

No.
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"IF YE THEN BE RISEN WITH CHRIST, SEEK THOSE THINGS
WHICH ARE ABOVE, WHERE CHRIST SITTETH ON THE
RIGHT HAND OF GOD." COL. 3. 1.

S U P E R N A T U R A L G I F T S

(As the words are commonly used)

An Address (revised) at

65, St. Mary Axe. E.C.

7th Nov. 1913

by

PERCY W. HEWARD.

Correspondence welcome:

Scriptural literature for Believers

Gottlieb-Daimler-Str.1 – GERMANY – 74343 Sachsenheim

SUPERNATURAL GIFTS.

(AS THE WORDS ARE COMMONLY USED.)

Address by Mr. P. W. Heward,
at 65 St. Mary Axe. E.C.
7th November 1913.

OUTLINE:-

1. How much is Supernatural
2. Divers Operations of the Holy Spirit.
3. "Gifts"
 - (a) In Different Parts of Scripture
 - (b) In History, Past and Present: Are they Counterfeits?
4. Inferences and Personal Application of Solemn Principles.

Our subject, beloved friends, is headed "Supernatural Gifts", and I take it we all realise the solemnity of seeing what GOD has said upon this subject. But before we consider how the words are commonly used may we not ponder awhile that word "Super". How much is "super-natural"? The life we live physically is, in one sense, supernatural. Man cannot produce life. Man cannot produce many things. Indeed those which are natural are linked with others which are supernatural. Do we make things with human skill? The power to make them, as well as the mind to conceive them, must be viewed as supernatural. Does the corn grow up, and thereby have we bread to eat? Ah, this also is supernatural, Beloved friends, our daily arrangements, even of daily food are all supernatural. To a BELIEVER, everything is suggestive of GOD. Nothing does he take as "a matter of course". Nothing does he take "for granted". Everything is supernatural. The infidel says, "Where is the power of God"? The believer says "Where is NOT the power of God". The infidel says "Where is a miracle"? The believer says "Where is that which is NOT a miracle?" And if we pass from these things to

think of God's gracious working in the heart, when He quickens poor lost sinners, and causes them to believe in the precious Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, truly here we have that which is supernatural, a miracle of grace. For if anyone is in Christ Jesus there is a new creation; as real a creation as when, in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. "Salvation is OF THE LORD". There is nothing by mere chance. There is nothing by mere circumstances. There is nothing by human reasoning. If we are saved by grace, God spake and it was done. It is the Spirit That quickeneth, - not by works which ^{we} He did, not of our wills which we had, but simply, and only by infinite grace, if we have been brought to believe in the Name of the Only begotten Son of God. Oh how deeply important that believers should realise afresh the constant miracles of grace!

And this we can pass on to consider "DIVERS operations of the Holy Spirit". We bless God for any realisation in heart that there is THE Holy Spirit, not as a thing, not as an influence, but a Living and Divine Person, Who in gracious limitlessness, makes Himself a reality to those who have been bought by the precious Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. There are MANY operations of this precious and glorious Spirit of God. We find Him working in creation, we find Him with regard to Scripture, even the Spirit of Christ in the prophets, so that they spake, being borne along by the Holy Spirit. We find the same Spirit of God causing, as we have seen, the quickening of a dead sinner, for that which hath been born of the Spirit is spirit. We find, yet again, the same Spirit of God bearing testimony in the experience of a believer, for the Spirit beareth witness with our spirit. Because ye are sons,

God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, - in Whom we cry, Abba, Father; and it is not mere words that Paul testifies - "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God". Thus we have brought very definitely before us divers operations of the Spirit of God. But we cannot ponder them all this evening. We cannot think particularly of His creative work nor of His guiding work, for we are specially to weigh before God the teaching of God Himself as to what are commonly called "Gifts". I say "commonly called", but may one not add "Scripturally called"? - although more than one word appears to be used in this relation, and indeed different terms are employed in 1 Cor.13 to show different aspects. There we read "There are diversities of gifts, but the Same Spirit, diversities of administrations, but the Same Lord; diversities of operations, but it is the Same God, Which worketh all in all". Thus we have different views of these Divine workings, when we speak of the different Persons of our Triune God.

We find "gifts" that showed the working of God in the olden times. If we turn back to the sad book of Judges, we find the Spirit of God coming upon a Gideon, and coming upon a Samson too. Nor can we forget the momentous words in the book of Numbers, that the Spirit of God came upon Balaam. Nor can we hide our eyes from the fact that the Spirit of God came upon SAUL, - so heartsearching a failure, at the beginning of Israel's kingdom. It is clear that we have, marked in the Earlier Scriptures, diverse men receiving special workings of the Spirit of God, by which they did supernatural things. Whether they prophesied, or whether they wrought miracles, we need not enquire just now. We are not thinking of the KIND of supernatural working, but of the supernatural working itself. When we come to the Later Scriptures, we find ourselves in a sphere of NUMEROUS miracles. The Lord Jesus Christ Himself went about doing good, and healing all

that were oppressed of the devil. Again and again crowds came unto Him, and whether they were suffering with defects that in the ordinary way would be said to require medical skill, or defects which would be said to require surgical skill - ah, we can think of those who had passed into death itself, and yet, - the Lord manifested His marvellous miracles. But the time came when He, the Rejected One, was to die on Calvary for guilty sinners, and to be raised again. But on being raised from the dead He made Himself manifest to witnesses chosen before of God, during forty days, and then He commanded them to wait for the promise of the Father, which, said He, ^y ye have heard of Me. For at the beginning of each of the Gospels, and the beginning of Acts, the words sound forth, "John baptized with water, ye shall be baptised in the Holy Spirit". The day of Pentecost was fully come, the type was fully met. The Lord Jesus is not said to have kept a Pentecost though we are told how He visited Jerusalem at the Passovers. The Passover typically was fulfilled in His LIFE and Death, and Pentecost was fulfilled in the descent of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God came upon men in the form of cloven tongues as of fire, on Christ He came in the form of a dove, for Christ has in Him no evil, but the cloven tongues as of fire, like to the live coal in Isaiah 6, speak of failure, that mars every human life, - Even the lives of God's servants, which have many marks upon them of falling short of Christ. When the Spirit of God came upon them they spake with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. The testimony was a Divine contrast with Babel. There God had sent confusion of tongues in judgment. HERE God gave it truly as a judgment to ISRAEL, showing that their Jewish Position was set on one side, but in uniting mercy to sinners, out of all nations under heaven. We read on through the Acts, and we find throughout that wondrous Book evidences of a Divine Working, that could be SEEN and HEARD. At Samaria Philip preached, and many believed and were baptised, and after the apostles came the Holy Spirit was very manifest.

Simon could see the works; likewise was it in the household of Cornelius. Peter said "Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptised, which have received the Holy Spirit as we?" and he commanded them in the name of the Lord to be baptised, Likewise was it at Ephesus, there was the MANIFESTATION of the reception of the gift of the Spirit of God, and they spake with tongues and prophesied. Thus we have the testimony throughout the Acts, and when in an Epistle that belongs to the same period, the Epistle to the Corinthians, we have a declaration of the state of the Lord's dear people at Corinth, - we find that in some meetings EVERY speaker was inspired, for in 1 Cor. 14 we have seven speakers, seemingly a maximum, and not a single one out from them is uninspired. True, an Epistle that was even earlier than that to the Corinthians, the one to the Thessalonians, gives a warning, and sounds a solemn note, for the apostle says, "Let no man deceive you". There was a danger lest any should imagine that the new prophetic teaching, which had been introduced among them was of God. The witness warned theⁿ, not to be soon shaken in mind, and not troubled, "neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us". It is plain that a certain supernatural power had stood up in the assembly, not to speak definitely against Christ, but indirectly to speak against Christ's revelation of prophetic teaching in Matthew 24, and to alter His Divine teaching in that matter. Indeed the Epistle to the Corinthians is equally solemn in its words of warning. The apostle realises that some will object to his solemn words of holy arrangement in Ch.14 and he adds, "What? came the Word of the Lord out from you: or came it unto you only?" "If any man THINK himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I WRITE unto you are the commandments of the Lord, but if any be ignorant, let him be ignorant". These words are momentous, they indicate that Satan presented travesties and imitations, and it seems fairly plain that the travesties were not always an open defiance of God. It is true,

probably, that someone had stood up in the assembly at Corinth, and had said "Jesus Anathema". The apostle says, as it were, you know plainly THAT cannot be of God, " for no one speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus Anathema. But apart from this there were some who were contentious, and who thought themselves to be prophets, or inspired, but they WOULD not recognise the Divine guidance in the commandments of the Lord. Here then was a need for the apostle's plain speaking.

The book of Acts close^s very suddenly.. The first Epistle written AFTER the period of the Acts is the 1st to Timothy, and it is in 1 Timothy we have at once a STRIKING evidence of the change that had been brought about. I do not mean a change in accord with God's revealed will for His people's obedient continuance in holy unity but in accord with God's chastening wisdom. It is very sad at the present time to find some quoting such a passage as 1 Cor. 13 implying that at the present time we have put away the childish things of Acts, implying that something which is perfect has come. Beloved friends, I trust our eyes are opened to see that the arrival of that which is perfect, mentioned in Corinthians, is with the return ^{in glory} of our beloved Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, when faith shall be turned to sight, and the prophecies of Scripture shall be so wondrously and gloriously fulfilled. But it is clear that we do find a change in 1 Timothy. You do not have in that Epistle a mention of the gifts, AS in 1 Corinthians 12-14. Indeed, though arrangements for a gathering are given, there is not a word about an INSPIRED speaker. We have a reference to the speaking of those equipped to teach, but the only prophecy that is mentioned is linked with Paul and Timothy. Now you will recollect that in Ephesians, one of the last Epistles that date at the same time as Acts, in the Epistle to the Ephesians we have

Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, and Teachers. We read, further, of the FOUNDATION of Apostles and Prophets, and I take it we recognize that God will not again send apostles into this dispensation, but that evangelists, pastors and teachers strikingly remain, even in latter days. And this seems clear from the Epistles to Timothy, though the apostles and prophets are limited to Paul and Timothy and past servants of God. This is the more striking, for in connection with the arrangements for the oversight of God's work which we find in 1 Timothy there is not a word of suggestion that the overseer should be a brother possessing supernatural gifts. I would mark this more definitely, because, though the loss of Gifts is plainly indicative of some ruin and failure, it is fairly evident that the Lord does not always blame the individual who is without them. If we might take a parallel from an earlier dispensation, one who belonged to Israel's race born in Babylon at the beginning of the seventy years, when God said they should be away from their land, was instructed by God to acknowledge the ruin, and not to assume that he could put things straight. It was his wisdom to recognise how he was placed, and we find the same thing marked in the later epistles which bring before us days of weakness, I do trust, dear friends, I shall not be misunderstood when I call your attention to the fact that words like the "BODY", the "CHURCH" which are so prominent in Epistles as those to the Corinthians and the Ephesians, are absent from the Later Epistles to Timothy. I do not mean that the purpose of God according to election is frustrated, or that God has failed in His purpose of preparing for His beloved Son that company of which we read "His wife hath made herself ready." Without doubt Christ shall present to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but just as God granted

a temporary earthly suspension of "kingdom blessings" to Israel, He manifestly marked out in the epistles to Timothy a temporary earthly suspension of certain "church blessings" to the saints at the present time. Mark, dear friends, my thought is not now "What is the condition of affairs at the present time?" - but rather, "What has God Himself marked out, as existing when the apostles wrote their last letters, and referred to the declension? We find Paul saying, for example "At my first answer no man ^{was} hood by me", and again "All they which are in Asia he turned away from me". When the apostle wrote the Epistles now before us, it is evident that he did not regard the unity of saints on EARTH as then something to which he could refer in the same way as when he wrote the Epistle to the Ephesians. The standpoint and language are quite distinguished, and it is our wisdom to confess this loss, that we may be in a position to receive any measure of restoration and blessing which God may be pleased to promise and give.

It is remarkable that the last Book of Scripture, and Book of Revelation, which contains such striking evidences of God's interest in His redeemed, contains, in the introduction, greeting FROM the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. No other Book contains greeting FROM the Holy Spirit. I take it we recognise that the absence of the greeting from the Holy Spirit in earlier books refers to the fact that He had come down to earth in a special Pentecostal way. The inclusion in the last book has a contrary testimony. I do not mean it suggests that the quickening Spirit is removed, or that the indwelling Spirit is removed, but the Spirit of God is there viewed as seven Spirits working rather in a LOCAL connection. For there are seven LOCAL churches. It is true there IS still the One Spirit, but WE DO NOT READ IN REVELATION "There is one body, and one Spirit". We read rather of greetings coming from the SEVEN Spirits,

and so we find in the letters primarily addressed to the individual angels of the seven churches a reference to FALSE apostles, a reference to a FALSE prophetess, but not to true apostles, nor to true prophets. These things are indeed momentous, and show to us something of the teaching of Scripture. To sum up this part of our subject, I would say 1 Cor.12 makes clear that in one Spirit believers WERE baptized into ONE BODY. That the term "ONE BODY" means more than vital relationship to Christ; it suggests an earthly executive FOR Christ. That though now local gatherings of believers may enter somewhat into the position of a body, (especially in local Christian fellowship), we cannot find at the present time that unity which existed of old and which was emphasized in the Divine phraseology "One Body" in its EARTHLY aspect. Furthermore, though the wondrous quickening and indwelling and witnessing of the Spirit of God remain, the baptism in the Spirit, means, I believe, far more than the birth and leading of the Spirit. The birth of the Spirit was invisible. The baptism of the Spirit was at once visible. The word "baptism" and the word "body" are BOTH suggestive of a visibility, and the theory which alters the language to an INVISIBLE baptism into an INVISIBLE body is altering something of the teaching of Scripture. That believers are linked with Christ and that the Spirit of God has brought this about, that there is a wondrous oneness, I would firmly recognise, for ALL who are "in Christ Jesus". That is usually what is understood among God's dear people by being baptised in one Spirit, into one body. All that they understand by it some of us would gratefully acknowledge, but that the Holy Spirit meant more by it, we must definitely testify.

And now we come to the more difficult part of the subject. We consider supernatural gifts in history, past and present

and to ponder before God whether those that exist to-day are counterfeits. I do not trust, beloved friends, that our desire is God's glory, and that this may be uppermost in our minds. I have no wish to accentuate differences, I have no wish to generalise, I am persuaded that much harm is oftentimes done because of hasty generalizing. I am not prepared with ONE word to characterise any movement, as if professing to understand it all from one sample or another. That is to say, I feel that oftentimes believers in controversy weaken their own position, even when standing for the Truth by a manner that dishonours God, and by a hasty generalising, which view everything opposed as necessarily of the same character, when there may be, in that which is unsatisfactory, various proportions of various failures, and various sins, mingled, and also blended therewith, or rather half-hidden thereby, some proportion of desire to please God. I do feel the importance of laying this before you. I suppose any who desire to please the Lord in any measure are often misunderstood, but I do hope that in our quiet and solemn gathering this evening, I shall not be misunderstood in laying a stress upon this, I believe that historical manifestation of gifts have included something of demon working. I believe that they have included something of fleshly hysteria. I believe they have included something of human scheming. I believe they have included various other things, but I am not prepared to generalize, and define all in the same way. On the other hand I do not think that all God's dear people must be compelled to test everything which exists before speaking at all. It is true that to those who have oversight in the gathering at Thessalonica, there was such a command given in a definite context, But not every believer - not any believer - can test everything that exists at the present time. There must be a measure of sampling by some, but it is well, as no one can investigate all, that there

should be a large measure of silence particularly as to the imputation of motives, or as to the declaration of heart's condition. I believe that in most movements of today, there are to be found those who love their Lord, and that they have certain desires toward the Lord, which the Lord honours and acknowledges. Among ourselves we must find the danger of one-sidedness. If the Lord only blessed us when we were perfect, we should not have received His blessings, but he graciously bears with His failing people. It is important to realise this, but we must go a step further. All along history there have been at various times supernatural workings. The Montanists, for example, had among them "prophets". We come along further and we see recognized, among the Moravians, prophets, - men, be it noticed, who appeared to live an exemplary life, yet who prophesied prophecies which did not come true. Coming further along we reach one of the most remarkable cases in the 18th century, of the so-called prophets of the Cevennes. There we find remarkable workings, particularly be it remembered in children, even as at the time of some earlier manifestations. These points are important, especially as they suggest a certain contrast with Scriptural arrangements, as far as we can see them in the Epistles. Furthermore, the apparently supernatural testimony in the earlier centuries, and in the 18th century was frequently with reference to the Coming again of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the earlier part of the 19th century, a movement, that afterwards developed into the Catholic Apostolic Movement, BEGAN, not so much with false teaching as to the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, but rather with false prophetic teaching. It is said that among the characteristic words at the beginning there were words about the Coming of Christ, and the continual utterance of the expression "The Body of Christ". We know how that movement DEVELOPED, with its sad denial of the absolute

perfection of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with a stress upon HUMAN perfectionism. But it is difficult to test all these things in half-forgotten history. It is hard enough to test ourselves, and to test things that are around us. Suffice it to say that there have been movements all along the ages, and that those movements have included men who have appeared to be sound as to MUCH Truth, yet who have been associated with false prophecies. For example, the French prophets of the 18th century prophesied a certain resurrection which never took place. Yet their lives appeared to be godly, and their doctrines seemed, in large measure, to be sound.

Now these things must make God's dear people very cautious at the present time, lest they be misled, and I must lovingly and definitely bear a testimony that as far as I can see from what I have known of the literature associated with the movement to which the word "Pentecostal" has been applied today, there are not in it the evidences of a Divine foundation. That believers may be associated with it is another matter. I believe there are believers in all denominations and organizations, though not one can be said to be the mind of God. Alas, believers fail; gloriously God never fails, and His infinite grace toward His wandering people is often made an excuse by others of His people for further wandering. We are not to be guided by results. We are not to be guided by the actions of those whom we think we can trust. We are not to be guided by circumstances, but by the Scripture that God has given. We may be sure of this, that any work that is the work of the Holy Spirit will be in accord with the teaching of the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures. If you go to a believer who professes to want the leading of the Holy Spirit, and he makes a mistake, that mistake does not prove he is entirely out of harmony with the Holy Spirit, but if you come to that which professes to be a revelation of the Spirit, and THAT contains a

mistake, the whole revelation is discredited. There is a vast difference between the two. Our testing of that which professes to be supernatural must be very different from our testing of that which is the manifestation of a believer's growth in grace, in which there are still the reminders that he is in the flesh. Sometimes, the evidence of miracles is brought forward as conclusive. I think we do well to notice that the Lord Jesus does not by any means deny those who stand before Him in Matt. 7. They say "Have we not prophesied in THY NAME, and in Thy Name have cast our demons, and in Thy Name done many wonderful works?" He does not deny to those that they have done marvellous works. Miracles are not of themselves evidential. "Oh" you say, "But does not the Lord Jesus Christ appeal to His miracles?" Undoubtedly, but HIS miracles are miracles in a certain SETTING, and the setting is as important as, and more important than, the miracles. A million miracles in a setting that was not according to the mind of God would be accounted for by the language of Deut.13. "If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder come to pass whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known and let us serve them; Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams; for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God, with all your heart and with all your soul". And I take it though this is an extreme case, the principle applies in everything LESS, - in other words, if a sign or a wonder come to pass in connection with that which is not the will of a God, it is a stepping stone on the same way as that which led to other gods, and therefore we would rather deny the value of the sign or wonder than deny the Scripture of Truth. There can be no mistake in Scripture. It is said "By their FRUITS ye shall know them," not by their claims or miracles.

Rather remarkably I received this morning a magazine and a Leaflet on the very subject we have before us this evening which came from one who knew nothing, as far as I can tell, of the fact that we were about to have this subject. But I felt it was more than a coincidence, and that God determined something from that arrival. The leaflet was one approving of the movement that we have just been considering, headed in words like these. "Is it of God, or of the Devil?". Here at once we have that hasty generalizing which is utterly ruinous to all true understanding of God's will. There is so much dross mixed up with God's silver, and so much silver found near man's dross, that we cannot hastily generalize. Again let me call upon God's dear people to realize that their first thing is not to look out for miracles, and evidence of this nature, but to consider, Scripturally "What is the revealed will of God? - Where is THE truth of God as a whole HONOURED?" See 1 Tim. 3.15. Such a number argue UP from miracles, which are thus considered first, to ponder Scripturalness. To me the important thing is to ponder Scripturalness first. Until I am satisfied on THAT, miracles prove nothing. The Lord Jesus Christ did certain miracles in a WONDROUS CONTEXT. It is sometimes said, "But Satan does not cast out Satan, therefore these workings are plainly not the works of the Devil." But, beloved friends, we must recognise this, that Satan CAN give a Testimony to some of the Truth. "I know Thee Who Thou Art, the Holy One of God"; "These men are the servants of the Most High God, which do show unto us the way of salvation" - were both Satanic testimonies; and furthermore, it is distinctly said that Satan is disguised as an angel of LIGHT, - not simply as an angel, but as an angel of positive light. Further, we need to be very exact, prayerfully exact, in reading Scripture. It does not say

"How can Satan cast out a demon"? But, "How can Satan cast out Satan which is vastly different. Satan can dramatically cast out many demons, but he cannot do that which, by its character, and context, and association and setting, shows that it is more than the casting out of an individual demon, it is the casting out of himself, and his authority, and his power and his wish and his plan,- This is vastly different. We need to notice the wondrous accuracy of the things of God. There are various tests that are given to us in Scripture concerning supernatural gifts. One test is in 1 John, confession of Jesus Christ COME in the flesh, another test is in the second epistle of John - literally Jesus Christ COMING IN the flesh. The third test in 2 Thess. 2 is correct prophetic teaching; and beyond this there is the general test of Deut.13. Nor can we forget 1 Cor.14, and the Divine appointments as to "silence" there. In brief, NO LIE IS OF THE TRUTH. Oh that we might realise this more! I turned through the paper that was sent me today and I noticed one or two things in it that I felt must be regarded as lies, which were not of the Truth. For example, we KNOW that in the last days people are teaching an unscriptural theory of entire ^c santification, and the real taking out of the root of inbred sin. I find nothing in Scripture of this teaching. Scripture reveals to us a continual warfare, though linked with a continual victory. There should be a continual overcoming, but disciples do not get beyond praying "Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone that is indebted to us". It is deeply important that we should notice these words in 1 John 1. "If we keep on walking in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the Blood keeps on cleansing". That is, IF we walk in the light, we need that the Blood should keep on cleansing ALL THE WHILE!" (See note at end). Here then is NOT the removal of

the root of inbred sin, but a Divinely-given victory and cleansing. Again, I noticed this expression "Every disease was healed when Jesus hung on the cross, not today but then". These words struck me as peculiarly unsatisfactory, for though I have not a word to say in favour of the present-day idea of hurrying to a doctor, though I have not a word to say of present-day ideas of LOOKING to means for preservation of health, though I believe that God's dear people waste money that belongs to Him on drugs and holidays, yet it is fairly plain that believers, though trusting the Lord with regard to their physical frame, as well as their spiritual condition, cannot CLAIM THAT every disease was dealt with in the same way as sin. Timothy is not blamed for sickness. If every disease was so dealt with, then, beloved friends, death, and the ruin of the physical frame which leads up to it would be equally dealt with, for they have all come into the world through sin in the same manner. In this connection may I call attention to the common use of the name JESUS without a title of reverence among those associated with this movement, and the common belief in a secret rapture of the Lord Jesus Christ, (which was the error of the Thessalonians), and a common absence of teaching of much of God's truth, for example, that we were CHOSEN in Christ before the foundation of the world. The OMISSIONS are serious, as well as the insertions. You do not expect me to go through everything this evening. My experience of the literature that has come across my path, coupled, I hope, with a prayerful willingness to be guided by the Lord, is that it does not bear the mark of God's leading in the warp and woof; that it is unmindful of the present state of affairs in the declension. It assumes the restoration of the blessings of supernatural gifts, without producing a promise to that effect, and further it assumes that these can exist while all the failure of human systems is perpetuated. That is to say, the gifts of the body are said to exist while the manifestation of the body is not to be found

And those who move in this movement can retain their titles of "Reverend" and in some cases their associations with organizations which are manifestly corrupt, and yet expect that there will be these workings from God. I said just now, that there is no prophecy of the restoration of these supernatural gifts. This is the more remarkable because there are definite promises of a restoration, and revival of the unity of saints before the Lord returns. But the Scriptures reveal that in the last days, linked with that reviving among the Lord's people, there WILL be supernatural gifts, linked with that which is of SATAN. There is no evidence they will be linked with that which is of God. These points should make us doubly cautious, doubly solemn that we may not be misled in this matter. We cannot take the evidences of earnestness and much truth as a proof of God's working. You recollect in Isa.58) a leaflet I received this morning mentioned the enthusiasm of a prayer meeting which resulted - you recollect in Isa.58 these words, "They seek me daily, and delight to know My ways - they take delight in approaching to God". Beloved friends, nothing of mere "enthusiasm" is an evidence of the Spirit of Truth. We want the whole TRUTH OF the Spirit of God.

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Q. Where do you get the thought of revival of spiritual gifts before the Lord's return?

H. The revival of unity before the Lord's return, but NO evidence of the revival of supernatural gifts, (I am sorry I did not make it clear). This is the more remarkable when we ponder the silence of passages which I think are unmistakably definite as to an awakening, - like 2 Pet.3, "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness, but is longsuffering to USWARD, not willing that any should perish, but that all should

come to repentance". The "usward" there points out believers, and shows that the Lord is WAITING till HIS people are more united and in harmony. 2 Tim.2 is a parallel passage, I believe, and Matthew 24, the latter part, brings before us, very definitely, believers, with little gatherings, spiritual households and faithful servants. Matt.25 at once says, "THEN shall the Kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten VIRGINS that went out". Christendom cannot be called even "Foolish VIRGINS". There is no widespread going OUT to meet the Bridegroom now. There WILL be a reviving, though I take it that even in that reviving there will be "Foolish virgins", (unsaved but apparently [✓]virgin like) but at the present time there is wicked harlotry.

Q. Is there a Scripture that suggests these gifts will cease on account of ruin, or that they have ceased on account of ruin?

H. I think that understanding of God's instruction in this matter largely depends on the evidence of comparing Scripture with Scripture, because I cannot regard anything as more unhealthy than "too clear" a revelation on certain points. It is deeply important that there should be difficulties for God's dear people. Take the differences that exist upon part of the doctrine which concerns God's Sovereign grace. His electing love, and so forth. There are Scriptures speaking in various ways, men will tell us, - all in God's way, but hard to be understood, that they may test those who are really the Lord's people and disciple-like. Thus with everything. It seems to me that just in the same manner as the first day of the week is not commanded in so many words, but its arrangement can be prayerfully followed out by thoughtful believers, so God deals with His people now, as to many things, teaching them as His INTELLIGENT children. Consequently you do not find most

things on the surface in any one passage, but you need to compare spiritual things with spiritual, and in the Holy Spirit. I take it that one of the strongest evidences is that in the epistles dealing with weakness, the language is so distinctly varied, and that it is not recorded of any assembly that there were outward spiritual gifts, which would surely have been the case if 1 Cor. 12 were still in force. Then the book of Revelation is, perhaps, another of the strongest evidences to me. In one verse you have the greetings from the seven Spirits of God; and then the evidence of NO true apostles or prophets or miracle-workers in those seven churches, any more than in the churches in the time of First Timothy, apart from the Apostle and Timothy himself. These things are not unimportant. That God CAN speak, whenever He pleased, in any way, - that God CAN deal at any time - is perfectly true. We have no limitation of HIS power, nor any wish to limit it, but that He Who chastened Israel of old by turning them out of their land, and breaking up the unity, has chastened wandering saints in a similar way, by breaking up the powerful witness of the manifest unity, is, I think, clear. (There are many parallels between the dispensations). It is further remarkable that when there was a restoration under Zerubbabel and Joshua, we are told that certain ones could not prove their descent, and they were told that they must wait till the priest stood up with Urim and Thummim. They had no supernatural gifts that they make such a decision, on the restoration then, though their spirits were stirred up. My own impression is that the parallel restoration in these dark days in which we live, will be very similar to that of those days. You know they were deeply earnest, their spirits were stirred up, and I trust we shall have OUR spirits stirred up. And they began to

build the temple, then trouble came along, and we read the work of God ceased. Cf. "While the Bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept". Then in Haggai you find the stirring up once more to go on with the work. "Is it time for you to dwell in your cieled houses?" But they had NO Shekinah glory, NO supernatural gifts of Urim and Thummim; so I think that Scripture suggests in the revival there will be the absence of the same MANIFEST glory of God,- because there is no Scripture to surmise it. This would seem unaccountable silence otherwise.

G. The last versés in Mark, I should like to read, "And He said unto them, Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be ^{damed}. And these signs shall follow them that believe; in My Name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall lay their hands on the sick, and they shall recover. So thenafter the Lord had spokén unto them, He was received up into heaven and sat on the right hand of God". Then I take it the Day of Pentecost comes in between here, and then "They went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the Word with signs following". I should like your thought, dear brother, on that.

H. This passage is deeply important; it brings before us the Lord's commands and promises; e.g. "They shall take up serpents",- they did so, as the last verse adds, "They went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following". I take it therefore the Lord says THIS DID COME TRUE. And if it did not come true for anybody else after those of whom it is speaking, it would have been fulfilled. "These things SHALL follow those that believe". They did go forth. They did have these wonderful

signs following. The Lord Himself mentions that it was fulfilled. Now in Matthew the ending is quite distinct. THERE we find a similar expression as to teaching all nations, similar expression as to baptising, but no mention of the signs. What then is the added promise? "And lo I am with you all the days, even unto the END OF THE AGE". Now can one account for the striking fact that "Unto the end of the age" and "all the days", occur in Matthew, and are as expressly omitted in Mark. God expressly says in Mark that THIS prophecy was then fulfilled. If we take it that God in perfect wisdom meant the two passages to suggest certain parallels and certain contrasts, everything, I think, becomes very clear; but if we take it otherwise, it seems to me we have confusion.

Q. How long is it since the Epistle to the Corinthians was written after this?

H. About 25 years after the Lord Jesus ascended into glory.

Q. And we read of them speaking with tongues in Corinthians in the church in general, and the signs followed the believers. How long do you think it continued after that?

H. Till believers so misused gifts, and wandered from the Lord, that the Lord chastened by removing much^h, as the epistles to Timothy show. Wherever you have the mention of unity and baptism in the Spirit, you have gifts and speaking with tongues. But I know no passage in Scripture that shows the gifts existing in the present time of disunity, and yet we must acknowledge that at the present time there is disunity. Timothy gives us the epistles that deal with the existence of the break-up of organized testimony, which break-up still exists. Have we any Scripture for supernatural gifts of this nature in broken-up disorganized times? ~~OK~~ I know of none.

Q. About 500 saw the Lord ascent^d, is that so?

H. at this period 500 saw Him, I can not say it was

exactly the moment of ascension) in fact I feel certain that they did not see Him at the very moment, or surely there would have been more than 120 in Acts 1.

Q. You have answered my question before I have asked it.

It has been a difficulty to me that there were 500 who saw Him ascend, and that there were only 120 that tarried for the length of time. Is it possible that the whole number started and gradually fell out, and left 120?

H. I think that would be quite inappropriate with the argument of the precious unity which existed in Acts 1. I cannot conceive that there would be such enjoyment with the Lord if they were being reduced every day by a large percentage of their number. Surely the 500 may be linked with the mountain in Galilee, to which the Lord Jesus specially referred. "Tell My ^{re.} brethren that they go into Galilee, and there they shall see Me" - See Matt. 28. 10, 16*. Surely that was the large gathering to whom the Lord gave many arrangements for the present dispensation.

Q. I take it, brother, coming back to my first query that you consider that the gifts have ceased, as it were, but not been taken back?

H. That God has in chastisement withdrawn certain workings as the glory of God was withdrawn from the temple in Ezekiel when Israel sinned. Not in God's approval but under God's chastening hand; one must fear that most present day attempts after unity and most present day expectations of gifts are alike ignorant of the depth of failure before the Lord.

* Possibly the mountain of Matt. 5 and certainly linked spiritually.

Note to Page 14.

Fourteen years have passed and the writer feels still by grace definitely convinced that 1 John 1 shows how we must humbly acknowledge sin, in the light of God's glory (cf. Isaiah 6.) more and more. First John is clear as to this and the experience of the power of the blood of Christ is continual as we walk in the light and see our need. But as the words of 1 John 1 may describe the function of the blood the writer would vary the wording on page 14 and emphasize, lest any should forget, the once purging by the blood, and the special stress after on the water of the Word, as when Israel's priests approached the laver.

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