

No.

78 .

"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.

ADDRESS TO PARENTS.

An Address (revised) at

FOREST GATE, E. 7.

25th May, 1914.

by

PERCY W. HEWARD.

Correspondence welcome:

Scriptural literature for Believers

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

ADDRESS TO PARENTS.

By Mr. P. W. Heward,

At Forest Gate, 25th May, 1914.

Numbers 4 read.

It is possible, dear friends, that as we were reading Numbers 4 the thought ran through some minds :- What has that to do with a Parent's Meeting? I suppose that if God has mercifully caused us to live with that new life which He so graciously bestows, we accept the Divine statement that "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable". Yes, the very name-lists in the Book of Chronicles, for example; - everything from cover to cover of God's Book is profitable. God has not given us one page that can be wasted, and you will find that those who criticise this aspect are usually those who have not read through the Scripture. The more any KNOW of God's Book, the more are they ready to testify that every page is a mine of wealth, though they frankly confess they cannot understand ALL the fulness, and that they have never reached the end of the depth of any verse of Scripture. There remaineth very much land to be possessed in this wondrous Book. Therefore it is a privilege to gather together and look into ANY part of the Scriptures, - it is a privilege to turn to any portion, because we have here God's Book. But this evening we are specially thinking of the privileges and responsibilities of parents. We are specially meditating on the service unto the Lord which is connected with the Bible School within these walls. What has Num. 4 to say in this connection? Permit me, dear friends, at the outset to make a very general statement, which I hope is also a very particular statement. If I were asked, What is the first lesson that impresses itself upon one in Reading Num. 4, I think I should put first, or at least among the first, the glorious holiness of God. Now that is a general statement. It is not only, it is not particularly, for a parent's meeting, and yet it is always a particular statement. For, I venture to say, one of the greatest difficulties in Christian work is that

those of us who go forth to preach God's Truth find there is no feeling of awe at the glorious holiness of God. Children are, in general, growing up amid surroundings which make light of the glorious holiness of God. A superficial education leads to a large measure of boasting and self-confidence, and young and old in the boasting 20th century consider they can largely put God and His glory on one side, and therefore in EVERY meeting I am convinced we do well at the outset to emphasize His majesty, His greatness. If the seraphim veil themselves before Him, if thousand thousands minister unto Him, if ten thousand times ten thousand stand in His glorious presence, what are we that we can speak of Him, that we can speak TO Him, and that we can consider what He has spoken to us? Why, dear friends, if only by the grace of God we have some heart realisation of what He is, there will be such a spirit of reverence that the true aspect of the training of children will be more fully grasped. Irreverence is at the root of many sins. "My flesh trembleth for fear of Thee" said the psalmist; and again, "My heart standeth in awe of Thy Word". When Moses realised the glory of God on Mount Sinai, he said, "I exceedingly fear". We need to have MORE reverence. Let us remember this is not only a HOLY Bible in the printing outside the cover; "The place whereon thou standest is holy ground" is a passage which applies whenever we approach God's Truth. God marked this out again and again in connection with the Tabernacle. The Levites chosen from the nation could only draw near as He appointed. The priests exalted above the Levites were confined to the Holy Place, and the High Priest himself, the only man who could enter the Holiest of all, was only allowed to enter on one special DAY, and in one special WAY. God was gloriously unapproachable, except in the manner He graciously marked out. The One Who said in loving condescension "Let them make Me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them", also said, "Speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times...within the vail,...THAT HE DIE NOT". Even Moses, with whom God spoke, face to face, could not enter in, when the

glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle. Nor has God changed His greatness, though in the present dispensation He is not manifesting Himself on a Sinai, nor do we see that glory which Ezekiel beheld, - but He is the Same God and it becomes us in all our meditations, and in all our work among children, whether that work be in a Bible School or in the home, if we are believing parents, and are so able to do that important part of Christian work, - it becomes us whether we be in Bible School or in home, beloved friends, to have a sense of the greatness and glory of God, as a background and basis for much that will please Him.

One other general statement will not be out of place. Everything in connection with the Tabernacle was not alone to emphasize the greatness of God, it brought to the forefront the thought of one way of acceptance, and that way by blood. The blood of bulls and goats was poured forth. Why the death of countless sacrifices? Because God emphasized that the one way of salvation is by that precious Saviour Who was as a Lamb without blemish and without spot. A general statement, do you say? Oh that God may apply it to all our hearts, whether for the first time, or after many years of experiencing His love. It is vain for us to talk about the training of children, it is vain for us to talk about Bible education, unless at the outset we are able to enter into the meaning of a personal welcome into the presence of this glorious God of holiness. A personal welcome because of that once finished Sacrifice whereby the sins of all who believe on Him ARE FOR ever blotted out, though they were as a thick cloud. A personal salvation is the stepping-stone to personal service. No higher service can easily be found, than service unto the Lord in the home, but unless there is an individual salvation, there cannot be a service: - there may be the routine of religion, there may be outward forms and ceremonies which in themselves will hold back from certain varieties of sin, but unless there is a personal welcome, let me repeat the words, a PERSONAL WELCOME into the PRESENCE OF GOD, through Him Who is the Way and the Truth and the Life, - unless there is a personal resting upon a personal Saviour,

and an enjoyment of that infinite grace which has secured everlasting life, unless there be that, how can we accomplish any true work which will be acceptable to Him Who seeth not as man seeth. and Who will only receive that which is intrinsically perfect, or that which is offered in the merits, and cleansed by the blood of His beloved Son!

And now, coming more definitely to the chapter we have read, with respect to the responsibilities of parents, I thought as I looked through the verses, that they lay a great stress on order. Everything seems arranged. Some would say, "A repetition", rather, "An arrangement". We have the mention of the families, and just what they were to do. Everything is mapped out, everything is put in order. God is not the author of confusion. Throughout nature we find order, throughout Scripture we find order, and if in God's mercy we have been brought to know His loving-kindness, we must lay a stress upon order. I am persuaded that we all waste more time than we think, that we all waste more time than we care to acknowledge, that we all waste more time than we should like other people to tell us we waste. A large amount of time is wasted through lack of order. It is so easy to work hard - doing nothing. It is so easy to have a stress of labour, and yet to accomplish little. I am not now thinking^{only} of that passage in Haggai, where God says that the people's labours were doomed to failure because they forgot Him. There we find an important aspect of truth. They sowed much and brought in little because they thought of their own houses and forgot His house, because they thought of themselves, and forgot Himself. Perhaps that which is before us is the SAME thing from another aspect, but it IS another aspect. There is certainly a distinct view point. Much time is wasted, and much of everything is lost, through lack of order. God marked out in connection with the Tabernacle that everything was to be orderly. I believe that God will graciously use the very arrangements of the Bible School in this connection. The mental advantages of order are very real, possibly the physical

advantages also. When God saves in His grace, certainly the SPIRITUAL advantages cannot be easily calculated, for if disorder means loss of time, it often means loss of temper as well. Arrangements frequently provides against a number of incidental difficulties, and God has laid this stress that there may be a true order among those who know His loving-kindness. May I, therefore, speak ~~earnestly~~ especially to any engaged in work among children, or to any parents who are able by grace to look up to God as their Father, and therefore UPON their home as service for HIM? To you this passage has a message. Order should mark the home; though not perhaps the order of a military camp. There are diversities. But certainly a definiteness is necessary. Children can be brought to take an interest in order so long as they are continually in the sphere of it. If they have the opportunity of testing both order and disorder, they like order afterwards, and disorder at the time, and with a child AT THE TIME is a very powerful influence. Disorder is the easiest thing TO-DAY, and order means many things will be easier to-morrow, and the child is very much concerned about the present. I do not mean with a right concern which refuses to look to the morrow. God's dear people are told not to be anxious for the morrow, but a child's tendency is to lack forethought, to act on the impulse of the moment, hence disorder is the easiest thing, and the child easily falls back into disorder unless the parent sets a controlling example otherwise. Feeling convinced that much sin results from disorder, feeling convinced that much mischief is produced by laziness, I would earnestly emphasize upon you, dear friends, the value of order in the home, and the value of order in the Bible School. I do not merely mean by "order" a care as to obedience in large things, but a careful arrangement as to everything. It is so easy to be irregular as to a meeting, as to time of rising in the morning, as to the reading of Scripture, as to the learning of Scripture, as to the home-work of a Bible School, - it is so easy in details to be irregular. I am persuaded that irregularity

is a cruelty to the children. God has marked out in the passages at which we have just looked a complete order and arrangement, and this alone can be pleasing to Him. Do not misunderstand me; order will never save a soul, arrangement will never take a man to heaven, it is only by the Blood of Christ that there can be any entrance into that glorious presence, but when any are brought to know the Lord as their own Saviour, their time belongs to Him, and being responsible for their children, they are responsible for their children's time, and the waste of time linked with disorder and lack of arrangement is a stealing from God.

May I go a step further from this same chapter in Numbers? It is beautiful to see the sons of Kohath doing one part of the work, and the sons of Gershom another part, and the sons of Merari another part. We know how in the case of Korah there was a rising up against that sphere which was marked out for him, a rising up which is comparable with much of the spirit of the present age. Discontent is in the air. Some would never be content unless they were discontented. THIS seems their object. This is sad, but sadly true. It is well to see that God has marked out, whether in the human frame, or in the work of the tabernacle, a fitting in. May I urge, upon Christian parents, a definiteness as to THIS in the home. That children should be kept from quarrelling with one another is only a small fraction of what I mean. Outward quarrelling is more than out of place in a home where the parents acknowledge the Lord Jesus. The parents' control should deal with this in a very definite manner, but it is possible to have friction without quarrelling, and friction largely comes through not knowing what is Kohath's work, and what is Gershom's. If everything is mapped out and arranged, if there is a working together and a little interest in one another, a number of difficulties can be prevented. Oh, dear friends, in connection with all that is done unto the Lord by those who have His service at heart, in any form, let there be a remembrance of this. Gershom

must not envy Kohath, and Kohath must not envy Merari. God has different spheres for His people. If there is His Own merciful salvation, that introduces to some service, but not necessarily each one to the SAME service. If there is jealousy and strife, there is confusion and every evil work. It is so easy for Merari to want to leave the pins of the Tabernacle, and to attend to the vessels of the sanctuary. But this is the danger. Whether in Christian service or in the arrangement of a home where God is honoured, let there be a stress on working together. Do not regard the lack of agreement of children as a necessary evil to be excused. The majority of children as they become older think lightly of most sins because their parents treated 'baby's' sins lightly. If there is an excusing of that which is wrong, and a smiling at sins dressed up prettily, we may be sure of this, those sins will grow till they manifest their ugliness. Selfishness can usually look pretty in a baby, but it is horrible when it develops, and the root, though it may be amusing, is to be checked and dealt with at the beginning. Furthermore, Numbers brings before us care as to LITTLE things. We have God's stress on the ark and the vessels of the tabernacle; but He does not forget the pins and the cords. Pins and cords are needful:- they may not be in the Holiest of all, but if there were no pins and cords and loops and tatches, how would the tabernacle be finished? God has need of little things, and our life is largely made up of little things. There is an attraction in big things, but God's stress is upon small things. The Lord Jesus has promised that His people shall be rewarded not so much for their publicity, but for their private prayer, and things of that character. Matt. 6 is clear upon this point. Remember, dear Christian parent, that in your training of your children, the little things are larger than many of the larger things, - larger in their effect. The tiny things as to which you are careless are producing, or (shall I say?) reproducing themselves in an enlarged form in your children. As a rule, a child will manifest a parent's defects "writ large". It is

natural for anything upon this earth, if it be put out from the hand, to drop DOWN TOWARD THE GROUND; spiritually there is the same tendency. Just as we can catch illnesses, but not "wellnesses" so the child is more quickly influenced by the defects of a parent, than by the excellencies of a parent. A parent needs to be a Christian to look after the home at all. Unless a parent is personally in Christ and walking with God, there is a total unfitness for this great responsibility, which cannot be over-estimated. Oh how many there are who have entered lightly upon this responsibility, who in after life look back sorrowfully on the failures which are ever linked with carelessness! Oh how many who have been brought to know the Name of Christ after their children have grown up, see with deep sorrow how unfit they were to train them in babyhood. A personal acquaintance with a Personal Lord is needed for this tremendous work of the home. Outside preaching may look important, the giving of addresses upon a platform may seem attractive, but the platform of daily life in the home is the largest platform of all. Scripture lays such a stress upon this, and the life is made up of little things. An address on a platform may be an hour long, but the parent's address in the home is more than twelve hours long each day, yet it is day by day and it contains within itself the whole of the parent's character; and that address is taken down more indelibly than in a note-book, with its after effects in the life of the child, though not to be seen at once. You sow the seed, and the harvest is not to-morrow. The actions of this year in your life will doubtless have further effects if God spares your children in a few years to come. You little know the consequences. You little know how the tiny root will spring up into a tree with many branches. This work is no light work, it is made up of one mass of little things. Oh, dear friends, if you are parents, remember the responsibility, and be concerned for your children's sake as well as your own, that you may know the Lord as Saviour and Controller. There is the same thought in connection with a Bible school. The

pins and the cords are deeply important. We do not put them first. We always seek to have the Ark first, I mean the teaching centred round the Ark, - meeting with God. It is not our object that the children should be able to read through the Greek Testament in the original and show other people that they can do it, it is not our object that there should be a vast amount of mental training. The acquaintance with the Greek, the acquaintance with the Hebrew is a MEANS, but never an object. The glory of God in the salvation of the children is the object. The Holiest of all must be first as it is in Num. 4, but we cannot leave out the tent pegs. God uses means. God could save every individual without others, ^{and} God could teach everyone the Scripture without learning to read, but He is pleased to use means and methods. As Scripture seems to lay a stress upon a School connected with early gatherings of Christians, we feel it our responsibility to seek after a Bible School that may illustrate more and more, while the days go by, that education is not VIA superficial cramming with knowledge of questionable value, but that education is VIA the true emphasis of that wondrously comprehensive Text-Book which we have in the Bible. And so I ask you not to undervalue the tent-pegs and the ropes. The little things, some of them take us time to carry along, but this part of the toil is not to be despised. It is necessary, and it may become part of service unto the Lord.

One other passage I would just like to mention. Prov. 10,1. Here is the beginning of the second section of this book of Proverbs, and the first words are "A wise son maketh a glad father, but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother". The book of Proverbs is intensely practical, and it is full of the home. Now this passage came before me in connection with an appeal I want to make to parents to seek to be glad in the right way, and sad in the right way. A wise son maketh a glad father. Parents can never take too much interest in the condition and concerns of their children. The body and care for the body occupies certain time, but the mind is more important and the soul is most important.

What is the advantage of a decorated body, and a mind in rags? What is the advantage of food for the body and the mind starved? Beyond this:- What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Think of the soul first, link with that the mind next, the body will well come in third. "Seek ye FIRST the kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added" - is a principle of far reaching importance. We return to "The WISE son", and we know what wisdom is, - "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom". "The wise son maketh a glad father" - this implies that there must be a certain sadness with the father unless there is a wisdom with the son. Beloved friends, till your children are brought to know the Lord Himself in a marked and manifest way, you must have a measure of sadness if you realise what the responsibility of a home is. And the expression "A foolish son" is literally "A self-confident son", - the one who is satisfied with himself, undoubtedly that is a form of foolishness, and every form of self-reliance seems to be a putting on one side of God, which should prove a heaviness. I would give a plea for gladness and a plea for sadness this evening. A plea for the right kind of gladness. "Thou, Lord", said the Psalmist, "hath made me glad through Thy work", and if we see the work of God in the children there is a gladness through it, but if there are not the manifestations of the work of God, if there be the showing forth of that which is against the work of God, let us be more sad over it, I do not mean that parents are to be disagreeably doleful in the home. TRUE sadness is vastly different. True sadness is intensely loving, but I am persuaded that we often fail in our training because we are unwilling to have the right kind of sadness. Sin, wherever it be seen should affect us more than it does. The tiniest manifestations of evil should cause our heart much grief. It is so easy to fall in with the levity of the present age, but what we need is to be of one mind with the gravity that God has marked out as befitting His dear blood-bought people. Beloved friends, if you look on eternity

as a fact, there is not room for earthly frivolity, albeit there is room for a joy and a peace which drives out earthly frivolity and which is ever so much brighter, but it has a depth and a solemnity within it.

And now a word or two as to arrangements in the coming term of the Bible School. I would have desired that these thoughts might have reached ALL the parents of the boys and girls. I am thankful for those whom the Lord has brought. It is always a joy to meet with the parents of the younger ones whom we see so frequently. I may say that on Thursday this week there will not be the further address I have sometimes given to parents at the beginning of a term, but I hope to say something more to parents next Monday, which you know is Bank Holiday, when we have the special gatherings at 3 and 6 and you will be very welcome. Possibly the boys and girls have told you already something about those gatherings, for we always think specially of the younger ones as well on such an occasion, and a good many of them are already learning special verses which will then be said. Passing away from that thought of next Monday, I would add that if the Lord will the New Term of the Bible School will start Wednesday week. This week and a half is a preparatory period, arranging the children, and the details connected with that work. A very important preparatory period. Not only do I want to see all the children who come regularly during this week and a half, but I long that if the Lord will other children might be brought. Again and again in God's work among the younger ones we have encouragements and discouragements numerically, ^{and spiritually.} We seek to weigh one against the other, but it is always refreshing to see God's hand in bringing MORE to hear His Truth. I would ask believers to make this a matter of prayer and to see if they can reach other Christian parents and the children ~~in~~ of such during the next week and a half. Perhaps they can influence other parents to come next Monday. Or if they give me the names and addresses I may be able to write. Without confidence in ourselves, for all is

by the grace of God, I think we may be thankful that God has enabled us to have arrangements for the study of the children, which are not usually brought to the front in these days. Here then is an opportunity. Will you seek to make it known to those within a radius of two or three miles?

With regard to the work next term, as a rule I have shown you the books that will be used. To-day I must frankly confess I have been too busy to get the books through, with other work that I had on hand. I expect, God willing, to-morrow the books will be prepared, but I thought there was no need particularly to show you those books, you will see them shortly, - and do have a look at them then, and take an interest in them. We shall be continuing Bible Geography and Weights and Measures of Scripture. We shall also be thinking of some Eastern things to which God refers in Scripture. Among the most enjoyable studies that we have had during last term I think have been those which referred to the East and God's allusions to the climate of the east, and the customs of the east. We shall continue these, therefore, on Thursday, and occasionally it would be a pleasure to welcome some of the parents. On Wednesday we shall leave the subject of the Offerings, which, following the Tabernacle, has occupied us a considerable period with much profit, and we shall consider some Servants of the Lord, and what is brought before us concerning them in Scripture. I propose to start with the apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ. These biographies will, I believe, be a blessing.

In the Hebrew and Greek classes I want that there should be a going forward in the arrangement. This term that is just closing there have been certain encouragements, but I am never satisfied with anything, except the Lord's work. Our own work always has a measure of disappointment in it. We always want to do more, and always by the grace of God and in the power of the Holy Spirit, I hope, want to do better. We want the co-operation of Christian parents in this matter, that is to say, it is a

kindness to keep the children to their studies. You need not be afraid, dear friends, that the boys and girls will overwork. I think the experience of others as well as myself is this, that over-study is not a USUAL tendency with younger ones, that far from being physically or mentally disadvantageous to have more study, it is physically and mentally advantageous and quieting. I hope therefore that parents of the boys and girls will take yet more interest than they have done, not only in the regular attendance of the children, not only in their punctual attendance which is deeply important, but also in their learning of the verses and in their sharing of the other work. It is a joy to feel from the little reports that the parents have in some cases sent this term, that there has been a measure of increasing interest in the children's homework. I do not want your little weekly reports to be a burden to you. I want it to be a pleasure, even as it is a pleasure for us to receive it, and ~~x~~ desirable whether you indicate that the boy or girl is progressing or not. I refer to the weekly line at the end when the paper is signed, which I many mention is not now signed on the Wednesday, but on Monday, (Saturday or Monday) and deals with the work of the preceding week, because it is more convenient for our booking up of the marks to have it signed on the Monday. Some of the boys' and girls' marks depend on the parent's testimony that the homework has been done satisfactorily, regularly and consistently.

As to the Hebrew and Greek, to which I return: - In the future we shall be holding the ordinary Hebrew classes on Thursday instead of Saturday, and the Greek on Monday and Saturday. I hope to vary my own personal share in the work. For a long time I have longed to be free from having any particular Greek or Hebrew class, because I felt it would be preferable to take a PART of all of them, that thus I could see how all the boys and girls were progressing in both. This has hitherto seemed a difficulty. I believe it will be obviated this term to a certain extent, that is to say dear Mr. Kirk who has hitherto been taking Set 2 A in the Greek will be

taking Set 3, and the Hebrew of Set 3 I shall not take alone, but dear Mr. Bennett will co-operate with me in it. I shall thereby be freer for other sets. I shall see Set 3, see Set 2 and see Set 1 on different occasions. Particularly I propose to myself in Hebrew, "centering" attention upon some of the younger ones, not that I can devote all my time to them,. I hope the new arrangement of the Thursday Hebrew class will lead to further ones taking this up and also that those parents who want their children to go forward more quickly in these studies will afterwards let me know, as I want to arrange the sets in accord with parents' wishes. In Set 1 there is practically no homework, but those who are getting a little older are preferably in Set 2. Set 2 has about 20 minutes homework per day, of the Greek and Hebrew combined, while Set 3 has about 35 minutes per day. The ordinary Bible School homework takes a variable period. That is to say, some have very little to do. Others have not so much that they MUST do, but they WISELY spend time over it, and the more time you spend on the Bible it well repays.

Again then I return to you, dear friends, who are parents. I ask you, not to give me the answer, but ask you before the Lord, if you can truthfully say you are rejoicing in His mercy. Then take ~~it~~ and look after the responsibility God has given, and look after your children. Spend time on them, and realise their eternal future. Do not think the details of the home are a light matter, seek God's gracious enabling in all these. But oh if it be that you cannot confess before God that you have a personal rejoicing in His forgiveness and salvation, for your children's sake as well as your own, and as in His sight and presence, I would bring before you your tremendous responsibilities, and the awful danger of being among those whom God characterises as having no hope, and without Him in the world. Oh that there may be in the hearts of ALL the parents of the boys and girls, a personal acquaintance with the Lord Himself, then may we have additional expectations that HIS work will go forward here, upheld by the continual prayer of praying parents.