

No.

206.

"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.

SCRIPTURE NUMERATION.

" E I G H T . "

An Address (revised) at

Campbell Road, Bow, E.,

25th June, 1913.

by

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Passages read:- Judg. 3. 8; 1 Sam. 17. 12; 1 Chron. 24. 4;
2 Chron. 29. 1; 17; Luke 9. 28; John 20. 26;
1 Pet. 3. 20; Lev. 14. 10; Lev. 23. 39; Num.
6. 10; 1 Kings 6. 38; 1 Kings 8. 66.

Now we come to our subject, dear friends, of "Eight". We have already looked at a goodly number of references to this number. May I suggest a few more? Exodus 26. 25. The west end of the tabernacle, with its two side boards, had eight boards and their sockets of silver, sixteen sockets; two sockets under one board, and two sockets under another board. Ezekiel 40, - in connection with the millennial temple we read that there will be eight tables, "four tables on this side, and four tables on that side, by the side of the gate; eight tables, whereupon they slew their sacrifices". Lev. 9. 1 affords another eight days. "And it came to pass on the eighth day that Moses called Aaron and his sons, and the elders of Israel". Neh. 8. 18, "Also day by day, from the first day unto the last day, he read in the book of the law of God. And they kept the feast seven days, and on the eighth day there was a solemn assembly, according to the manner".

It is now important that we connect the number "eight" with "seven". Two further passages may, therefore, be read. Eccl. 11. 2. Verse 1 shows what I hope some^{of} us have been doing to-day in tract testimony, - "Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days. Give a portion to seven, and also to eight, for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth". Micah 5. 5. "And this Man shall be the Peace when the Assyrian shall come into our land, and when he shall tread in our palaces, then shall we raise against him seven shepherds

and eight principal men. And they shall waste the land of Assyria with the sword, and the land of Nimrod in the entrances thereof. Thus shall He deliver us from the Assyrian, when he cometh into our land, and when he treadeth within our borders.

Now that we have connected the passages, before we go any further I would suggest something of the meaning of the number "eight", as used in Scripture. The Hebrew term employed "SEEMS" at any rate, to come from the same root as the word for "OIL", being that which is regarded as overflowing and very plentiful. The number "seven", as you know, SEEMS related to a word that means "satisfaction". "Eight" means more, in one aspect, than rest and satisfaction. That must be "overflowing" Satisfaction for yourself, and for somebody else as well, like Joseph's branch that went over the wall. "Seven" is complete, but "eight" goes beyond completeness. It is the "overflowing" number in Scripture, and we shall find this thought continually brought before us. Indeed, the passages at which we have just looked well illustrate it. "Give a portion to seven" appears to be a climax, but it adds "And also to eight", as much as to say, Do not simply think of the complete company, but go beyond the full number, "Also to eight".

In like manner is it in Micah 5 where we read of seven and eight. "Eight" seems a climax beyond a climax, and this is the idea of the number in many passages of Scripture. But, beloved friends, you will realise that the climax which is beyond a climax must suggest resurrection, for the climax of earth, peace on earth, would be "seven". This is illustrated in the fact that God's division of time was six days of work, one of rest, making seven. The thousand years of the millennial kingdom will be approximately, as far as we can reckon, if the Lord comes quickly, and we expect Him, - they will be approximately (or rather in one of GOD'S calculations of years) the seventh thousand years since Adam; and then at the end of that period the earth will be destroyed. And "Seven", therefore, is the climax of earthly peace and rest and satisfaction. Do not think

I mean that seven has only the thought of earthly peace and rest. Like all odd numbers it suggests God, but it implies a climax of God's work with respect to earth. Eight goes beyond this into resurrection and the NEW creation. The one week closes, and the eighth day begins the next week. It is beyond seven, it is that which is overflowing. Now is not this what we have in Christ? We are not merely brought to the end of law, but the end of law INTO righteousness, as Rom. 10 shows. The door opens at the end, and we have a new beginning. "If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation", a new beginning. The first day of the week when our beloved Lord was raised was the eighth day counted from the week before, the week of His final witness and death; it began a new week, the eighth day was the first day.

And so this leads us on just to consider that not only is "eight" the climax of "seven", but it often has a close relation to "one", because of God's division into weeks of seven days. I repeat it, the eighth day IS the first day, and God again and again refers to it thus. "Eight" is a number that often alludes to something of earth, but resurrection IS linked with the earth, albeit suggestive of the NEW creation, and spiritually from above in God's gracious dealing in overflowing love to those who were of the men of this earth. If we shall find that the number "nine" suggests judgment, the number "eight" comes between seven and nine. On the one hand we have God's perfectness "seven", ^{on the} other hand God's judgment "nine", and wrapped up between them God's gracious work in making us new creatures in Christ Jesus on resurrection ground. "Eight" is, therefore, continually in Scripture a resurrection number, and continually has reference to the position of the Lord's people. This is not surprising, for it is the FIRST cube, $2 \times 2 \times 2$, and "two" is the number of believers as the Lord's saved ones in fellowship. The world says it takes two to make a quarrel; the believer says it takes two to make, or rather be made into, a fellowship. "Two" is the smallest number of fellowship, and also often of witness. I do not mean it is positively wrong for a believer to witness when he is by himself.

but every child of God who has had the privilege of witness can realize the wisdom of our Lord in sending forth the twelve and seventy alike by twos. He did not choose thirteen, though there were thirteen tribes, if you reckon Levi. He did not choose seventy one. He chose numbers divisible by two. He would not have an odd one to go alone. The Lord emphasizes fellowship in witness, fellowship in everything. It is well to stand alone if you cannot find anyone to stand with you against evil, but it is better to stand with another. "Eight" is the cube of "two", and continually linked with the redeemed viewed as raised up from the dead and placed in the new creation. I mean, raised up from the death of sin; not that I would suggest that this thought exhausts it, for indeed we find that all Scripture thoughts exceed ours. Scripture is always beyond us, and it is well that we realise this. Types of resurrection have the number "eight" stamped on them. Paul tells us that he was circumcised the eighth day, in Phil. 3. When God brought forth Noah from the ark into that earth in which there was a figure of a new creation, God brought out eight persons, who were saved through water, and His words of blessing are "While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night (eight things) shall not cease". Thus the number eight was at least twice stamped upon Noah's exit from the ark. This is the more remarkable because going into the ark, and the time in the ark, are alike characterized by the number seven. The seven days first, and afterwards, the stress on the eighth.

Furthermore, in connection with another type of resurrection, we have the Divine teaching as to the cleansing of the leper. You know how the climax is reached, as we have seen in Lev. 14, on an eighth day, even as we have noticed in Lev. ~~14~~⁹, Aaron began his priestly functions on the eighth day. (Lev. 9. 1). "Eight" is a number associated with a Nazarite, and the completion of his work. You recollect the well-known passage, - we might just turn to it again, in Numbers 6. I suppose there is little difficulty in seeing that the priest

reminds us of resurrection. There is little difficulty that the removal of leprosy speaks of resurrection, for when Miriam was smitten with leprosy we are told that Aaron said, Let her not be as one dead. Leprosy was a picture of death; it has a whiteness, pictorial of the whiteness of death. Possibly the teaching is not quite so on the surface in Num. 6. Let us look at it. We read about the Nazarite's vow. He separates himself from wine and strong drink, and comes at no dead thing; then on the seventh day, if anyone dies suddenly by him, he shaves his head, and on the eighth day he brings an offering; for, as verse 11 puts it, that he sinned by the dead. So the eighth day here suggests the removal of the fact of death.

Further, it has been interestingly pointed out that there are eight individual miracles of raising the dead in Scripture. You recollect Elijah's one, Elisha's two, and Christ's three. The numbers are very suggestive, - Elisha besought for a double portion of the spirit of Elijah. I do not suppose he thought this meant twice as many works of power, but rather the firstborn's portion, but God gave him exceeding abundantly above what he thought. Elijah raised up one, Elisha raised up in a similar case a child who had died, but there was also the resurrection through the bones of Elisha, long after. It has been pointed out interestingly by those who rejoice in comparing Scripture with Scripture, that the three miracles of the Lord fit in rather wondrously with these three of Elijah and Elisha, for the Lord raised up a child in a rich family, one who was the son of a widow, and another one who was dead and buried. Elijah raised up the son of a widow, Elisha in a rich family, and the other case was that of a grown man who was dead and just about to be buried. The other two miracles of raising the dead individually are, as you know, Peter's case and Paul's case. Almost everything that Peter did in the Acts, Paul also was enabled to do. You can make a long list which would be profitable, showing that the Lord was with both His servants in SIMILAR ways. Thus we reach eight individual

miracles, "eight" being the resurrection number.

We have further noticed that the eighth day is prominent in connection with the feast of Tabernacles. Why is this? The seven days of the feast of Tabernacles denoted completeness, but the eighth day goes beyond. It is the climax day of Israel's year. They have added a ninth, but God arranged that this eighth day should have a peculiar position. I do not mean it was wrong when the Lord stirred their hearts up to spend extra days TOGETHER. It is blessed to gather together in the things of the Lord, but Israel have rather lost the importance of the eighth day in their OFFICIALLY added ninth day now. The eighth day was the climax, and, I believe, pictorial of that which is BEYOND the blessings of peace on earth. It is in connection with the new heavens and new earth. You know how the old heavens and earth are to pass away, and there is to be a Divine work of a new creation, as to the new earth. Now the present earth is brought before us by the feast of Tabernacles, which has a feast of seven days, in which Israel live in booths. God said that they were to live in booths seven days, from the fifteenth day onwards. Then He said the eighth day should be a sabbath day, because, beyond the feast of Tabernacles, beyond the booths with the boughs of goodly trees, there is a type putting aside all the products of the earth, and leading up to the new earth, - resurrection again! Indeed, resurrection seems always before us, or almost always before us in this number eight.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the climax in the tabernacle beyond the mercy-seat, speaking of the presence of God, - the climax is found by eight boards, the number "eight" being the final number that is reached in that tabernacle. Nor is it surprising in connection with the millennial temple when Christ has been raised from the dead, and the sacrifices are retrospective, that there should be EIGHT tables for killing the sacrifices. Moreover, we are told of eight steps in connection with that millennial temple, doubtless pictorial again

of resurrection.

So you see, beloved friends, that almost all the "eights" not only imply an overflowing, but show a relationship to resurrection. In some cases, of course, the "overflowing" thought is more prominent. David the EIGHTH son is brought before us as the one who was blessed beyond the seven, who were passed over. GOD put them on one side, and gave David as a new king for a new beginning, in accord with His great love and kindness. Enoch is called in Scripture the seventh from Adam, therefore Methuselah must be the eighth. Here is a striking type the other way round. Methuselah looked like the man who was to live without death; he advanced as near as anyone, and nearer, to the thousand years; but all the time he was carrying the name that meant "When he has died God shall send it", viz. the flood. And so he died the year of the flood, his very name having been a prophecy, a merciful warning of the flood for nine hundred and sixty nine years, yet the people were not repentant.

The "Meth" part being the "death" part (our memories are surely helped by the similar sound). Methuselah - the one who would die; the eighth from Adam in the old creation, speaking of death to show that there is a need for a new creation in which there shall be an entirely contrasted "eight".

Various names of our beloved Lord contain a numerical value of multiples of eight. You know how every word has a certain numerical value in Hebrew and Greek. Every letter counts a certain number. Now the Name Jesus in the number of the letters in Greek is 888, that is surely not an accident. The Name Lord "KURIOS" is 800, and the name Saviour, Christ and Messiah are all divisible by eight. Thus "Lord", "Jesus", "Christ" - these three names that come so frequently, are all divisible by eight, - that surely is not an accident. He is brought before us as the Prince-Leader of the new creation, in Whom we are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, raised up from the dead.

I had put down to speak of the compounds of eight, such as twenty four for the priests of Israel, forty eight for the cities of the Levites, and so forth; doubtless that will be an interesting subject, but I must come now to our last point.

Are we living as those who are linked with our beloved Lord on the wondrous eighth day when He was raised from the dead? The THIRD day from His death, the EIGHTH day from the preceding week of wondrous work, the FIRST day of a new beginning, - precious linked thoughts - that we may work hard as a result, in the enabling of the Holy Spirit. Are we living on resurrection ground in Christ? I do not only say, Are we on resurrection ground? My difficulty, beloved friends, is not as to salvation and its security. I suppose there are a goodly number of us here present who, having tasted that the Lord is gracious, have a quiet, settled, fixed rest as to the eternity of the gift of eternal life, and the thought of losing our salvation is, by grace, a thought entirely foreign to us. We KNOW that God, having loved His own, loves them unto the end. Our difficulty is not about salvation. We know the doctrine of grace, and we rejoice in the doctrine of grace; but, beloved friends, are we living as those in the new creation? (Cf. Rom.6.13). Are we living as those who are united with our beloved Lord in the glory in heavenly places in Christ Jesus? I take it that we expect to see a difference in earthly arrangements between a dead plant and a living one. I take it, dear friends, that if there were a dead body, and a living person was standing beside it, we should not say, How curious! they look different. We should EXPECT it. Should it not be so in the new creation? If the world is made up of those who are dead sinners, should we not expect the Lord's people to LOOK different? and to make manifest their new creation, that they are in Christ Jesus? Furthermore, if we realize our beloved Lord, we shall think very little of what people think. You have sometimes heard of those who have wealth dressing themselves up to feign poverty, for the amusement of the experience. You can well imagine that when they

were treated in an off-hand style, they only realised that it was part of the amusement they sought; it never troubled them. Now it cannot be amusing to us to be insulted by the world, but we are very little troubled about it ON OUR OWN account. We are troubled that we are not insulted more on our own account, because if we were more like our Lord we should be insulted more. We are troubled about it for the world, but not on our own account, for though we have NOT disguised ourselves to hide our glory, God has been pleased that we should still have the body of this humiliation, and our glory remains inside, but we know it is there, and the revelation of the sons of God is sure, albeit future. Moreover, our inheritance is in a bank that will never break. We know it is there, and so if the world despises us, this does not trouble us from our standpoint. We are quite content because we know we have all things and abound, at least we should be. When a child of God is afraid of being thought peculiar, you may know that child of God is not possessing his possessions. When a child of God is afraid of the world's opposition or the world's contempt, you may know that child of God is not valuing what he is in Christ. If only we value aright what we have in Christ, we shall have room for a thousand times more opposition from the world, without this making us feel it will overdraw our banking account of blessings. If the world robs us of everything, it can only rob us of farthings, and coins which are not current in heaven, and we have untold gold. Nay, there is another fuller explanation, the OTHER way about. When the world robs us, it robs us advantageously. The world, if we treat it rightly can only be used to remove the hindrances, to rub off the angles, and so to arrange for the hewing and the polishing of the living stones for God's temple, to be made ready before they are taken thither. Viewed in this way the child of God values persecution, for he realizes that the pain of the tribulation is only to remove an awkward corner on the stone, and though he grieves that the awkward corner is there, he thanks God for the removal of it, and glories in tribulations

also. Oh that we might learn to live as those born of the Spirit on resurrection ground, and walk up and down this earth with such a quiet dignity of fellowship with God, that the scorning world may feel there is a mystery! Oh that this may be a testimony to the world, even the life of the Lord's raised up people, made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, remaining a very peculiar people, inasmuch as they belong to Him Who is the Contrast with earth's arrangements to-day!
