness of God, and perhaps is a figure parallel with the beautiful veil separating the holy place from the holiest of all in the tabernacle. Thus, presuming our observations are correct, the prophet was taught that "the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest" (Heb. 9:8). Whether this was clear to him cannot yet be known, as the prophets did not always understand the full purport of their message (1 Pet. 1:10-12).

When, however, the parallel, yet contrasted, vision granted to John in Patmos, is considered, the same four living creatures ("beasts") are seen, *not beneath* the throne, but "*in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne*" (Rev. 4:6). Why this exaltation? The answer is in the next chapter. "And I beheld and lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a LAMB as It had been slain." And when the Lamb had taken the book, the living ones and the elders "fell down before the Lamb." "And they sung a new song saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood, out of every kindred.

and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God Kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth" (Rev. 5:6-10). Thus, there can be no doubt that the cherubim do, indeed, symbolize the redeemed. In Ezekiel's day, the coming of a Redeemer was still future. Yet "the appearance of the likeness of a Man" was a faint foreshadowing of the Word becoming flesh (John 1) and of "God manifest in flesh." In John's day, the Redeemer had come. Redemption by the "precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot" had been accomplished by Him "Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifested in these last times for you, who by Him do believe in God" (1 Pet. 1:18-21). So prophecy by "visions of God" is, by like visions declared to be fulfilled.

Some Further Lessons Doctrinal and Practical

Since a comparison of the Scriptures in Ezekiel 1 and 10 with those in Revelation 4 and 5 shews that the cherubim symbolize the redeemed, we may expect to gather some teaching, by figure of speech, from what is written about them.

In the hand of God

First, the word, "cherubim" means "grasped or held fast." And is not this true of each believer? He has been "plucked as a brand out of the fire" (Zech. 3:2), "rescued from the authority of darkness" (Col. 1:13), and is now in the safe keeping of Him Who neither slumbers nor sleeps. "None shall pluck them out of My hand," says the Lord of His sheep. "My Father, which gave them Me, is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand" (John 10). "They are preserved for ever."

Living Ones

Then the cherubim are repeatedly called, "Living creatures," although they manifest every sign of life. "The whole world lieth in the wicked one." All are "dead in trespasses and sins." "But God, Who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith He loved us . . . quickened us together with Christ" (Eph. 2:1-5). So that now God's saved ones are "alive from the dead" (Rom. 6:13) having "passed out of death into life" (John 5:24). Their life is everlasting. Well may a child of God rejoice that he is a "living creature," for "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." 'Tis a work of sovereign grace, for "The Son quickeneth whom He will."

Untiring Activity

The cherubim were ceaselessly active. "The living creatures ran and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning." The servants of a living

God, they hastened to do His bidding, and having performed their appointed task, they "returned," apparently to wait upon Him for further commands. And is this not precisely the desirable attitude of the believer? "I made haste, and delayed not, to keep Thy commandments"; "I will run the way of Thy commandment when Thou shalt enlarge my heart" (Ps. 119:60-32). Our feet are to be "shod with the preparation (alacrity) of the gospel of peace" (Eph. 6, and see Rom. 10:15, and Song. 7:1). "Beautiful, indeed, is the alacrity of the living creatures!"

Quietness before God

But the servant needs his quiet time also. From having accomplished a piece of service at the bidding of "The Man on the throne," he needs to "return" to that throne—a throne, not only of authority, but "of grace"—for personal spiritual renewing and refreshing. The Lord "went about doing good," but He spent much time alone with the Father. Ceaseless activity, though it be in Christian service, leads often to "breakdowns," if there be not sufficient time to be alone with God. Let our readiness to service be balanced by a readiness for communion.

Onward in the Spirit's power

One further thought; the cherubim "went every one straight forward; whither the spirit was to go, they went; and they turned not (round) when they went" (Ezek. 1:12). This is heart-searching and a challenge. Of how many Saints can it be said that, from the moment of their conversion, they have made constant progress, "straight forward," pressing "toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus?" "They turned not round" (literally), their "eyes looked right on and their eyelids straight before" them. "No man," said the Lord, "having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

"Wither the spirit was to go, they went." Whether this means the Holy Spirit, or the spirit of the living creature, the lesson is most important. Truly, the believer needs the leading and compelling power of the Holy Spirit, but his flesh ought to be subject to his own spirit. "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall (are about to) die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body ye shall live;" in other words, prove that ye are "living creatures" indeed.

May you and I, beloved fellow-saved-ones, by the Holy Spirit's enabling, "forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before," go every one of us straight forward.

THE "WHEELS" SEEN BY EZEKIEL

It is not easy to understand the symbolic language put into the lips of Ezekiel, the prophet of "the captivity." The meaning of the "wheels" mentioned in chapters 1 and 10 seems to be hidden from the mind of man. It is conjectured by some that the "living creatures" and their "wheels" symbolize the acting of God on behalf of His people throughout the earth. Both are said to be "full of eyes" (1:18, 10:12) and this, taken together with the words, "ran and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning" (1:14) certainly remind one of the words of 2 Chronicles 16:9; "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."

Nevertheless, if the "living creatures" (the cherubim) represent the Lord's redeemed (Rev. 5:8-9) the "wheels" would appear to signify something very closely connected with them.

Their Relation to the Cherubim

There was ONE wheel upon the earth BY (close by) the living creatures (1:15). This means that each had his wheel, for there were FOUR—a number that is many times mentioned, probably signifying a worldwide-ness. The wheels WENT BY (near to) the living creature, and were LIFTED UP as they were lifted up (1:19). The next verse says that they were lifted up OVER AGAINST them—that is, "at the same time with them." So intimate is the connection that whatever "these" do, "those" do, whether they stand or are lifted up. Chapter 10:16-17 is thus rendered in Young's literal translation:—"And in the going of the cherubs, the wheels go beside them; and in the cherubs lifting up their wings to be high above the earth, the wheels turn not round, even they, from being beside them. In their standing they stand, and in their exaltation they are exalted with them; for the living spirit is in them."

A Living Spirit

The wheels at first were seen, in the vision given to the prophet, "on the earth," their lifting up was "from the earth" (1:15, 19, 21) and, although the cherubim are seen immediately under the "firmament" (1:22), and so, apparently, in "heavenly places," in this last verse (21) they are said to be "lifted up from the earth" (see also ch 10:16, 17, 19). In this connection is found the word "spirit." "Whithersoever the spirit was to go, they went, thither was their spirit to go; and the wheels were lifted up over against them; for the spirit of the living creature ("of life"—margin) was in the wheels" (1:20-21). Most interesting, and worthy of

remark, are the words of chapter 10:11; "but to the place whither THE HEAD looked they followed it; they turned not as they went." Now the head had four faces, so there would appear to be four directions in which "the Head" could look—a further reminder of a world-wide outlook—and, perhaps, an illustration of the Lord's commission (Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47)—"all the nations," "all the world."

Unity of Purpose and Oneness in Action

The close intimacy of the "living creatures" and "the wheels" is stressed in chapter 10:6; "Take fire from between the wheels, from between the cherubim." This fire is described thus in chapter 1:13; "Their appearance was like burning coals of fire, and like the appearance of lamps; it went up and down among the living creatures; and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning." May this not take the mind back to Genesis 15:17-18? There, amid similar manifestations, God made a covenant with Abraham. Ezekiel may have remembered this, and, if so, he would be encouraged, at the outset of his ministry by the faithfulness of a covenant-keeping God; and how gracious is He Who would thus give "visions of God" to His servant, in the midst of a people so disobedient to Him!

'Tis true the fire is to be scattered over the city (Jerusalem), chapter 10:2; but have we not something comparable in Revelation 8:5? There the altar not only furnishes fire for incense to accompany the prayers of ALL SAINTS, but also for judgments on a sin-filled earth. A similar seeming paradox is that, when Israel were crossing the Red Sea, the same pillar of fire which gave them light and protection, was darkness to their pursuers. Truly, God's ways are "past finding out"! The beautiful harmony between the cherubim and the wheels may be used to illustrate how the body of the believer should be under the complete control of his spirit. True, he falls short of his desires, as Paul found by experience (Romans 7), but his Spirit inspired exhortations (in Romans 6:13, and 12:1) are for God's children now and always. Though they may not reach the perfection seen in Ezekiel's vision, they dare not lower the standard.

The foregoing is not to be regarded as an "exposition," but rather an attempt to marshal the salient features of these wondrous "visions of for writer and readers, for the daily godly life. And God," and to glean some practical lessons both if the LORD is pleased to use this effort thus, in the grace of the Holy Spirit, to God be all the glory.

"OUT OF DEATH INTO LIFE"

John 5:20-29.

The presence of death has a sobering effect upon most people, and should have a sanctifying power also; that is to say, those who witness the "sowing" of a body in the earth ought to be concerned as to their "end," their own departure from this earthly scene. The lifeless body now concealed from our sight was once strong to wield the blacksmith's hammer and to make the anvil ring. *Then* our friend had little or no thought of God and eternity, though his dear wife and children loved the Lord. But the latter years of his life were marked by prolonged weakness and pain, and the amputation of limbs. 'Twas then he had some realization of his need of the mercy and forgiveness of God.

Some amongst us who sought, in love to his soul, to bring the gospel of grace before him, have reason to believe that he was at peace with God, through the work of Christ, before he was called into That Holy Presence. Hence, we may speak of him as a "brother in Christ." True, he was not manifestly in fellowship with any body of believers, but neither was the repentant thief on the cross. Yet he, who realized that the Holy Sufferer next to him, is Lord and King, the Saviour assured would be with Him in Paradise, and our hope is that the dear man now taken from us is now in that same blessed place.

But the Scriptures before us speak not only of the death of the body, but also of the death—a moral condition—in which every soul, by nature exists. It is a state in which the five senses of the natural man cannot re-act to spiritual things. In such a condition he *hears* not the voice of God; he *sees* no beauty in Jesus Christ that he should desire Him; the fragrance of that Name is nothing to him; he never has *tasted* that the Lord is gracious; nor has he *touched*, as it were, the hem of His garment. He is "dead in trespasses and sins."

Is there then no hope? Hear what the Lord Jesus says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, 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" (v. 25). The word of a King is with power. The Lord speaks with authority, and when His voice is truly heard within the heart of a man, then he lives, for "the Son quickeneth whom He will," that is, He makes alive. Hear, then, His further assuring word. "Verily, verily (Amen, Amen), I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him That sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life" (v. 24).

It is our desire that some who have not heard the voice of God's dear Son, may hear Him speaking within their own hearts, even today. That

voice will surely be heard in a future day—the last Day—when the Lord Jesus Himself, the Son of God, shall call the dead out from their tombs. "For the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (vv. 28, 29). Since it is also written, "There is none that doeth good, no, not one," it follows that those whom the Lord describes as "doing good" must be those who do so because of a new and living principle within, that is, they bring forth "the fruit of the Spirit." It may be asked, what fruit can there result from an "eleventh hour repentance"? It cannot be "much fruit." Yet the testimony of the thief on the cross, acknowledged by the Lord Jesus, is recorded, and has continued to this very day. How many have been blessed through that witness eternity alone will reveal. May it be, then, that the words uttered at this graveside will be used of God to bring some "out of death into life," and to His Name be all the glory!

The foregoing is the gist of an address given at the "sowing" of the body of Mr. G. F. Phillips, the father-in-law of the late Charles Stocks, at the City of London Cemetery, Ilford, on November 3rd, 1961.

NOTES ON MEMORIZED VERSES**ZECHARIAH 13**

2. It is a solemn thought that idolatry (see ch. 11:17) and an unclean spirit will be in the "land" of Israel prior to "that Day." 3. Not only will God cut them off, but His people will be in harmony with Him. 4. 5. Even the false prophets themselves brought to repentance. 6. This does not refer to the wounds of the Lord Jesus. They may indicate harsh treatment meted out to the "prophet" by disappointed "friends." 7. MY Friend... MY Shepherd. Plainly the Lord Jesus, whose earthly "friends" were few. The sword (cf. Gen. 3:24) of judgment. Fulfilled at the FIRST Coming of Christ (see Matt. 26:31). 8. 9. This has to do with the second coming of the Lord. Two thirds of Israel then in Israel die, that is, retribution for sin in the land. Even the spared third will need the refining of fire.

ZECHARIAH 14

1. The Day of the Lord cometh. These words were written long before the first coming of Christ, and nigh 2000 years have passed since then, but there is no slackness with God (see 2 Pet. 3:9). 2. The city of Jerusalem surrounded by enemies among all the nations. 3. But the Lord will fight for them. 4. Surely this is literal, though some make it figurative. The Lord's feet had often stood there, when He was teaching. In that day He will come in power. 5. "All the saints," for they will have been raised (cf. Jude 14). 6. A day known to the LORD (see Matt. 24:36). A day of darkness (Matt. 24:29), but the light will prevail at eventide. 8. The living waters (see Ezekiel 47). 9. The LORD'S universal reign (see Ps. 2 and 72; 1 Cor. 15:25). 10. The physical features of the land will be affected in that Day. 11. The mention of places shews that an *earthly* city is before us. 12. 13. The Lord's battle (see v. 3). His judgment on the enemies of His people Israel. 14. "All the heathen

(nations"). Note the frequency of this phrase (vv. 1, 16, 19, and contrast Matt. 28:19). 15. Upon even the beasts shall be the plague. God's work of judgment is solemnly swift and complete. 16. "Left," for there will be a very great slaughter. The King is the Lord Jesus. He will be worshipped where He was once "despised and rejected." 17. "No rain" for the disobedient. 18. 19. For Egypt a plague. God cannot be disobeyed with impunity. 20. 21. Holiness not only in regard to spiritual things, but affecting the everyday life. So should it be amongst saints today.

DANIEL 9

This is a chapter which may well be committed to memory, not only for Daniel's prayer in line with God's purpose, but also because of its prophetic significance.

1. The Chaldean empire had just come to an end (see ch. 5:31). Darius was 72 years old. Cyrus was soon to be the predominant ruler in the Medo-Persian Empire. 2. Daniel read, understood, and trusted, the prophecies by Jeremiah (ch. 25:12, 29:10). Yet it did not prevent him from praying that God would fulfil His purpose. 3. I set my face to seek prayer ("by" is not in the Hebrew). "Setting" and "seeking" the true attitude in prayer. 4. A realization of the holiness of God, and His faithfulness. 5. "We," for he felt himself one with his people. He calls sin by its right names, five words being used. 6. Sins of omission. All classes involved. 7. He acknowledges the righteousness of God in His chastisements. 8. Confusion because of sin. Peace is only for

those who love God's law (Ps. 119, 165). 9. 10. Where sin abounds, grace over-abounds. 11. 12. The written words of God stand for ever, though they be forgotten or neglected. 13. Knowledge of God's Word ought to lead to repentance and prayer. 14. "Watched." The Lord does not sleep, though He may be silent for a time. 15. Sin is "great" on the part of those so signally blessed. 16. 17. A felt realization of the ruin gives intensity to the prayer. 18. A plea for Divine action, not for human merit, but for God's mercies. 19. A threefold calling upon the Lord's Name, for the Name is called upon the people. 20. 21. "Caused to fly swiftly." God hastens to answer prayer. "The evening oblation" shews that prayer rests on atonement. 22. "To give thee," as from God. 23. God heard "at the beginning." The vision is that in chapter 8, apparently. 24. Seventy "weeks" of years, that is 490 years. 25. Seven "weeks" and sixty-two "weeks," a total of 483 years. This is exactly the period that elapsed before Christ came. 26. "Seven weeks" were first fulfilled, and after the passing of "the threescore and two weeks," "Messiah" was cut off, "and there was nothing for Him." In A.D. 70, the city and temple were destroyed. 27. He ("the Prince that shall come," verse 26) makes a covenant with "Many" (of Israel) for "one week" (seven years). In the midst he breaks the covenant, and during the remaining 3½ weeks (Time, Times, and the dividing of time, or 42 months, or 1260 days) the "Desolator" causes tribulation until Divine judgment is "poured out upon" him (see Matt. 24 and 2 Thess. 2).

SUGGESTED DAILY READINGS

"IF THE LORD WILL"—MAY, 1962

SUGGESTED DAILY READINGS

"IF THE LORD WILL"—JUNE, 1962

Day	READING		LEARNING		Day	READING		LEARNING	
	Exodus	Mark	Zechariah	Hebrews		Leviticus	Mark	Daniel	Hebrews
1	31 1-18	1 1-15	13 2	10 12	1	4 27-35	10 41-52	9 1	11 4
2	32 1-18	16-31	3	13	2	5 1-10	11 1-11	2	5
3	19-35	32-45	4	14	3	11-19	12-33	3	6
4	33 1-11	2 1-14	5	15	4	6 1-18	12 1-17	4	7
5	12-25	15-28	6	16	5	19-30	18-34	5	8
6	34 1-11	3 1-12	7	17	6	7 1-15	35-44	6	9
7	12-26	13-26	8	18	7	16-27	13 1-13	7	10
8	27-35	27-35	9	19	8	28-38	14-23	8	11
9	35 1-19	4 1-13	14 1	20	9	8 1-17	24-37	9	12
10	20-35	14-29	2	21	10	18-38	14 1-16	10	13
11	36 1-13	30-41	3	22	11	9 1-24	17-31	11	14
12	14-26	5 1-17	4	23	12	10 1-20	32-52	12	15
13	27-38	18-24	5	24	13	11 1-12	53-72	13	16
14	37 1-15	25-43	6	25	14	13-31	15 1-23	14	17
15	16-29	6 1-13	7	26	15	32-47	24-47	15	18
16	38 1-10	14-28	8	27	16	12 1-8	16 1-20	16	19
17	11-20	29-44	9	28	17	13 1-17	1 1-17	17	20
18	21-31	45-56	10	29			Luke		
19	39 1-7	7 1-13	11	30	18	18-28	18-25	18	21
20	8-21	14-23	12	31	19	29-46	26-45	19	22
21	22-31	24-37	13	32	20	47-59	46-66	20	23
22	32-43	8 1-13	14	33	21	14 1-18	67-80	21	24
23	40 1-8	14-26	15	34	22	19-32	2 1-18	22	25
24	9-16	27-38	16	35	23	33-47	19-35	23	26
25	17-21	9 1-13	17	36	24	48-57	36-52	24	27
26	22-38	14-27	18	37	25	15 1-15	3 1-14	—	28
	Leviticus				26	16-33	15-22	25	29
27	1 1-17	28-40	19	38	27	16 1-17	23-38	—	30
28	2 1-16	41-50	20	39	28	18-34	4 1-15	26	31
29	3 1-17	10 1-16	21	11 1	29	17 1-16	16-32	—	32
30	4 1-12	17-27	—	2	30	18 1-30	33-44	27	33
31	13-26	28-40	—	3					

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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

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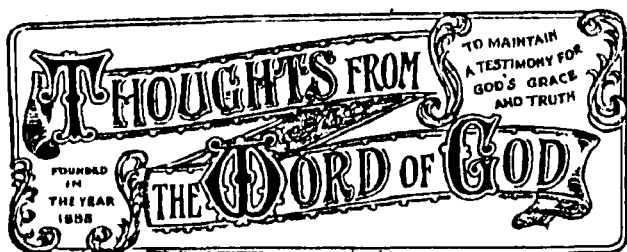
"The LORD is my Strength and my Shield; my heart trusted in HIM, and I am helped; therefore my heart rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise HIM."

Psalm 28:7.

"BLESS THE LORD, O MY SOUL"

Bless thou the LORD, O soul of mine,
GOD over all, yet He is thine,
Who died for thee, but now He lives,
And freely all thy sins forgives.

Ne'er of His grace forgetful be,
Since He it is Who healeth thee;
Into thy heart thy GOD doth shine.
O bless the LORD, O soul of mine.



WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

"Fear not, Abram; I am thy Shield, and thy Exceeding Great Reward."

Gen. 15:1.

"After these things" came this word of the LORD to Abram. What things? The previous chapter makes this known. This man of God, in order to rescue his relative, Lot, had gained a notable victory over the King of Shinar and his confederates. He had also gained a moral victory over the King of Sodom, who offered him material gifts. These he rejected, because he had had a blessing from "the priest of the Most High God." Thus, he did not deviate from the path of separation marked out by God.

How singularly fitting was the encouraging word from the LORD Himself! The resentment felt by a defeated foe would be a potential danger. Possibly, too, the refusal to be "made rich" by Sodom would not endear the "stranger and pilgrim" to the king and people of that most wicked city.

Saints who are living by faith today are much like Abram. By faith they overcome the world (1 John 5:4-5). They are not of its spirit, and sometimes are conscious of its resentment. They love not the world, neither the things of the world. So the world loves them not. Even the "religious world" will scarcely tolerate them. And as "the apostasy" increases, their position is increasingly difficult, and in some places, dangerous.

Precious then, are the words of our text. Abram's God is our God. To us He says, "Fear not . . . I am thy Shield and thy Exceeding Great Reward."

Poem to Help Christian Experience—No. 278.

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and 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." Gal. 2:20.

I did not stand beside the Cross
Whereon my Saviour died,
Nor with disciples mourn His loss
When taken from their side;

I was not with the thoughtless throng
That mocked the Sufferer there,
Nor felt that darkness, deep and long,
Or heard His piteous prayer.

But sins of mine had brought Him there;
As thorns they pierced His brow;
He did my whole transgression bear—
My sins—I feel them now.

When my dear Lord was crucified,
And suffered in my stead,
With Him I was identified,
As member with the Head.

With Christ I have been crucified,
And yet I live indeed;
He died for all, then all have died—
'Tis true of all His seed.

I live, and yet it is not I,
But Christ Who lives in me;
And in That One, exalted high,
I live eternally.

The life I now live in the flesh
Is by the Son of God,
By faith of Him. Since formed afresh
I tread the upward road.

On me the Saviour set His love,
And gave Himself for me;
But when He cometh from above,
I shall His glory see.

"THEMSELVES"

Mark 9:1-10.

"And after six days Jesus taketh with Him Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart *by themselves*, and He was transfigured before them" (verse 2).

"And suddenly, when they had looked round about, they saw no man any more, save Jesus only *with themselves*" (verse 8).

"And they kept that saying *with themselves*, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean" (verse 10).

Mark alone introduces the word "themselves." Certain other additional statements occur in Matthew and Luke, which gospels need to be studied, together with Mark's record. The object of these few notes is to emphasize the use of the particular word before us.

Only "some" were granted the great privilege of seeing their Lord "glorified," though but for a brief season. In later years Peter remembered this as a foreshewing of "the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 1:16-18). But these favoured disciples must be led up into a high mountain "apart by themselves." The others were far below, learning something of their own impotence in dealing with the forces of evil. Only

those *in the high place* had this view of the eternal Son of God. There is symbolic significance here. The powers of evil are indeed great, and are a challenge to believers in "this present evil age." Their weapons are not carnal, but mighty through God. And yet it is equally important to realize communion with a glorified Lord, that there may be a true balance between "service" and "worship." "We were *with Him*," says Peter, "in the holy mount" (2 Pet. 1). And so must be the experience of saints today. They are to "live . . . looking for that Blessed Hope" (Titus 2:12-13). They *must* come, "apart by themselves," if they would "see Jesus" where He is, and be ready also for "That Day."

Further, though there may be a tendency to linger "in the heavenlies," so to speak, for, doubtless, Peter was right when he said, "Master, it is good for us to be here," it is needful to remember there is service awaiting us "in the world" below. Moreover, it is God's will concerning His Son that we, "Hear Him." He spoke through Moses and the prophets, but "in these last days," He has "spoken unto us by His Son" (Heb. 1). Hence, Moses and Elias departed, and "they saw no man anymore but JESUS ONLY *with themselves*." Moses and Elias may be there, but HE is pre-eminent. They are indeed "holy men of God," but He is "THE Holy One of God." Saints may be "compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses," but they are to be "looking off unto JESUS, the Author and Finisher of faith," Who is "with themselves," and will be, "even unto the end of the age."

The subject of conversation on "the holy mount" was "His decease (exodus) which He should accomplish in Jerusalem" (Luke 9). His sufferings were foretold by Moses, in the Law, through every sacrifice, and plainly by the prophets, as, for example, in Isaiah 53, where His death is clearly prophesied. But on the way down from the mount, the Lord commanded the three disciples "that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of Man were *risen from the dead*" (Mark 9:9). They, as the rest of the Jews, had an earthly view of the rule of Messiah; hence their inability to grasp the meaning of His words. Yet "they kept that saying *with themselves*," "and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen" (Luke 9:36). His words were treasured; He ever linked these with Himself—"Me and My words" (Mark 8:38). The disciples had "JESUS ONLY *with themselves*," and His "saying *with themselves*"; and, though its meaning was not clear to them, it was the theme of conversation "one with another." And may it

be so with us, who have the advantage of their recorded experience, in the grace and power of the Holy Spirit.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S COLUMN

Changes

Those of you who are studying science at school have learned that one of the "Laws of Nature" is stated somewhat as follows:—"Every body continues in a state of rest, or of uniform motion in a straight line, unless it is compelled to change that state by external force or forces impressed upon it." For example, a weight lying on one end of a board resting on a table will not move of itself, but if the board is tilted, it will, without being touched, slide down, and may fall over the edge of the table on to the ground. Of course, you know why. The earth draws to itself everything over it, and upon it. This, as you also well know, is the force of gravity. If it were not so, we should not be able to walk steadily on the ground.

An arrow shot from a bow would continue in a straight line, if it were not for this force of gravity. Actually, it travels in a curve downwards until it reaches the earth. Or it may be stopped by coming in contact with another body.

All this you know, and have done, or seen, experiments to prove this "Law." But you must remember that laws do not make themselves. There must be a Law-Maker, Who is God Himself. We may expect, therefore, to see a parallel to this law in human life, for God is the Maker and Upholder of all things.

A dead body cannot move of itself. It does not breathe, nor use any of the five senses. The last thing to be done with it is to bear it to the grave and bury it in the earth. Now, the Bible tells us that all men and women, boys and girls, are "dead," and therefore *cannot move* upwards toward God; also, in another sense, because they have "natural" life, they are travelling in a certain direction—straight towards a sure Divine judgment. And they cannot of themselves change their state, for they are "dead in trespasses in sins" (Eph. 2:1). Unless a mighty force acts upon them, they continue in this sad state.

Is there then no hope? Yes, indeed! The Lord Jesus, when He was here on the earth, once spoke these words—"Verily, verily, I say unto you, 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 Son makes alive whom He will" (verse 21). The "hour"

is still with us, and these words, now being written, are sent forth with the desire, hope, and prayer that some dear readers may long to hear that strong, loving voice, and know the great change "from death unto life," "from the power of Satan unto God," and from "darkness into His marvellous light" (John 5:24; Acts 26:18; 1 Pet. 2:9).

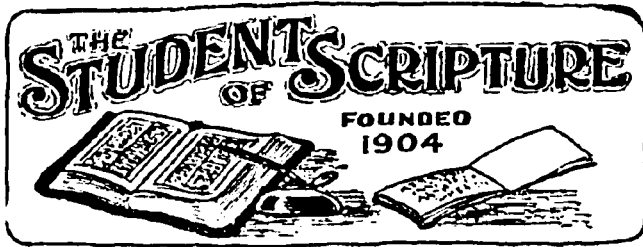
This wondrous power over death was shewn by three miracles of the Lord Jesus. One was of a little girl, twelve years old. She had *just died*, but the Lord took her by the hand, and said unto her . . . "Damsel, I SAY UNTO thee, Arise. And straightway the damsel arose, and walked . . . and He commanded that something should be given her to eat" (Mark 5:39-43).

The next instance was that of a young man, the only son of his mother, who was being carried through the streets to his grave. "When the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. And He came and touched the bier; and they that bare him stood still. And He said, Young man, I SAY UNTO thee, Arise. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak" (Luke 7:11-17).

The last miracle was that of restoring to life one who had been in his grave four days. Lazarus, a man loved by the Lord Jesus, had died, to the great grief of his two sisters; and even of the Lord Himself it is said, "Jesus wept." But He came to the grave. "It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it. Jesus said, Take ye away the stone . . . He cried with a LOUD VOICE, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth . . . Jesus said, Loose him and let him go" (John 11).

So the Lord Jesus had power over death, and He is the Same today. He is able to "make alive" in a true and heavenly sense, children, young men, and older ones. He alone can work this wondrous change, and when He does so, He commands that the newly-living one has *spiritual food*, like the little twelve year old girl. The Bible is such food. A living one *speaks*, and those who are "born again" speak to God in prayer, and tell others of the love and power of God. Such, truly, also are set free and "go" (John 11:44). They go forward in God's strength, and stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free (Gal. 5:1).

May some who read these words hear the voice of the Son of God, and live.



THE TEMPTATION OF CHRIST; DISPLAYING HIS EMPHASIS ON THE SCRIPTURE

PERCY W. HEWARD

A WORD OF INTRODUCTION

Great peace have they which LOVE God's law (Ps. 119:165), and such need not be afraid of evil tidings, when they hear of attacks on the Truth. "The Word of our God shall STAND for ever" (Isa. 40:8). It shall RISE, though men seek to tread it down, and subtly plot against it.

Our concern, however, should be lest WE dishonour His Name, lest we be too much like the world, lest we be disobedient in life while extolling the truth with our lips, lest we become flippant and careless, lest we "get used" to evil instead of feeling pain. The wondrous GRIEF of the Lord Jesus puts us to shame. The ZEAL of His Father's house consumed Him and reproach broke His heart because He loved so MUCH, and the reproaches were against the Father (Ps. 69:9).

Intensity is a great need among blood-bought ones, intensity in the Holy Spirit. Desiring that our gracious God may use these pages to this end, and His glory thereby, we humbly send them forth to many lands. We shall rejoice to hear from many who are exercised BEFORE HIM, and who welcome encouragement to searching of our ways, and the washing of one another's feet, that we may LIVE FOR CHRIST, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation (Phil. 2:15), with the bright hope of His Coming in view.

When the devil went to Eve he questioned God's words. She parleyed, and altered these words.* We know the consequence of Adam's sinful love, endorsing his wife's sin. But another narrative is now before us. When the devil went to the Lord Jesus, he at once attacked the last words which we know God had just spoken (Matt. 4:3 with 3:17), and, remarkably, dealt with food and the physical frame once more. But how different was the result! Our glorious Lord replied at once, and unhesitatingly, with Scripture, and, not only so, but continued this attitude and met each temptation with Scripture, refusing to take

any other standpoint of reasoning. If the One Who was over all, God Blessed for ever, and able to answer fresh words of power, thus acted for our example, why should we choose other weapons? It is, indeed, sinful and manifestly foolish to leave God's truth.

Christ had no "if's" with Scripture. Christ had no reservation. He implicitly believed it and acted upon the belief. Here we see the attitude of One accomplishing a perfect obedience. Any hesitation as to Scripture is the contrast with obedience. Let our hearts feel this, to God's glory.

But much more might be said. The Lord Jesus was led of the Spirit into the wilderness, after the Spirit had descended to abide on Him (John 1:33). His holiness before was the same, but now He was marked out as the Faithful Servant—John 1 is clear upon this point. Thus we learn that all ministry "in the Spirit" emphasizes Scripture. 2 Timothy 3:16 likewise implies this. The Holy Spirit will honour the words He has indited! And, further, we realise that Christ's very first action after so striking an induction to His public ministry was a stress on the written Scriptures. The preacher who yields to the devil's higher criticism in the college, and study, has a vastly different induction. Christ is NOT his model. How can such ministry be of God? Moreover, we see that the Lord Jesus not only alluded to the book of truth, but shared a practical feeding on its contents. Mere mental acceptance of truth is vain. Disobedience is "higher criticism" even though it says "Lord, Lord."

Further, our Lord did not quote without a plan. He kept to the book of Deuteronomy to remind us, it would seem, of the fulness even of one neglected book. Whether He would teach us His foreknowledge of Satan's special attack on that book, or whether we see such an attack because Satan was so completely worsted through that book, it may be difficult to say. But is not the answer twofold? Thus our Lord's anticipation of man's opposition to Deuteronomy answers it in advance, even as the Scriptures so clearly refute evolution in advance, showing at one and the same time their supernatural character, and God's hatred of the evil doctrine He exposes. His protecting care for His own shines out!

Again, the context of the first answer,* lays stress on "all the commandment," and on God's "proving" in the wilderness concerning this very

*The tree of life was in the midst, not the tree of knowledge. If our "midst" is changed from God's appointment, everything is in confusion.

*Matthew and Luke emphasise this.

point of *adherence to His words*. Here then is a test: Christ accepts the test for Himself. His faithfulness is manifest! And what shall we say of the very words of Deuteronomy 8:3? They are not only Scripture, but set forth, with no uncertain sound, the authority of the words of truth. No merely vague-thought inspiration, or bare superintendence of godly men, is marked, but something far deeper. "The mouth of the Lord" is emphasised. *And to ignore this is death, as in Eden*. The mouth of the Lord and "life" are together, and the Living One Himself fed on the words of truth. He lived by them: they were *His precious bread*. A "technical" acknowledgment of inspiration falls far short. O for more delight in the words of God. This delight is likeness to Christ (Ps. 40:6-8). The "wilderness" journey is to prove whether there is unqualified acceptance of "everything" from God's mouth. Here then is the question that settles the issue. Do you acknowledge, amid trials of faith, amid temptations to falter, that "everything" from God's mouth is authoritative? To evade the point by saying, "If we know it is from God's mouth," is dishonourable. If Deuteronomy 8 did not mean the testimony through Moses, what did it mean? And if Christ did not indicate the Scriptures, what did He indicate? Again let it be repeated, "That He might make thee know" is a display of God's object. It is in a time of *attack* that God calls for this unqualified *knowledge*. Faith is contrasted with sight, but not with knowledge.

The prayerful reader may have noticed that the article "The" is inserted in the original. "The Man," i.e., the Only Man of Whom it could be said throughout that He "lived." The Word became flesh, and His *whole life* was in harmony with the words of the Father. His *whole life*! Could there be a stronger emphasis on inspiration? And God humbled Israel and fed with manna—a type of Christ—to cause them to know this fact concerning Christ. Satan is thus condemned for attacking a prophecy that Christ would not listen to any attack on Scripture! *This was the prophesied characteristic of the Messiah*. And all God's dealings with Israel were to lead them to see Christ. And all our daily food, and dependence on God, is to make us also behold Christ. 'Tis self-dependence which prevents this view, and which opposes the *characteristic of receiving everything from God's mouth*. Thus higher criticism is convicted of *pride*, and *self-dependence*, and of *opposition to Christ*. That which began with dissecting the Pentateuch logically leads to an attack on Christ! John 5:46-47 shows foreknowledge of the aim and methods of

the evil one. It is no wonder that Satan hates the types, as the manna. The reference to this in Deut. 8:3 is entwined there with the *twofold* acknowledgement of Christ *and* the Scriptures; the written words and the Incarnate Word stand together! Could anything be more remarkable than the Lord's choice of this passage, contrasting Himself with Adam and Eve, and with Israel alike?

The glory of Scripture shines out again in possessing *such* verses, to be used so appropriately as weapons of power. The believer not only sees the fact, but finds in the *nature* of the language itself that which is beyond man, and thus enjoys the very food of which the verse so definitely speaks! Truly we should bow the head and worship. And worship is the reverse of "criticism." In heaven there is adoration, there is *no room for criticism*. The attitude of fallen man is unbelieving. Satan *HATES* the exclusive worship of God, and we shall soon see how he sought to attract this to himself. May all who are in Christ Jesus realise the power of *worship* as an antidote to a cold and critical unspirituality!

Having thus seen Christ's *INTRODUCTORY stress* on Scripture—*NOTHING ELSE FIRST*—we find His *CONTINUANCE* in this witness. Nor can we overlook the fact that He also *repeated* the words "It *HAS* been written," using each time the emphatic perfect tense to emphasise fixity. Again, He quoted *twice* the very chapter which commanded the writing of God's Words upon the very posts of the house, *after* welcoming them in the home, as *the centre of the children's education* (Deut. 6:6-9)! The allusion to "Massah" in Deut. 6:16 reminds us how Satan tempted Israel all too successfully in the very matter of food, wherein Christ's victory was so marked. Luke's gospel tells us that the Lord Jesus not only declared, "It has been *written*," but further, when Satan also quoted, it would seem, only *part* of a passage,* uttered the words, "It has been *SAID*," to set forth the *living power* of the long-ago written message, applied by the Holy Spirit! Satan could repeat the written language, but he could not reproduce its living power. Thus Christ showed that more than a mental and verbal acquaintance with Scripture is *NECESSARY*. A disobedient reader *IS* a higher critic, however "orthodox" his creed may appear. Satan, moreover, illustrated *another* aspect of higher criticism at the same moment, for together with an untouched heart, he showed, before the Lord of Glory Him-

*The words "In all Thy ways," give the key and limitation, and Satan is *not* said to have included these.

self, the picking out of *part*, and rejecting of *part*, which ever characterises the theories of men. His sin was the more daring in the light of the further context, "Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder" (Ps. 91:13; see Gen. 3:15; Rom. 16:20).

And now we notice the *nature* of the two added temptations, the intentional avoidance of chronological order in one record causing a "two-fold" climax:—in Matthew's gospel the definite rejection of Babylon (the "glory" of "kingdoms," 4:8 with Isa. 13:19), and in Luke's account the forceful words "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God" (Luke 4:12)—which, in the light of verse 13, seem also to allude to the Deity of the One *then* attacked! Jerusalem AND Babylon are more than once before us together*: Jewish and Gentile supremacy. Priesthood AND Kingship are alike seen. How different will be the attitude of Antichrist, who will *accept* these two cities (Zech. 5, Rev. 11); and come, it would seem, on the temple-wing, or pinnacle of abominations, desolating (Dan 9:27, lit; see with Matt. 4:5; 24:15). Thus Satan *keeps* to his unholy purpose, but the apparent success of "the man of sin" shall be soon broken (Dan. 8:25), and the Righteous One shall be recompensed in the earth (Prov. 11:31).

The temple-temptation seems to be much more subtly contrived than we at first realise. It is plain that Satan wished to hurry God's purpose (Matt. 4:3 illustrates this: indeed *each* temptation has the thought that to "hasten" before the time is to oppose God's will; cf. 1 Cor. 4:1-5, unveiling the tempter's *continued* plan on these lines). *Let it be remembered that Satan is never more dangerous than when quoting and misapplying "PART" of Scripture.* Some are even "deceived," and think they have a spiritual leading. We have seen, and rejoice, that the context in Psalm 91 refers to our Lord's triumph. "The dragon shalt Thou trample under feet" (13). How "naturally" should WE have answered, using *this* verse, and have become almost proud of our victory. This was perhaps, the *kernel* of the intended temptation. But it failed altogether: the Lord Jesus would not leave Deuteronomy. To have applied the Psalm before the time would have been to hurry the purpose of God:—so the contrasted purpose of Satan was frustrated. Genesis 3:15 SHALL be fulfilled, but at the right time. "God shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly" (Rom. 16:20). But the bearing of wrath was necessary first, and the Lord trod the appointed path. His answer alluded to Israel's

*E.g., Gen. 14, Dan. 1:1, 2, Ezra 7:9, Rev. 17, 18 and 19.

tempting in the wilderness, and their *impatience*. This was tempting God.

Thus the Lord Jesus illustrated Philippians 2:6-7 remarkably in the wilderness.* He was not only a Contrast with complaining Israel, but a loving Encouragement to believers now, that they may not be petulantly in haste, and that they may have a victory of humility over pride.† All self-exaltation is opposed to Christ (Heb. 5:5), and entirely against the Scriptures, which He used for our example. Satan wished to alter the *dominion* of earth for his own glory. The first Adam betrayed this to the evil one (Gen. 1:28; see 1 John 5:19), but the Last Adam *delighted* in the Father's will (Ps. 40:6-8). Since we have already seen how Satan will use Antichrist, let us ask ourselves to whom we are the more like? Are we self-willed, or not? Daniel 11:38 may allude to the worship which will be rendered to the devil, and Revelation 13:2 confirms. Satan ever seeks homage, and obedience. This gives a solemn inference as to the attitude which degrades Scripture, and forges weapons *against* Deuteronomy, instead of embracing its witness as the Lord's appointed weapon. Is not "Higher Criticism" thus exposed, with reference to its devilish origin; and should not children of God boldly refuse all compromise with those who maintain it? To speak of loving fellowship, when nominal Christian treachery against the Truth is involved, hardly seems honourable. Love rejoiceth not in iniquity, and to make peace on such terms is a denial of LOYALTY TO CHRIST. We ALL need to be more faithful, and thus more PAINED at sin. The spared ones of Ezekiel 9 sigh and cry, and the true sower of Psalm 126 goes forth weeping, bearing precious seed. The apostle spoke, weeping, of the enemies of the cross of Christ. Is the rejection of the Word of truth a mere matter of *history* to us? Is the advance of higher criticism a bare series of events for chronology, or is our heart solemnised? Do we feel the call to awake from sleep and arise from among the dead, that we may not only have a name to live, but a holy living faith, and a desire to be separate from *every* system and organisation that compromises God's truth? Thus alone can we rightly hold fast the faithful Word, and remember His welcome description—"Ye are My friends, if ye do *whatsoever* I command you!"

In this connection it is precious to notice again

*Phil. 2:3 reminds of the empty glory of the offered kingdoms: earth's honours are so temporary, yet so often sought.

†Saul, the king before David, and who persecuted David, is, as a type of Antichrist, marked by self-will, and haste (1 Sam. 14:19). Note, too, the growth of pride indicated in 1 Sam. 15:17.

that the quotations which the Lord Jesus chose, being *devotional*, urge alike the *food* of the truth, and right *worship*, reminding us that our peril is when we are OUTSIDE THE SANCTUARY. We may continue, like the Ephesian angel, to be unable to bear them that are evil, but if we have left the sanctuary and our first love, what is the profit? A growing up unto Christ *in all things*, is appointed, (Eph. 4:15) and necessary, that God *in all things may be glorified* (1 Pet. 4:11). The daily life of God's people must be spiritual; and let us remember, when meeting Satan's attacks, that the very verse we use against him, *should primarily and at the same time be our Father's food for our own souls*. The sword must be the sword of the Spirit, otherwise we are out of communion, and the conflict is more than half lost. We may congratulate ourselves on our orthodoxy, but that is not the victory.

To sum up:—*The Lord Jesus*, in wondrous fellowship with *the Holy Spirit*, after the heavenly testimony from the *Father*,* was led into the wilderness, picturing a ruined world. THERE He showed Himself a Contrast with Israel, and a Contrast with Antichrist alike. THERE He emphasised the true nature and preciousness of obedience, and set forth the appropriateness and power of Scripture, even as, in the subsequent *threefold* temptation of Matt. 26, He illustrated the power of prayer. Thus His blood-bought people are caused to see more clearly, in what way the tempter will strive to mislead, and what his aims really are.† Thus are they caused to realise their own necessary failure, unless brought to a simple enjoyment of that wondrous grace which leads to the will of God, and still links the two weapons Christ held (Eph. 6:16-17-18). May it be ours in His victory to obtain true victory (1 Cor. 15:57), and, in the might of grace (1 Cor. 15:10), to glorify our Saviour's precious Name, while we look for His Coming to take the dominion of earth which He refused from Satan's hands, and to be glorified in His saints, and admired in all them that believe (2 Thess. 1:10). Well may our hearts leap for joy in view of our present privileges and our eternal prospect—in the growing consciousness of "all blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 1:3).

*One of the allusions to our Triune God, in the working out of the covenant; notice Matt. 28:19, 2 Cor. 13:14, Eph. 2:18.

†Again call to mind Satan's (a) use of food, (b) appeal to the body, (c) desire to cause dissatisfaction, (d) encouragement of pride, (e) plea for self-will, and presumption, (f) urging to self-authority, (g) seeking after homage. A comprehensive plan. But he found NOTHING in Christ (John 14:30).

INSPIRED WORDS INSPECTED

No. 70

"For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do."

1 Thess. 5:9-11.

FOR (hoti); Conjunction, "because."

NOT (ouk); Negative, OU, k being added because the next letter is a vowel.

HATH APPOINTED (etheto); verb, aorist, indicative, from "tithemi," (I place, set, put) translate "did . . . set or place."

US (humas); personal pronoun, accusative plural.

GOD (ho Theos); masculine noun and article; lit., "The God." Nominative case. The position in the sentence is emphatic.

TO (eis); preposition, into, always governing acc. case often translated "to" or "unto." May be rendered "with a view to," with the thought of a goal in view. Translate the whole sentence, "For God did not set us with a view to wrath," that is, He has brought us into such a position that wrath cannot be the end in view.

WRATH (orgen); noun, feminine, from "orge," ("anger," Eph. 4:31, Col. 3:8, as a human passion, "indignation"—of God, Rev. 14:10, as "vengeance," Rom. 3:5, but mostly translated "wrath"). Thus, God's wrath is that which is coming (1 Thess. 1:10, 2:16). There is to be a "day of wrath" (Rom. 2:5; Rev. 6:17) God will shew the fierceness of wrath (Rev. 16:19; 19:15), but saved ones shall not endure it (Rom. 5:9). Some confuse the word in 1 Thess. 5:9 with tribulation, without Scriptural reason, and argue that no saints will pass through the great tribulation. "Wrath" is that which abideth on the unbelievers (John 3:36).

BUT (alla); a strong adversative conjunction, could be rendered, "on the contrary."

TO (eis); see above; "with a view to."

OBTAIN (peripoiesin); not a verb, but a noun, fem. acc. "Peripoiesis" is derived from "peripoieomai," lit. "I make around," signifying "to acquire for myself"; translated "to save" (Luke 17:33), probably in the sense of preserving alive. In the verse under consideration, the thought is probably of acquiring a final salvation for oneself (see 1 Pet. 1:5). The verb occurs in Acts 20:28, 1 Tim. 3:13, and the noun here, also in 2 Thess. 2:14, Heb. 10:39, 1 Peter 2:9 ("obtaining," "saving," and "peculiar," respectively), the last

meaning a people acquired by God for Himself.

SALVATION (soterias); noun, fem., genitive from soteria" (salvation); means "of salvation." The whole phrase may be rendered, "with a view to (or for the purpose of) acquiring salvation for oneself." Thus we have a negative and a positive statement of God's unchanging purpose for His own.

BY (dia); preposition meaning "through."

OUR (hemon); personal pronoun, gen. plural meaning "of us."

LORD (tou Kurious); masc. noun and article, genitive, as following "dia," which is sometimes governed by the accusative case. "The Lord."

JESUS CHRIST (Iesou Christou); proper nouns, masc. genitive to agree with "The Lord."

WHO DIED (tou apothanontos); verb, aorist participle, and article, genitive to agree with words going before; from "apothnesko" (I die) Translate, "The One having died."

FOR (peri); preposition, meaning "about" or "around." With the genitive there is the thought of surrounding and including. Thus, "for sins" (1 Pet. 3:18) meaning that the atonement embraced all the sins of the elect. "For us" means that work embraced all their persons, as here.

US (hemon); see above.

THAT (hina); conjunction, "in order that."

WHETHER (eite); conditional conjunction. When repeated, as here, means "whether . . . or."

WE WAKE (gregoromen); verb, present subjunctive, from "gregoreo" (I am awake, I am watchful); see verse 6, where the latter sense is evidently meant.

OR (eite); see above.

SLEEP (katheudomen); verb, present subjunctive, from "katheudo" (I sleep), that is, natural sleep (Matt. 8:24), moral sleep (Eph. 5:14). This latter is evidently intended by its use in this chapter (vv. 6, 7, 10). Another word is used in ch. 4, 13, 14, 15, where the sleep of death is the subject.

WE SHOULD LIVE (zesomen); verb; aorist subjunctive, from zao (I live), "We shall have lived."

TOGETHER WITH (hama sun); an adverb and a preposition linked, as in ch. 4:17, emphasising the close association, as both words signify "together with."

HIM (autoi); personal pronoun; dative because following "sun."

WHEREFORE (dio); conjunction, meaning "because of which."

COMFORT (parakaleite); verb, present imperative, from "parakaleo" (lit. "I call alongside"; I comfort, I encourage). "Be ye encouraging."

YOURSELVES TOGETHER (allelous); reciprocal pronoun, plural, accusative, meaning "one

another."

AND (kai); conjunction.

EDIFY (oikodomeite); verb, present imperative, from "oikodomeo" (I build a house) compounded from "oikos" (a house), domos (a house). Translate, "be ye edifying or building up."

ONE ANOTHER (heis ton hena). Numeral adjectives, nominative and accusative, with article. Lit. "one the one." The thought is, "each one the next one." A similar construction is found in 1 Cor. 4:6.

EVEN AS (kathos); adverb, compounded of "kata" (according) and "hos" (as); "according as." **ALSO** (kai); see above.

YE DO (poicite); verb, present indicative, from "poieo" (I do, I make) "ye are doing."

BRIEF COMMENTARY ON PSALM 50 Considered Prophetically

All Scripture is inspired of God and profitable, but some portions stand out with an unction above others. This Psalm is one such, and describes in words profound and majestic the Coming of the Lord at His second Advent.

The Psalm, it will be noted, divides itself into three main parts:—

Verses 1—6 The Coming of the Lord for His saints.

Verses 7—15 The Lord's dealing with His people Israel.

Verses 16—23 The Lawless one and the ungodly.

Thus we have the three sections of mankind (as marked out in 1 Corinthians 10:32), at the time of the end, when the Lord Jesus returns in manifested power and glory.

Verse 1. *The mighty God even the Lord.* El, Elohim, the Lord (Jehovah). Three names of God together; unusual, and to impress our hearts with the awful solemnity of the events to be unfolded. This One, the mighty God *hath spoken (speaks) and called (calls) the earth from the rising of the sun until the going down thereof.* It is the time of solemn assize of Daniel 7:9-14, when the Son of Man comes before the Ancient of Days, and is invested with authority to take unto Himself the dominion and sovereignty of the earth; the whole earth universally being summoned to account and to judgment.

Verse 2. *Out of Zion the perfection of beauty God hath shined.* Not apparently the earthly Zion, glorious as that will be (Ps. 48:2), but the mount Zion of Heb. 11; and Rev. 14; where God dwells,

the place of His presence; the excellent glory (2 Peter 1:17), from which our Lord Jesus shall come forth in divine manifestation.

Verse 3. Our God shall come and shall not keep silence. The silence of nearly 2,000 years will be broken. His silence has denoted His longsuffering, for when He arises and speaks it will be in judgment. (Isa. 63:1-4; 2 Cor. 5:10; Ps. 2:5; Rev. 11:17-18). *A fire shall devour before Him and it shall be very tempestuous round about Him.* His advent will be "in flaming fire" (2 Thess. 1:8), with power and great glory (Matt. 24:30), in the glory of His holy angels (Luke 9:26), bringing rest from tribulation, and salvation to His suffering saints (2 Thess. 1:7), but wrath and destruction to His enemies (2 Thess. 1:9); as also 1 Thess. 5:1-10; Rev. 6:12-17 and Rev. 11:15-18.

Verse 4. He shall call to the heavens from above, whither He ascended; far above all heavens (Eph. 4:10 also Heb. 4:14). Thus those in Paradise (Luke 23:43; 2 Cor. 12:4) who are with Christ (as to their souls) awaiting resurrection (see Rev. 6:9-11, also Matt. 24:30-31) will He bring with Him that soul and body may be united in resurrection glory; *and to the earth,* for those who are in the graves (as to their bodies) shall hear His voice and come forth (John 5:26-29) and living saints shall be changed (1 Cor. 15:51), in order that all who are Christ's at His coming may be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thess. 4:13-18, as also Heb. 11:39-40), that *He may judge His people* (2 Cor. 5:10). Resurrection and judgment are linked. The Day shall declare (1 Cor. 3:13-15). His reward will be with Him (Rev. 22:12; see also 2 Tim. 4:8).

Verse 5. Gather My saints together unto Me, as Matt. 24:29-31, Mark 13:24-27, 1 Thess. 4:13-18 (see also Heb. 11:40), He will receive His people to Himself through angelic ministry (Matt 24:31; Matt. 13:39). So shall we be forever with the Lord. *Those, that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice.* The everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure, on the ground of His one sacrifice for sins on the Cross (1 Peter 2:24), through His own blood having obtained eternal redemption for us (Heb. 9:12, 26).

Verse 6. And the heavens shall declare His righteousness. God's righteousness will be vindicated. His judgments will be true and righteous (Rev. 19:2). That He might be just and the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus (Rom. 3:36), *for God is Judge Himself. Selah* (see John 5:21-23 a witness to the deity of Christ).

The Lord now speaks to His people Israel. He would bring home to them their sin before receiv-

ing them in everlasting embrace (Isa. 54:7-10) never more to be cast away (Isa. 62:1-12).

Verses 7-13. Hear, O My people and I will speak, O Israel, and I will testify against thee, I am God, even thy God, by election (Deut. 7:7-8) and by covenant (Ex. 24:7-8). They had kept His sacrifices (v. 8), but the Lord would not accept them (v. 9); He had no need, for all belonged to Him (vs. 10-12). The Lord did not want the outward, but the inward; not the legal but the spiritual. To love the Lord is more than burnt offerings, and so He exhorts them to offer unto Him the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and to pay their vows unto the most High, (v. 14). Then would He hear them, and deliver them in the day of their trouble. And thus prophetically it will be. The spared of Israel when the Lord returns, for many of the nation will be cut off (Zech. 13:8-9) will pass through fearsome distress and trouble, it will be the time of Jacob's trouble (Jer. 30:1-9), but in their extremity they will call upon His Name and He will deliver them and they will become a praise and blessing in the earth, and then, unlike this dispensation, all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God (Isa. 52:1-10; 61:8-11; Psalm 72, etc.).

Lastly the Lord speaks to the lawless one and the ungodly.

Verse 16. But unto the wicked (singular, the wicked or lawless one) *God saith.* This lawless one declaring God's statutes and taking God's covenant in his mouth, may suggest that at first he comes feignedly, even as "a minister of righteousness" (2 Cor. 11:14-15) thus deceiving Israel and those that dwell on the earth (2 Thess. 2:9) deceiving, if this were possible, even the elect (Matt. 24:24; see Dan. 8:24; 11:21-24; 1 Thess. 5:3).

Verses 17-21. Appear to describe a state of lawlessness when expediency rather than truth governs the conduct of men, and when the end is held to justify the means (v. 19, frameth deceit, see Ps. 94:20). Even natural affection, v. 20, being violated for the end in view, as always in totalitarian systems, whether political or ecclesiastical.

Verses 22-23 This Psalm so detailed and wonderful in its unveiling ends with a personal note, as so often in prophetic context (Rev. 13:10; 16:16; Matt. 24:45-47; also Rev. 3:20). And so in verse 22 we have—"A warning to the forgetters of God," and in Verse 23—"an Invitation and promise to those who fear God."

Whatever conditions God permits to prevail upon the earth (how appalling today in some lands) there is always a right way before the Lord for those who fear Him, whether of suffering even

unto death (Rev. 14:12-13) or of deliverance and preservation, and if great outward persecutions have not yet been experienced, the searching principle remains, that the one who is faithful in that which is least, is the one who will be faithful also in much (Luke 16:10).

SUGGESTED DAILY READINGS "IF THE LORD WILL"—JULY, 1962

SUGGESTED DAILY READINGS "IF THE LORD WILL"—AUGUST, 1962

Day	READING		LEARNING		Day	READING		LEARNING	
	Leviticus	Luke	Job	Hebrews		Numbers	Luke	Job	Hebrews
1	19 1-18	5 1-15	32 1	11 34	1	4 34-49	14 1-14	33 10	12 25
2	19-37	16-26	2	35	2	5 1-31	15-24	11	26
3	20 1-27	27-39	3	36	3	6 1-12	25-35	12	27
4	21 1-24	6 1-16	4	37	4	13-27	15 1-10	13	28
5	22 1-16	17-31	5	38	5	7 1-23	11-32	14	29
6	17-33	32-49	6	39	6	24-47	16 1-15	15	13 1
7	23 1-14	7 1-18	7	40	7	48-71	16-31	16	2
8	15-32	19-35	8	12 1	8	72-89	17 1-19	17	3
9	33-44	36-50	9	2	9	8 1-13	20-37	18	4
10	24 1-23	8 1-15	10	3	10	14-26	18 1-14	19	5
11	25 1-13	16-25	11	4	11	9 1-23	15-30	20	6
12	14-28	26-42	12	5	12	10 1-17	31-43	21	7
13	29-43	43-56	13	6	13	18-36	19 7-10	22	8
14	44-55	9 1-11	14	7	14	11 1-23	11-27	23	9
15	26 1-12	12-27	15	8	15	24-35	28-48	24	10
16	13-20	28-36	16	9	16	12 1-16	20 1-18	25	11
17	21-35	37-48	17	10	17	13 1-20	19-38	26	12
18	36-46	49-62	18	11	18	21-33	39-47	27	13
19	27 1-10	10 1-16	19	12	19	14 1-25	21 1-13	28	14
20	11-21	17-28	20	13	20	26-45	14-28	29	15
21	22-34	29-42	21	14	21	15 1-21	29-38	30	16
22	Numbers 1 1-19	11 1-15	22	15	22	22-41	22 1-20	31	17
23	20-35	16-28	33 1	16	23	16 1-22	21-38	32	18
24	36-54	29-41	2	17	24	23-35	39-53	33	19
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PERSONAL NOTE

April, 1962.

The Editor desires to render thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for mercies as to the body. In the middle of last December, internal trouble developed which was thought would necessitate an operation. In answer to prayer—his own and that of many others—an x-ray examination shewed all clear, and a subsequent medical examination confirmed that the inflammation had subsided. The prayer was answered exactly according to his petition, so that neither operation nor medicine was needed.

On February 7th, again by Divine mercy, an

operation for cataract was successfully performed on the right eye. For some months reading was impossible and writing difficult. Some errors* in printing were not detected, but it is hoped that readers will pardon mistakes, and will continue in prayer that all future issues, as God enables, will be for His glory, and the good of His people.

Thanks are also due to many who wrote, assuring the editor of their prayers; and to his valued helpers, living at this address, who have carried on during the past months, dealing with correspondence, and keeping the accounts. To God be glory.

*One in particular is that "Saviour" should read "savour" (Mar. April, page 143).

SUGGESTED DAILY READINGS

"IF THE LORD WILL"—SEPTEMBER, 1962

Day	READING		LEARNING	
	Numbers	John	Job	Colossians
1	21 1-20	1 1-18	34 8	1 1
2	21-35	19-34	9	2
3	22 1-21	35-51	10	3
4	22-41	2 1-25	11	4
5	23 1-13	3 1-17	12	5
6	14-30	18-36	13	6
7	24 1-14	4 1-26	14	7
8	15-25	27-38	15	8
9	25 1-18	39-54	16	9
10	26 1-22	5 1-16	17	10
11	23-43	17-35	18	11
12	44-65	36-47	19	12
13	27 1-23	6 1-21	20	13
14	28 1-15	22-36	21	14
15	16-31	37-56	22	15
16	29 1-16	57-74	23	16
17	17-28	7 1-18	24	17
18	29-40	19-36	25	18
19	30 1-16	37-53	26	19
20	31 1-20	8 1-14	27	20
21	21-40	15-30	28	21
22	41-54	31-53	29	22
23	32 1-19	9 1-23	30	23
24	20-42	24-41	31	24
25	33 1-28	10 1-15	32	25
26	29-48	16-30	33	26
27	49-56	31-42	34	27
28	34 1-29	11 1-19	35	28
29	35 1-34	20-37	36	29
30	36 1-13	38-57	37	2 1

SUGGESTED DAILY READINGS

"IF THE LORD WILL"—OCTOBER, 1962

Day	READING		LEARNING	
	Deut.	John	Job	Colossians
1	1 1-14	12 1-16	35 1	2 2
2	15-31	17-33	2	3
3	32-46	34-50	3	4
4	2 1-13	13 1-17	4	5
5	14-25	18-30	5	6
6	26-37	31-38	6	7
7	3 1-17	14 1-14	7	8
8	18-29	15-31	8	9
9	4 1-13	15 1-15	9	10
10	14-24	16-27	10	11
11	25-36	16 1-16	11	12
12	37-49	17-33	12	13
13	5 1-15	17 1-13	13	14
14	16-33	14-26	14	15
15	6 1-12	18 1-23	15	16
16	13-25	24-40	16	17
17	7 1-11	19 1-24	36 1	18
18	12-26	25-42	2	19
19	8 1-20	20 1-31	3	20
20	9 1-14	21 1-25	4	21
21	15-29	Acts 1 1-26	5	22
22	10 1-22	2 1-13	6	23
23	11 1-9	14-28	7	3 1
24	10-17	29-47	8	2
25	18-32	3 1-11	9	3
26	12 1-16	12-26	10	4
27	17-32	4 1-18	11	5
28	13 1-18	19-37	12	6
29	14 1-20	5 1-15	13	7
30	21-29	16-28	14	8
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Phone: Grangewood 4196. No telephoning on Lord's Day.

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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

Vol. 62, Nos. 9 to 10

SEPTEMBER to OCTOBER 1962

FREE

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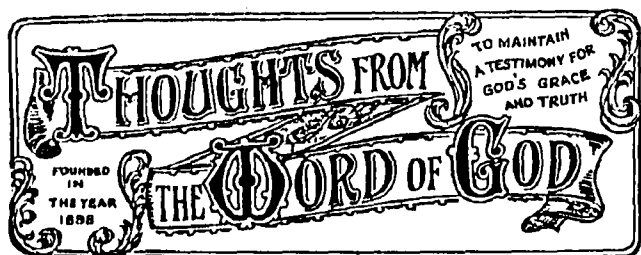
"For ye have need of patience, that,
after ye have done the will of GOD,
ye might receive the promise. For yet
a little while, and HE That shall come
will come, and will not tarry."

Hebrews 10:36-37.

"This is my comfort in my affliction; for Thy
Word hath quickened me."

Psalms 119:50.

'Tis good for me that I have been
Afflicted, for 'tis thus I learn
My weakness, and the sins unseen—
The hidden faults. Thus I return,
Renewed, revived by grace Divine,
To my first love, and do again
The things that please Thee, Saviour mine.
When Thou within my heart dost reign.



WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

"I do earnestly remember him." God, in His grace, condescends to use language, so simple and tender, that His children may be encouraged to trust Him as their Father, of Whom they can say, "The Lord thinketh upon me."

The words before us concern the chosen nation, Israel, who will enjoy the blessings of the New Covenant "in that Day." But the saints enjoy these blessings in advance, and the promises, which must be interpreted as concerning the earthly people, may be applied to present-day believers; for the Holy One of Israel, of Whom is found grace (v. 2) and Who loved with an everlasting love, is their God also. Is He not the unchanging One?

"Having forgiven you *all* trespasses" is His word to us, dear fellow-believers, as is also the Divine declaration—"I will remember their sin no more."

But, although He sovereignly "forgets" our sin, He does not forget us, though we oft fail, and even backslide in heart. Our sins and failures grieve Him, and should grieve us more, since they shew ingratitude to Him Who has shewn such grace. And yet it is, with a background of sin and repentance, that such tender words are spoken—"I do earnestly remember him still."

Is not this an encouragement to holiness, and a call to more loving obedience? The Lord enable us, by His grace, and the power of His Holy Spirit.

Hebrews 10 : 36, 37.

It is the work of Christ,
Who once was sacrificed
When, on the cross, He made propitiation.
Tis in Thy Word we read
How Thy Son met our need—
An everlasting, free, and full salvation.

Then may it be our joy
Our powers to employ
To ponder well, and spread abroad, its pages.
Tis thus we wend our way
On to that perfect Day,
When praise shall rise to Thee through
endless ages.

"IT IS FINISHED"

(John 19 : 30)

PERCY W. HEWARD

Only three striking words, but how much they mean. In the Greek, moreover, all is contained in ONE word: yet who can measure its eternal preciousness, who can fathom its depth, who can realize its fulness?

"It is Finished!" The cry of the Lord Jesus was not one of weakness, or defeat, but with a loud voice (Luke 23:46). It was a cry, yea, *the CRY* of triumph, it was the utterance of One Who could say in His wondrous prayer, "I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do" (John 17:4).

Nothing before was truly "finished," as we review the lives of men! Verily, in Genesis 2:1, "the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them," and the appointment of God was carried through, for example, with regard to the tabernacle: "So Moses finished the work" (Ex. 40:33). But no man had a life without a blemish: far otherwise. Of none except the Lord Jesus could God say, "This is My Beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased." God the Father had changeless complacency in Him. If words were entrusted they were spoken (John 12:49), if a work was appointed it was done (John 4:34), if a cup was given it was not left undrunk (John 18:11). "Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work," said the Holy Law of God (Ex. 20:9), but as Hebrews. 3 shows none could enter into rest: everything was imperfect, everything unfinished! But on Calvary no qualifying or restricting words were needed, and the shout of triumph could sound forth, to the glory of God the Father, and a death knell against the plans of the enemy. But what does all this mean to YOU and me?

"It is finished." In how many different, though linked, ways can a redeemed one look at these delightful words. The Law was fully honoured,

Poem to Help Christian experience—No. 279.

"The words of the LORD are pure words,"
Psalm 12:6.

Thy Word, our God, is pure:
Sound words are there, and sure,
For they are by Thy Spirit's inspiration
Man's sin is not concealed,
But therein is revealed
The wondrous work that frees from
condemnation.

The Lord Jesus had become under the law, and no failure marked His perfect life. Did law say, "Thou shalt love"? Love in its fulness characterised Him. What a contrast with others. To Him that word "love" meant the whole will of His Father, in the full carrying out of His purpose, and the Lord Jesus was able to say, "I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him That sent Me" (John 6:38-40). He was Perfect in Service, "I delight to do Thy will, O my God" (Ps. 40:8, with Heb. 10:7, 9). We repeat:—not one omission, not one alteration, not one mistake. And the law's judgment, too, was met, and the law's curse fell on Him and was fully satisfied (Gal. 3:13). But was this judgment for YOU?

If one thinks of the many prophecies of the Old Testament that concerned His first Coming, and what He would accomplish, the words ring out in this connection, "It is finished." Not one word was broken, or modified. And His own prophecies, signifying by what death He should die, came true to the very letter. There was no mere accommodation, or partial illustration. "Finished" is the only word that applies.

We should remember, too, the types graciously given in the tabernacle, and the other sacrifices, the types of the Smitten Rock, and the Serpent on the Pole, and many others. They were all pointing to One Person, the Lord Jesus and His work. Some were but once, others were oft repeated, and continued their testimony up to the very moment of Christ's death; and then the word "Finished" may well be emphasised, for even the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom (Matt. 27:51). The period of a *closed* way was thereby "finished," and the way into the very presence of God was blessedly opened. Everything depends of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ: that is the centre of history and of eternity. O, dear reader, is He your Saviour, or not?

We have already mentioned "Contrasts." Adam's life was spoilt, and broken, and the sad record of Genesis 5 shows every life under a thousand years, with a deep meaning, for a day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day: no life was truly "finished." The great effort of man's unity, of old, was Babel, and do we not read "They left off to build the city"? When Israel entered into the land, Judges 1 says, again and again, "They could not." Nothing was finished. Israel's priests are specially marked out as offering often times the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins (Heb. 10:11). Those who came thereto were never made perfect (Heb. 7:19, 10:1); never brought to a completeness. But the

Lord Jesus, "after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, SAT DOWN on the right hand of God" (Heb. 10:12). Here is the one hope of salvation, and it is blessedly sure and fixed. Finished, finished, finished!—Let the word be sounded forth in all its joy to those who realise its blessed meaning, and its undying fulness.

There are many religions in the world, there is only one gospel. This gospel is quite distinct. It does not look to a man, nor depend on ourselves, but directs the heart simply to the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 16:31). One says, "You cannot know if you are saved till you die": the word "Finished" contains a wondrous answer that faith appreciates (Eph. 2:8). Another speaks of "the sacrifice of the mass," and the Holy Spirit's reply against this grievous mistake is already written large in the word "Finished." Here comes one who would like to join "his part" to the work of salvation. He professes to believe in Christ, but his own good works and character count for something in his esteem. "Finished" sweeps away all such vain confidence and pride. Here comes yet another who is burdened beyond measure, and would wish to bring somewhat, yet feels himself unable, and filled with unworthiness and despair. The word "Finished" is a message of peace to this poor, anxious soul. Nothing can be added to the work of Christ, absolutely nothing. It was for the helpless, the underserving that He died, and such are now accepted in Him the Beloved, because His redemption, without anything of theirs, is sufficient for those most conscious of guilt. Here then is God's gospel, a sweet message of mercy to a soul, but ah, dear reader, it is not a merely general witness that we give. Let all this come before you as if you were the only one reading it. The Lord Jesus said, "It is finished," and you know why He came into the world. Do you believe Him, or not? Do you rest upon Him, or not? No other work has been "finished," nor can be, but here is God's welcome, and the heart-broken He is ready to heal today (Ps. 147:3).

YOUNG PEOPLE'S COLUMNS

Pins and Nails

Everything in the Bible is important, and so many homely things are mentioned in its pages, such as bread, water, and soap. But let us see what the Book has to say about "pins" and "nails," for they are the same word in the Hebrew. We read of wood, iron, and brass pins or nails.

Nails for Tents

We speak of these as tent-pegs, to which are fastened the cords. God's dwelling-place, the Tabernacle, was really a tent, and needed pins. These were made of brass (or copper) for they must be strong (Exodus 27:19, 38:20). The Tabernacle was very beautiful, and was surrounded by a court of white linen hangings. Though the pins were not the things that people looked at first, they were very important, and very necessary to keep the curtains of the tent in their place. Now God has a dwelling-place made up of His saved ones (see 2 Cor. 6:16); and *all*, great and small, who are a part of *that* tabernacle are noticed by God, Who caused Moses to mention the pins several times. However humble the place of a child of God, the Lord has need of him. Of course, one cannot be useful to God until he or she is saved through believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. Have you come to Him for salvation?

NAILS TO FASTEN IDOLS

In Isaiah 41:7 and Jeremiah 10:4, we read of those who made idols of wood, and decked them with silver and gold. "They fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not." How foolish, and how wicked, to bow down to a "god" that must be kept in its place; and yet in many parts of the world men and women, boys and girls, are doing just that. How needful to pray, that many servants of God may be sent forth to tell them of the True and Living God, and for those who are already serving Him in this way overseas.

NAILS ON WHICH TO HANG THINGS

In the eastern tent there was a large peg called a "nail" on which all the vessels and furniture were hung. So we read in Isaiah 22:23-24 these words—"And I will fasten Him as a nail in a sure place; and He shall be for a glorious throne to His father's

house. And they shall hang upon Him all the glory of His father's house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons. From verse 22, when we compare Revelation 3:7, we learn that this Scripture speaks of the Lord Jesus, for He it is Who has the key of David. He is pictured as a nail fastened in a sure place, to encourage those who trust in Him, Who is strong and firm as a foundation. He can bear all the glory, and every vessel of mercy" can be supported by Him. Are you such an one? Does your heart say, "Hangs my helpless soul on Thee"?

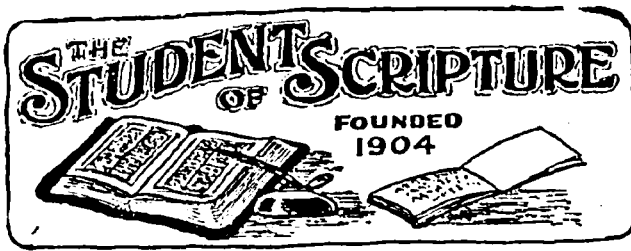
Nails of the Cross

The Lord Jesus endured a shameful and cruel death. His hands and feet were pierced by sharp nails, by which He was hanged on the cross. "We may not know, we cannot tell, the pain He had to bear." We do know that He died bearing the sins of a great number of sinners, and that, after He was risen from the dead, He shewed to His disciples His hands and His feet, for they still bore the print of the nails. "It is I myself," He told them.

But we are told, when He died, all that was "against" His people, all that was "contrary" to them, He took out of the way, "nailing it to His cross" (Col. 2:14). That means, of course, that they are dead, and can have now no power over His believing ones. The verse before says, "having forgiven you all trespasses." How precious is "the blood of His cross"! (Col. 1:20). What is that blood to you, dear reader?

NAILS FASTENED BY MASTER OF ASSEMBLIES

That is a verse (in Ecclesiastes 12:11) not easy to understand—"The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd." Where do we find such words, except in the Bible, and Who has given such words but God Himself, Who is truly the One Shepherd? (Psalm 23:1.) A goad is a sharp instrument and causes pain. So does the Word of God when His Holy Spirit sends it into our hearts. It is a good thing to be pained over sin. But He also uses His word as a nail, to drive it well home into our heart and mind, so that it may stay there. And these words are written in the hope, and with the prayer that God may so apply His own word to the hearts and consciences of our dear readers, and to Him shall be all the glory.



PREPARING FOR ANTICHRIST

This name is probably that most frequently used in speaking of the prophesied coming world-ruler. Not only has he many other descriptions, but there are several types of him in Scriptural or other history. He is the "beast, dreadful and terrible," "a king of fierce countenance," "a vile person" (all mentioned by Daniel, 7:7, 8:9, 11:21). He is the "Assyrian" (Isa. 10), "the idol-shepherd" (Zech. 11:17), "Another" that "shall come in his own name" (John 5:43), and "the wild beast" of "Revelation." Saul, Absalom, and Judas, were all types of the coming "Man of sin, the son of perdition," that "wicked One" to be revealed (2 Thess. 2).

It is John alone, and that in his shorter writings, the first and second epistles, who speaks of this "wicked" as "the Antichrist."

The word "anti" is important. Its exact meaning is "over against," and is used in the sense of being "against" in a hostile manner, or of being "instead of" in a substitutionary manner. Absalom, David's son remarkably illustrates both. He "stole the hearts of the men of Israel" by representing himself as the one who would espouse their cause, and deal properly with their cases in "the gate," the place of judgment and justice. He manifested a "socialistic" spirit, and so attracted many to himself. So is it with the demagogues of today, who, once in the position of authority and power, use it for self-glorification and tyranny. So was it with Absalom. As soon as he declared himself as "reigning in Hebron," he rebelled against his father, and became "Anti-David."

Whenever a person or a thing takes the place "instead of" or even "alongside," God and His Truth, the spirit of Antichrist is at work, and may lead to open hostility to God and His Christ. Some years ago, the exponents of what was called, "The New Theology" made the shocking statement that "every man is a potential Christ." The very opposite is the fact. Every man is a potential Antichrist, as Scripture abundantly testifies; "because the carnal mind is *enmity against God*" (Rom. 8:7). Let it then be remembered that the spirit of anti-

christ begins by "substituting," and develops into hostile opposition. So believers, therefore, need to be on their guard against anything that tends to undermine the Saviour's Lordship of their lives or the integrity of Holy Scripture, for, as we shall see, "antichrists" were in the very assemblies of God. Solemn are the words of the Holy Spirit through the apostle—"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates? (2Cor. 13:5.)

"A Last Hour"

"Little children, it is a last hour" (lit. 1 John 2:18). We know now it was not then THE last time, but the characteristics of the last hour were then manifesting themselves. And how much more have those characteristics developed in the present day. Many are the proffered substitutes for "the faith," some centuries old, others of the present and preceding century, and yet others more recent. But beneath all is a veiled antagonism to "the truth as it is in Jesus." And since "our salvation is nearer than when we believed," and the "signs of the times" are becoming more ominous, what need have the saints, as individuals and as assemblies, to guard against those who "go too far (lit.), and continue not in the doctrine of the Christ" (2 John 9)!

Many Antichrists—The spirit of Antichrist

The apostle recognised that his day had the character of the latter days, for "many antichrists" had arisen. It is in the "last day that the Man of Sin appears. He will shew himself to be Satan's "masterpiece," particularly during the last three and a half years of this "present evil age." But whence did *these* evil persons arise? "They went out from us," says the apostle. They *knew* the truth, and had seemed to be among the saved. "But they were not OF US." Otherwise, they would have continued in fellowship with the saints, but they not only leave the assembly, but are either definitely hostile or are preaching "another gospel which is not another" (Gal. 1:1-7). And even though the "going out" was but a shewing forth of their real character, the apostle in using the present tense, "all are not of us" (lit.) warns those remaining lest they "abide not in the doctrine of Christ" (2 John 9). "Even now" are there antichrists (1 John 2:18). "Even now already is it (the spirit of antichrist) in the world" (4:3). Such "spirits" are misleading men, and this is true of some teaching concerning prophecy. The words, "even now," and "many false prophets have gone out into the world" (4:1) apply with even greater force today.

Paul recognised false teaching as emanating from a "spirit" (2 Thess. 2:2). Peter warns, "There shall be false teachers among YOU" (2 Peter 2:1).

The Antichrist

He is described as "The Liar," "The Denier" and "The Antichrist," each term suggesting an individual. As "The Denier," he says, "Jesus is not the Christ" (1 John 2:22, lit.), a statement that will appeal to unbelieving Israel, who will receive the one coming "in his own name" (John 5:43). But thus he will shew himself to be "The Liar," and his origin and inspiration to be satanic. The "elect" will not be deceived, but those who receive not the love of the truth, though they may know it, will "believe the Lie" (2 Thess. 2:10-11). Satan, when speaking "a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it" (John 8:44). From the beginning, he "abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him." The Lie, "Ye shall be as GOD," was believed by Eve, and will be believed by men in the latter days. The evil teachings of evolution will lead men to accept Antichrist as the "superman," to regard him as the finest product of humanity, and to worship him, for "God will send them strong delusion, who turn their hearts from His revealed truth. And these latter days may be very near! Moreover, we read, "This is The Antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son" (2:22). He may begin by a general acknowledgment of a Supreme Deity, but "in the midst of the week," at the centre of the last seven years, he will throw off the mask, and shew himself to be anti-God, *opposing* and exalting "himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God" (2 Thess. 2:4). Thus, the twofold force of the word "anti" will be illustrated. He is both hostile to God, and presents himself to man as being, "instead of" God.

The Great Denier

"Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come (*hath come*) in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God; and this is that spirit of Antichrist" (1 John 4:2-3). A denial of the reality of the birth of the Lord Jesus, and of His life in the flesh was an heresy of quite early days in the church's history. It has reared its head in modern times. Attacks on the virgin birth of God's Messiah, and on His physical resurrection are made by professed ministers of the Gospel, who thus hasten on "the Apostacy," and prepare the coming generation to welcome Antichrist. The

apostle adds, "They are of the *world*: therefore speak they of the *world*, and the *world* heareth them. We are of God" (1 John 4:5-6). How ominously sounds this word in our ears today! People talk of a world-parliament, a world-church, and already there exists a "world council of churches," which idea has fascinated even some "evangelical" people. Let us not forget the words, "We are of God," and particularly what follows. "He that knoweth God heareth us"—surely the message given by the apostles (see chapter 1:1-5). And compare the words of Peter (2 Peter 3:2). If the words of God are set aside, it is no marvel if the *world* hears those who question the authority of Scripture.

In his second epistle John says, (and he is inspired of God)—"For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come (literally—Jesus Christ coming) in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist" (v. 7). So that the latter days will be marked, not only by a denial of the Christ of history, but of His personal coming again "in the flesh," that is, "This Same Jesus" (Acts. 1:11). He Whom the disciples heard, saw, and handled (1 John 1:1) is indeed coming again, as He said (John 14) Hence, any denial of His return to this earth is of the spirit of antichrist, which would rob the saints of "That Blessed Hope". How needful then the warning—"If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds" (2 John 10:11).

Warnings and Encouragements

"And now, little children, abide in Him; that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming" (1 John 2:28). "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure" (1 John 3:2-3). "Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward" (2 John 8).

All these scriptures need no enlarging upon. Our gracious Lord is coming and His reward is with Him. In the meantime, we hear, and by the Holy Spirit's enabling, obey the command, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols" (things SEEN) (1 John 5:21) "For we walk by faith, not by sight."

INSPIRED WORDS INSPECTED

No. 71

"Little children, it is the last time; and as ye have heard that Anti-christ shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us."

1 John 2:18-19.

LITTLE CHILDREN (paidia); noun, plural, neuter, vocative case, from "paidion" (a little child), from "pais" (a child); the ending "ion" is like our ending "-ling" in "darling," "gosling," signifying "smallness" and "dearness." John, in using this word, speaks affectionately or endearingly. "Teknia" (2:1) is also diminutive, with the same thought of affection, but denoting rather "birth" than "youth."

IT IS (estin; verb, present, from "eimi," (I am); it comes at the end of the sentence, an *emphatic* position.

THE LAST (eschate); adjective, nominative, feminine, from "eschatos, -e, -on" (last): qualifying "hour."

TIME (hora); noun, feminine, singular, nominative, meaning "hour." There is no article, so translate, "a last hour." The time of which John is writing had the characteristics of the coming last days.

AND (Kai); conjunction.

AS (kathos); adverb, from "Kata" (according) and "hos" (as). "According as."

YE HAVE HEARD (ekousate); verb, aorist, from "akouo" (I hear); render "ye heard" or "ye did hear."

THAT (hoti); conjunction; used often to introduce a statement, almost equivalent to our inverted commas.

ANTICHRIST (antichristos); noun, masculine, compound of "anti" (over against) and meaning sometimes "against," and sometimes "instead of." The other part of the word "Christos" is the Greek form of "Messiah" (Anointed One). Hence, the term denotes someone who *substitutes* himself for Christ, and, at the same time, or subsequently, and inevitably, is definitely *hostile* to Christ.

SHALL COME (erchetai); verb, present tense, from erchomai (I come) translate, "cometh" or "is coming." Indeed, he is on the way, for the spirit of antichrist is now already in the world (ch. 4:3).

EVEN (kai); conjunction, usually "and" or "also" in translation.

NOW (nun); adverb.

ARE THERE (gegonasin); verb, perfect tense, from "ginomai" (to become); may be rendered, "have become." An interesting word, seeing they were originally in an assembly of believers.

MANY (polloi); adjective, masculine, plural, from "polus" (much or many). This word *follows* "antichrist," which it qualifies.

ANTICHRISTS (antichristoi); noun, plural.

WHEREBY (horthen); relative adverb, meaning "whence." Here it denotes the source of the knowledge (see the next word).

WE KNOW (ginoskomen); verb, present, from "ginosko" (I know).

THAT (hoti); see above.

IT IS (estin); see above, where also it comes at the end of the sentence.

THE LAST TIME (no article, and see above).

THEY WENT (exelthan); verb aorist, from "exerchomai," a compound of "ek" (out of) and "erchomai" (I come). Hence, "to go or come out, to proceed, emanate, take rise from."

FROM (ex); preposition, "ek" (out of, from) "k" becomes "x" before a vowel. Genitive case always follows "ek."

US (hemon); personal pronoun, genitive plural. The order of the last five words is: — "out from us they came out."

BUT (all); *strong* adversative conjunction, "alla," the "a" being omitted before a vowel.

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

NOT (ouk); negative "ou," the "k" being added because preceding a vowel. This word comes before "they were."

OF (ex); preposition, "ek" (see above); but here it signifies origin or derivation. Compare, "ye are of God" (ch. 4:4, etc.).

US (see above).

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

IF (ei); conditional conjunction.

THEY HAD BEEN (esan); lit., "thy were"; see above.

OF US (see above).

THEY WOULD HAVE CONTINUED (memen-ekesan); verb, pluperfect, from "meno" (I remain, continue, abide), by which three words it is rendered in ch. 2:24. The particle "an" which follows this verb, gives the sense of uncertainty or possibility.

WITH (meth'); preposition, "meta" (with or after); "a" is omitted, and "h" added, because the following word is an aspirated vowel.

US (hemon); personal pronoun, genitive.

BUT (all); see above.

THEY WENT OUT (not in text, but understood).

NO DOUBT (not in text).

THAT (hina); conjunction, "in order that."

THEY MIGHT BE MADE MANIFEST phanerothosin); verb, aorist, subjunctive, passive, from "phaneroo" (to bring to light, declare, make manifest).

THAT (hoti); see above.

NOT (ouk); see above.

THEY WERE (eisin); verb, present tense, from "eimi." Lit., "they are."

ALL (pantes); adjective, plural, from "pas, pasa, pan" (all). May be rendered, "Not all are of us." *The present tense* is heart-searching, for there is much profession, which will be revealed in a coming day.

OF US (ex hemon); see above.

THE INNER LIFE OF THE BELIEVER

How, then, did Brainerd witness a good confession, honouring God and putting the adversary to shame?

He did so, we would say, not by the success of his labours, though that was great, but by that life of marvellous nearness to, and strange intimacy with, God, which he lived during his brief day on earth. It is in living such a life that we witness a good confession, and bring special glory to the Name of that God Whose we are and Whom we serve. It is not, perhaps, easy to understand how a veiled life like this should be so glorifying, nor how it should be, that the most hidden parts of it should be sometimes the most glorifying of all; yet such, we are assured, is the sober truth. And there may often be concentrated in one hour's blessed communion, or in one hour's desperate struggle with the unseen adversary, more of what honours God and bears testimony to His Name, than in long years of public labour acknowledged and applauded on every side. It is not upon the platform, or amid the listening crowd, nor even in the pulpit, that we confess Christ with the purest lip and the most noble testimony. These, doubtless, are fit places for confessing Him, just as, in truth, any place is where we can name His Name; but the confession in which there mingles least of what is earthly and human, most of what is heavenly and divine, is the confession made upon the bended knee in the lonely closet, unlistened to by any ear but God's. There we are less tempted to be insincere; and though even there we are at times conscious of trying to impose even on Him, and speaking of ourselves, not as we really are, but as we know He desires us to be, yet, when alone with Him, our witness-bearing is of a true and more thoroughly expressive kind.

Besides, it is evident that God attaches more importance to the private history of our souls in their transactions with Himself than we are

accustomed to do. Not that He makes the private to supersede the public, or the individual to exclude the corporate; but still He gives us to understand that His glory is strangely wrapt up in all the secret movements of the soul, and that there is a weight and importance connected with our closet history which we know not now, but which we shall know hereafter.

Thus Enoch walked with God, and obtained the testimony of pleasing Him. Thus Moses passed his forty years' sojourn in Midian, glorifying God in the solitudes of Horeb as truly as afterwards amid the thousands of Israel. Thus David honoured God when feeding his sheep on the plains of Bethlehem. Thus Elijah honoured Him at the brook Cherith, and at the widow's house in Zarephath. Thus did John the Baptist in the wilderness of Judea. And thus was it with the Lord Himself, Whose public life was so short. Whose private life was so long. Ah! is it not evident that, whether we see it or not, God has some most wondrous way of glorifying Himself by those parts of our lives which are lived alone? There is something about the silent, solitary growth of His "trees of righteousness" that we are slow to understand. How much of delight in them, and of glory from them, He is continually receiving, we know not; yet that this is not only great, but of the purest and most precious kind, we cannot doubt.

Nor, indeed, is this altogether wonderful; for it is here that the soul gets fullest room and liberty to expand itself. It is here that we are brought into the most direct contact with God. It is here that there is least of earth and most of heaven. It is here that the spikenard flows forth with its unchecked fragrance. It is from this that our sweetest songs arise. It is here that we unbosom and unveil ourselves without reserve, delighting to make mention to God of all that He has done for us, in loving, forgiving, quickening, gladdening us. It is here that we fondly dwell upon the whole story of our saved life, telling, over and over again, in His listening ear, the wonders of His grace toward us—wonders of grace which all proclaim aloud the unutterable glory of His Name! Here, too, our battles are fought, and our noblest victories won; and who can tell the glory that goes up to God from such a battlefield! Our conflict with sin, our struggles with unbelief, our crucifying of the flesh, our resistance to self, our strife with the world, our wrestling with principalities and powers,—all in loneliness, and amid tears, and sighs, and groanings that cannot be uttered,—these fill up the story of an unseen life, in which Christ is confessed and God is glorified in the way in which He most

delights to be. Man's love of show and effect and outward scene, would pronounce a life like this wasted and lost. But He Who plants flowers in the desert, whose fragrance ascends to none but Himself; He Who studs the secret cave with dazzling crystals which none but Himself has ever gazed upon; He Who lights up stars in myriads in the depths of space, far beyond the range of man's widest vision;—*HE* glorifies Himself in a way more befitting the loftiness of His nature and the simple majesty of His Name. He can afford to be unseen Himself, and He can afford to let that be hidden in which He takes the profoundest interest, and from which He means to draw the largest revenue of glory.

**"HE WILL BRING ME FORTH TO THE
LIGHT, AND I SHALL BEHOLD HIS
RIGHTEOUSNESS"**

Micah 7:9.

The prophet was passing through a testing time, though he had borne a faithful witness for God. Now he was conscious of an enemy who would rejoice over his "falls"; he knew something of darkness in soul; he had a deep sense of sin, and was experiencing, because of felt failure, the chastening hand of God. He was "a man of like passions as we are." A saint today may, and does, tread the same path. Sometimes a feeling of depression occurs, for which no cause can be found, or reason given. It may last a day, and the joy of the Lord returns. But some are longer "under a cloud," and are in "prison." It may be self-caused, it may be through overmuch introspection; temporary bodily weakness sometimes will have such an effect. Self-pity, that corroding moral disease, may be the cause. On the other hand, such experiences may be Divinely permitted, in a Heavenly Father's wisdom, for the training of His child. But there is a prayer that those in such a case may utter:—"Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise Thy Name" (Ps. 142). Micah, though not making light of his affliction, retained his faith in God. "*When I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD shall be a light unto me.*" "*He will bring me forth to the Light, and I shall behold His righteousness.*"

May these words encourage, so that we may say, with sorely-tried Job, "*When He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold*"—"that I may praise Thy Name."

"BUT HE GIVETH MORE GRACE"

James 4:6

Our trials are not denied by our Father. The manifold temptations are not treated as a light matter. Hebrews 2:18 and 4:15, indicate the reverse. "But he giveth more grace." WE might wish the difficulties to be far removed (see 2 Cor. 12:8, 9). But then we should have no test of faith. So our Father permits them to remain, AND supplies fulness of grace to meet emergencies, if only we are in a *condition* to receive. The absence of temptations would have no refining power, no message, as to *our condition*. The purpose of God is that lowly ones should be blest, and so the verse continues: He "giveth grace unto the humble." Thus the Divine plan shows if we are watchful or sleepy, if we are humble or self-satisfied. It puts a difference between those who seek the Lord and those who do not. The grace is available, but it is not wasted, it is not bestowed indiscriminately, as the sun shines on evil and good alike: it is ours as we come to the throne of grace (Heb. 4:16). Yes, and *more* grace, the greater the trial is. The word "more" (even as in John 15) shows there are real differences in Christian experience. Everlasting life is the same for all the Lord's redeemed, but *this* supply of grace depends on a believer's spiritual attitude. God "gives": we have no merit: but where is the capacity to receive, and where the readiness, where the "coming," while pride and self-satisfaction have sway? Surely this word of encouragement, applied by the Holy Spirit, draws us to our Lord.

P.W.H.

A DIVINE UNVEILING

Some Thoughts on Zechariah 3

INTRODUCTION

The Book of Zechariah, with which should be studied the preceding book of Haggai, has an historical setting. Those before us in this chapter are real persons Divine, human, and angelic. This history is found in the book of Ezra, wherein is recorded the return of a remnant of Israel from the Babylonian captivity. As foretold by Jeremiah, that lasted seventy years, no less and no more, according to God's purpose. Daniel knew of this prophecy (Jer. 25:11-12, Dan. 9:1-2) and set himself to confess the national sins, and to intercede for Israel and Jerusalem. Another prophecy, that of Isaiah (44:28, 45:1-4), foretells the rise of Cyrus, King of Persia, who would grant permission for the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem. This was exactly fulfilled (2 Chron. 36:22-23, Ezra 1).

Thus, God kept His word, but He who will be enquired of, *thus* answered Daniel's prayer—an illustration of the efficacy of prayer—God's will and His people's desires being in holy harmony.

Some of those in Babylon mourned over their exile in a strange land; they remembered Jerusalem, preferring her above their chief joy (Ps. 137). These probably formed the "remnant" that returned, the rest being content with their captivity. Still, no less than forty-two thousand three hundred and sixty, with their servants and maids, returned to Jerusalem. Zubbabel, of the line of the kings of Judah (ch. Matt. 1:12-13, Luke 3:27) and Joshua the high priest, were one with the people. They began by building the altar of the God of Israel, thus setting forth atonement by blood as the basis of salvation and of all subsequent service. They resumed the practice of the daily burnt-offering, they kept the Lord's feasts, they "willingly offered a free will offering unto the LORD" (Ezra. 3:1-7).

(If the Lord will, to be continued)

NOTES ON MEMORISED VERSES**COLOSSIANS 3**

10. The new man is God's creation, according to His own image, and with a view to knowledge (cf. John 17:3). 11. These descriptions, varied as they are, are the "old man," but Christ is in the "new man." 12. Election is coupled with holiness, and is thus proved. The elect are God's beloved. The graces here were all displayed by the Lord Jesus. 13. Forbearing "one another" and forgiving "yourselves" (lit.). The Lord is our Example. 14. These graces are nothing without love, that perfect bond (cf. 1 Cor. 13). 15. The peace of Christ to be the "arbiter." Become ye thankful. 16. "The word of the Christ." "Teaching . . . yourselves" (lit.). 17. "Ye do in word." Words are working. Giving thanks is such a work. 18. 19. Wives and husbands. How they behave who would please God. 20. 21. Children and fathers. What is well-pleasing to God? 22-25. Servants (lit., "slaves") to obey *fully*, to "work out from the soul" (lit.) with the eye on the Lord only. Even such service is to the Lord Christ, and will be rewarded, or merely to man, perhaps without diligence, meriting disapproval "in that Day."

COLOSSIANS 4

1. Masters to remember they, too, have a Master. 2. Prayer should *always* be coupled with thanksgiving (cf. Phil. 4:6). 3. "That God may open to us a door of the word" (lit.). 4. For the apostle was behind the door of the prison. 5. The appointed season buying up. Use all opportunities in witnessing to those "without." 6. Saints should be gracious in speech, yet not in fleshly "sweetness." 7. A description of a true servant, "beloved," "faithful," "fellow-bondman." 8. Illustrating Paul's yearning over the saints. 9. Another brother of the same kind, similarly described (see Philemon). "He is of you." 10. "Fellow-captive" was Aristarchus (see Acts 27:2). Marcus, now in favour with Paul. 11. Apparently he would not, out of reverence, retain his

original name. All these were a comfort to Paul. 12. Epaphras (see ch. 1:7) a faithful minister in Colosse, and one who "agonized" in prayer for their stability in the will of God. 13. His "painful toil" in supplication was also on behalf of other saints. 14. Demas had not then defected. 15. The church in *their* house. Was the wife in fellowship? 16. An exchange of epistles. 17. Archippus (see Philemon 1) probably the son of Philemon and Apphia. "Take heed . . . fulfil." 18. Paul, so prayerful himself, valued the prayers of saints.

1 PETER 1

1. Strangers of dispersion, yet, 2. Elect ones. The Triune God before us. The Father choosing, the Spirit sanctifying, the Son's obedience and blood. 3. The Father begetting; therefore they are children, and heirs; INTO a living hope, 4. INTO an inheritance . . . reserved in heaven, 5. being guarded in power of GOD, THROUGH faith, INTO Salvation ready to be revealed. Note the threefold, at present *unseen*, inheritance. 6. Note also the threefoldness of the variegated (lit.) testings—a little while, just now, if need be. 7. The fiery trial is with a view to "That Day." 8. The *unseen*

Saviour still unseen, yet loved and rejoiced in because of faith, 9, and faith which has a sure end, the soul's salvation. 10. The prophets witness of this salvation, though, 11, they did not understand fully that which the Spirit of Christ in them fore-witnessed. Suffering, then glory (Luke 24:26). 12. Not to themselves, but to us. The gospel announced by evangelizers, by the Holy Spirit's agency. 13. Because of this, be in an attitude of readiness, girded and forward-looking. 14. 15. A negative and positive command. "*Become ye holy*" in every phase of life. 16. The reason, God is holy, and His children should be obedient (see verse 14). 17. The Father is without respect of persons (lit., not receiving faces) in judging each one's work; hence "fear" is enjoined. 18. 19. "Not But." The preciousness of redeeming blood. 20. The Divine purpose was from eternity, but manifested in time, "because of you." 21. *Through Him faith in* (into) God. The resurrection (see v. 3) the foundation of faith and hope *in* (into) God. 22. Purity of soul is the result of obedience to Truth, and leads to brotherly love, and that fervent (out stretching, lit.). 23. "Having been born again," not "being" as a process, but a past action, with a present effect.

SUGGESTED DAILY READINGS

"IF THE LORD WILL"—NOVEMBER, 1962.

Day	READING	LEARNING
	Deut.	Acts Job Colossians
1	15 12-23	6 1-15 36 16 3 10
2	16 1-12	7 1-16 17 11
3	13-22	17-29 18 12
4	17 1-20	30-50 19 13
5	18 1-22	51-60 20 14
6	19 1-21	8 1-24 21 15
7	20 1-20	25-40 22 16
8	21 1-14	9 1-16 23 17
9	15-23	17-28 24 18
10	22 1-12	29-43 25 19
11	13-30	10 1-16 26 20
12	23 1-14	17-33 27 21
13	15-25	34-48 28 22
14	24 1-22	11 1-15 29 23
15	25 1-19	16-30 30 24
16	26 1-19	12 1-12 31 25
17	27 1-13	13-25 32 4 1
18	14-26	13 1-22 33 2
19	28 1-14	23-37 37 1 3
20	15-30	38-52 2 4
21	31-48	14 1-18 3 5
22	49-57	19-28 4 6
23	58-68	15 1-12 5 7
24	29 1-13	13-29 6 8
25	14-29	30-41 7 9
26	30 1-20	16 1-18 8 10
27	31 1-15	19-40 9 11
28	16-30	17 1-15 10 12
29	32 1-14	16-34 11 13
30	15-22	18 1-16 12 14

SUGGESTED DAILY READINGS

"IF THE LORD WILL"—DECEMBER, 1962

Day	READING	LEARNING
	Deut.	Acts Job Colossians
1	32 23-31	18 17-28 37 13 4 15
2	32-40	19 1-20 14 16
3	41-50	21-41 15 17
4	33 1-7	20 1-12 16 18
5	8-12	12-27 17 —
6	13-19	28-38 18 —
7	20-29	21 1-19 19 —
8	31 1-12	20-40 20 —
9	Joshua 1 1-18	22 1-16 21 1 Peter 1 1
10	2 1-24	17-30 22 2
11	3 1-17	23 1-22 23 3
12	4 1-24	23-35 24 4
13	5 1-15	24 1-15 38 1 5
14	6 1-11	16-27 2 6
15	12-27	25 1-12 3 7
16	7 1-15	13-27 4 8
17	16-26	26 1-18 5 9
18	8 1-17	19-32 6 10
19	18-35	27 1-26 7 11
20	9 1-15	27-44 8 12
21	16-27	28 1-15 9 13
22	10 1-21	16-31 10 14
23	22-43	Romans 1 1-17 11 15
24	11 1-23	18-32 12 16
25	12 1-24	2 1-16 13 17
26	13 1-14	17-29 14 18
27	15-33	3 1-18 15 19
28	14 1-15	19-31 16 20
29	15 1-19	4 1-25 17 21
30	20-63	5 1-21 18 22
31	16 1-10	6 1-11 19 23

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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

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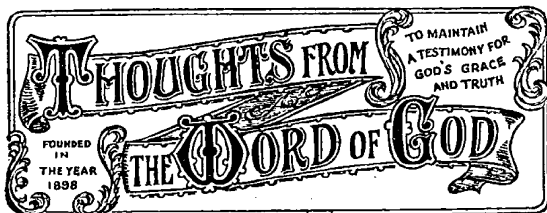
**"GOD is faithful, by Whom ye were
called unto the fellowship of His Son,
JESUS CHRIST our LORD."**

1 Corinthians 1 : 9.

**"THE LORD . . . SAVETH SUCH AS BE OF A
CONTRITE SPIRIT"**

Ps. 34:18

Blest is the contrite heart
That feels the weight of sins;
Tis ever thus the GOD of grace
The work of grace begins;
And what He hath begun
He surely will complete
Until the Day of His dear SON,
When grace and glory meet.



WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

"Ye see the day approaching." These words had a meaning to the Hebrew believers so long ago; how much more to us in these days, so

near, it would seem, to the "last days." "The fig-tree and all the trees" are budding, whereby we know "that the Kingdom of God is nigh at hand" (Luke 21:31). How are the saints to react to this conviction? The context (Heb. 10) instructs them. "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works." The time is short, "for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed." Love must be, not in word and tongue, but in deed and in truth. The "charity" for which many plead today is not the love to which we are called. "Love one another with a pure heart fervently." "Love as brethren." But we are told to "consider" one another and this word means "to take knowledge or notice of." It leaves no room for neglecting the saints and their needs, or for "respect of persons." Rather are we to be exhorting (comforting or encouraging) one another. To this end the saints should be often in each other's company, especially as they "see the day approaching."

And what of the needs of those who are serving the Lord "overseas"? Are we encouraging them by our prayers and by our letters? The context reminds us of our "oneness" with them, for we each "have a High Priest over the house of God," "which house are we." May we thus live in the light of that soon-coming day, and, having our hope on Him Who shall come, "purify ourselves even as He is pure."

Poem to Help Christian Experience—No. 280

"Rejoice in the LORD alway"

Lift up your voice,
In God rejoice,
And, resting in His love,
Bid sin depart,
And lift your heart
Up to your God above.

By pity moved,
Your God so loved

Poor sinners lost, undone,
In moral graves—
'Tis such He saves
Through His Beloved Son.

Once sacrificed
Was Jesus Christ,
The Very Son of God.
Your sins for aye
Are sent away
By Jesus' precious blood.

Can you, so loved,
Be so unmoved
As to forget such grace?
Give Him your heart,
The whole, not part,
For His abiding place.

And let His Word
Be ever heard,
Hidden the heart within;
That, by its pow'r,
From hour to hour,
'Gainst Him you may not sin.

And when your Lord,
With His reward,
From heaven comes again,
You will rejoice
To hear His voice,
And live with Him, and reign.

MESSIANIC PASSAGES

"Whose Goings Forth Have Been from Old"

Micah 5:2

"With a rod they shall smite upon the cheek the Judge of Israel. (And thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, a little one to become among the thousands [leaders] of Judah, out of thee TO ME shall He go forth to become Ruler in Israel, and His goings forth [are] from of old from days linked with eternity). Therefore will He give them up, until the time one that beareth hath borne, and the remnant of His brethren shall return with (lit. upon, united with) the sons of Israel. And he shall stand and feed in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the Name of the Lord His God, and they shall abide, for NOW shall He be great unto the ends of earth. And This one shall become Peace, when the Assyrian (antichrist) shall come in our land." Micah 5:1-5.

Many are the prophecies in the law, the prophets, and the psalms, concerning the Lord Jesus Christ. Far from over-stating the emphasis, our valued translation could be made even more clear and definite in showing forth His glories throughout the Hebrew Scriptures. If only more from among Israel saw this! We praise God for every one of the remnant already brought in, and long that others may be drawn to Him speedily. "The Lord's hand is not shortened."

Even the chief priests and scribes applied Micah 5:2 to Messiah (Matt. 2:6, cf. John 7:42), but they failed to see the message of the context in which three or four things are very impressively before us:—

- (a) The Messiah is One smitten and rejected (verse 1).
- (b) He is One Who has had “goings forth,” prior to His birth in Bethlehem (verse 2).
- (c) Israel are to be given up (yet not for ever), *because of* (“therefore” looks back to verse 1) *smiting Him* (verse 3).
- (d) This captivity will cease when the remnant of His brethren from Judah are associated with “the children of Israel”^{*} unitedly, and then He shall not only rule over them, but be “great unto the ends of the earth.”

The key to the “two days” of Israel’s captivity (Hos. 6:2) is thus given (“golus,” as they call it), and we observe how its last stage of beginning was just forty years (a prophesied “generation”), after the rejection of the Lord of Glory. This exactness is most remarkable, “as a witness.” And the blessing shall be brought when the remnant at Jerusalem look upon Him Whom they have pierced (Zech. 12:10), and when the distant ones come equally “with weeping, and with supplications” (Jer. 31:9). Praise God for this.

But we would notice just now the words, “*Whose goings forth are from of old, from days belonging to eternity.*” There is a reference here to the fact that Messiah is more than man, and that His birth was not His beginning (cf. Isa. 9:6). The “goings forth” appear to allude to much more than His original creative work, though that may well be remembered. The *plural* is remarkable, and we see, in the Old Testament, many revelations of Christ. Not only was the Spirit of Christ in the Prophets (1 Pet. 1:11), but the One Who came to Moses in Exodus 34, revealed concerning “Himself,” that He would be “*bearing iniquity, and transgression and sin*” (verses 6, 7 with Isa. 53:12). And we call to mind the meaning of the word “Angel.” It is “Messenger.” In some places there is One quite distinct from ordinary created beings thus described. In Judges 6:12 the One Who came is the Lord Himself, in verse 14, and the One Who appeared in Judges 13 had the name “Wonderful” (verse 18, marg. with Isa. 9:6). We may even go back further, in Genesis 18 “*three men*” appeared, but Abraham said to One, “In Thy sight,” and, when the men “went toward

^{*}Mark “Judah” and “Israel” in verse 2, and cf. Jeremiah 50:4, Ezekiel 37:15-17.

Sodom, Abraham stood yet before *the Lord*” (verse 22), and remarkably those who reached Sodom were “the two angels” (Gen. 19:1). To Joshua “the Captain of the host of the Lord” appeared, and appointed, as the “I am” of Exodus 3 the removal of the shoe (Jos. 5:13-15, with Ex. 3:1-14*). Nor can we forget the Holy Spirit’s comment on Isaiah 6, “These things said Esaias, when He saw *His glory, and spake of Him*” (John 12:41). Such were the repeated manifestations, including many “goings forth” of Him Whose delights were with the sons of men (Prov. 8:31).

How grievous then, and resultful, was the blindness which happened in part—in larger part—to Israel. The very words “*Unto Me*” (cf. Isa. 53:2), and “*to be Ruler*” with the added “now” of verse 4 illustrate the fact that the nation would not receive Him the first time. We remember the rejection of Joseph at the first, and of Moses also. But there was a second time for these, and there shall be for the returning Lord, when “This One shall be Peace” (His very name, Eph. 2:14), and the Assyrian shall be laid low (Mic. 5:5 with Isa. 14:25). All Scripture harmonizes, and centres around the two comings of our adorable Lord. His Person and His work are alike misunderstood by Israel now, but when the words are fulfilled, “They shall look upon *Me* Whom they pierced” (Zech. 12:10), and they cry “Who is a *God* like unto Thee *bearing iniquity?*” (Mic. 7:18), there will be a realization of His Deity and His Atone-ment together, and “life from the dead” (Rom. 11:15). “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem” (Ps. 122:6), and for Israel (Rom. 10:1). P.W.H.

*The tense and verb of verse 14 may give a prophecy of incarnation, even as verse 2 affords a type thereof. So rich is the Scripture in its foreshadowing of the work of Christ,

YOKES (continued from page 52)

bondage, under the Law. But the Lord Jesus, in love and wisdom, placed Himself under the Law, because *He could obey it perfectly*. Not only so, He died, *that He might bear the judgment due* because man has broken the Law. So those who trust in Him are free, not to do as they like, but to do what He likes. Their sins are forgiven and they are reckoned righteous in God’s sight. So Paul, writing to the Galatian believers, who were in danger of going back to the Law, and thus trying to add their works to what Christ has done for them, says, “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith CHRIST hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage” (Gal. 5:1). Are you among the Lord’s freed ones?

YOUNG PEOPLE'S COLUMNS YOKES

Yokes are often mentioned in the Bible, for they were in every-day use in Israel's land. But what are they? When the writer was a lad, he sometimes saw a man with a shaped piece of wood on his shoulders and fitting round his neck. At the two ends were strong hooks; from which hung pails of milk. This arrangement helped in the carrying of so heavy a weight, because the pails were large and full. Slaves were said to be—

Under the Yoke

This we read in 1 Timothy 6:1. In the Christian assemblies, some of those in fellowship in the early days were not freemen, but slaves belonging to a master. Often the word "servant" means a "bondman," and they are addressed in the epistles and told to obey their masters whether they were "froward" or harsh or whether they were "gentle" (1 Peter 2:18). They were to do all things heartily, as to the LORD. "Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the Name of God be not blasphemed."

The Yoke in Youth

"It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth" (Lam. 3:27). What can this mean in the light of what we have seen already in the Scriptures? Surely, that complete freedom, to do as one likes, whilst young, is not good. Many young people today have not been taught to obey parents, and many parents are careless about training their children. Perhaps most of us who are older felt we were "under a yoke" in our homes or at school, because we could not have our own way, but the one who is writing these words is now old, but is very thankful to have had parents who were firm, but kind. It is easier to go through life if one has learned, whilst a child, to obey.

Yokes as a Punishment

Jeremiah the prophet was often sad, because he had to tell his people of coming judgment. Once he was told to make bonds and yokes and put them on his own neck. He then sent them by messengers to various kings. To the king of Judah he said, "Bring your necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him and his people, and live. Why will ye die, thou and thy people?" (Jer. 27:2, 3, 12, 13). In the next chapter, verse 10, we read that a false prophet "took the yoke from off the prophet Jeremiah's neck, and brake it." Then he said that this signified that the yoke of

the King of Babylon would be broken in two years, claiming that he was speaking in God's Name. But Jeremiah spoke the truth and said, "Thou hast broken the yokes of wood; but thou shalt make for them yokes of iron. For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; I have put a yoke of iron upon the neck of all these nations, that they may serve Neb-u-chad-nez-zar, King of Babylon, and they shall serve him" (verses 12-13). Although Judah and her king heard the truth, they did not like it, but God's word came true, and the time came when they were captives in Babylon seventy years. It is sad and dangerous not to believe what God has spoken. His word warns us to flee from the wrath to come. Will you heed that warning?

Yokes of Oppression

Solomon's reign began well, but when he was older, he began to treat some of his people harshly. When he died, his son Rehoboam was made king. But the people came to him and said, "Thy father made our yoke grievous: now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee." The old men told him to listen to the people and treat them well. But the young men, his friends, very foolishly, gave advice quite the opposite, and when the people came again after three days, he said, "And now whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke; my father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions." This was not only foolish talk, but wicked, because God had said, in Deuteronomy 17:20, that, concerning the king, "his heart be not lifted up above his brethren." His sin was punished, because his kingdom was divided, and he lost ten of the tribes of Israel. How true it is that pride goes before a fall. What a contrast to the Lord Jesus, Who said, "My yoke is easy, and My burden is light." This story of Rehoboam is found in 1 Kings 12, and is a lesson for all.

The Yoke of the Law

In Acts 15:10, Peter was speaking at a meeting of leaders in the church, because certain believers from among Jews were teaching that believers from the Gentiles ought to keep the Law of Moses. But Peter said, "Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear." The law is good, but we are weak and cannot keep it; and thus we cannot be saved by what we do. We are like slaves, and are in

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A DIVINE UNVEILING

(continued from page 47)

In the second year, they laid the foundation of the house of the LORD, amid shouts of joy, mingled with loud weeping of those who remembered "this house in her first glory" (Hag. 2:3). But every work for God has adversaries, and so it was here. Jerusalem's past history, that of being "the rebellious and the bad city," was brought up in their enemies' accusations to the king then reigning. The record was only too true, but the decree of Cyrus, which had superseded and cancelled this record, was forgotten or overlooked. The adversaries obtained the king's ear, and exultingly "they went up in haste to Jerusalem unto the Jews, and made them to cease by force and power" (Ezra. 4:23-24).

For about sixteen years, the temple remained unbuilt. Sad to say, the people settled down in a seeming apathy. "The time is not come," they were saying, "the time that the LORD'S house should be built." Yet they were dwelling in their own "ceiled houses." However, God did not permit them to continue undisturbed in their apathy. He withheld the rain and the dew and allowed but a poor harvest. Thus, being chastened, they became ready to receive the *Divine rebuking* through Haggai and Zechariah, and to experience a Divine reviving through the same prophets. "Then rose up Zerubbabel . . . and Jeshua . . . and began to build the house of God which is at Jerusalem: and with them were the prophets of God helping them" (Ezra 5:1-2). But what were Zerubbabel and Jeshua doing all those years? It is just here that the vision of Zechariah 3 gives some instruction.

DIVINE "SHEWING"

God sent an angel that talked with him, and to instruct him by visions, such things as the prophet could not know by his own wisdom or intuition. They must be "shewn" to him by God. He had seen Joshua in his priestly apparel (Ezra 3:10), and witnessed his ministrations at the altar, but what was the high priest as GOD saw him? How does he appear when standing before the Angel of the LORD? Not in garments "for glory and for beauty" (Ex. 28:2) but, as "clothed with filthy

garments." Not only so, Satan stood beside him as "an adversary." Surely, such an one was not fit to be a minister of God; that we may assume, would be the prophet's reaction to so solemn a revelation. But, even though he may have wept over the unveiled reality, he was soon to learn—

DIVINE "SAVING"

First the LORD rebukes Satan, "the accuser of the brethren" (Rev. 12:10). Not a few, in these days, deny the existence of the devil, but Scripture makes very clear the awful reality of his person. The Lord Jesus met him in the wilderness, and "suffered being tempted." To raise questions in the mind as to whether Satan really exists, is not only to reject the inspired word of God, but daringly to doubt the truthfulness of Christ. Satan is mighty, but he is, after all, a creature. He has allowed men to be persuaded that he is but a myth, yet "as a roaring lion" or as "an angel of light," he carries on his deadly work, and even gets believers into his snare (2 Tim. 2:26).

DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY

In rebuking Satan, the Angel of the LORD reminds him that the LORD had *chosen* Jerusalem. So that, notwithstanding its failure and its present desolate condition, *HE* had not "made a full end" of her. His purpose cannot fail. Jerusalem shall yet be "a praise in the earth." The sovereign grace that will restore His chosen city (Ps. 132:13, 14) is the same grace shewn here to an individual. The Angel of the LORD saw one standing before Him clad in filthy garments, yet one to whom He would shew mercy. "And unto him He said, 'Behold, *I have caused* thine iniquity to pass from thee, and *I will clothe* thee with change of raiment'" (v. 4). This is the word of power—"I have," "I will"—a word of authority, and spoken directly to the object of mercy.

DIVINE SIGNIFICANCE

God is a God of grace in His dealings with men, though man does not appreciate, or even realize that "grace." "Despise thou the riches of His goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" (Rom. 2:4.) But, when God purposes to save "a vessel of mercy," He does so by *sovereign grace*. He sees all men before Him as they truly are, and as all saints feel themselves to be. "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away (Isa. 64:6). But as truly as Joshua heard the voice of mercy, as truly also is "the righteousness which is by faith of Jesus

Christ unto all and upon all them that believe" (Rom. 3:22). The voice of God now speaks in and by the Scriptures. No man sees himself as God sees him. His uncleanness and hostility of heart must as truly be "shewn" to him by the Holy Spirit as God "shewed" to Zechariah the real condition of Jeshua the high priest. Outwardly, robed in priestly robes, and performing religious acts, he seemed one in favour with God. "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart" (1 Sam. 16:7). Ah! how many are contenting themselves with "religion," and have never had a view of their own hearts! Even to the saints, John writes, "For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, AND KNOWETH ALL THINGS" (1 John 3:20). Happy, then, is he who, having been given a true sight of himself, by grace, turns, by that same grace, to behold in the Lord Jesus, "beauty that he should desire Him." Whose atoning blood has caused his "iniquity to pass from" him, and Whose merit has been imputed to him, even as being "clothed with change of raiment."

DIVINE SERVICE

Joshua, having been cleansed and clothed, is "crowned" with a "fair mitre," and is ready for priestly service. And is not this illustrative of God's appointment for *all* His saints today? Every redeemed one is a priest of God and of Christ. Joshua heard the voice of the LORD of hosts, calling him to a life of obedience, to walk in His ways, and to keep His charge. Faithfulness herein would lead to further responsibility and privilege: "then thou shalt also judge My house, and shalt also keep My courts" (v. 7). God has His plan for the life of each of His own; to *all* He commands a walking in His ways. To others, dividing severally as He will, He entrusts talents to be used for Him. Joshua had a very high privilege, yet a twofold "IF" precedes a promise of reward,—"I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by" (v. 7). We may compare this "IF" with that of 1 Corinthians 3:14, 15. The place of the saint in the coming Kingdom will depend upon his "walk" and the purity and faithfulness of the service *here*, to which God has called him. May we so serve, dear fellow-saints, our Lord and Master, that, "in that Day," we may hear Him say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant; thou has been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Joshua had companions (fellows) who were "men wondered at"—"men of *sign*" (see margin, verse 8). The Lord Jesus says of His brethren,

"Behold I and the children which God hath given Me" (Hebrews 2:13). But, in Isaiah 8:18, these words are followed by, "for *signs* and for wonders in Israel." How searching a word is this! Are the lives of saints such that they are indeed "signs." They are indeed miracles of grace, but should they not be also as "signs"—finger-posts—pointing to Christ? "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord."

The Lord grant that it may be even so, by the enabling of His Holy Spirit.

INSPIRED WORDS INSPECTED

No. 72

"Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest; for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things. And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?"

Romans 2:1-3.

THEREFORE (dio); conjunction, a compound of "dia" (through or because of) and "ho" (which); lit., "because of which"; relating to what has gone before (ch. 1:32).

THOU ART (ei); verb, present tense, from "eimi," (I am).

INEXCUSABLE (anapologetos); adjective, masculine, singular, a compound of "a" (deprivative, like "a" in atheist) and a derivative from "apologemai" (to speak oneself off, that is, to plead for, or defend, oneself; our word "apology.") This is the word Paul used—"answer for myself" (Act 26:3). Hence, our word means, "without an apology, plea, or defence."

O MAN (o anthrope); interjection and noun, vocative case (cf. v. 3 and ch. 9:20).

WHOSOEVER (pas); adjective, masculine, meaning "all"; render here "every."

THOU ART THAT JUDGE (ho krinon); article and present participle, from "krino" (to judge): lit., these three words mean, "every one judging." There is the thought also of character, a criticizing nature.

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

IN (en); preposition, governing dative case.

WHAT THING (hoi); relative pronoun, dative case; from "hos, he, ho" (who or which). The A.V. renders these last two words, "wherein."

THOU JUDGEST (krineis); verb, present tense, second person; from "krino."

ANOTHER (ton heteron); article and pronoun, accusative, masculine, meaning "the other," that is, a different one (from oneself). Later in the chapter Paul speaks of Jew and Gentile, and shews that all are alike.

THOU CONDEMNEST (katakrineis); verb, present tense, from "katakrino" (to judge down, lit.), "to give judgment against." It is a compound of "kata" (down) and "krino."

THYSELF (seauton); reflexive pronoun, accusative case. This word precedes "katakrineis." "Thyself thou condemnest."

FOR (gar).

THOU THAT JUDGEST (ho krinon); see above; this word comes at the end of the sentence.

DOEST (prasseis); verb, present tense, second person; from "prasso" (to practise). Not so much a single action, but rather a course of action.

THE SAME THINGS (ta auta); article and pronoun, neuter, plural; from "autos, -e, -o" (self); "the things themselves"—(the same things).

BUT (de); conjunction.

WE ARE SURE (oidamen); verb, first person, plural; from "oida," a perfect tense from "eido" (to see). The thought is of mental perception, to have seen, and therefore to know.

THAT (hoti); conjunction.

THE JUDGMENT (to krima); article and noun, neuter, nominative case; derived from "krino." The ending "ma" indicates something *made*; here it is a judgment given, a sentence, a verdict.

OF GOD (tou Theou); article and proper noun, masculine, genitive. Note the use of the article in ch. 1:28 (twice).

IS (estin); verb, present tense; from "eimi" (to be).

ACCORDING TO (kata); preposition, meaning "down," but with the accusative case, as here, is rendered, "according to."

TRUTH (aletheian); noun, feminine, accusative; from "aletheia" (truth). There is no article. This does not suggest indefiniteness, or in the abstract, but rather truth in essence.

AGAINST (epi); preposition meaning "on or upon"; with the accusative, as here, there is the thought of motion, so it may be rendered, "on to."

THEM WHICH COMMIT (tous prassontas); article and present participle, accusative, plural; from "prasso" (see above). Lit., "the ones practising."

SUCH THINGS (ta toiauta); article and correlative pronoun; from "toioutos, -aute, -auto" (such, or of such kind); neuter, plural.

AND (de); conjunction, meaning "but."

THINKEST THOU (logizeis); verb, present tense, second person, singular; from "logizomai" (to use the reason, think, consider, reckon). Sometimes rendered "impute" or "count" (Rom. 4:3-5). What man reckons is contrary to God's reckoning.

THIS (touto); demonstrative pronoun, neuter, accusative, from "houtos, haute, touto" (this).

O MAN (see above).

THAT JUDGEST (ho krinon); see above.

THEM WHICH DO (tous prassontas); see above.

SUCH THINGS (ta toiauta); see above.

AND (kai); conjunction.

DOEST (poion); present participle, from "poieo" (to make or do); the definite article before "krinon" belongs also to "poion," for the two words characterize the same man, who is judging others and doing the same things at the same time. It is said that one easily recognises in others one's own faults, resulting in harsh criticism, and absence of self-judgment.

THE SAME (auta); pronoun meaning "self" (autos, aute, auto); often having the thought of "very" or "same." Here it may be rendered, "the things themselves," "the very things."

THAT (hoti); see above.

THOU (su); personal pronoun, singular.

SHALT ESCAPE (ekpheuxei); verb, second person, future tense, middle voice; from "ekpheugo," a compound of "ek" (out) and "pheugo" (to flee): Hence "to flee out" or "escape." (See 1 Thess. 5:3; Heb. 2:3).

THE JUDGMENT (to krima); see above.

OF GOD (tou Theou); see above.

HOLINESS

Self-inflicted austerities through which many in medieval or early Christian centuries have gotten to themselves a name, were no indication of holiness. It would often seem in those days that the greater the self-inflictions, or eccentricities, or even lying wonders, the holier such were considered to be by a priest deceived and credulous people.

If God calls to fasting, and He does, it is to be with washed countenance and anointed head. If the Lord calls to denial of self, and He does, it is to be in secret, not letting your left hand know what your right hand doeth (Matthew 6).

Holiness springs from a heart that is hungering and thirsting after righteousness. God's beatitude rests on all such, and His promise is that they shall be filled.

R.L.W.

THE LAST WORDS OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST WHEN ON THE CROSS

R. L. WHEELER

FOREWORD

The last words of loved ones are generally treasured. We bend over to catch if possible their last words ere they depart from this scene.

Very many sermons have been preached, and many books written, on these last sayings of our Lord Jesus Christ while on the cross, showing that they have been much treasured and meditated upon by saints of God through the ages.

The following simple notes are a few gathered thoughts, so that with a reverence that becomes this sacred theme, we may ponder afresh on the Lord's sufferings and obedience unto death for His people.

PREFACE

Crucifixion was a cruel form of death entailing untold agonies. Yet others have suffered similarly, and also in other ways, with longer drawn out anguish. How then are we to discriminate between the Lord's sufferings and death, and the sufferings of others?

It is by His words. It is through His sayings, even when on the cross, that we know that His death was unique, and that His utterances are in themselves an infallible witness to the Lord's sinlessness and to His Deity.

The Scripture records some of the physical sufferings of the Lord as, for instance, the scourging, the piercing of the hands and feet, the crown of thorns, but does not enlarge upon these cruelties, nor detail the awful scene, for the object of the inspired record is not primarily to call forth our compassion, but our faith and trust.

Play-acting, drama, and the like, appealing to the senses, depicting the Lord's nativity or crucifixion, not only transgress the second commandment but are an affront to the Lord, with their misrepresentations of divinity and of sacred things. Such were thrown out at the time of the reformation, but much has since crept back, even into evangelical circles, under new guise, but having the same carnal origin.

The form of the cross is not known, the Greek word signifying a stake or upright pale. Its form has been kept from us in the divine wisdom, which fact in itself should keep us from making likenesses or images of the Lord.

The Lord was crucified at the third hour of the day corresponding to our 9.0 a.m. It was at the

sixth hour, at noon, that the supernatural darkness descended over the land, which remained until the ninth hour, 3.0 p.m., the time of the Jewish evening sacrifice.

The Lord spoke seven times while on the cross, seven brief utterances. It would appear that the first saying was at the beginning of the crucifixion, and the next two before the three hours of darkness descended. The last four cries must have followed one another in quick succession, as we are told that the first of these last four utterances, namely, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me" was uttered at the ninth hour.

Thus the time that the Lord hung upon the cross was practically one of long silence, and how dreadful and solemn must have been those hours for those who loved Him, and who were present at the shameful scene.

It is somewhat difficult to say with absolute certainty the exact order of each of the sayings of the Lord. They are here taken in their usually acceptable order.

THE FIRST SAYING

"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do"—Luke 23:34.

These words are evidently a prayer for the soldiers who were nailing the Lord to the tree, not a prayer for the multitude. All would not be saved and blessed. The leaders of the nation of Israel, as we know, remained in hardness of heart (Acts 7:51, 53). We know that the Lord's request would be answered. Did He not say to His Father, "I know that Thou hearest Me always" (John 11:42).

The soldiers at the beginning were ignorant that they were crucifying the Lord of glory. Maybe it was not the first time that they had so acted. But as the awful scene unfolded itself, and they heard the words of the Divine Sufferer, and witnessed the terrifying accompaniments, the supernatural darkness and the earthquake, they may like the centurion at that time have been brought to "fear exceedingly," and to realise that the One Who was hanging there was indeed a righteous Man, even the Son of God.

This prayer also reminds us of Stephen's last words, when like his Master, he prayed for his persecutors, crying in a loud voice, "Lord lay not this sin to their charge." Whose prayer also was heard as to one named Saul standing by and consenting to his death, who later became so mighty and so humble a servant of God (Acts 7:57-60).

THE SECOND SAYING

"Verily I say unto thee, today shalt thou be with Me in Paradise"—Luke 23:43.

The dying thief had confessed his sin, and also the sinlessness of the One to Whom he appealed for mercy. "We indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds, but this Man hath done nothing amiss."

Pilate also we remember, found no fault in the One arraigned before him. Herod likewise, but with what contrast. Their convictions only added to their guilt.

To the piteous cry of the dying thief, "Lord remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom," there was instant response. The Lord could not deny Himself; the humble and contrite heart He would not despise.

Only the Lord could give such a promise of forgiveness and of eternal inheritance. He alone has the keys of Hades and of death. O let not any be deceived by those who claim priestly powers over the soul after death. After death is the judgment (Heb. 9:27). The Lord's teaching regarding the rich man and Lazarus clearly shows this. Mercy and forgiveness there is today, and there is welcome to the troubled sinner from that One, the Son of God, Who came from heaven to seek and to save the lost, and, "whose blood can make the foulest clean."

THE THIRD SAYING

To Mary, "Woman, behold thy son." To John, "Behold thy mother."—John 19:16, 27.

The above words have been called the last will and testament of the Lord, seeing that by them He provided for His kindred after His decease.

Mary and John must have stood very near the cross at this time to hear the Lord speaking to them. Natural and spiritual yearnings must have drawn them thither amid "that wild and savage crew," "the assembly of the wicked that enclosed Him round" (Ps. 22).

The fact that John was commissioned to succour Mary, for he took her to his own house (things) seems to indicate that spiritual relationship and affinities decided this honour rather than natural relationship, as the Lord Himself had previously indicated (Matt. 12:46-50). Truly at this time, as they were able, they were sharing in His sufferings. Love beareth and dareth all things (Phil. 3:10; 1 Pet. 4:13).

Mary with others had thought that it would have been He Who would have redeemed Israel, and the sword as the destroyer of human hopes, must at this time, in a very deep way, have

pierced through her soul (Luke 2:34, 35). The thoughts of many hearts were also to be revealed for the Lord was set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, and for a sign to be spoken against. As also saith Isaiah the prophet. "He shall be for a sanctuary . . . and for a rock of offence (Isa. 8:14). And it is even so today for there are the two classes, those who are perishing, and to whom the preaching of the gospel is foolishness, and those to whom Christ is the wisdom and the power of God" (1 Cor. 1:18-24).

The Lord had been subject to His parents for about 30 years, but when called to the prophetic office at His baptism changed relationships had to be recognised and the former filial subjection was laid aside. More than once, we may remember, His kinsfolk sought to press upon Him former relationships, but the Lord would not recognise their solicitations (Mark 3:21). Having put His hand to the plow He would not look back. But now on the cross, His life's work completed, He again assumes filial duty and makes needed provision for His mother.

It may not be out of place to mention the superstitions which have grown up around this pious and lowly handmaid of the Lord, who herself would reject with all the ardour of her soul the divine titles and extravagances accorded to her. Alas for those who direct anxious souls to lesser gods, which are no gods, only to find at the last that their faith is misplaced and unavailing. The invitation of the gospel of Christ to the troubled soul is, "Come unto Me," "Learn of Me," and blessed are those who in faith apprehended His gracious invitation and put their trust in Him. Theirs is the sure foundation, and all other ground is sinking sand (1 Cor. 3:11).

(If the Lord will, to be continued.)

**A GREAT VICTORY, A GREAT ENCOUNTER,
A GREAT REFUSAL, A GREAT PROMISE**

Genesis 14 to 15:1.

Everything that God does is great. "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised. His greatness is unsearchable." 'Tis He Who was working in, and for and through, Abraham, in all that is recorded in this part of Scripture.

The position of Abraham in the land of Canaan is analogous to that of believers in "this present evil age." His native land was Mesopotamia (Acts 7:2), in which was the plain of Shinar, and the site of Babel (Gen. 11). In later times, it became famous for the great city Babylon, and the rule of Nebuchadnezzar, who built that city. In a future

day (perhaps near) it will be the region where Antichrist will have his great city and centre of rule. It was therefore the "world" of Abraham's day. But God called him thence, and he obeyed, and went forth in faith. Yet God was acting in sovereign grace. "Thus saith the LORD God of Israel . . . I took your father Abraham from the other side of the flood, and led him throughout all the land of Canaan" (Josh. 24:2, 3). Thus was Abraham called out from "the world," turning his back on the civilization, culture and comforts of "Ur of the Chaldees" (Gen. 11:31 to come into Canaan, another aspect of "the world," for "the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelt then in the land" (Gen. 13:7) and watched how "brethren" would act toward each other. All this is typical of the Divine dealings with "the elect" today. They are "not of the world," even as Christ is "not of the world," for they have been called out therefrom. They no longer "love the world, neither the things that are in the world." They have heard the word, "Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach" (Heb. 13:13). Yet they are not taken out, physically, from the world, but, as the Lord Jesus has said, "As Thou has sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world."

Once Abraham had taken the definite step of obedience, he never looked back. The separation was decisive. "And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned" (Heb. 11:15). Abraham had also the witness of God as to his control of his family. "And the LORD said . . . for I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD." Hence, he not only refused to return to Mesopotamia himself, but would not allow Isaac to go thither. "Beware thou that thou bring not my son thither again," said he to the servant whom he had commissioned to find a wife for Isaac from among his relations who still lived in that land. His wife must leave all, and come to him, not he to her. Such steadfastness is a challenge to saints today. "No man," said the Lord Jesus, "having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God."

Abraham confessed himself to be a stranger and a pilgrim on the earth, "dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise," that is, to inherit the land. Yet, "He gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on yet He promised that He would give it to him for a possession, and to

his seed after him (Acts 7:5). *He must inherit the land, for God is faithful.* Hence, he will have a part in the first resurrection. His hope was heavenly, "for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God" (Heb. 11:10). And is not this the hope of believers now? "For here have we no continuing city, but seek one to come" (Heb. 13:14). "Our conversation (citizenship) is in heaven" (Phil. 3:20). We are "strangers and pilgrims" and are exhorted, "pass the time of your sojourning here in fear"

(Further extracts, if the Lord will.)

NOTES ON MEMORIZED VERSES

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER

CHAPTER 1

24. All flesh and all its glory (see Isa. 40), contrasted with spirit (cf. John 3, Gal. 5:19-26), and here contrasted with the Incorruptible Word of the Lord, which, 25, abideth for ever.

CHAPTER 2

1. Note repeated "all." 2. Compared with eternity, the maturest saint is a "babe." Grow into "salvation" (lit.). 3. A quotation from Ps. 34, where "good" is rendered "gracious" in LXX. 4. The Lord (1.25:25) is Jesus Christ. 5. Living stones, consisting of all who "are coming" to the LIVING STONE. "Holy," "spiritual," "acceptable." How? Through Jesus Christ. 6. The O.T. Scriptures tell of Christ as the Foundation "placed" by God. 7. Faith makes "not ashamed," but positively makes Christ "preciousness." 8. Unbelief only stumbles, because disobedient. Faith is essentially obedient (Rom. 1:5 margin). 9. The priesthood is royal as well as holy (see verse 5 and Rev. 1:6). 10. A quotation from Hosea 1:10, where it refers to Israel as a nation. Here it is said of converted Jews; in Romans 9:24-26, Gentiles are included. Thus the church, embracing all nations, is a first fruits, a pledge of what God will do for Israel. 11. "Fleshly lusts," not necessarily vicious, but desires merely natural. 12. A good manner of life and works the only answer to slander. 13, 14. Submission to authority is to be for the Lord's sake (see Rom. 13:5). 15. How to answer (put to silence, or muzzle) (see verse 12). 16. The will of God (v. 15). The servants of God. 17. An embracive command. 18. A bond-servant of God may be a slave under a master, and is to be submissive. 19. "Thankworthy" (lit. "grace"). Resentment is not grace; "acceptable" (lit. "grace"). 21. Christ our Example of such "grace." 22, 23. No sin, no reviling, no threatening, but committing His cause to God. 24. He Who had the right to avenge took that which merited vengeance, and bore the judgment due. "Dead" yet "living." 25. Shepherd (see ch. 5:4) and Overseer.

CHAPTER 3

1. "Likewise" refers back to ch. 2:13, 18, by the use of the word "submit." But here it is because of love and a desire for a soul's salvation. 2. Purity and godly fear combined. 3, 4. The inward adorning of "great price" to God. The outward may be costly, but does not commend one to God. 5, 6. Holy women the example, particularly

Sarah. 7. "Heirs together" mean "prayers together." 8. Oneness of mind for all. 9. "Not . . . but" (cf. ch. 2:23). 10, 11, 12. A quotation from Psalm 34, as is also verse 3. To see "good," one must do "good"; to know the favour of God, "evil" must be neither "spoken" nor "done," but "eschewed" (lit., "bend away from"). 13. An encouragement to follow "good." 14. An echo of the Lord's words (Matt. 5:11). 15. "But sanctify Christ Lord in your hearts." 16. A Good conscience (within), a good conversation—manner of life (outward). 17. Better—if it be the Will of God (cf. ch. 2:15). 18. Christ, suffering as our Substitute, was also our Example (see 2:21). 19, 20. "In which," that is, "in His spirit," in the days of Noah, who, by that Spirit in him, preached to those who perished in the flood. 21. Baptism is in water, typifying judgment, but, because of the ark, typifying Christ, not falling on the believer. Immersion signifies death, emer-

sion, resurrection. 22. Christ, having been raised, has ascended to where He was before.

CHAPTER 4

1. Arm yourselves, because there is a natural fear of suffering. Again, Christ is before us as Example. 2. The desires of men or the will of God. Which shall we follow? 3. The will of the nations. "When we walked." Peter does not exclude himself (compare Titus 3:3). 4. The world will always think the believer "strange." 5. But by their words they shall be condemned. 6. The Gospel preached and received led to man's condemning, but to God's receiving. 7. The "end" was ever before the early saints. How much more should we heed the exhortation here. 8. Brotherly love also in view of that day. 9. Hospitality as to earthly things. 10. Ministry as to heavenly things. "Manifold grace" (see ch. 1:6—manifold temptations or testings).

SUGGESTED DAILY READINGS

"IF THE LORD WILL"—JANUARY, 1963

Day	READING	LEARNING
	Joshua	Romans
1	17 1-18	6 12-23
2	18 1-14	7 1-12
3	15-28	13-25
4	19 1-23	8 1-13
5	24-51	14-25
6	20 1-9	26-39
7	21 1-19	9 1-16
8	20-45	17-33
9	22 1-20	10 1-10
10	21-34	11-21
11	23 1-16	11 1-12
12	24 1-33	13-24
	Judges	
13	1 1-21	25-36
14	22-36	12 1-10
15	2 1-13	11-21
16	14-23	13 1-14
17	3 1-14	14 1-23
18	15-31	15 1-33
19	4 1-24	16 1-27
	1 Cor.	
20	5 1-31	1 1-10
21	6 1-14	11-20
22	15-27	21-31
23	28-40	2 1-16
24	7 1-25	3 1-13
25	8 1-17	14-23
26	18-34	4 1-10
27	9 1-21	11-21
28	22-40	5 1-13
29	41-57	6 1-10
30	10 1-18	11-20
31	11 1-22	7 1-13
		Job
		1 Peter
		38 20
		1 24
		21 25
		2 1
		23 2
		24 3
		25 4
		26 5
		27 6
		28 7
		29 8
		30 9
		31 10
		32 11
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SUGGESTED DAILY READINGS

"IF THE LORD WILL"—FEBRUARY, 1963

Day	READING	LEARNING
	Judges	1 Cor.
1	11 23-40	7 14-28
2	12 1-15	29-40
3	13 1-25	8 1-13
4	14 1-20	9 1-14
5	15 1-20	15-27
6	16 1-14	10 1-17
7	15-31	18-33
8	17 1-13	11 1-16
9	18 1-13	17-34
10	14-31	12 1-31
11	19 1-15	13 1-13
12	16-30	14 1-20
13	20 1-25	21-40
14	26-48	15 1-29
15	21 1-12	30-58
16	13-25	16 1-24
	Ruth	2 Cor.
17	1 1-13	1 1-12
18	14-22	13-24
19	2 1-12	2 1-17
20	13-23	3 1-18
21	3 1-18	4 1-18
22	4 1-12	5 1-21
23	13-22	6 1-18
	1 Samuel	
24	1 1-18	7 1-16
25	19-28	8 1-24
26	2 1-19	9 1-15
27	20-36	10 1-18
28	3 1-21	11 1-33
		Job
		1 Peter
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