

The Berean Expositor

Acts xvii. 10, 11

“Study to show thyself approved unto God,
a workman that needeth not to be ashamed,
rightly dividing the Word of truth”

II Tim. ii. 15

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DEAR FELLOW-MEMBERS of the ONE BODY,

We are reminded, this day, of the words of Moses to Israel: “*Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee*” (Deut. viii. 2). Israel were reminded not only of provision, but of *proving*; not only of manna and miracle, but of *hunger and humbling*.

We, too, look back over the year and over the years. What a testimony they yield of utter faithfulness, of longsuffering, of grace beyond expression on the part of the Lord.

We have continual evidence that were the Lord not our Shield, our testimony would have been silenced long ago. We boast only in Him. We are glad to know that as the Lord “stood by” the apostle, so will He stand by the feeblest attempt to maintain that “good deposit” (II Tim. i. 12-14) until in His mercy “all the Gentiles” shall have heard.

In this spirit and in this assurance we thankfully close another year’s testimony, and look forward to the coming year with chastened yet unflinching confidence.

Yours in the unity to the Spirit,

CHARLES H. WELCH
FREDERICK. P. BRININGER

31st December, 1933.

INDEX

BIBLICAL BLESSINGS--	
Introductory	6
The blessing that accompanies confession	8
COLOSSIANS, STUDIES IN--	
Meaning of "comfort" and "knit together" (ii. 2)	11
Hid treasure (ii. 2, 3)	15
An important parenthesis (ii. 5-7)	19
Philosophy and its two supporters—tradition and the rudiments of the world (ii. 4-8)	23
That philosophy which is not after Christ, contrasted with all the fullness that dwells in Him (ii. 8, 9)	28
All the fullness of the Godhead bodily (ii. 9, 10)	33
FUNDAMENTALS OF DISPENSATIONAL TRUTH--	
Korah's rebellion (Numb. xvi. and xvii.)	38
The start from Kadesh (Numb. xx.-xxv.)	41
The twofold opposition encountered by Israel and its relation to Eph. vi. 12	46
Balaam and Baal-Peor (Numb. xxii.-xxv.)	49
Concluding features (Numb. xxvi.-xxxvi.)	54
Deuteronomy: Structure of the Book	57
GREAT AND PRECIOUS PROMISES--	
An incentive to holiness (II Cor. vii. 1)	61
Promises and the divine nature (II Pet. i. 4)	64
By grace, to the end the promise might be sure (Rom. iv. 16)	66
Ye are all one in Christ Jesus (Gal. iii. 28)	68
In Him is the Yea, and through Him the Amen (II Cor. i. 20)	71
The holy promissory Spirit (Eph. i. 13, 14)	73
HELPERS OF OUR JOY--	
On seeking the Lord	76, 78
MINISTERING TO THE SAINTS	80
MINISTRY OF CONSOLATION, THE--	
Lift up your hands (Heb. xii. 12); Lift up your heads (Luke xxi. 28)	89
POEM	5
ROMANS, THE EPISTLE TO THE--	
Sanctification.—A sphere: Newness of life (vi. 1-14)	91
Sanctification.—A condition: Union (vi. 1-14)	96
Sanctification.—A state: Freedom (vi. 1-14)	98
Sanctification.—How it is apprehended—"Reckon" (vi. 1-14)	103

Sanctification.—Its sphere: “Under grace” (vi. 1-14)	107
SEVEN PRECIOUS THINGS--	
The precious trial of faith (I Pet. i. 6, 7)	110
The precious blood of Christ (I Pet. i. 18, 19)	111
The elect and living stone (I Pet. ii. 4-6)	113
He is precious (I Pet. ii. 7)	115
Like precious faith (II Pet. i. 1)	116
Precious promises (II Pet. i. 4)	117
SIGN OF THE TIMES--	
Pillar that may be Lot’s Wife	119
Bible relics found at Samaria	120
Mizpah Gate open again after 2,600 years	121
THIS GOD IS OUR GOD--	
Elohim and Jehovah—Titles of relation	122
Elohim and Jehovah—God in relation to creation	124
El, Jah and Adon	128
The immutability of God	131
The holiness of God	133
TRUTH, THE, THAT MAKES FREE--	
The truth shall make you free (John viii. 32)	136
Deliverance from the snare of the Devil (II Tim. ii. 24-26)	140
The truth of the gospel (Gal. ii. 5 and 14)	143
The veil that keeps in bondage (II Cor. iv. 3, 4)	147
VOLUME OF THE BOOK, THE--	
How the O.T. is quoted in the N.T.	150
How the O.T. quotations are introduced in the N.T.	161
The quotation of the O.T. in the N.T.	164
The Revised Version	169
WHAT MANNER OF PERSONS OUGHT YE TO BE--	
The relation of doctrine and practice	175
His service is perfect freedom	176
Pre-requisites for service	177
Symbols of service; Ambassador, Apostle, Angel	179
Symbols of service; Bondservant, Builder and Burden-bearer	181
Symbols of service; A calling, a cleansing and a committing	183
WHEN THE COMMANDMENT CAME--	
Matthew xiii. and deliverance from tradition	186
Ephesians i. 1 and the breaking of prejudice	189
WITH ALL THY GETTING, GET UNDERSTANDING--	
Definitions	191
Propositions	193
The syllogism	196
The fallacy	199
WORDS IN SEASON--	
Gospel notes on John iii. 16	203

Selected.

p. 160

Some of us stay at the Cross,
Some of us wait at the Tomb,
Quickened, raised, seated together with Christ,
Yet lingering still in its gloom.
Some of us bide at the Passover Feast
With Ascension all unknown--
The triumphs of grace in the heavenly place
That our Lord has made our own.

If the Christ Who died had stopped at the Cross
His work had been incomplete,
If the Christ Who was buried had stayed in the Tomb
He had only known defeat.
But the way of the Cross never stops at the Cross
And the way of the Tomb leads on
To victorious grace in the heavenly place
Where the risen Lord has gone.

(Adapted from C.S.S.M. Magazine of April, 1933).

Biblical blessings.

#1. “The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and He addeth no sorrow with it” (Prov. x. 22). pp. 197 - 199

Pursuing our intention of including, in the articles appearing in this periodical, ministry of a more simple character, as a set-off to the somewhat harder reading that the nature of our witness often necessitates, we draw attention to a series of “Biblical blessings” found in the Scriptures, believing that the contemplation of such cannot but be an encouragement to us all.

At the outset we are met with the fact that the Scriptures, as translated into English, present to the reader two words, “happy” and “blessed”, as the translation of *ashere* in the Hebrew, and *makarios* in the Greek. The two conceptions in the words “happy” and “blessed” need to be kept apart. To be strictly applicable to the believer, “happy”, in its English constituents, contains too much the idea of that which falls out by “hap”. It would, however, introduce the very feature we wish to avoid in these particular articles, were we to conduct the reader along the paths of enquiry that lead to a true differentiation of *ashere* and *barak* in the Hebrew, and *eulogeo-etos* and *makarios-izo* in the Greek. For the present, then, let it suffice that *makarios* was used by the Ancients for the “Immortals”, and indicates a bliss that does not draw from external sources, whereas *eulogeo*, “to eulogise”, means to be well spoken of by others, and therefore has more reference to external sources.

Leaving these refinements for a more fitting occasion, we turn our attention to the word *ashere*, translated both “blessed” and “happy”. One or two marginal references found in the A.V. will give us an idea of the general, underlying, meaning of *ashere*, “blessed”:-

“They which *lead* thee” (margin ‘*call thee blessed*’) (Isa. iii. 12).

“The *leaders* of this people” (margin ‘*they called them blessed*’) (Isa. ix. 16).

“They that are *led* of them” (margin ‘*called blessed*’) (Isa. ix. 16).

Here we discover that an element of uncertainty existed in the minds of the translators, owing to the fact that, in the Hebrew, “blessing” is derived from the idea of “going forward”. If we examine the word *ashere* that gives us “blessed”, we discover that it means:-

(1) TO PROCEED, GO FORWARD.

“Forsake the foolish and live, and GO in the way of understanding” (Prov. ix. 6).

(2) STEPS.

“None of his STEPS shall slide” (Psa. xxxvii. 31).

(3) THE RELATIVE PRONOUN “WHO”.

The relative pronoun enables a sentence to “proceed” easily.

“The salvation of the Lord *which* He will show you” (Exod. xiv. 13).

“The Egyptians *whom* ye have seen to-day” (Exod. xiv. 13).

Both “which” and “whom” are translations of *ashere*. If the reader will attempt to re-write these sentences and avoid using “which” or “whom” he will appreciate the Hebrew use of the word that “goes forward”.

There is close affinity between *ashere* and *yashar*, “straight”, and the root idea of “blessedness”, as expressed by the Hebrew word *ashere*, appears to be: “Prosperity as the necessary accompaniment of uprightness.” The reader will probably turn to Psa. i. 1 as a pointed illustration of this meaning. This we must consider later: for the moment we are concerned with the statement of Prov. x. 22 as to “the blessing of the Lord”.

This blessing of the Lord, we learn, “maketh rich”. We must now introduce the reader to another feature, not evident in the translation, but very evident in the original. We have seen that the word “blessed” is *ashere*: we now learn that the words “maketh rich” translate *ashar*. The vowels with which the two words commence are not the same, though expressed in English by the letter “a”. This play upon words is a feature far more common than many think, and, as the following examples show, impresses the mind with the truth conveyed:--

“And the earth became *tohu* and *bohu*” (without form and void) (Gen. i. 2).

“The gods that have not made (*avadu*) the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish” (*yevadu*) (Jer. x. 11).

Blessing and enrichment are evidently to be thought of together.

What a plenitude of riches constitutes the blessings of the Lord as unfolded in the N.T.! There we read of riches of *goodness*, riches of *glory*, riches of *wisdom* and riches of *grace* (Rom. ii. 4; ix. 23; xi. 33; Eph. i. 7; ii. 7; iii. 16). And, even so, we have not named the blessing of the Lord as a whole, for there are two sides of His benediction. Positively, the blessing of the Lord *maketh rich*. Negatively, He addeth *no sorrow* with it. The Scriptures abound with references to the fact that “riches” and “sorrow” often keep company:--

“They that will to be rich fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all evil; which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through many sorrows” (I Tim. vi. 9, 10).

“Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, Who giveth us richly all things to enjoy” (I Tim. vi. 17).

“He went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions” (Matt. xix. 22).

Here, then, we pause and contemplate the source, nature and the essential distinctiveness of Biblical blessings:--

- (1) THE SOURCE.—“The blessing of the Lord.”
- (2) THE NATURE.—“Blessing” has to do with progress and uprightness.
- (3) THE ESSENTIAL DISTINCTIVENESS.—(a) It maketh rich, and
(b) adds no sorrow.

It shall be our blessedness together to consider, in subsequent articles, some of these distinctive Biblical blessings. May the Lord make us rich in so doing.

#2. The blessing that accompanies confession (Psa. xxxii. 1-5). pp. 231 - 234

Let us commence our review of some biblical blessings at the book of the Psalms, and divide up our subject according to the five-fold division of that book. The sign that marks off these divisions is a double Amen, which we find at the end of Psa. xli.; lxxii; lxxxix. and *cvi. (*only one here). Book I therefore comprises Psa. i.-xli., and in it we have four distinct biblical blessings: blessings that are from the Lord, that make rich, and that add no sorrow:--

The blessedness of CONSISTENCY (Psa. i. 1).
The blessedness of CONFIDENCE (Psa. ii. 12; xxxiv. 8; and xl. 4).
The blessedness of CONFESSION (Psa. xxxii. 1-5).
The blessedness of CONSIDERATION (Psa. xli. 1).

Instead of starting at Psa. i., let us commence at Psa. xxxii., where all must begin, with a blessing that must be known and enjoyed before any manifestation of life and grace is possible:--

“Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile”
(Psa. xxxii. 1, 2).

The Psalm is divided into four portions by the word *Selah*. Among the purposes which *Selah* fulfils is the useful one of calling upon the reader to pause, think of what has been said, and compare with what immediately follows. Without burdening the reader of these simple lines with an elaborate structure of the Psalms, we feel that the arrangement of its parts, as indicated by the recurring *Selah*, is too important to pass over:--

1-4 Blessedness. Contrasted with grief.
Selah. Think of this. Now consider what follows.
5 Acknowledgment and Confession.
Selah. See the progress, how Confession leads to Praise.
6, 7 Prayer and Song.
Selah. Then shall I teach transgressors Thy ways, said David.
8-11 Subsequent Instruction.

The Psalmist speaks of “transgression”, “sin”, and “iniquity”, and he may well have had Exod. xxxiv. 7 in mind. There (in Exod. xxxiv.) the Lord reveals His glory, His goodness and His grace.

We have given reasons in Volume XXI, page 24, of *The Berean Expositor*, for rejecting the translation: “Thou wilt by no means clear the guilty”, and for rendering the passage: “Thou wilt clear him who is not clear.” In Volume XVI, pages 183-191, we have traced the various shades of meaning contained in the words “sin”, “transgression”, and “iniquity”. It is not our purpose to go into the meanings of these separate terms, or to give proofs, all that it is necessary to say here is that the essential meaning of “sin” is *missing the mark*; of “transgression”, *rebellion*; and of “iniquity”, *perverseness*. No wonder David exclaims at the blessedness of the man who is forgiven such rebellion, whose utter moral failure is covered, and to whom the Lord no longer reckons, or imputes, such inherent and radical perversity.

It is natural to express this aspect first. If we speak as we find, both in ourselves and others, our awakening concern is our sin, its nature, and particularly its liability to dreadful punishment. As we grow in grace our realization of the exceeding sinfulness of sin increases, and our heartfelt appreciation of the grace, the love, and withal the righteousness displayed in our forgiveness, causes us to repeat, with perhaps fuller meaning than before, “Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven covered not imputed”. For the word “forgive” means “to lift up and take away” and finds its full meaning in the words of the Baptist, “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John i. 29).

It would be pardonable if the English reader who understands the meaning of the O.T. word “atonement” were to conclude that the *covering* of sin referred to in this opening verse of Psa. xxxii. was a translation of the Hebrew word *kaphar*. Such, however, is not the case: the actual word that is used is *kasah*. This word means “to conceal” (Gen. xxxvii. 26), “to cover”, as nakedness (Exod. xxviii. 42), and “to veil” (Gen. xxiv. 65). When God conceals, covers, or veils sin, it is done righteously. He never touches sin—except in wrath—apart from the sacrifice that atones and puts it away.

The reason why the Psalmist is so exultant, and uses this word, is discovered in verse 5, where it occurs once more: “I have acknowledged my sin unto Thee, and mine iniquity have I *not hid*” (*kasah*).

In Prov. x. 12 we read: “love covereth all sins”, and love is seen at this gracious work in Psa. xxxii. 1. Again, in Prov. xvii. 9 we read: “He that covereth a transgression seeketh love”, and we who have received mercy at the hand of the Lord should indeed ever be merciful. On the other hand, Prov. xxviii. 13 says:--

“He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.”

David had “covered” his sin, and had endured agony and grief as a result:--

“When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long” (Psa. xxxii. 3).

“Roaring” and “silence”, at first sight, seem incompatible; but they are to be considered as on two different planes. All David’s “roaring” was unheard by reason of the non-confession of his sin. David was guilty of murder and adultery, and in the language of another king equally guilty of a similar double crime, we may catch a faint echo of that troubled silence that dried up his moisture as the drought of summer:--

“Pray can I not,
Though inclination be as sharp as will:
My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent;
And, like a man to double business bound,
I stand and pause where I shall first begin,
And both neglect

May one be pardoned and retain the offence?
In the corrupted currents of the world
Offence’s gilded hand may shove by justice,
And oft’tis seen the wicked prize itself
Buys out the law; but ‘tis not so above” (*Shakespeare*).

The whole Psalm turns upon that word “acknowledged” of verse 5, and David’s blessed experience was, that when he ceased “hiding”, guiltily, his sin, God could then “hide” it righteously and in grace. It is not possible to “be pardoned and retain the offence”. Prov. xxviii. 13, already quoted, says not only “confess” but “forsake”.

Here then is a biblical blessing that lies at the very forefront of all spiritual experience. Without this, all other blessings are but names, and can never be experienced, but with this initial blessing, come crowding around the accepted believer many marvelous outpourings of love and mercy. These we wish to investigate and enjoy, and we trust that our study together may be profitable indeed, leading us by many avenues and roads back to the opening text of the series:--

“The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and He addeth no sorrow with it” (Prov. x. 22).

Studies in Colossians.

#17. Wherein the meaning of “comfort” (*parakaleo*) and “knit together” (*sumbibazo*) is considered (ii. 2). pp. 13 - 17

The intense conflict that the apostle had for the saints is explained in two ways. First he says he taught and warned every man that he might present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. Secondly, he says that the great conflict he had was:--

“That their hearts may be comforted, they being knit together in love, and unto all riches of full assurance of understanding, that they may know the mystery of God, *even* Christ, in Whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden” (Col. ii. 2, 3, R.V.)

The R.V. marginal note here says: “The ancient authorities vary much in the text of this passage.” The reading they have adopted has the sanction of that most important Manuscript, the Vatican, and that is the reading we believe to be the true one.

We advance, by a progressive series, to the heart of the great secret of God, which is Christ. The first step in this progress toward “perfection” is a “comforted heart”. The word “comfort” has lost a great deal of its original meaning, for even in the English word the idea of strengthening or fortifying can be seen “com-fort”, which is derived from the Latin *cum* = “together”, and *fort-is* = “strong”. The Greek word translated “comfort” is *parakaleo*, from *para* = “beside” and *kaleo* = “to call”. The idea of consolation or of comfort is not resident in the word itself, but from being one of the many reasons why we may “call someone beside” us, it has grown until it dominates all the rest. *Dr. E. W. Bullinger* in his Greek Concordance says of this word:--

“To call to one, call near, call for; every kind of speaking to, which is meant to produce a particular effect, e.g., exhortation, encouragement, comfort”, etc.

In II Tim. iv. 2 we have the word “comfort” rendered “exhort”:--

“Preach the word: be instant in season, out of season: reprove, rebuke, *exhort* with all longsuffering and doctrine.”

We find the word used together and somewhat synonymous with “testify” in Acts ii. 40:--

“Testify and *exhort*, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.”

There are eight occurrences of the word *parakaleo* in I Thessalonians, and one occurrence of *paraklesis*. Coming together in such close proximity these should yield come consistent rendering that will illumine the meaning of Col. ii. 2. Let us note the passages:--

Parakaleo in I Thessalonians.

- “How we *exhorted and comforted* and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children” (ii. 11).
“And sent Timotheus to establish and to *comfort* you concerning your faith” (iii. 2).
“We were *comforted* over you in all our affliction and distress by your faith” (iii. 7).
“We beseech you, brethren, and *exhort* you by the Lord Jesus” (iv. 1).
“But we *beseech* you, brethren, that ye increase more and more” (iv. 10).
“Wherefore *comfort* one another with these words” (iv. 18).
“Wherefore *comfort* yourselves together, and edify one another” (v. 11).
“We *exhort* you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble minded” (v. 14).

Paraklesis in I Thessalonians.

“For our *exhortation* was not of deceit nor of uncleanness, nor in guile” (ii. 3).

It is manifestly impossible to use the word “comfort” in every one of these passages, but in one of them the true word in the sense of soothing or consoling actually occurs (v. 14). What we apparently want is a word that shall combine the idea of exhortation and comfort—not exactly consolation, and not exactly warning. This word we find in Deut. iii. 28:--

“But charge Joshua, and encourage him, and strengthen him.”

In the Septuagint the words are reversed, viz., “strengthen and encourage”, and the second word is the translation of *parakaleo*. It will be seen that these ancient translators knew that underlying the idea of comfort in sorrow was the “fortifying” of the spirit, expressed fully and yet quite idiomatically in the English word “encourage”.

If the reader will examine the eight references from I Thessalonians given above, or any other of its many occurrences, and substitute the word “encourage” for the renderings, “exhort”, “beseech”, “comfort”, etc., he will find in it the word that fully fits every case.

The first step towards being presented perfect in Christ Jesus, therefore, is for the heart to be encouraged, even as Joshua was encouraged, to stand firm upon all the word and will of God for us. This will be the result of the double ministry of “warning and teaching” mentioned in Col. i. 28.

Flowing from this encouragement of heart is the condition described as “Being knit together in love”. At first there may not appear to be a most intimate connection between *parakaleo* (“comfort”, “exhort”, “encourage”) and *sumbibazo* (“knit together”), but let us see. This word *sumbibazo* is found in Eph. iv. 16 and Col. ii. 19:--

“From Whom the whole body fitly joined together and *compact*ed by that which every joint supplieth . . . maketh increase of the body” (Eph. iv. 16).

“From whom all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and *knit together*, increaseth with the increase of God” (Col. ii. 19).

With these two references to the effect of the “joints and bands” upon the whole body, we might leave the matter as being fairly obvious to all readers. This word *sumbibazo*, however, occurs in three other places in the N.T., and in ten places in the Septuagint, but never in the sense used in Eph. iv. 16 and Col. ii. 19. The fact is too important to ignore, and consequently we give the reader the whole of the references before proceeding:--

Sumbibazo in Septuagint.

- “I will *teach* thee what thou shalt say” (Exod. iv. 12).
- “I will *teach* you what ye shall do” (Exod. iv. 15).
- “I do *make them know* the statutes of God” (Exod. xviii. 16).
- “That ye *may teach* the children of Israel” (Lev. x. 11).
- “*Teach* them thy sons, and thy son’s sons” (Deut. iv. 9).
- “*Teach* us what we shall do” (Judges xiii. 8).
- “I will instruct thee and *teach* thee” (Psa. xxxii. 8; LXX Psa. xxxi. 8).
- “Who being His counselor *hath taught* Him?” (Isa. xl. 13).
- “With whom took He counsel, and who *instructed* Him?” (Isa. xl. 14).
- “I am now come forth *to give thee skill* and understanding” (Dan. ix. 22).

Sumbibazo in N.T.

- “*Proving* that this is the very Christ” (Acts ix. 22).
- “*Assuredly gathering* that the Lord had called us” (Acts xvi. 10).
- “Who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he *may instruct* Him?” (I Cor. ii. 16).
- “The whole body *compacted*” (Eph. iv. 16).
- “The body *knit together*” (Col. ii. 19).
- “Being *knit together* in love” (Col. ii. 2).

It will be seen that apart from the references in Ephesians and Colossians, the usage is uniform and consistent, whether in Old Testament or New.

Sumbibazo is derived from *sum* = “together with” and *baino* = “to go, to walk, to step”. Unless the reader has had some experimental acquaintance with the subject, it may appear difficult to reconcile such, apparently, different ideas as “to teach” and “to be compacted together”. To help such we mention one or two other instances in our own language.

The word “articulate” means (1) “to enunciate, or to utter clearly”, and (2) “formed with joints”. We can, therefore, say: “the man who had difficulty in *articulating* his shoulder joint, *articulated* his words very clearly.” Again, the average reader, if he saw the word “colon”, would immediately think of the sign (:) used in punctuation. A medical student, however, would probably think of the large intestine. How does it come about that a punctuation mark and a part of the intestine bear the same name? The answer is that the Greek word *kolon* means “a limb”, and the punctuation sign (:) marks off a large limb of a sentence, while the name given to the largest portion of the intestine is for the same reason, it is a large “limb”. Both of these examples have the merit of using a word in two senses, the one to do with speech, the other to do with the human

body—and so illumine the usage of *sumbibazo* which also deals with speech and with physiology.

The common meaning that united such opposite ideas in “articulate” and “colon” will unite the apparent incongruity in the translations of *sumbibazo*. The “teaching”, “proving” and “assuredly gathering” are the outcome of making the subject-matter of instruction “walk together” with the explanation. For example, in Acts xvi. 10 the apostle “put two and two together”, and realized that the vision of the man of Macedonia indicated the will of the Lord for their entry into Europe. Again, in Acts ix. 22 Paul evidently made the known facts of the birth, life, death and resurrection of Christ “to walk together” with the prophecies of the O.T. Scriptures, thus “proving that this is the very Christ”.

We now return to Col. ii. 2. “Being knit together in love” must be explained by all the facts. To limit ourselves to Eph. iv. 16 or to Col. ii. 19 is to miss the interpretation for ourselves. We are “members” of a body, and “members” one of another. We do minister “nourishment”, and are thus “joints of supply”. But what do we minister as nourishment? The literal body is nourished by the blood stream, and makes increase by the various secretions of wonderful glands, but these need re-translating into spiritual equivalents. What is the “life-blood” that nourishes the church, and that is ministered by fellow-members? Surely it is the “truth of God” and as we say this all the references to “teaching” and “proving”, etc., immediately come into line.

If we will look again at Eph. iv. 16 and Col. ii. 19 we shall find that “the faith”, “the knowledge”, “the truth”, “the understanding”, “the ignorance” (Eph. iv. 13-21); “the commandments and doctrines of men” and “a show of wisdom” (Col. ii. 22, 23) are in the context, and explain the ministry of the members of the body. So, in Col. ii. 2, the words “being knit together in love” are followed by:--

“All the riches of the full assurance of the understanding, in order to a full knowledge of the mystery of God—Christ. In Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Col. ii. 2, 3).

The subject is so vital to our spiritual growth, and there is so much to be considered before we can conclude this section, that it will be in our best interests to devote another article to the passage we have just quoted but not explained. We, therefore, hope to conclude Col. ii. 2 and 3 in our next article.

#18. Hid treasure (ii. 2, 3).
pp. 42 - 46

We found in our last article that the expression “knit together” of Col. ii. 2 includes the idea of teaching and instructing as well as “compacting together”, and that just as nourishment is ministered to the physical body through the “joints and bands” working harmoniously together in conjunction with the head, so spiritual nourishment, that is the truth, is ministered by one member to another as each “holds the Head” and realizes that “in Him are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge”.

We shall “encourage” (*parakaleo* = “to comfort”) the heart best when point away to the Head, even Christ, Who now sitteth on the right hand of God. We shall minister that which makes for the increase of God in the church when we “teach” and “preach” Christ. We shall minister both to our own “full assurance” and to that of others when we realize that the very mystery of God is summed up in the single title “Christ”: we shall be proof against all vain philosophy of men if we ever acknowledge that in Christ are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

We sometimes read that a certain Preacher ministers to a “wealthy congregation”. That is the blessed position of the writer of these words. His congregation, made up mostly of scattered members of the church which is the body of Christ, is wealthy beyond dreams. Of no other church is such wealth spoken. Does the apostle speak of its redemption? then it is according to the riches of His grace (Eph. i. 7). Does he speak of the glorious inheritance awaiting us? then he speaks of the riches of its glory (Eph. i. 18). Does he speak of the yet future ages? then he speaks of the exceeding riches of grace and kindness yet to be shown unto us (Eph. ii. 7). The very mystery that is his theme is defined as “the unsearchable riches of Christ” (Eph. iii. 8), and the answer to his prayer is according to the riches of the glory (Eph. iii. 16). So in Colossians there are riches beyond the dreams of avarice and beyond the touch of corruption:--

The <i>riches</i> of the glory of this mystery	\	
The <i>riches</i> of the full assurancemystery	}	are all in CHRIST
The <i>treasures</i> of wisdom and knowledge	/	(Col. i. 27; ii. 2, 3).

The item of wealth immediately before us is “The *riches* of the full assurance of understanding”. Ignorance is costly; uncertainty is sometimes fatal. The apostle who could say, “I know Whom I have believed”, could not be shamed or cowed though all men forsook him. The word *plerophoria*, which is translated “full assurance”, occurs in the New Testament as follows:--

“For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in *much assurance*” (I Thess. i. 5).

“We desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the *full assurance* of hope unto the end” (Heb. vi. 11).

“Let us draw near with a true heart, in *full assurance* of faith” (Heb. x. 22).

“All the riches of the *full assurance* of understanding” (Col. ii. 2).

The verbal form gives us the translations: “most surely believed” (Luke i. 1); “fully persuaded” (Rom. iv. 21, xiv. 5); “make full proof” (II Tim. iv. 5); “fully known” (II Tim. iv. 17). There is an element of completion about the word, together with the feeling of enabling power, for *phoria* comes from *phero* = “to carry”, which is directly connected with the purpose of the apostle in his desire to present every man “perfect”, or carried along completely to the end.

This full assurance of understanding is “with a view to a full knowledge or acknowledgment (*epignosis*) of the mystery of God”. This full knowledge or acknowledgment of the mystery of God is summed up in one word—“Christ”. The A.V. here reads: “The mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ.” The R.V. reads: “The mystery of God, *even* Christ.” The Manuscripts show a great variety of readings, almost every possible combination and arrangement of the words being found. Textual criticism is not *every* man’s work, for it is easy to rush in where, possibly, angels would fear to tread. We believe the general reader would be little wiser if we occupied pages filled with references to Manuscripts and quotations of the “Fathers”. It may be sufficient to justify the acceptance of the R.V. reading if we say that *Greisbach, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Alford* and *Wordsworth* (men who have edited the Greek text at different times during a period of two hundred years) point to this as the true reading, and the weight of that most important Manuscript, Vatican B, is in its favour. In the series under the heading “*The Volume of the Book*” we shall be able to deal with this question of the various “texts”; to attempt more here would but cumber the mind, and stay the teaching that it is our object to give.

Proceeding, therefore, we observe that from the opening of this section in Col. i. 28 until this point is reached in Col. ii. 2, there has been a definite movement in one direction, a teaching leading to one person, a revelation of a fullness discernible nowhere else but in Christ:--

“The riches of the glory of the mystery among the Gentiles is CHRIST” (Col. i. 27).

“The riches of the full assurance of understanding to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God is CHRIST” (Col. ii. 2).

The touchstone of all doctrine, whether it be expressed as “philosophy”, whether it has the sanction of “tradition”, or comes with all the force of the accepted “rudiments of the world”, is CHRIST (Col. ii. 8). Christ is revealed as our very life itself (Col. iii. 4), and eventually as our “All and in all” (Col. iii. 11).

It is the simplest yet the most profound lesson of the ages. “The mystery of God” is the all embracing secret within which all other mysteries find their sphere, and which are solved in the Person of Christ. “That I may know *Him*” is the climax of all prayer. “I know *Whom* I have believed” is the basis of all assurance. “To know the love of *Christ*” is to possess a knowledge far beyond our greatest faculties. “The excellency of the knowledge of *Christ*” makes all lesser attainments so much offal, and the very unity of the faith unto which we all press is, above all, “the knowledge of the *Son of God*”. Paul’s gospel was *Christ* (I Cor. i. 23; II Cor. iv. 5; Gal. i. 16; Rom. i. 1, 3, 16; Phil. i. 18).

Paul's doctrine was *Christ* (Eph. iv. 20). His life here in the flesh (Gal. ii. 20), the goal of this life (Phil. i. 21), and the life of resurrection glory (Col. iii. 4) was Christ:--

“Yea thro’ life, death, thro’ sorrow and thro’ sinning
He shall suffice me, for He hath sufficed:
Christ is the end, for Christ was the beginning,
Christ the beginning, for the end is Christ.”

No language of ours can express anything approaching the fullness that the heart realized to be resident in these words of Col. ii. 2. Nothing less than a life-long exposition of these epistles could hope to touch the fringe of so mighty a theme. We will, therefore, continue our study of the many facets of this one truth that irradiate with His glory the sacred page:--

“In Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Col. ii. 3).

The English word “treasure” comes from the Greek word *thesauros*. The Lexicons suggest that it is made up of the phrase, *thesis eis aurion* = “laying up for the morrow”. More than one Hebrew word has the idea of something hidden or concealed in its composition. The word *otsar* of Deut. xxviii. 12 means “a thing laid up”, and is possibly the original from which the Greek *thesauros* was derived. *Matmon*, of Job iii. 21, is from *taman* = “to hide or secrete”, as in Gen. xxxv. 4. It seems to be the essence of a treasure that it should be stored, concealed or hid:--

“Is this not laid up in store with Me, and sealed up among My treasures?”
(Deut. xxxii. 34).

“The Lord shall open unto thee His good treasure” (Deut. xxviii. 12).

“What have they seen? There is nothing among my treasures that I have not showed them” (II Kings xx. 15).

“Dig for it more than for hid treasures” (Job iii. 21).

“If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasure” (Prov. ii. 4).

“Treasures hid in the sand” (Deut. xxxiii. 19).

“The kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth” (Matt. xiii. 44).

“We have this reassurance in earthen vessels” (II Cor. iv. 7).

God's secret and God's treasure seem to meet in Christ:--

“In Whom are *hid* all the *treasures* of wisdom and knowledge” (Col. ii. 3).

It is not accurate to deduce from this statement that the treasures of God hidden in Christ are exhausted in wisdom and knowledge, for we have already seen that all the riches of grace and glory are also to be found in Him. The apostle particularly selects wisdom and knowledge, because of the teaching of a vain and deceitful wisdom (“philosophy” and “show of wisdom”, Col. ii. 8, 23), and the “opposition of knowledge (science) falsely so called” (I Tim. vi. 20), the incipient Gnosticism that is found in the great warning of Col. ii. 4-23. Including the compound *philosophia*, the word “wisdom” (*sophia*) is found in Colossians seven times, and appears in such an order as to compel attention:--

“Sophia” in Colossians.

- A | i. 9. Wisdom and walk (Godward).
- B | i. 28. Warning and teaching.
- C | ii. 3. The treasure of wisdom.
- D | ii. 8. Vain deceitful philosophy.
- C | ii. 23. The show of wisdom.
- B | iii. 16. Teaching and warning.
- A | iv. 5. Wisdom and walk (Manward).

With this full assurance, understanding, knowledge and treasure available, why should we turn aside to empty cisterns that can hold no water? We conclude with the following lines of *Cowper* (known to many as the writer of the Olney Hymns) whose Bi-centenary falls in this year of grace:--

“But reason still, unless divinely taught,
Whate'er she learns, learns nothing as she ought;
The lamp of revelation only shows,
What human wisdom cannot but oppose,
That man in nature's richest mantle clad,
And graced with all philosophy can add.
Though fair without, and luminous within,
Is still the progeny and heir of sin.
Thus taught, down falls the plumage of his pride,
He feels his need of an unerring guide,
And knows that falling he shall rise no more,
Unless the power that bade him stand, restore.
This is indeed philosophy; this known,
Makes wisdom, worthy of the name, his own;
And without this, whatever he discuss,
Whether the space between the stars and us,
Whether he measure earth, compute the sea,
Weigh sunbeams, carve a fly, or spit a flea,
The solemn trifler with his boasted skill
Toils much, and is a solemn trifler still;
Blind was he born, and his misguided eyes
Grown blind in trifling studies, blind he dies.”

#19. BEWARE.
An important parenthesis examined (ii. 5-7).
pp. 82 - 87

We now approach the distinctive feature of the epistle to the Colossians. While it shares with Ephesians the glory of making known “what is the dispensation of the mystery” and traverses much of the same ground, we have observed that the apostle condenses the truth into a smaller compass, as though anxious to get to his main point. Already the warning note has been sounded in the first chapter:--

“Whom we preach, WARNING every man, and teaching every man that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus” (Col. i. 28).

The twofold reference to “presentation” (Col. i. 22 and 28) makes it clear that the apostle entertains no doubts as to the believer’s standing in Christ. His conflict and prayer have to do with their “perfecting”. Satan does not employ useless energy in attacking the believer’s life, for that life is hid with Christ in God. Only in the realm of growth and reward is there any element of contingency, and it is along this line that the Satanic attack must be expected. Hence, in Col. ii. 18 the apostle sums up his warning in the words:--

“Let no man beguile you of your REWARD.”

The attack upon the believer comes along the line of “humility”, “worship”, “abstinence”, “observance” and “neglect”. Throughout the passage (Col. ii. 4-23) there is not one allusion to vice or immorality. The Colossian saints would have been proof against any attempt upon the part of the Evil One to have led them into gross sin. The wiles of the Devil are skillfully adapted to their end. The apostle reveals that in the latter times the apostacy that is introduced by demonic doctrines will come under this same guise of sanctity. Instead of the gross immorality that soiled the fair name of the Corinthians, we have the other extreme:--

“Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth” (I Tim. iv. 1-4).

From a religious point of view, respect for holy days and sabbaths makes a fair show. The worshipping of angels, the observance of prohibitory commands and the neglect of the body, make a “show of humility”. Yet all is vain and false. Anything, however sanctified it may seem outwardly, that leads away from Christ and His fullness is not of God, but from beneath.

The apostle warned, but he also taught:--

“Warning every man and TEACHING every man in all wisdom” (Col. i. 28).

The words of Col. ii. 4, “This I say”, refer back to the revelation of the mystery with its insistence upon the fullness of Christ. The words, “lest any man beguile you”, lead on to the warnings of the remainder of the chapter. The juxtaposition of warning and teaching and the contrast between all that deceives and Christ Himself are indicated by the following analysis:--

- A1 | i. 26, 27. HID. Riches of the glory of the mystery—CHRIST.
- B1 | i. 28 - ii. 1. WARNING.
- A2 | ii. 2, 3. HID. Riches of full assurance of mystery—CHRIST.
- B2 | ii. 4 - iii. 3. WARNING.
- A3 | iii. 4. HID. Life manifest in glory—CHRIST.

Here, as the apostle insists in Col. iii. 11, Christ is all and in all. He brings all teaching to the touchstone of Christ—“not after Christ” (Col. ii. 8)); “not holding the Head” (Col. ii. 19). He exposes the foolishness of ceremonials; they are but shadows and the body is of Christ (Col. ii. 16, 17). He disposes of all attempts to put the believer into the bondage of negative commands (Col. ii. 21) by reaffirming the doctrine of his identification with Christ in His death (Col. ii. 20).

Having seen the general drift of the passage, our next concern must be to seek the literary structure, so that we may be guided in our exposition by the arrangement of the truth.

Col. ii. 4-23.

- R | a | 4-8. Plausible speech. Philosophy (*sophos*).
 - b | 8. Traditions of men.
 - c | 8. Rudiments of world.
- CORRECTIVE. | 8. Not after Christ.
 - 9, 10. Ye are filled full in Him.
- S | d | 11, 12. Body of the flesh. The energy of God.
 - e | 11. Made without hands.
 - f | 11, 12. IN Whom. Circumcised and baptized.
- CORRECTIVE. | 12. Dead and buried with Christ.
 - 10. Head of principality and power.
- T | g | 14. Handwriting of ordinances. Blotted out.
 - h | 14. Nailed to cross. Taken out of the way.
 - h | 15. Principalities spoiled. Triumph in the cross.
 - g | 16. Observances. Let no man judge you.
- CORRECTIVE. | 17. These are shadows.
 - 17. The body is of Christ.
- S | d | 18, 19. Mind of the flesh. Increase of God.
 - e | 18. Voluntary humility. Vainly puffed up.
 - f | 18, 19. OUT of Whom. Religion of angels.
- CORRECTIVE. | 19. Hold Christ the head.
 - 20. Ye died with Christ.
- R | c | 20-22. Rudiments of world.
 - b | 22. Teaching of men.
 - a | 23. Wordy show of wisdom (*sophos*).
- CORRECTIVE. | 23. Not in any honour.
 - 23. Filling the flesh.

Here we find that the subject-matter is divided in five sections, each section being devoted into one aspect of the error against which the apostle gives his warning and followed by a corrective. When we look at the first of these sections (verses 4-8) we see that the apostle has introduced a parenthesis—a point of style so that we may at the same time indicate one or two niceties of expression that are obscured in the A.V.:--

“This I say, in order that no one may be reasoning you aside with plausible speech—
(For though indeed I am absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in the spirit, rejoicing and beholding your order and the solid firmness of your Christward faith. As therefore ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, walk in Him, having been rooted and being built up in Him, and being established in the faith, even as ye were taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving)—

Beware lest any one shall be making a prey of you, through vain deceitful philosophy, according to the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not according to Christ: for in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and ye are filled full in Him” (Col. ii. 4-10).

One of the reasons for this parenthesis is the desire of the apostle to encourage as well as to warn. It is his continual practice to refer first to some occasion of thankfulness to God before he finds fault or exhorts to fuller and higher things (*See*, for example, Rom. i. 8; I Cor. i. 4; Eph. i. 16; Phil. i. 3). So it is that before the warning comes, he interposes a note of joy—“joying and beholding your order”—and before the parenthesis is finished he speaks of the Colossians “abounding with thanksgiving”. When advising parents on the question of the upbringing of their children, the apostle was concerned that the children should not be discouraged (Col. iii. 21). He is here seen as the father of his believing children encouraging them along the path of faith. Moreover, a thankful spirit is of itself a wholesome corrective against unsound doctrine, and should be encouraged by all the means at our disposal. Observe how the apostle united thanksgiving with prayer (Phil. i. 3; iv. 6; Col. i. 3; I Thess. i. 2, etc.); with practice (Rom. xiv. 6; Heb. xiii. 15; Col. iii. 15; Eph. v. 4; I Tim. iv. 3, 4); and with doctrine (Rom. i. 21; Col. i. 12).

Two things brought joy to the apostle in the midst of his conflict for them: their “order” and the “solid firmness of their Christward faith”. There was nothing of the martinet about the apostle, yet he appreciated and rejoiced in their order. The word *taxis* (“order”) implies submission to divine appointments. To a church divided by schism, undermined by immoral conduct, and swayed by spectacular gifts, the apostle uses this word in admonition (I Cor. xiv. 40). It also occurs seven times in Hebrews in the phrase: “after the order of Melchisedec.” In a practical connection, *hupotasso* is used in Eph. v. 21, 22 where the husband and wife accept their divinely-appointed order. The apostle is not thinking of some dead mechanical order that stultifies individuality and makes a mockery of equal membership in Christ, but of his main theme, “Holding Christ the Head”.

While there are some things in I Cor. xi. that do not belong to the dispensation of the mystery, those of verse 3 are true of every dispensation since the time of Adam:--

“But I would have you know that the head of every man is Christ; that the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God” (I Cor. xi. 3).

To live in the spirit of such a revelation is not bondage but glorious fullness:--

“Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present or things to come; all are yours, and ye are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s” (I Cor. iii. 21-23).

Freedom from the domination of man, his doctrines, his traditions and his religion is not a state of spiritual lawlessness, but a state in which one Head alone is recognized—Christ. Freedom from false and harmful travesties of sanctification is not to be found in carelessness of life and walk, but in the recognition that all our acceptance is in Christ. Freedom from the handwriting of ordinances that were against us, and freedom from the bondage of types and shadows is to be found only in the realization of the fullness of Christ. So, the apostle rejoiced in their “order”.

He rejoiced, moreover, in the steadfastness of their faith in Christ. We have re-translated the passage, “The solid firmness of your Christward faith”, in order to give fuller expression to the apostle’s meaning. The word translated “steadfastness” is *stereoma*, used by the LXX in Gen. i. 6 for “firmament”. The word gains in significance when we remember that *apostereo* means “to defraud” (as in Mark x. 19) and occurs in I Tim. vi. 5:--

“Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute (*apostereo*) of the truth.”

This seems to suggest (*apo* means “away from”) that the deception against which the apostle warns would entice the believer away from the solid basis of Christ and His fullness.

The close association of doctrine and practice is seen in the apostle’s exhortation:--

“As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him” (Col. ii. 6).

The repetition of the article here, *ton Christon, ton Kurion*, conveys the idea that the Colossians had received Christ as their *Lord*. Well, says the apostle, walk in Him as your Lord too. It is a complete summary of the apostle’s teaching, which is expanded and enforced in the subsequent verses.

The reader will probably have noticed the slight change in the participles of verse 7: “*having been rooted*”, “*being built up*” and “*being established*”. “*Having been rooted*”, corresponds to the receiving of Christ Jesus as Lord; “*being built up*” corresponds to the walking in Him. True practice follows from true doctrine; it is the fruit upon the tree whose root is planted in grace.

Finally, the apostle draws attention to what the Colossians had been taught as a corrective to the doctrines and traditions of men: “As you have been taught” (Col. ii. 7). The word “teach” is *didasko*, which gives the word “doctrine” (*didaskalia*), as found in

Eph. iv. 14, Col. ii. 22, I Tim. i. 10, etc. We have already noticed that the apostle combined “teaching” with “warning” (Col. i. 28); the same two words come together again in Col. iii. 16: “Teaching and admonishing one another.” In contrast with the baseless traditions of men, the apostle urges the brethren at Thessalonica to “stand fast and hold fast the traditions” which they “had been taught” (II Thess. ii. 15).

Although the three verses we have been considering in this paper (Col. ii. 5-7) are a parenthesis and hold up the main sequence of the apostle’s argument, they are fraught with meaning, and will repay all the attention we can give to them. Their burden is that the solid basis of our faith is in Christ, received and held as Head and Lord. Let all our practice flow from that blessed doctrine, and the wiles of the Devil shall leave us unharmed. Our standing is in Christ. Let our state but manifest this and we need not fear. Bring all to this touchstone, and life, service, walk and worship will be acceptable. More than this we cannot attain to in this life; less than this means a falling short of the “perfection” of which the apostle speaks (Col. i. 28).

#20. BEWARE.
Philosophy and its two supporters,
tradition and the rudiments of the world (ii. 4-8).
pp. 123 - 129

Having considered the parenthesis of Col. ii. 5-7, we can now take up the teaching of Col. ii. 4-23 which constitutes the great distinctive note of the epistle. It is a solemn warning uttered in all faithfulness, with the object that every man may be presented “perfect in Christ Jesus”. Three words must first claim our attention: “beguile” (*paralogizomai*); “enticing words” (*pithanologia*), and “spoil” (*sulagogeo*).

The story of man is interwoven with deception. From Gen. iii., where the Serpent beguiled Eve, until the last act of the Deceiver, recorded in the Book of the Revelation, deceit has taken its dread toll. No dispensation has been free from its attack; and no protection against it has been provided apart from the revelation of truth, the Word of God. So long as we hold fast to all that is written, so long as we obey the injunction rightly to divide the Word of truth, so long as we refuse to go one step beyond what is revealed, we are safe and at peace. To do otherwise is to mistake darkness for light, to heed the voice of the Serpent rather than the voice of God, to sow the seeds of error and reap the harvest of shame.

Deception is many-sided. We can be deceived, as in Eph. v. 6, with “vain words”. Here the word “to deceive” (*apatao*) means “to seduce” or “lead astray”, and occurs in another form in Col. ii. 8. We can also be deceived by wandering, or being caused to wander, from the path of truth, as in Eph. iv. 14, where the word used is *plane*, from which comes our word “planet”, a wandering star.

Again, we can be deceived by false reasoning, by falsely-drawn conclusions, by permitting others to do our thinking for us. This is the meaning of the word “beguile”, which we are considering (Col. ii. 4). It is the translation of *paralogizomai*, “to reason aside”, and occurs again in Jas. i. 22. The context of the latter passage with its distinction between darkness and light is worthy of careful study. This “reasoning aside” is but a repetition of the initial deception in the garden of Eden. Our first parents failed because they did not stand fast to the actual words of God. “Yea, hath God said?” should be enough to make us flee. To palter with the Devil over the Word of God is to invite disaster. To commence a discussion along the lines of the Serpent’s first question—“Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of *every* tree of the garden?”—is to be led astray into the paths of death.

While faith is never unreasonable, there are many things known to faith that are beyond the powers of our reasoning, simply because they deal with facts and experiences beyond the present limits of man. It is here that philosophy steps in and attempts to fill the breach, and it is here also that the child of God must lay hold upon revealed truth and refuse to move. We are no match for Satan when it comes to philosophy, but we are more than a match for him while we keep to: “It is written.”

We can now perhaps the better appreciate the apostle’s words: “But this I say, lest any man beguile you”, especially when we remember that he has already declared that the very treasury of wisdom and knowledge is Christ Himself. Who would turn aside to the cisterns of *Plato*, or of any modern speculator, when the fountain-head of all wisdom is already theirs?

“Enticing words” (*pithanologia*).—The false reasoning against which the apostle warned the saints was accomplished by the use of “enticing words”. He himself has told us how he resolutely set such persuasive methods aside. “And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom” (I Cor. ii. 4). Rather was it in the all-prevailing wisdom of the cross, foolish as it appeared in the eyes of the wise of this world, and impossible as it appeared to the philosopher. As in I Corinthians so in Colossians, the apostle has but one ground of appeal whether to sinner or saint—Christ, His death, His burial, His resurrection.

To every reader we should say, Look to the arguments whereby men seek to persuade you. (*The series entitled, “With all thy getting, get understanding”, will, we trust, be of help in this regard*). Strip them of their gorgeous dress, re-write them in the language of cold matter of fact. If you are persuaded, be persuaded by fact and not by feeling.

“To spoil” (*sulagogeo*).—This word means “to carry off as plunder” and is derived from *sulao*, which means, in Homer’s *Iliad*, “to strip the vanquished of their armour”. We have earlier remarked that Satan is not wasting his efforts in attempting to rob us of our life, for that is safe, being hid with Christ in God. He is, however, using all his efforts to rob us of our reward (Col. ii. 18), to spoil our service, to ruin our fellowship and to shackle us with bonds and fears. In these things it is all too true that we may “give place to the Devil”. The reward or crown held out to the believer is associated with a

conflict, a fight of faith, so that the fact that the word “spoil” means “to rob one of his armour” is most suggestive. Has Satan never attempted to rob you of your sword, fellow-soldier? Has he never attempted to deprive you of your shield? Only as we stand in the whole armour of God are we proof against the fiery darts of the wicked. Only as we stand and stand completely, trustingly and assuredly “in Christ” for all things, are we not only “saved” but “safe”. This is the apostle’s burden in this chapter—so to minister the fullness of Christ that the vain words of men shall fall unheeded.

Having considered the threefold attack of the enemy—“false reasoning”, “enticing” and “spoiling”—we now turn our attention to the means that he employs. Again we find that the menace is threefold: “philosophy”, “tradition” and “rudiments”.

The expression, “philosophy and vain deceit”, is an instance of the use of the figure *Hendiadys* (“two for one”), and conveys the meaning, “A vain, deceitful philosophy”, with an emphasis upon the words “vain” and “deceitful”. *Kenos*, the word translated “vain”, means “empty”, and should be read in conjunction with verses 9 and 10, where true “fullness” is found.

What is philosophy? It is the search by unaided minds for wisdom, an attempt, without supernatural revelation, to get to the bottom of things. The word “philosophy” was invented by Socrates in the fifth century B.C. He intended a distinction between himself and the *sophoi*, the wise men. He called himself a philosopher, not because he had attained wisdom or knowledge, but because he sought it. Philosophy to him meant a criticism of all the assumptions of science, in order that, as a result of this criticism, one might be able to comprehend the whole. Alas, the task was too great for human wisdom. “The world by wisdom knew not God” (I Cor. i. 21). However skillfully the philosopher may have reasoned, he was bound to fail. His premises were defective and his conclusions could not but be erroneous. He is an example of one who has been beguiled, or “reasoned aside”, with enticing words of man’s wisdom.

The nations had received a knowledge of God sufficient to render idolatry “inexcusable”:

“When they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful: but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools” (Rom. i. 21, 22).

It would be a mistake to limit the apostle’s term “philosophy” to the Greek and the Roman systems. Paul was a Hebrew and a Pharisee, and knew well that the word was also applied to the various sects of Israel:

“The Jews had for a great while those sects of philosophy peculiar to themselves; the sect of the Essenes, and the sect of the Sadducees, and the third set of opinions was that of those called the Pharisees” (*Josephus*, *Antiquities*, Bk. xviii. 1, 2)

It would serve no good purpose to quote all that *Josephus* has written concerning these “philosophies”. Of the Pharisees he says:

“They live meanly, and despise delicacies in diet; and they follow the conduct of reason.”
“When they determine that all things are done by fate, they do not take away the freedom from men of acting as they think fit.”

Of the Sadducees, *Josephus* writes:--

“Nor do they regard the observation of anything besides what the law enjoins them; for they think it an instance of virtue to dispute with those teachers of philosophy whom they frequent.”

Of the Essenes he writes:--

“All things are best ascribed to God. They teach the immortality of souls they do not offer sacrifices yet in their course of life better than that of other men they neither marry wives, nor are desirous to keep servants.”

There is much food for thought in *Josephus*' analysis of these Jewish philosophies. The following of “reason”, the idea of “fate”, the “despising of delicacies in diet”, the avoidance of “marriage”, the view that disputation is a virtue, the avoidance of sacrifice—all speak volumes. Here was a people who had received the oracles of God, a revelation from on high, and this is where their reasonings and philosophies had led them. They were all blind leaders of the blind.

The mixture of Jewish and Greek philosophy which emerged after the apostle's day is known as “Gnosticism”; it is here seen in its early stages.

The Scriptures are able to make *wise* unto salvation, and to give a knowledge of the will of God. Philosophy is a poor and harmful substitute.

Philosophy has two supports: the tradition of men, and the rudiments of the world. These mischievous teachers would attempt to support their philosophy by appealing to the tradition of men, and especially to that of the Elders. This would lend colour to their speculations and help to make them less unattractive to those who still regarded the Scriptures as sacred and true.

Tradition has usually been unscriptural largely because it has added to the Word of truth. Christ accused the leaders of the Jews of transgressing the commandment of God, and making it of none effect by their tradition (Matt. xv. 2-6).

The apostle Paul knew the bondage of tradition—so did also Peter (*see* Gal. i. 14 and I Pet. i. 18). And to this day, it has a stifling grip upon many a child of God. Many a belief, hoary with age, has become attached to the pure Word of God and been accepted as truth. Philosophy's appeal to tradition is often quite enough; the hearer is overwhelmed with great names and great words, accepts the enticing words of man's wisdom for valid argument, and succumbs.

Another support upon which philosophy relies is man's inbred veneration for ceremonial, custom and observance—in other words for Religion. This the apostle speaks of as “the rudiments of the world”. The word “rudiments” or “elements” is a translation of *stoicheion*, meaning a “first step”. It is associated with childhood and immaturity:--

“For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles (elements) of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age” (perfect) (Heb. v. 12-14).

Seeing that the apostle ardently desired to present every man perfect, we can well understand his abhorrence at the intrusion of the “rudiments” or “elements”. In Gal. iv. he speaks of the dispensation of law as a system of bondage to “weak and beggarly elements”, consisting of the observance of days, and months, times and years—very much like the new moons and sabbaths of Col. ii. 16. “Are ye so foolish?” he writes to the Galatians, “having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect in the flesh?” (Gal. iii. 3). All our associations with the elements of the world were cancelled once and for all by the redemption of Christ (Gal. iv. 3-5) and our death with Him (Col. ii. 20).

The wisdom of this vain, deceitful philosophy is in strong contrast with the wisdom of God, expressed in the cross of Christ (I Cor. i. 17). It is “foolishness with God” (I Cor. iii. 19); it is “fleshly” (II Cor. i. 12); and it is “devilish” (James iii. 15-17).

In Colossians, the apostle has in view the exalting of the “shadows” above the substance. Such an attitude is entirely foreign to the glorious fullness of the revelation of the mystery; it hinders the growth and perfecting of the saints; and it is dishonouring to the Lord as Head.

This vain, deceitful philosophy was “according to” tradition, and “according to” rudiments, but it was *not according to Christ*. This is the touchstone of all truth, doctrinally, practically and dispensationally. We need not waste this minutes over any book which does not accord with this supreme test. What place has Christ in the scheme? How far is He indispensable? Is He the First and the Last? Or is the believer asked to supplement His finished work? These are the vital questions. Be not deceived. Sanctification is not furthered by the flesh or by the elements of the world. It is not strengthened by observing days, feasts or fasts. It is not made purer by neglecting the body, and it can be choked and spoiled by a false humility. It can only grow in the soil of grace and in the sunlight of full acceptance in the Beloved.

We have dealt, to some extent, with the deception. We must consider in our next article the corrective of verses 9 and 10.

#21. BEWARE.

**That philosophy which is not after Christ,
contrasted with all the fullness that dwells in Him (ii. 8, 9).
pp. 168 - 174**

The structure of Col. ii. 4-23 set out on page 84 shows five features which are in some degree notes of warning, and also five features giving prominence to the person, work and fullness of Christ, which are in some degree correctives of the error expressed. The five correctives taken together are related to one another as are the five items of warning. Let us see this clearly before dealing with the first corrective of verses 8-10.

The correctives (Col. ii. 4-23).

- A | 8-10. Not after Christ. Filled full in Him.
- B | 10-12. Christ the Head. Dead and buried.
- C | 17. Shadows in contrast with body.
- B | 19, 20. Christ the Head. Ye died with Christ.
- A | 23. Not any honour. Filling the flesh.

The corrective that immediately concerns us is the first. This, we observe, is expressed both negatively and positively; we shall expect to find in it not only positive truth but also further light upon that vain, deceitful philosophy which is supported by the tradition of men and the rudiments of the world:--

NEGATIVELY.—Not according to Christ.

POSITIVELY.—The fullness of the Godhead bodily.

Ye are filled to the full in Him.

He is Head of all principality and power.

The words, “Not after Christ”, which we render, “Not according to Christ”, indicate the one and final test of all doctrine and practice. Whatever does not “accord” with Christ is not truth. To this we may readily assent; but a difficulty may arise when we begin to put it into practice, for “Christ” means so much. It is therefore incumbent upon the apostle to select, out of the fullness of his subject, those outstanding features, which, being settled, establish the whole doctrine of the Lord. Let us observe how the apostle uses the title “Christ” in leading up to and developing this important central section of the epistle:--

(1) Christ.

“To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is CHRIST among you, the hope of the glory” (Col. i. 27).

(1) Warning.

“Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus” (Col. i. 28).

(2) Christ.

“The full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God CHRIST, in Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Col. ii. 2, 3).

(2) Warning.

“And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words” (Col. ii. 4).

(3) Warning.

“Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world” (Col. ii. 8).

(3) Christ.

“And not after CHRIST, for in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily” (Col. ii. 8, 9).

(4) Warning.

“Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days, which are a shadow of things to come” (Col. ii. 16, 17).

(4) Christ.

“But the body is of CHRIST” (Col. ii. 17).

(5) Christ.

“If ye then be risen with CHRIST, seek those things which are above, where CHRIST sitteth on the right hand of God” (Col. iii. 1).

(5) Warning.

“Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth” (Col. iii. 2).

(6) Christ.

“Your life is hid with CHRIST in God. When CHRIST, Who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory” (Col. iii. 3, 4).

(6) Warning.

“Mortify, therefore, your members which are upon the earth” (Col. iii. 5).

(7) Warning.

“Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds” (Col. iii. 9).

(7) Christ.

“And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him; where CHRIST is all and in all” (Col. iii. 10, 11).

Every epistle has its own peculiar theme, its own special purpose and its own antagonist; and no one epistle provides a complete presentation of Christ, except in so far as is necessary for the case in hand. The problems that had to be met in the Colossian church were not the same as those in the Corinthian or Galatian churches. Upon examination, the false teaching at Corinth and at Galatia is also seen to be “not after Christ”, but it is from a different point of view from that set forth in Colossians. For example, in I Corinthians the apostle stresses the cross of Christ as opposed to false wisdom, while in Galatians he glories in the cross as opposed to false and fleshly works of self-righteousness. It would require a treatise to set forth the apostle’s exemplifications of the principle of Col. ii. 8. We have devoted as much space to this negative side of the matter as we can spare and we must leave its further study to the reader. Let us now turn to the positive side and observe the way in which the apostle presents Christ.

He does not speak of His cross, His death or His resurrection. He does not take us back to the glory before the world was nor to the day when every knee shall bow. He presents to us Christ, now, as He is, an all-sufficient Saviour, Guide and Friend:--

“For in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily” (Col. ii. 9).

The fullness of Christ and its bearing upon the purpose of the ages is a theme which, with the one exception of John i. 16, is the exclusive ministry of the apostle Paul. In the writings of Paul, the word “fullness”, used of Christ, occurs once in Galatians, four times in Ephesians, and twice in Colossians; a total of seven times.

There can scarcely be conceived a deeper subject or one that demands more care, prayer and attention. We must discriminate between the fullness of God and the fullness of the Godhead; between the fullness of Christ and the fullness of Him that filleth all in all. We must observe parallels and associations, and every phrase that has been recorded. The importance of the theme must be our complete apology for any weariness which the reader may feel; it has more than compensated for any weariness experienced by the writer.

The fullness.

- A | John i. 1-18. | HIS TITLE.—In the beginning. The Word.
HIS OFFICE.—Maker of all things.
His title in the flesh. The only begotten Son.
God declared to be invisible.
- B | Gal. iv. 1-10. | The elements of the world.
Ye observe days, months, times and years.
Made of a woman. Made under the law. Sonship.
- C | Ephesians. | a | i. 10. Goal. Head up things in heaven and earth.
b | i. 23. Foreshadowing Head. Fullness of Him.
Christ and His Church. | a | iii. 19. Goal. Filled unto all the fullness of God.
b | iv. 13. Measure. Fullness of Christ.
- A | Col. i. 12-22. | HIS TITLE.—Before all things. The Image.
HIS OFFICE.—Creator of all things.
His title in the two spheres. Firstborn of all creation.
Firstborn from the dead.
God declared to be invisible.
- B | Col. ii. 9-23. | The rudiments of the world.
Holydays, new moons and sabbaths.
Bodily. Completeness.

It will be observed that the references to the fullness in Ephesians are in a class by themselves. Those in John, Galatians and Colossians stress the Godward aspect of the fullness; those in Ephesians the receiving of the fullness by the church, especially the church which is the body of Christ:--

“The main theme of the Colossians is the Person of Christ; that of the Ephesians is the life of Christ manifested in the living energy of His church. In the former, Christ is the ‘Plenitude’, the synthesis and totality of every attribute of God; in the latter, the ideal

church as the body of Christ is the Plenitude, the recipient of all the fullness of Him Who filleth all things with all" (*Farrar*).

We will here confine our attention to those references that occur outside the Ephesians.

In an earlier series we have drawn attention to the similarity between the opening verses of John's Gospel and those written by Paul in Col. i. 16-22. John, at the beginning of his ministry, was an apostle of the circumcision, but he lived to see Israel as a nation set aside; and, just as Paul was permitted to write at least one epistle to the Hebrews, though he himself was a minister to the uncircumcision, so John was not set aside when Israel passed into blindness, but was used by the Lord to give the Gospel that bears his name to the "world". While John i. 1-18 in some degree approximates to the full blaze of Col. i. 16-22, it is not quite so full or so high. Colossians is at the centre of the mystery; John at the circumference of the world. The same ascended Christ sheds His light in John's Gospel and in Colossians, but the latter is written in its fullest blaze. We will not occupy time and space in tabulating the many points common to John i. 1-18 and Col. i. 16-22; the hints already given in the structure of references to the Fullness will be enough to establish the connection.

While we do not propose to compare, in detail, the passages from Galatians and Colossians which are placed in correspondence in the structure already referred to, it will be clear that they both deal with attacks upon the truth of the apostle's ministry. The first passage in Galatians is a refutation of the attack made upon the basic doctrine of Paul's gospel—"justification by faith without works." The apostle sets aside observances and circumcision as being contrary to the grace of his gospel. In the Colossian passage the attack is upon the believer's completeness in Christ, and the intimate relationship between the Head and the members—a denial of the fact that when He died, they died; that, when He was buried, they were buried; and that when He arose, they arose. This heresy, already at work in the Colossian church, emerged some years later as Gnosticism. Its germs were already in the church long before it made its appearance in history, and a brief acquaintance with some of its peculiar doctrines will perhaps enable the reader to follow the apostle's argument in Col. ii. more intelligently:--

"The Colossian teachers were trying to supplement Christianity, *theoretically* by a deeper wisdom, *practically* by a more abstentious holiness."

"In the moral and practical discussion of the Epistle we see the true substitute for that extravagant and inflating asceticism which had its origin partly in will worship, ostentatious humility, and trust in works, and partly in mistaken conceptions as to the inherency of evil in the body of man. St. Paul points out to them that the deliverance from sin was to be found, not in dead rules and ascetic rigours, which have a fatal tendency to weaken the will, while they fix the imagination so intensely on the very sins against which they are intended as a remedy, as too often to lend to those very sins a more fatal fascination—but in that death to sin which is necessarily involved in the life hid with Christ in God. From that new life—that resurrection from the death of sin—obedience to the moral laws of God, and faithfulness in common relations of life, result, not as difficult and meritorious acts, but as the natural energies of a living impulse in the heart which beats no longer with its own life but with the life of Christ" (*Farrar*).

The Cerinthians, a sect that arose soon after apostolic times, believed that the world was created by angels, and also enforced circumcision and other Levitical observances. Cerinthus commenced preaching in Asia, where the church of Colosse stood. Simon Magus, who lived in the apostle's own day, taught that it was necessary to learn the names of the invisible principalities and powers, and to offer sacrifice to the Father by their means. Moreover, these schools of thought held wrong doctrines concerning Christ as Man, and placed Him "lower than the angels". Josephus tells us that the Essenes were careful to preserve the names of angels. The Jewish philosophy, in the Cabala, contains a great deal of mystic lore concerning the orders of angels; and the Greek philosophy of Platonism, used by Philo in his system of theology, views the angels as mediators between God and man. We have also the historic document of the Canons of the Laodicean Council (A.D.320 *circa*) in which it is decreed that Christians may not "invoke the names of angels for they desert our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (Canon 35); that "ecclesiastical persons may not use incantations or make phylacteries" (Canon 36); that Christians may not receive presents from Jews on their feast days, or feast with them (Canon 37); and that "Christians must not Judaize, and rest on the Sabbath" (Canon 29).

"The Gnostics in general were wont to talk much of the *pleroma* or *fullness*; in which, they meant, a fictitious plenitude of *aeons* was supposed to subsist, and into which spiritual men should hereafter be received" (*Dr. Waterland*).

"There seems to have been a combination of Greek theosophy, and Jewish ritualism and asceticism in the system here denounced by S. Paul, which was substantially the same with Alexandrian Judaism, as expounded in the writings of Philo. Its promoters at Colosse were probably Jews who, desirous of retaining essential Judaism, Mosaic and patristic (or traditional) as an element of Christianity, and of securing its ascendancy as such, allied themselves with the other great party which had a previous system to maintain, that of the Grecian sophists or speculatists, by adopting their language, and representing the ascetic and ritualistic principle as the highest philosophy" (*Webster and Wilkinson*).

We seldom quote at length from the writings of others in this magazine, but we feel that in the realm of historical research it is simpler to quote the testimony of authorities than to attempt a summary ourselves. We have devoted the space necessary, believing that the dark background of error will but emphasize the glory and the grace that shines in the face of Jesus Christ, in Whom all the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily. This positive study we hope to take up without further preliminaries in our next article.

[NOTE.—In order to complete our study of Col. ii. and to appreciate with some measure of fullness the doctrine intended by the contrast of "Philosophy" with "Fullness", we hope to follow this series on Colossians with another dealing with the findings and failures of human wisdom as contrasted with Him in Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.]

#22. BEWARE.

**“All the fullness of the Godhead bodily” (ii. 9, 10).
pp. 210 - 216**

Having seen in the preceding article something of the usage of the word “fullness”, and something of that mystical system condemned by the apostle as being “not after Christ”, we proceed to an appreciation of that glorious contrast to all such vain deceit, the fullness of Christ Himself:--

“For in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in Him, Which is the Head of all principality and power” (Col. ii. 9, 10).

Christ is here seen as the Mediator between God and men, for in Him dwells the fullness (*pleroma*) of the Godhead, and we are filled full (*pepleromenoi*) in Him. And because of this, stress is laid upon the word “bodily”. God Who is spirit, invisible and unapproachable, and man who is finite and fleshly, need a Daysman between them. No man in the ordinary sense of the word could qualify for this high office, no angel, or principality or power. The position could only be met by the mystery of godliness—“God was manifest in the flesh.”

One of the important subjects related to the conception of the “the fullness” is concerned with the Lord’s title as “Head”, mentioned here in Col. ii. We learn from the epistle to the Ephesians that “in the dispensation of the fullness of seasons there will be “gathered together under one Head (*anakephalaiomai*), all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth” (Eph. i. 10). The word which we have translated “gathered together under one Head” supplies us with the substantive *Kephale*, “Head”, in the next passage:--

“And hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all” (Eph. i. 22, 23).

Again, in Eph. iv. 13-15, we have the association of the fullness with the Headship of Christ:--

“The measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ grow up into Him, which is the Head, even Christ.”

Coming to Colossians, we find Headship and fullness together again in the two passages where the word *pleroma* occurs:--

“And He is the *Head* of the body the Church for it pleased the Father that in Him should all *fullness* dwell” (Col. i. 18, 19).

“For in Him dwelleth all the *fullness* of the Godhead bodily. And ye are filled full in Him, which is the *Head* of all principality and power” (Col. ii. 9, 10).

We have set forth in these passages the illuminating fact that, without Christ as Head, the fullness, whatever subsequent study may show it to be, would be impossible.

In Volume XIII, pages 165-170, the relation between the “fullness” and the purpose of the ages is discussed in some detail. Without repeating what is said there, we would summarize our findings briefly as follows (See also *The Testimony of the Lord’s prisoner*, pages 51-53):--

The word “fullness” (*pleroma*), in its first occurrence is placed over against the word “rent” (*schisma*) (Matt. ix. 16). The “rent” refers back to Gen. i. 2, and is the “overthrow of the world” mentioned in Eph. i. 4. Before the present creation was called into being, a fall, in which angels were involved, had taken place, and it is because heaven as well as earth is affected, that the purpose of the ages includes a church which is destined for heavenly places, as well as saved companies for other and lower spheres.

The church of the mystery was chosen in Christ before Gen. i. 2, but in the wisdom of God, angels and principalities, and Adam himself were all allowed individual trial—a trial which in every case ended in failure. There can be no final and irrevocable certainty in the universe until all, not merely all men, but all principalities and powers, all angels and ministering spirits, all things in heaven and on earth, are gathered under the Headship of Christ. Colossians reveals Christ as the Head both of the “church” (i. 18), and of “all principality and power” (ii. 10), and hence explains the necessity for and the character of the reconciliation of Col. i. 20. Ephesians reveals Christ as the Head of the church which is His body, in which the enmity perpetuated through the Acts period as a middle-wall is broken down, and “the both”, Jew and Gentile, are created one new man, so making peace. This reconciliation is spoken of as “in one body” (Eph. ii. 16).

In the history of the nation of Israel, also, there is a “rent”, but when the *fullness* of Israel shall come in, the divided nation shall at last be secure:--

“Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves *one Head*, and they shall come up out of the land” (Hos. i. 11).

In I Cor. xi. Christ is said to be the Head of all men in the divine order, and this is more fully expounded in I Cor. xv., where the Lord from heaven is revealed as the last Adam, and the second Man.

When the purpose of the ages is attained, and the results of the “rent” of Gen. i. 2 have passed away, with all the “former things” (including the “deep”—see Rev. xxi. 1), then all things will be “in Christ”. He will be Head over all things to all, as He is now Head over all things to the church; God will then be all in all, and the fullness will be fully attained. It is one of the special glories of the mystery, that the church now is a foreshadowing of the fullness then; its very title is “The fullness of Him that filleth all in all” (Eph. i. 23).

Should the reader wish to read a more detailed explanation of this great theme, he is asked to consult the comprehensive index of the volumes under such headings as

Pleroma in the Greek Index, *Tohu and Bohu* in the Hebrew Index, and Fullness, Ages, Dispensation, Human Destiny and Satan, etc., in the Subject Index.

Two words are translated “Godhead” in the A.V.; and it is necessary to differentiate between them if the truth of each is to be clearly seen. The two words are *Theiotes* and *Theotes*; the first should be translated Divinity, the second Deity. *Dr. Wette* expresses the distinction in his German translation, rendering *Theiotes* by *Gottlichkeit* and *Theotes* by *Gottheit*:--

“For the invisible things of Him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even His everlasting power and DIVINITY” (Rom. i. 20, R.V.).

“For in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the GODHEAD bodily” (Col. ii. 9, R.V.).

In both cases there is the manifestation of the invisible. In Romans “the invisible things” of the Creator are shown in His works, but in Col. i. 15 and ii. 9 the invisible God Himself dwells fully and bodily in the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is essential that we should grasp the truth contained in the word “bodily” (*somatikos*). While it is a truth, in which we rejoice, that the church is the body of Christ, this must not cause us to forget or ignore the fact of His own literal body. In Col. i. 22 we have the expression, “In the body of His flesh”; which shows that the epistles of the mystery use this word *soma* both literally and figuratively. It is the spirit of Antichrist that denies that Jesus Christ *has come* in the flesh (I John iv. 3), or that He *is coming* in the flesh (II John 7). This in itself is a proof that the truth denied is of the first importance. If Christ came not in the flesh, we have no Kinsman-Redeemer (Heb. ii. 14, 15). If the Word was not made flesh and dwelt among us, we yet await the glory of the Only Begotten of the Father (John i. 14). If Christ was not of the seed of David according to the flesh, there could be no gospel of God concerning His Son (Rom. i. 1-3), neither could we tell Israel that their Messiah has already come (Rom. ix. 5). In His flesh, stricken for sin on the cross, He abolished the middle-wall of partition between believers (Eph. ii. 15) and the veil between the believer and his Lord (Heb. x. 20). The very mystery of godliness is that “God was manifest in the flesh” (I Tim. iii. 16). When we add to these statements many others—the Lord bearing our sins in His own body (I Pet. ii. 24), the offering of the body of Jesus Christ (Heb. x. 10), His being found in fashion as a man (Phil. ii. 8)—we see that the literal meaning of the word “bodily” (Col. ii. 9) cannot be denied without disastrous consequences to the faith.

There are several parallel references in the Gospel of John to the mystery and purpose of this manifestation of the Godhead in the flesh, that may help us further in our understanding:--

“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, Which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him” (John i. 14-18).

The title of Christ here as “The Word” is somewhat similar to that of Col. i. 15, “The Image”; both titles have reference to “the invisible God” Whom “no man hath seen at any time”. Yet, in spite of the glories that necessarily attached to the Lord both as the Word and as the Image, His becoming flesh evidently involved something more. “The Word was made flesh and we beheld His glory.”

Is the Lord concerned as to whether we shall behold His glory or not? It seems that He is. So in John xvii.--

“And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine Own self, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was” (verse 5).

“And all Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine; and I am glorified in them” (verse 10).

“And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one” (verse 22).

“Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory for Thou lovedst Me before the overthrow of the world” (verse 24).

These verses contain a double reference to that period spoken of as “before the world was” and “before the overthrow of the world”. Before the world was, and before it was overthrown (Gen. i. 2) He Whose titles were the Word and the Image possessed glory. He became flesh, He dwelt among us, and out of His fullness we have received; and, as a result, the glory which He had before the world was, He has given to His people. The Lord does not part with His glory; it is shared—“that they may be one”. And then, in view of the uniting under one Head of all the redeemed of all dispensations: “I will that they be with Me that they may behold My glory.”

Returning to John i., we observe that one of the chief reasons given there for this coming in the flesh is that God the Father may be “declared” (“explained” or “given an exegesis”). So the Lord could say:--

“Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father: and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?” (John xiv. 9).

The invisible things of God may be learned from His works of creation (Rom. i. 19, 20), but the invisible things of the Father are learned only in His Son. The transient glory of the law was reflected in the face of Moses (II Cor. iii. 7), but “God Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness” (a reference to the overthrow of the world in Gen. i. 2 and so a link with the references already cited) “hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (II Cor. iv. 6).

The word “dwelt” in John i. 14 is, literally, “tabernacled”. This should be compared with John ii. 18-22, where the body of the Lord in resurrection is likened, not to a tabernacle, but to a temple. The earthly manifestation of the Godhead in the flesh with its accompaniments of sorrow and death was but for a time; He “tabernacled” among us. The indwelling of all the fullness of the Godhead in Him as the risen Head of all things is likened to a temple fitly framed together (Eph. ii. 19), and to a body fitly joined together

(Eph. iv. 16). And it is this church, as body and temple, that bears the title: “The fullness of Him that filleth all in all” (Eph. i. 23).

We have, therefore, two important references to “the fullness” in Colossians. The first of these is concerned with the purpose of the ages, and the redeemed of all dispensations, of which the church which is His body stands first:--

“And He is the Head of the body, the church; Who is the Beginning, the Firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the pre-eminence” (Col. i. 18).

He is the Beginning, “The Beginning of the creation of God”, as Rev. iii. 14 shows. He is the Firstborn from the dead, and Head of a new creation in which His pre-eminence shall never again be challenged:--

“For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell” (Col. i. 19).

“All the fullness” is the goal of the ages, purposed by God to blot out the consequences of the entrance of sin into the universe. It is, therefore, linked with the “blood of His cross” and “the body of His flesh through death” (Col. i. 20, 22). The riches of the glory of the mystery is Christ, and in Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. This leads to the second reference to the fullness, not this time concerned with the redeemed of all ages, but with the mystery of godliness—“God was manifest in the flesh”. He has now been made known as He never could have been made known otherwise. And so the apostle’s argument follows. Philosophy is vanity; the tradition of men and the rudiments of the word, bondage. We have all things in Christ:--

“Ye are complete (filled full) in Him, which is the Head of all principality and power” (Col. ii. 10).

In Col. i. He is the Head of the body, the church (Col. i. 18); in Col. ii. He is the Head of all principality and power (Col. ii. 10). We may, in a later article, be able to consider these principalities and powers in their relation to the purpose of the ages, but this will be better appreciated when we arrive at Col. ii. 15.

The practical word for us is that, with the fullness of Christ on our behalf, and because of our completeness in Him, we should be proof against all attempts on the part of the enemy to come between us and our glorious Head. The means employed by the Wicked One and the correctives supplied by grace are to be more fully examined in subsequent papers. Meanwhile, let not the problematic character of some of our studies cloud for one moment the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Let us magnify the Lord and hold the Head, allowing no usurper; and we shall not only be to the praise of His glory, but we shall enter into some of the “riches of the full assurance of understanding to the acknowledging of the mystery of God—Christ; in Whom are hid *all* the treasures of wisdom and knowledge”.

Fundamentals of Dispensational Truth.

#86. Numbers xvi. and xvii.

The Lord knoweth depart from iniquity (II Tim. ii. 19).
pp. 24 - 28

It will be remembered that the section of Numbers that has just been before us, viz., xi.-xiv., revealed many points of analogy both with Philippians and Hebrews. There is one other epistle that comes into line with Philippians, namely, II Timothy, and we shall find that the next section of Numbers which we are to study (xvi. and xvii.) is used in II Timothy in a significant context.

Numb. xvi. and xvii. is in the first place an attack upon the distinctive office of the priest, in the second place it provides a corrective against an argument often used in opposing the distinctive character of the church, the body, and of the distinctive company in that church who shall attain unto the prize of the high calling. This is anticipating somewhat, so we will deal with the actual passage.

Numb. xvi. and xvii. must be looked upon as a whole. There are two rebellions, one by the princes led by Korah, and the other by the people, both having reference to the distinctive calling of the priest. The two chapters may be visualized as follows:--

Numbers. xvi. and xvii. “The Lord will show who are His.”

- A | xvi. 1-3. | a | Rebellion of Korah.
 - b | Gathered together against Moses and Aaron.
 - c | Wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord.
- B | xvi. 4. Moses fell on his face.
- C | xvi. 5-9. *To Korah.*—Take you censers—ends in death.
- D | xvi. 10-18. | d | Seek ye the priesthood also?
 - e | Take every man his censer the tabernacle.
- E | xvi. 19-40. | f | Death and consuming for rebellion.
 - g | Censers a memorial “against own souls”.
- A | xvi. 41-44. | a | Rebellion of all the congregation.
 - b | Gathered against Moses and Aaron.
 - c | Ye have killed the people of the Lord.
- B | xvi. 45. Moses and Aaron fell upon their faces.
- C | xvi. 46. *To Aaron.*—Take a censer—make atonement.
- D | xvii. 1-9. | e | Take every one a rod the tabernacle.
 - d | “I will choose” (the priesthood).
- E | xvii. 10-13. | g | Aaron’s rod a token “against the rebels”.
 - f | Death and consuming feared.

What was the basis of Korah’s rebellion? Let him speak for himself:--

“Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord?” (Numb. xvi. 3).

At the close of chapter xv. is the command of the Lord that all the children of Israel should wear a fringe and a riband of blue, a remainder to them to keep all the commandments of the Lord, to seek not the desires of their own hearts, and to be holy unto the Lord.

Korah’s argument was that, seeing that *all the congregation* was holy, there should be no such distinctions among them as was evident in the high positions held by Moses and Aaron; that Moses and Aaron had lifted themselves up above their fellows—all of whom were part of the same congregation of the Lord.

Moses’ first response is to prostrate himself before the Lord. He saw the seriousness of this rebellion, and wisely sought the face of God before attempting to justify himself before man. His opening words dispose of the insinuation of Korah, that Moses and Aaron had lifted *themselves* up above the congregation. If there had been any “lifting up” it was by the sovereign disposal of the Lord Himself:--

“Even to-morrow the Lord will shew who are His, and who is holy (set apart): and will cause him to come near unto Him: even him whom He hath chosen will he cause to come near unto Him. This do: Take your censers, Korah, and all his company; and put fire therein; and put incense in them before the Lord to-morrow: and it shall be that the man whom the Lord doth choose, he shall be holy; ye take too much upon you, ye sons of Levi” (Numb. xvi. 5-7).

Moses now draws the attention of Korah to the illogical nature of his objection. Korah himself was a Levite, and God had separated the Levites from the congregation of Israel. They had been brought near to do the service of the tabernacle of the Lord:--

“He hath brought thee (Korah) near to Him; and all thy brethren, the sons of Levi, with thee: and seek ye the priesthood also?” (Numb. xvi. 10).

All Israel might have justly murmured against Korah, as Korah murmured against Aaron.

Moses sought to remonstrate with the sons of Reuben, but they would not hear, but cast the aspersion upon Moses, that he wished to make himself altogether a prince over them. Then comes the dreadful ordeal. “Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men” (Numb. xvi. 26). We know the tragic end. Korah and his men went down alive into the opened earth and were swallowed up, and the 250 men who had offered incense were consumed with fire.

Here is a “new thing” or as the Hebrew reads: “but if the Lord create a creation.” The first earthquake is associated with usurpation of the priest’s office. Uzziah also is connected both with an earthquake and with usurpation of the priest’s office, and Antichrist will be likewise associated with both.

While we may be keenly interested in the typical teaching of this passage as it illuminates the days of antichristian rebellion that are still future, it will be more profitable to observe the bearing of this tragic end upon ourselves. One might object, and say that such things can have no possible bearing upon the church. Let us see. Two utterances of Moses stand out prominently in chapter xvi.:-

“The Lord will show who are His” (verse 5).

“Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men” (verse 26).

These words re-appear in II Tim. ii.:-

“Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth then that are His, and, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity” (II Tim. ii. 19).

In what way does II Tim. ii. resembles Numb. xvi.? Let us remember Korah’s objection to the possibility of some being called to glory higher than others, though all members of the same congregation, and then let us see the way in which the apostle deals with that same spirit:--

“But in a great house (*parallel with the whole congregation*) there are not only vessels of gold and of silver (*like the offices of Moses, Aaron, and the Levites*), but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to no honour. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master’s use, and prepared unto every good work” (II Tim. ii. 20, 21).

Some object to the distinctive glory of the church of the mystery by appealing to the fact that all the Lord’s people, of whatever calling and company, are redeemed by the same precious blood, and belong to the same Christ. This is no valid objection. The Lord could choose and has chosen some of the redeemed to “inherit the earth”, some to walk the streets of the New Jerusalem, and some to enter their inheritance in the heavenly holiest of all. The same answer that Moses gave to Korah must be given here. It is a matter of the Lord’s sovereign choice. Limiting ourselves to the one company, the church which is His body, some express themselves in almost angry terms when any suggestion is made to the teaching of Philippians, with its out-resurrection and prize, or to II Timothy with its contest and crown, endurance and reign. These possible distinctions in the one church in the heavenlies are no more objectionable than the evident distinction between the comely and uncomely members of the one human body, or the distinctions that obtained in Israel. To any who would seek further argument, we would commend the chapter in *Dispensational Truth* entitled: “An election within an election.”

Returning to Numb. xvi. and xvii. we observe that the censers of the men who rebelled were beaten out into sheets for a covering of the altar, and to act as a memorial of their rebellion, while the rod that budded was placed in the holiest of all before the testimony, as a token against the rebels:--

“And thou shalt quite take away their murmurings from Me, that they die not”
(Numb. xvii. 10).

We are brought back therefore to the initial seed of this awful crop of death—murmuring. Murmuring about God’s sovereign disposal of glory, dignity or honour reveals a failure to appreciate that the smallest and lowliest blessing we receive is all of grace. Korah should have remembered the signal mercy that had led him out of Egypt, and have been thankful that his bones were not bleaching with those of the Egyptians on the shore of the Red Sea. No wonder Philippians, the epistle of the prize winner, is the epistle of rejoicing, the epistle of contentment, the epistle that warns against murmuring. Some, we fear, may resent this message: may it be a means of help to those who having heard the higher call are seeking grace to run with patience.

**#87. The start from Kadesh (Numb. xx. - xxv.).
pp. 66 - 71**

Once again we have, interposed between chapters of history, further laws pertaining to the priests and the people, full of matter and abundantly repaying careful study. It is not our purpose, however, to investigate every detail of these books, time alone being against us, so we pass over chapters xviii. & xix. and take up the theme again in chapter xx., where another series of incidents is recorded, some of which are used in the N.T. and all of which are full of needed lessons for those who, having been redeemed by the precious blood, are pressing on like Caleb and Joshua to the inheritance ahead. It is not of our choosing that these historic incidents should necessitate so much insistence upon the Philippians aspect of truth, and we shall not shirk it because some may not readily appreciate the lessons taught. We need all the counsel of God, and a faithful ministry does not keep back anything that is profitable.

The section before us occupies six chapters, and for the first approach, the structure found in *The Companion Bible* is of service in placing the distinct grouping of events before the eye. The following analysis brings into prominence the features that represents the lesson element, the features therefore that we mostly desire:--

Numb. xx. - xxv.

- A | xx. 1. Miriam dies.
- B | xx. 2 - xxi. 3. |
 - a | NO WATER.
 - b | “Would God we have died with our brethren.”
The Rock and the water.
Moses forfeits entry into land.
 - c | Water of Meribah.
Water refused by Edom twice.
Aaron forfeits entry into land.
 - d | Arad the Canaanite—Open fighting.
- B | xxi. 4 - xxv. 13. |
 - a | NO BREAD.
 - b | “Wherefore have ye brought us to die in the wilderness.”
The Serpent and life.
Israel set forward.
 - c | Brooks of Arnon.
Way refused twice by Sihon and Og,
Israel set forward.
 - d | Balak and Balaam—Betrayal.
- A | xxv. 14-18. Midianitish woman slain.

Here is the old trouble, viz., no water and no bread. While both Moses and Aaron forfeit entry into the land, the structure balances this with the two passages which say (even after failure in one instance) that “the children of Israel set forward” (*See* xx. 12, 13, 24 for Moses and Aaron; and xxi. 10 & xxii. 1 for Israel). Earlier we see how the Lord defended the high honour of Moses against the murmurs of Aaron and Miriam, and how he defended Aaron against the gainsaying of Korah. Nevertheless high honour brings high responsibility. To him that has had much given, of him will more be required. The five talent man must produce five more talents to be level with the two talent man who produced two. We are therefore still in an atmosphere of service, contest, endurance, pressing on, reward or loss.

Wasted years.

Chapter xx. opens with the words: “Then came the children of Israel, even the whole congregation, into the desert of Zin in the first month”, and unless we are already prepared, we should naturally assume this to be within a brief interval of the last recorded movement. As a matter of fact an interval of some 37½ years must be recognized as intervening between Numb. xiv. and Numb. xx.:--

“Your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years and ye shall know My breach of promise” (Numb. xiv. 33, 34).

This should warn us to be prepared to find the interval, but the definite date of Aaron’s death leaves no doubt. Chapter xxxiii. enumerates the itinerary of Israel from the time they went forth out of Egypt until they pitched by Jordan in the plains of Moab, and it is there we read:--

“And Aaron the priest went up into the Mount Hor at the commandment of the Lord, and died there, in the fortieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the first day of the fifth month” (Numb. xxxiii. 38).

Miriam dies without entering the promised land; Aaron dies without entering; and so does Moses, although the death of Moses is deferred until later. The men that were twenty years old and upward who had seen the mighty work of the Lord, and who had nevertheless refused to go up at the leading of the Lord, were now all dead.

The children that they had said were to be a prey in the wilderness had been miraculously preserved, and were now about to go into the land. The fact that these repeat the sin of their fathers removes all idea that they were essentially different from their parents; their entry is still of the grace of God. Moses called them rebels, and so they were; nevertheless, in that, and in his angry striking of the rock, Moses failed. The comment of Psa. cvi. 32, 33 should be remembered:--

“They angered him also at the waters of strife, so that it went ill with Moses for their sakes: because they provoked his spirit, so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips.”

Let none think that we comment on Moses' lapse in any self-righteous spirit. Who amongst us would have endured one year, let alone forty years, of this people's manners and ways?

There is perhaps a closer link between minister and people than at first appears. Paul said to the Thessalonians:--

“For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? For ye are our glory and joy when Timothy brought us good tidings of your faith we were comforted for now *we* live if *ye* stand fast in the Lord” (I Thess. ii. 19 - iii. 8).

To the like intent we read I John ii. 28 and II John 8:--

“And now, little children, abide in Him; that, when He shall appear, *we* may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.”

“Look to yourselves, that *we* lose not those things which we have wrought, but that *we* receive a full reward.”*

There is, moreover, another reason for the death of Moses and Aaron before entry into the land of promise. Both stood for a failing law and failing priesthood. Law was to be dead and buried before Joshua (whose name is the same as Jesus) should rise and lead the people over Jordan. God had forgiven many sins of Moses and Aaron, and could have forgiven many more. It pleased Him, however, to prevent the representative of the law from crossing the Jordan, and we do well to learn both the personal lesson for ourselves, and the doctrinal lesson for the church.

[NOTE * - Some texts read “ye”, but we do not feel that there is sufficient evidence to warrant the alteration. If “ye” had been originally written, who would want to alter it to the more difficult “we”?]

Types of Christ.

The rock and the brazen serpent are evident types of Christ. In the earliest history of Israel, the smiting of the rock had been by divine command:--

“Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock of Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink” (Exod. xvii. 6).

When once more water was to be brought out of the rock at the end of the forty years’ pilgrimage, no command was given to strike it again. The sacrifice of Christ is never to be repeated. There shall be in the day of Israel’s return a fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, and they shall look upon Him Whom they pierced, but they shall never pierce Him again. The striking of the rock in the second place is an O.T. parallel of the awful words of Heb. vi. 6: “They crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh.”

The second great type of this section is the brazen serpent. Again the people murmur (xxi. 5), and use very similar expressions to those recorded in xx. 3-5, yet in chapter xx. no punishment follows, while in chapter xxi. the murmuring is immediately followed by the judgment of the fiery serpents. It will be remembered that earlier still the people had murmured, and had been visited with dire judgment. Is there anything in the passage to account for this? There is one thing common to the two passages recording that punishment is absent, and that is a slighting reference to the manna:--

“But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes” (Numb. xi. 6).

“Our soul loatheth this light bread” (Numb. xxi. 5).

What expressions are here, when speaking of the gift of God—the corn of heaven, angels’ food.

The chapter in John which speaks so much of the manna, and of Christ as the true bread that came down from heaven, shows the spiritual equivalent of this loathing of the manna, and the “dried up” soul:--

“This is a hard (dried up) saying” (said many of His disciples), “who can hear it the words I speak unto you they are spirit and they are life” (John vi. 60-63).

Murmuring is evil enough, but when it takes the form of loathing the gift of God and the type of Christ, judgment falls.

When Israel sinned and broke the law at the foot of Sinai the Lord’s reply was, in effect, “Make an ark”. Here, the only remedy is: “Make a fiery serpent and set it upon a pole.” Here is a most precious anticipation of those statements in the epistles that reveal that the curse of the law can only be removed by one dying under a curse (Gal. iii. 13), or that reconciliation can only be accomplished by imputing sin to the One Who knew no sin:--

“For He hath made Him to be sin for us, Who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him” (II Cor. v. 19-21).

Numb. xxi. 8 is the O.T. equivalent of John iii. 16:--

“And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life” (John iii. 14, 15).

By the time Hezekiah came to the throne, the brazen serpent, preserved by Israel and carried by them into the land, had become an idolatrous image:--

“He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it; and he called it Nehushtan—a brass thing” (II Kings xviii. 4).

The symbol of Israel’s redemption had degenerated to the level of the obscene *Asherah*, and idolatrous images. If Satan cannot blot out a truth by denial, he will ruin it by fleshly prominence. Where the symbol of the cross is most prominent to-day, the reality of its teaching is lost. The apostate church abounds in crucifixes, images and incense, but where is the glorious doctrine of the cross of Christ? How can we tolerate the wearing of crosses as ornaments, when we remember of the dreadful truth for which it stands? What a sad thing for people of any time, when the grandest symbol of their faith has to be destroyed as “a thing of brass” in order to save them from idolatry.

The apostles, writing to different companies of the church, warn of idolatry, and we are not so removed from all spheres of temptation but that the warning should be remembered by ourselves also.

We will next consider the remaining items indicated in the structure which deal with the opposition of Edom, Arad, Sihon, Og and Moab.

#88. Numbers xx. - xxv.
The twofold opposition encountered by Israel
and its relation to Eph. vi. 12.
pp. 108 - 112

Israel, as they press on from Kadesh, meet with opposition in various forms. The Edomites, who were related by blood, refuse passage through their territory and even the purchase of drinking water. The Moabites, who were also related to Israel through Lot their father, sought to curse Israel, and succeeded in entrapping them in evil practices. Arad the Canaanite, Sihon King of Heshbon and Og King of Bashan, in no way related to Israel but rather the seed of the Serpent, oppose, too, in different ways. A careful consideration of these contests will throw light upon the conflict of the Church to-day, and especially upon the meaning of the apostle in Eph. vi. where the armour of God is specified and the contestants indicated. "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers" (Eph. vi. 12). Edom and Moab represent "flesh and blood"; Arad, Sihon and Og the "principalities and powers". Two distinct lines of action are indicated to deal with these two types of opposition.

Edom, of course, is Esau the brother of Jacob, and so the message sent to the King of Edom opens with the words: "Thus saith thy brother Israel" (Numb. xx. 14). The request was for permission to pass through the country, and the request was accompanied by a promise that neither fields, nor vineyards, nor wells of water should be touched, but that the King's highway should be kept "until we have passed thy borders". This modest request was refused. The children of Israel sent again saying:--

"We will go by the high way: and if I and my cattle drink of thy water, then will I pay for it: I will only, without doing anything else, go through on my feet" (Numb. xx. 19).

Edom again replied, "Thou shalt not go through", but Deut. ii. 28, 29 suggests that the request to purchase food and drink was granted. Neither Edom nor Moab, however, would allow Israel to pass through their territory. Jephtha's summary of the time shews this clearly:--

"Then Israel sent messengers unto the King of Edom, saying, Let me, I pray thee, pass through thy land, but the King of Edom would not hearken thereto. And in like manner they sent unto the King of Moab: but he would not consent; and Israel abode in Kadesh" (Judg. xi. 17).

Deut. xxiii. 3, 4 shows that Moab refused what Edom granted:--

"They met you not with bread and with water in the way, when ye came forth out of Egypt: and because they hired against thee Balaam the Son of Beor of Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse thee."

The Companion Bible note to Deut. ii. 28 suggests that Moab sold too, but the very clear-cut distinction made between Moab and Edom in Deut. xxiii. 3, 4 and 7 is rather opposed to this suggestion. However, be that as it may, Edom and Moab both refused permission for Israel to pass through their territory.

What did the Lord say? Did He command, "Arise, O Israel, manifest by conquest that you are the redeemed of the Lord"? No; Israel's attitude was to be the reverse of this. All that is written in Numb. xx. 21 is: "Wherefore Israel turned away from him." Deut. ii., however, makes very clear what Israel's attitude was to be:--

"Ye are to pass through the coast of your brethren, the children of Esau, which dwell in Seir; and they shall be afraid of you: take ye good heed unto yourselves therefore. Meddle not with them; for I will not give you of their land, no, not so much as a foot breadth" (Deut. ii. 4, 5).

Much the same is said of the Moabites: "Distress not the Moabites neither contend with them in battle" (ii. 9). Here is no uncertain sound, and the spiritual analogy is not difficult to perceive:--

"We wrestle not with flesh and blood" (Eph. vi. 12).
"Ye took joyfully the spoiling of your goods" (Heb. x. 34).
"They confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth" (Heb. xi. 13).
"No man that warreth entangleth himself in the affairs of his livelihood" (II Tim. ii. 4).
"Let your moderation be known to all men" (Phil. iv. 5).
"I have learned in whatsoever state I am, to be content" (or independent) (Phil. iv. 11).

Passages like these bear out the analogy. We are not citizens here. This world is partitioned out to others; brothers indeed in the flesh but, alas, not in the line of promise. We leave them their inheritance, we do not meddle with them, we shall not possess one foot of their territory, and we are forbidden to enter into conflict. "From such turn away" is the apostle's echo of the words, "Israel turned away from him". If the rebuff of the world hurts our pride, we must remember that we should have no pride left to be hurt. The redeemed of the Lord should have no "rights" in the world. Their citizenship is not here; they are at best pilgrims seeking a pathway home.

When we come to the consideration of the Canaanite opponents, we are on entirely different ground. The first is King Arad the Canaanite. We read:--

"And when King Arad the Canaanite, which dwelt in the south, heard tell that Israel came by way of the spies; then he fought against Israel, and took some of them prisoners" (Numb. xxi. 1).

The spies had originally entered the land by this route (*see* Numb. xiii. 17), and this early act of unbelief (as we have seen the sending of the spies to be) not only brought disaster upon those who lived at the time, but upon their children forty years afterwards.

The Canaanites are delivered into the hand of Israel and are utterly destroyed.

A request is next sent to Sihon, King of the Amorites, couched in terms almost identical with those used for Edom. The request is refused, Sihon comes out and fights against Israel; and Israel smites him with the edge of the sword, and takes possession of his territory. What Israel took from Sihon had originally belonged to Moab (Numb. xxi. 26), who had become idolatrous, as we see from Numb. xxi. 28, 29: “The lords (baalim) of the high places of Arnon O people of Chemosh” (Chemosh being an idol, II Kings xxiii. 13).

This was a legitimate conquest on this side of Jordan before the land of promise was reached; and the Church to-day, while not forgetting the restrictions associated with Moab and Edom, can win back territory which was lost to Satan and his hosts, which once belonged to the outer circle of God’s people.

Og, King of Bashan, also went out against Israel, and he, too, was overcome and destroyed. This king was the last of the Rephaim; his bedstead (or tomb) was nine cubits long, “after the cubit of a man”.

The destruction of Sihon and Og is commemorated in a psalm of praise, which specially emphasizes the mercy of God.

“To Him which smote great kings:
For His mercy endureth for ever:
And slew famous kings:
For His mercy endureth for ever:
Sihon, King of the Amorites:
For His mercy endureth for ever:
And Og, King of Bashan:
For His mercy endureth for ever” (Psa. cxxxvi. 17-20).

This seed of the giants, the Rephaim, were the tares sown by the Wicked One; it was mercy utterly to destroy them. And so, when the day arrives for the Church to ascend into the heavenly inheritance, the principalities and powers, the world holders of this darkness and the “spiritual wickednesses” that have, under the authority of Satan, for so long barred the way, shall in like manner be destroyed. Already by the cross they have been “spoiled” and “triumphed over” (Col. ii. 15). For the present time our orders are to “stand”, to “stand against” and to “withstand”.

If it was vital that Israel should follow out implicitly the instructions given them in their passage from the wilderness to the promised land, it is surely equally important that we also should neither exceed nor fall short of the instructions given for our own guidance. The teaching that some hold regarding “warfare” to-day, is as though Israel, long before the arrival at Kadesh, marched forward indiscriminately with sword in hand, simply because they knew that over the Jordan lay their inheritance and that even then they were really “more than conquerors”.

We have touched, in passing, upon each of the opposing forces met by Israel, but so much is involved in the action of Balak and Balaam that this must be reserved for separate study in a subsequent paper.

#89. Numbers xxii. - xxv.
Balaam and Baal-Poer.
pp. 147 - 153

Throughout the unfolding of the purpose of the ages—whether the whole sweep of that purpose, as visualized from Gen. i. to Rev. xxii., whether man himself, from Paradise lost to Paradise regained, whether Israel, or the Church, or even the individual life of the believer throughout all times and under all dispensations—Scripture apprizes us of a series of Satanic attacks, carried out along lines parallel with that purpose, including, prominently, an attack upon the exclusive worship of God, and a seduction from the path of moral purity. These attacks are not confined to the beginning of any new dispensation, but are repeated, with undiminished force, at their close. Rebellion began in heaven and war will again take place in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the Dragon and his angels. That old Serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, who deceived our first parents when placed in the garden of Eden, will deceive the nations once again, just before the garden is restored at the last.

Coming closer to our subject, Israel had been delivered out of Egypt but five months when we find them ensnared in the matter of the golden calf and its immoral “play”, for they made themselves naked (Exod. xxxii. 1-6, 25). This terrible breaking of the covenant of Sinai was visited by a judgment executed by the sons of Levi. And now, as we are about to read the account of the closing attack upon Israel, just as they are to cross the Jordan, we find again, in the matter of Baal-Peor, the same idolatry and immorality, followed by vengeance executed by the javelin of Phinehas.

The book of the Revelation reveals a similar attack at the time of the end, “that woman Jezebel” teaching the same double evil in the church in Thyatira (Rev. ii. 20). Before the dreadful fall of Israel in the matter of Baal-Peor, much is recorded concerning Balaam himself, and considerable space is devoted to his unwilling inspiration and utterance of the prophetic parables.

Three battles are recorded: against Irad the Canaanite, Sihon, king of the Amorites, and Og, king of Bashan, but these sanguinary fights are disposed of in a few verses. The record of the final attack under Balaam, however, occupies more than one hundred verses. Moreover, the N.T. refers to Balaam three times, and makes allusion to two points in the story recorded in Numbers:--

“Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam, the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness, but was rebuked for his iniquity; the dumb ass speaking with man’s voice forbad the madness of the prophet” (II Pet. ii. 15, 16).

“Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Korah” (Jude 11).

“But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit fornication. So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate” (Rev. ii. 14, 15).

A reference is made to this period in I Cor. x. 8:--

“Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand.”

Two references are made to Baal-Peor outside the books of Moses:--

“They joined themselves also unto Baal-Peor, and ate the sacrifices of the dead” (Psa. cvi. 28).

“They went to Baal-Peor and separated (*nazar*, as Numb. vi. 7) themselves unto that shame; and their abominations were according as they loved” (Hos. ix. 10).

As a detailed examination of the whole of the narrative is beyond our limits, these references will enable us to appreciate the features that require consideration.

Just as Balaam comes upon the scene at the very end of Israel’s period of wandering, and just before they cross over into the promised land, so these N.T. Scriptures which refer to Balaam, are Scriptures that deal with the last days, viz., II Peter, Jude and Revelation.

II Peter is occupied with prophecy, both false and true, revolving around the second coming of the Lord. Chapter ii. is taken up with the question of false prophets, and the ungodly of ancient times. The angels that sinned, the old world in the days of Noah, and the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, are examples cited of the ungodliness yet to come. Even a passing acquaintance with the Scriptures that deal with these three subjects will indicate the awful uncleanness associated with them, and this is immediately taken up by the apostle (ii. 10-14), and is followed by the reference to Balaam.

Jude follows very closely the same lines as II Pet. ii. He, too, introduces three ancient examples of ungodliness: Israel, the angels, and Sodom & Gomorrah, and, again, terrible uncleanness is indicated (Jude 7, 8). These three classes are balanced in the epistle by three evil individuals: Cain, Balaam & Korah, and throw light upon the character of the last days.

The book of the Revelation also speaks of the last days, and again we read of Balaam. This time a special doctrine is associated with his name, and also with Nicolaitanes. Now, inasmuch as both *Balaam* and *Nicolaitan* have the same meaning, namely, the overcoming of the people, we see that Satan will once more introduce his unclean doctrines at the time of the end to ensnare the people of God. Balaam’s doctrine was taught at Pergamos—“where Satan’s throne is.” Balaam stands before us as the great typical false prophet: he sins against light and knowledge and is overcome of greed: He was in league with the forces of evil, as may be seen by the references to enchantments (Numb. xxiii. 23; xxiv. 1 and falling into a trance, xxiv. 4). Four times does Balaam

utter in parable form the words that God put into his mouth. Balak takes Balaam to view Israel from three different heights, but no loophole can be found for the curse to fall upon them.

Balaam's four parables represent four aspects of the perfect standing of every true child of God. Under the first covenant Israel had undertaken to inherit the position of a kingdom of Priests by their obedience, saying: "All that the Lord hath spoke we will do" (Exod. xix. 3-8), and as a part of their preparation for the confirmation of this covenant Moses was to: "sanctify them to-day and to-morrow and let them wash their clothes and be ready against the third day" (Exod. xix. 10, 11). Alas, we know too well that Israel utterly failed, and the Lord, in grace, set aside that covenant and introduced another, a better covenant, established by better promises, resting upon an infinitely better Sacrifice, and in the hand of a better Mediator.

When Israel do, eventually, enter into their blessed inheritance, it will not be by their own obedience, neither will they be able to "wash their clothes and be ready against the third day". The book of the Revelation gives the new and better state:--

"Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father" (Rev. i. 5, 6).

"These are they which have come out of greater tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the lamb" (Rev. vii. 14).

"Thou hast redeemed to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, and hast made them unto our God kings and priests: and they shall reign over the earth" (Rev. v. 9, 10).

The first of Balaam's parables emphasizes the believer's separation unto God:--

"Lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations" (Numb. xxiii. 9).

This is the basic truth concerning Israel. The second parable emphasizes the perfect acceptance of every child of God:--

"He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath He seen perverseness in Israel" (Numb. xxiii. 21).

Yet on both sides of this parable of Balaam we have the record of Israel's terrible failure. The apparent contradiction is, however, removed when we remember that Balaam speaks of their *standing*, whereas Moses speaks of their *state*.

The two parables that follow emphasize the glory and the victory of the people "in the latter days" (Numb. xxiv. 14). "His kingdom shall be exalted" (Numb. xxiv. 7), and Balaam plainly prophesies that this exaltation is associated with the Messiah:--

"There shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel. Out of Jacob shall come He that shall have dominion" (Numb. xxiv. 17, 19).

Before ending the prophetic utterances, Balaam speaks of the end of the Amalekites, the Kenites and the Assyrians. Ships shall come from the coast of Shittim, and afflict both the Assyrian and the Hebrew, and then he also (that sent the ships) shall perish for ever. Daniel, in xi. 30 of his book, speaks of these “ships of Chittim”, and makes it clear that they come against the Beast of the Apocalypse.

Here, then, we have a false prophet, who sets out, at the bidding of a king, to curse Israel, uttering such truths as demand nothing less than the inspiration of God as their origin. Balaam realized his helplessness in the matter, saying to Balak:--

“Have I now any power at all to say anything? The word that God putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak” (Numb. xxii. 38).

“Must I not take heed to speak that which the Lord hath put in my mouth?” (Numb. xxiii. 12).

“If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the commandment of the Lord, to do either good or bad of mine own mind: but what the Lord saith, that will I speak” (Numb. xxiv. 13).

“And Balaam lifted up his eyes, and he saw Israel abiding in his tents according to their tribes; and the spirit of God came upon him” (Numb. xxiv. 2).

It is therefore apparent that Balaam’s utterances had no relation to his own heart, or his own moral character. He, himself, was wicked, unrepentant, and in league with Satanic powers, yet God could so come upon him that he was powerless to resist being made a mouthpiece of the Almighty. If wicked Balaam and wicked Caiaphas can utter prophetic truth by the mighty constraint of the Spirit of God, how much more may we believe that “holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” (II Pet. i. 21)?

It is sad to leave this high standpoint of the blessed *standing* of the elect of God, for the narrative of their terrible *state* which follows in Numb. xxv. Balaam’s intended curses were rendered impossible, but Balaam’s subtle doctrine ensnared the people of God:--

“And Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab. And they called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods: and the people did eat, and bowed down to their gods, and Israel joined himself unto Baal-Peor” (Numb. xxv. 1-3).

No censer of incense stays the judgment that now falls. The javelin of Phinehas “made an atonement for the children of Israel”, and his reward is remembered in the words of Israel’s last prophet (Mal. ii. 4, 5). The words that follow deal with abuses in connection with marriage, and the intention of the Lord in marriage—“That He might seek a seed of God” (*Elohim*) (Mal. ii. 15). They reveal the diabolical character of Balaam’s doctrine. Its connection with Cain, the fallen angels and the cities of the plain in II Peter and Jude, further emphasizes the Satanic plot at Baal-Peor, at the moment of entry into the land, to sow his own tares, “the seed of the wicked one”.

It is surely something more than an accident that the passage already quoted from Hos. ix. 10 should use the word *nazar* (“separate”), which is found in Numb. vi. 3,

where we have the law of the Nazarite. What a contrast. Israel should have been “separated” as a nation unto the Lord: instead, they corrupted themselves, and “separated themselves unto that shame, and their abominations were according as they loved”. This passage from Hosea makes us think of the charge against the church of Ephesus, “Thou hast left thy first love”, although, be it said, they hated the deeds of the Nicolaitanes. Hate, however, is not so strong as love, and with the loss of the first love, hatred of the Nicolaitan doctrine waned, so that by the time we reach Pergamos, the Nicolaitan doctrine has a hold, and is coupled with the doctrine of Balaam, and answered by the seduction of Jezebel. And now Levi with his sword and Phinehas with his javelin give place to the Lord Himself, out of whose mouth goeth a sharp two-edged sword.

The last act of Moses was the execution of vengeance, a faint anticipation of the “Day of vengeance of our God”:

“And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Avenge the children of Israel of the Midianites: afterwards shalt thou be gathered unto thy people” (Numb. xxxi. 2).

Each tribe of Israel sent 1,000 armed men to execute this vengeance of the Lord against Midian, for all Israel had been guilty, and had actually lost double this number, 24,000 having died, as Numb. xxv.9 declares. In this connection we earlier quoted I Cor. x. 8. As some may have a difficulty because that passage says 23,000, it should be noted that I Cor. x. 8 specifies how many died *in one day*, for some had been hanged, and some slain earlier (Numb. xxv. 4, 5). Phinehas, whose javelin executed the first stroke of vengeance on a daughter of Midian, led the army on this dreadful mission. This was no conquest of territory, it was not the claiming of an inheritance; it was a priestly blotting out of a sinful alliance. In this battle Balaam meets his end, unrepentant to the last. Not a single man of Israel was lost in this battle, and a thank offering was brought to make an atonement for their souls before the Lord, amounting to 16,750 shekels of gold. This was brought into the tabernacle of the congregation, “for a memorial for the children of Israel before the Lord” (Numb. xxxi. 54). This, in some measure, counters the other memorial for the children of Israel, made of the rebels’ censers (Numb. xvi. 40).

Surely we are justified in seeing in these 12,000 overcomers a foreshadowing of that great company, the 144,000 who overcome, who were not defiled with women, and who stand out in contrast with the awful doctrine of Balaam and Jezebel.

Israel now prepare to enter the land of promise, and the remaining chapters of Numbers are occupied with the numbering of the people, with laws adjusted to suit the changed circumstances, and with the special provision of the cities of refuge. These we hope to consider in our next article, which brings the survey of Numbers to a conclusion.

#90. Concluding features (Numb. xxvi. - xxxvi.).
pp. 186 - 190

We have now considered the teaching of the Book of Numbers up to the end of chapter xxv. From this point to the end of the Book, we have eleven more chapters. Had our intention in this series been a study of each book as it stands, we should have dealt next with the structures and analysis of the remaining chapters. This work had been partly done, but upon weighing the matter over, and considering the teaching of these remaining chapters in the light of the title, "*Fundamentals of dispensational truth*", we have decided to replace this detailed study by the briefest of summaries. So much of the ground is retraced in these chapters, the new matter being largely connected with the re-adjustment of the people in view of the entry into the land, and the summary will be sufficient to lead on to the study of the fifth book of Moses, that of Deuteronomy.

Numb. xxvi. is occupied with the numbering of the people. This is the third census. The three occasions on which a census was taken are as follows:--

- (1) Before the building of the tabernacle (Exod. xxx. 11; xxxviii. 25). This provided silver for the work of the tabernacle.
- (2) At the opening of the Book of Numbers, in the wilderness of Sinai (Numb. i.).
- (3) The third numbering is recorded here in Numb. xxvi. The record is followed by this solemn comment:--

"These are they that were numbered by Moses and Eleazar the priest, who numbered the children of Israel in the plains of Moab by Jordan near Jericho. But among these was not a man whom Moses and Aaron the priest numbered, when they numbered the children of Israel in the wilderness of Sinai. For the Lord had said of them, They shall surely die in the wilderness. And there was not left a man of them save Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua, the son of Nun" (Numb. xxvi. 63-65).

Even Moses is not spared. He, too, must suffer loss, because of his failure to sanctify the Lord at Meribah:--

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Get thee up into this mount Abarim, and see the land which I have given unto the children of Israel. And when thou hast seen it, thou also shalt be gathered unto thy people, as Aaron thy brother was gathered. For ye rebelled against My commandment in the desert of Zin, in the strife of the congregation, to sanctify Me at the water before their eyes" (Numb. xxvii. 12-14).

With these solemn words we may compare the witness of the apostle Paul:--

"Lest by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be disqualified All our fathers were under the cloud all all all all, but with many of them God was not well pleased Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall" (I Cor. ix. 24 - x. 12).

"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief. Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us any of you should seem to come short of it" (Heb. iii. 7 - iv. 1).

"This one thing I do, forgetting reaching forth I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. iii. 13, 14).

As we read these words, who among us would have the temerity to say that we are sure that that crown and prize are ours? We do not, of course, mean to cast the slightest doubt upon the absolutely perfect and inalienable position that every believer occupies in grace. The passage in view is not dealing with position in grace, but with service, running a race, fighting a good fight, finishing a course. There is as much difference between these two things as between the rock foundation once laid, and the subsequent erection built upon it that shall be tried by fire (I Cor. iii.). When we are dealing with Israel in the Book of Numbers, we must remember that they are a redeemed people. Redemption had delivered them from the bondage of Egypt, and the Red Sea flowed between them. Moses himself was a saved man; yet he “suffered loss”. The reader would be helped in his study if he were to read Psalm xc. and xci., noticing that Psalm xc. speaks of those whose carcasses fell in the wilderness, while Psalm xci. speaks of those who, being under twenty years of age, were preserved for those forty years, and led into the land under Joshua.

A beautiful spirit is manifested in the reply of Moses in Numb. xxvii. to the sentence of death. He makes no complaint, he offers no excuses; he bows before the Lord, but asks that a successor shall be appointed.

Numb. xxvii. deals with the request of the daughters of Zelophedad, and the Lord’s answer. The latter, together with the further enactment given in the last chapter of Numbers, has to do with the law of the kinsman-redeemer, an important principle which underlies the beautiful account in the book of Ruth and the teaching of Scripture in connection with the Redeemer Himself (*See* the series on “*Redemption*”, Volume XII, page 109). Chapters xxviii. and xxix. restate the law regarding various offerings and feasts. This was necessary for the guidance of the people about to enter the land, but does not demand a detailed study here.

Chapter xxx. is devoted to the question of vows: their fulfillment and their cancellation. A special place is given to the woman in the matter. Her vow can be rendered void either by her father, if she be unmarried, or by her husband, if she be married. The words, “He shall bear her iniquity” (xxx. 15) give us a faint picture of the relationship between Christ and His people. Moreover, the passage throws light upon the true status of women. It is introduced by the words: “This is the thing which the Lord hath commanded.” A word here may perhaps be in season when the tendency of the times, even among the Lord’s people, is to throw over the restraints of Scripture in the interests of a false “liberty” and “equality”. The treatment of the daughters of Zelophedad, taken together with this chapter, would help to give a balanced judgment.

In chapter xxxi. Moses is commanded to avenge the children of Israel upon the Midianites. This is the last command laid upon Moses: “afterward shalt thou be gathered unto thy people.” Midian is defeated. Balaam is slain. The spoils of war are purified with fire and the water of separation. A great difference is made between the levy imposed upon those who actually went out to the battle, and the remainder of the congregation who stayed at home.

The prey taken was of three kinds: persons (verses 12, 18, 35), beasts (32-34) and money & goods (22 and 50). These were divided among the congregation and the army. In this we have an anticipation of David's ruling concerning "his part that tarrieth by the stuff" (I Sam. xxx. 24). On the other hand there is due recognition of the active part played by the soldier, whose levy was "one soul of five hundred" whilst that of the congregation was "one portion of fifty" (Numb. xxxi. 27-30). At the close of this levy, a census was taken of the warriors, which revealed the fact that there "lacked not one" of them. Moved with gratitude, they bring an oblation, to make an atonement for their souls.

Chapter xxxii. is mainly concerned with the request of Reuben and Gad, that their inheritance should be allotted to them in the land of Gilead because "the place was a place for cattle". They requested that they should not be brought "over Jordan" (xxxii. 1-5). Their request was granted, upon condition that they sent their quota to war, until Israel had entered into their own possessions. There is an important lesson here, which we shall probably consider in our study of the Book of Joshua and its typical teaching. We may anticipate, however, without going into detail:--

- (1) It was the possession of cattle, not the glory of the Lord, or the following of His will, that influenced Reuben and Gad.
- (2) It was an attempt to reverse God's order—which was the conquest of Canaan first, and then the spreading out to occupy the land "from sea to sea".
- (3) The gaining of their request meant that many never returned to wife and children or inheritance. And when Israel began to be taken into captivity, they were among the first to go.

It is "natural" to shirk the crossing of Jordan, but it is foreign to the teaching of Scripture.

Chapter xxxiii. is occupied with a record of the journeys of Israel. The word "journeys" in verse one is, in the Hebrew, "pullings up", and has reference to the tent pegs. The whole is a record of pilgrimage, and a remainder of the way in which the Lord had led the people, suffering their ways, providing food and raiment, and eventually leading them into the land of promise.

Chapter xxxiv. fixes the bounds of the inheritance.

Chapter xxxv. provides for the tribe of Levi forty-eight cities, of which six are reserved as cities of refuge for the man-slayer (verses 1-6). Three of these cities were in the land of Canaan, and three on the other side of Jordan (verse 14). The avenger of blood is the kinsman-redeemer; and this chapter, together with those that deal with the problem of the daughters of Zelophedad, provided a twofold aspect of the work of the Redeemer, corresponding to the two words, "destroy" and "deliver" in Heb. ii. 14, 15.

From another angle, the avenger of blood may be regarded as symbolizing the law, from whom the man-slayer was not freed until the death of the High Priest.

Chapter xxxvi. brings this book to a close with the added statement already considered regarding the case of the inheritance passing to the daughter of a family. Marriage within the tribe is the only restriction; freedom of choice is allowed within these limits. This may well be taken as an illustration of the vexed question of the freedom of choice among moral agents. Man must of necessity be free; otherwise he ceases to be either moral or responsible. His freedom, however, is not absolute but relative; for God's will shall with certainty be accomplished. Freedom of choice is not permitted to spoil the inheritance or ourselves or of others, for this inheritance has much to do with the great purpose of the ages. We ask the reader to observe that we use the words, "freedom of *choice*" and not "freedom of *will*". Who among us can say "I will" and not feel how much he is bound by circumstances?

With this survey we conclude our study of the book of pilgrimage; and look forward with interest to the restatement which is contained in the book of Deuteronomy.

Fundamentals of Dispensational Truth. (Second Series).

Deuteronomy.

#1. Structure of the Book. pp. 234 - 238

We have now reached the fifth book of Moses, called in our version *Deuteronomy*. The name given by the Hebrews is usually taken from the opening sentence: *Elleh debarim*, "These be the words". The title Deuteronomy was taken by our translators from the Vulgate *Deuteronomium*, which in turn was taken from the Septuagint, where, in Deut. xvii. 18, the words, "A copy of this law" (Hebrew: *Mishneh Hat-Torah*) are translated by *Deuteronomium*, meaning, "A repetition of the law". This title indicates very clearly the general purpose of the book, which is devoted mainly to a rehearsal of the law upon the threshold of the land of promise. Of all the suggested outlines and subdivisions that we have examined, none seems to keep so close to the actual subject-matter as that given in *The Companion Bible*.

The literary structure given in *The Companion Bible* is as follows:--

- A | i. 1-5. Introduction.
- B | C | i. 6 - xxxii. 47. The Tribes. Their administration.
 - D | xxxii. 48-52. Moses. His death announced.
- B | C | xxxiii. 1-29. The Tribes. Their blessing.
 - D | xxxiv. 1-7. Moses. His death accomplished.
- A | xxxiv. 8-12. Conclusion.

This outline has the advantage of placing all the spoken words of Moses together in one member (B | C | i. 6 - xxxii. 47) with the exception of the blessing pronounced upon the nation in xxxiii. 1-29, which stands alone. As these articles have in mind readers who may not be able to weigh over the “pros and cons” of those structures which deal with a wide range of subject-matter, we devote this opening article to an expansion and verification of the outline given in *The Companion Bible* for the second member in the scheme above (C | i. 6 - xxxii. 47).

Analysis of the addresses of Moses to Israel (From *The Companion Bible*):

C | E | G | i. 6 - iii. 29. Possession East of Jordan. Retrospective.
 H | a | iv. 1 - v. 33. Injunctions in Horeb. Retrospective.
 b | vi. 1 - xi. 25. Injunctions on entry. Prospective.
 J | c | xi. 26-28. Blessings and curses.
 d | xi. 29-32. Gerizim and Ebal.
 F | xii. 1 - xxvii. 10. Laws IN the Land.
 E | J | d | xxvii. 11-26. Gerizim and Ebal.
 c | xxviii. 1-68. Blessings and curses.
 H | a | xxix. 1-17. Injunctions *plus* Horeb. Retrospective.
 b | xxix. 18 - xxx. 20. Injunctions re Dispersion. Prospective.
 G | xxxi. 1-8. Possession West of Jordan. Prospective.
 F | xxxi. 9 - xxxii. 47. Laws and Song: IN and OUT of the Land.

The opening member is retrospective and deals with possession East of Jordan; the balancing member is prospective and deals with possession West of Jordan. These members we shall now consider more in detail, so that the reader may see for himself that these things are so.

The first member is retrospective, for Moses turns the attention of his hearers back to that day thirty-eight years earlier, when God had commanded the nation to go up and possess the land. He reminds them of the sending of the spies and the awful result. Chapters ii. and iii. speak of Israel’s journeys through the lands “this side of Jordan”, lands held by Og, king of Bashan, and Sihon, king of the Amorites. Chapter iii. refers to the inheritance of Reuben, Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh, also on “this side of Jordan”. This is sufficient, we trust, to establish the headline of the structure; and we now turn to the corresponding section, xxxi. 1-8.

This section is a short one occupying but eight verses. It opens with the fact that Moses was one hundred and twenty years old, that he was no longer as active as hitherto, and that he was forbidden by the Lord to go over Jordan. But though Moses the leader had failed, Jehovah the Lord had not: “The Lord thy God, He will go over before thee and Joshua, he shall go over before thee” (xxx. 3). The opening section dealt with Og and Sihon and so, in this balancing section, we find: “And the Lord shall do unto them, as He did to Sihon and to Og” (xxx. 4). Words of encouragement addressed to Joshua are then given; these are repeated in Joshua i., emphasizing that the point of

view is now prospective, looking forward to the crossing of Jordan and the entering of the land.

We now examine the next pair of members, iv. 1 - v. 33 and xxix. 1-17. Both are said to be retrospective, and associated with Horeb. The second differs from the first in that it is said to be "*plus* Horeb". This we must test. Israel are reminded of what took place at Baal-peor (iv. 3), of what happened to Moses (iv. 21) and of the manifestation at Sinai and in Egypt (iv. 33, 34). The association with Horeb is found in iv. 15 and v. 2. The parallel passage (xxix. 1-17) is both retrospective and additional to the covenant terms of Horeb. Moses opens with the retrospective words, "Ye have seen" (xxix. 2-4); and this is resumed in verses 16 and 17: "For ye know Ye have seen." The words of xxix. 1: "These are the words of the covenant *beside the covenant* which He made with them in Horeb" speak of an important fact that must be taken into consideration whenever the "covenant" is mentioned. For the moment, however, we have to test the structure given on page 235. We turn, therefore, to the next pair of members, vi. 1 - xi. 25 and xxix. 18 - xxx. 20:--

Injunctions on entry. Prospective.
Injunctions re dispersion. Prospective.

Chapter vi. opens with the words:--

"Now these are the commandments, the statutes and the judgments which the Lord your God commanded to teach you, *that ye might do them in the land* whither ye go to possess it thou and thy son, and thy son's son" (vi. 1, 2).

Chapter vii. 1 continues in the same strain: "When the Lord thy God shall bring thee into the land." And so with viii. 1, ix. 1 and xi. 10, 11; the whole passage, however (xxix. 18 - xxx. 20), has to do with the possibility of the people being deprived of the land and scattered:--

"The anger of the Lord was kindled against the land and the Lord rooted them out and cast them into another land" (xxix. 27, 28).
"If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven" (xxx. 4).

The central members of the structure are concerned with blessings and curses, Gerizim and Ebal, and the laws in the land.

Chapter xi. 26-28 deals with a blessing and a curse:--

"Behold I set before you this day a blessing and a curse" (xi. 26).

Chapter xxviii. 1-68 balances this section, verses 3-14 detailing a series of blessings, and verses 15-68 a series of curses. Chapter xxvii. 11-26 is taken up with the pronouncement of blessings and curses by specified tribes on either Gerizim or Ebal.

This leaves us with xii. 1 - xxvii. 10 and xxxi. 9 - xxxii. 47:--

Laws IN the land.
Laws and songs IN and OUT of the land.

Chapter xii. opens with the words:--

“These are the statutes and judgments, which ye shall observe to do *in the land*, which the Lord God of thy fathers giveth thee to possess it, all the days that ye live upon the earth.”

These statutes and judgments deal with idolatrous places, images, clean and unclean foods, false prophets, sabbatical years, passover and other feasts, the administration of justice, the desire for a king, the Levites, war, agriculture, property, marriage, women, men, offerings and tithes.

Chapter xxxi. 9 speaks of Moses writing “this law” and xxxi. 19 continues with a command to write “this song”. The song gives a prophetic picture of Israel’s history from their original call and election to the establishing at last of the kingdom.

We trust that sufficient has been said to justify the structure given in *The Companion Bible*, and with this survey we must conclude. In subsequent articles we hope to single out a few essential features for consideration, but the bulk of the book we shall have to pass over unnoticed. The book is long and, to some extent, a repetition, and our studies in this series are not intended to give a detailed exposition of every chapter, but rather to draw attention to features that are fundamental to the working out of the purpose of the ages as exhibited during the varied dispensations.

Great and precious promises.

#1. An incentive to holiness.

pp. 21 - 24

When we were dealing with various aspects of sanctification in an earlier series, we had occasion to refer to II Cor. vii. 1, our special point at the time being the “perfecting” of holiness that is there enjoined. It is evident that in pursuing one line of doctrine many other helpful and interesting parts of the truth must necessarily be passed by without comment. We now therefore return to this same verse, to commence another series of short articles, this time meditating rather upon the place that “promises” occupy in our growth in grace:--

“Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God” (II Cor. vii. 1).

The exhortation to “perfect holiness” does not stand alone; behind it is a priceless possession:--

“Having let us.”

These words set before the reader God’s order of presentation, an order which recurs in other parts of Scripture, and particularly in Heb. iv. and x.:--

“Seeing then that WE HAVE a great High Priest, that is passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, LET US hold fast our profession” (Heb. iv. 14).

“For WE HAVE an High Priest Who was tempted like as we are LET US therefore come boldly to the throne of grace” (Heb. iv. 15, 16).

“HAVING therefore, brethren, boldness and HAVING an High Priest over the house of God; LET US draw near with a true heart LET US hold fast the profession of our hope LET US consider one another” (Heb. x. 19-24).

Such is the only true basis and sequence of exhortation; to reverse the order would be spiritually fatal.

We propose, therefore, to consider the promises that form the basis of this true exhortation, and we commence with the passage already referred to, II Cor. vii. 1.

The promises referred to here are those quoted in II Cor. vi. 16-18:--

“For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.”

This is a composite quotation from several O.T. Scriptures. The passages cited are Lev. xxvi. 12; Ezek. xxxvii. 26, 27; Isa. lii. 11, and II Sam. vii. 14. There is also an allusion to Isa. xliii. 6. At first sight, these citations may seem to be quoted at random without much reference to context, but an examination of the passages as they stand in II Cor. vi. will shew an underlying unity and purpose, which we should, of course, expect in any part of the Word of God.

The O.T. quotations in II Cor. vi. 16-18.

- A | 16. YE ARE—The temple of the living God.
- B | 16. I WILL—Dwell, Walk, Be their God.
- C | THEY SHALL BE—My people.
- A | 17. BE YE—separate. Touch not.
- B | 17, 18. I WILL—Receive. Be a Father.
- C | 18. YE SHALL BE—My sons and daughter.

When we have seen this arrangement of subject-matter, we cannot possibly entertain the idea of mere haphazard quotation. Rather, we find that in this orderly presentation of truth, we have set forth the very teaching to which we have already alluded, represented by the words, “Having let us”. Here, however, the basis and incentive is not what we *have*, but deeper still—what we *are*: “Ye are the temple of the living God.”

“*Ye are.*”—In the first epistle to the Corinthians the truth that the believer is the temple of God had already been made known:--

“What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s” (I Cor. vi. 19, 20).

Here are the same argument, the same basis, and the same approach, as are found in II Cor. vi. 16 - vii. 1. Here the believer, being the temple of God, is urged to glorify God in body and in spirit, while in II Cor. vi. 16 - vii. 1, on the same basis, there is to be the cleansing of the flesh and spirit from all filthiness—an illuminating comment upon what glorifying God in body and in spirit entails.

“*I will.*”—Before God could dwell in the midst of Israel a sanctuary had to be made, so that the holiness of the Lord might be uncompromised by His condescension:--

“Let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them” (Exod. xxv. 8).

This is a promise, the fullness and blessedness of which we do not yet realize. If God shall, in any sense, dwell and walk with His people, then the promise becomes a firm basis upon which the exhortation can rest: “Having therefore let us cleanse ourselves.” There is, moreover, a prophetic anticipation of that glorious day when in the new heavens and earth shall resound the voice, saying:--

“Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God” (Rev. xxi. 3).

It is natural and right to read straight on the comforting words, “and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes”, but we should not forget that the context is very like that of II Cor. vi. 16 - vii. 1:--

“I will be his God, and he shall be My son. But the fearful and the unbelieving, and the abominable and murderers and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death . . . there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth” (Rev. xxi. 7, 8, 27).

“*They shall be.*”—Not until the fulfillment of the two preceding clauses, can it be said, “They shall be My people”. The people of God are something more than a chosen nation. They are His people because they are bought with a price, and have been cleanse and sanctified.

To enforce the lesson, the apostle goes over the ground again, and approaches his subject from another angle.

“*Be ye.*”—This clause looks back to the previous statement: “Ye are the temple of the living God.” If this is so, says the apostle, we must remember that there can be nothing in common between the temple of God and idols. So he continues:--

“Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing” (II Cor. vi. 17).

Here we have a threefold exhibition of the fact that we are the temple of God. We are to “come out”, to “be separate” and to “touch not the unclean thing”.

To each one of us these words have their own special appeal and application; it is not for us in an article like this to attempt more than draw attention to facts. The real application must be the work of the Holy Spirit interpreting to heart and conscience what these things involve. We may at least see that any compromising connection that we may have, even in the realm of service, comes under this scrutiny.

“*I will.*”—In the first set of quotations, the Lord’s “I will” included the thoughts of “dwelling”, “walking” and “being their God”. Another aspect is presented in this second “I will”:--

“I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you” (II Cor. vi. 18).

If it is true that we are received by God, and if He is also our Father, what precious promises we have upon which to lean and from which to work.

“*Ye shall be.*”—When the Lord said, “I will be their God”, the sequel was that “they shall be My people”. When He says, “I will be a Father unto you”, then the sequel must be: “And ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.”

With this double set of promises as basis and incentive, the apostle proceeds to the application:--

“Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God” (II Cor. vii. 1).

#2. Promises and the divine nature (II Pet. i. 4). pp. 61 - 63

Having considered the reference in II Cor. vii. which links this series with the earlier one dealing with holiness, it will be of service before we go further to turn our attention to the passage which contains the words chosen for the title of the present series:--

“Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us, by the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ. Grace to you and peace be multiplied by the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. Seeing that His divine power hath granted unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that called us by His own glory and virtue, through which He hath given to us the most great and precious promises, that by means of these ye may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption which is in the world by lust” (II Pet. i. 1-4).

The mere reading of this extract from Peter’s second epistle is sufficient to associate it with the teaching of II Cor. vi. 16 - vii. 1, where the exhortation to “cleanse ourselves from all filthiness” is based upon the possession of certain promises.

Although Peter speaks of “great and precious promises”, one promise, in the working out of the epistle, is dominant—that of the Lord’s second coming.

The first and last references to the promises in II Peter contain the word *epaggelma* (II Pet. i. 4 and iii. 13; the only occurrences of this form). The remainder contain the words *epaggelia* and *epaggelomai* (II Pet. ii. 19, iii. 4 and 9). Let us consider the two former passages, in which *epaggelma* occurs:--

“Most great and precious promises, that by these ye may become partakers of the divine nature; having escaped from the corruption that is in the world by lust” (II Pet. i. 4).

With this opening statement should be compared the following passage from the third chapter, with which should be read the preceding two verses:--

“Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless” (II Pet. iii. 13, 14).

“Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God?” (II Pet. iii. 11, 12).

We observe that both in i. 4 and in iii. 13 the promise is intimately connected with sanctification, and the connection becomes even more apparent as we take a wider survey. For example, the first chapter continues:--

“And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness love” (II Pet. i. 5-7).

Here we have an account of the “manner of persons we ought to be”:

“For if these things be in you and abound, they shall make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ” (II Pet. i. 8).

We hear the echo of this in II Pet. iii. 18:--

“But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”

These comparisons make abundantly clear that the great and precious promise of the Lord’s coming is an incentive to sanctification, a teaching which we may discover in other passages such as I John iii. 3. The great and precious promise that is specially developed in II Pet. i. is the promise of the Lord’s return, sealed to the heart of Peter by the vision on the Mount of Transfiguration, and by the “more sure word of prophecy”.

This sure word of prophecy may be contrasted with the promise in chapter ii. made by “false prophets”, by the following of which the way of truth is evil spoken of:--

“While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption for if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning” (II Pet. ii. 19, 20).

The statement here seems, on the surface, to be much the same as that of II Pet. i. 4:--

“Having escaped the corruption that is in the world” (II Pet. i. 4).
“After they have escaped the pollutions of the world” (II Pet. ii. 20).

We note, however, that in the first instance we have the word “corruption” (*phthora*), and in the second the word “pollution” (*miasma*). The first word means the corruption of death and the grave, and demands as its answer nothing less than resurrection life and power; the second conveys the idea of defilement or stain, which may be washed off without altering the nature of the subject. That this is sound exegesis one more reference

to the passages will prove. In II Pet. i. 4, those who are in view have been made, by the most great and precious promises there spoken of, partakers of the *divine nature*. On the other hand, those who were influenced by the promise of liberty made by the false teachers, never knew this radical change, for they are likened to *dogs* returning to their own vomit, and to *sows* that were washed returning to their mire (II Pet. ii. 22). Dogs and sows can never set forth the divine nature; a sow may be washed, but it remains a sow by nature still.

The contrast between the dog and the sow returning to their uncleanness and the position of the true believer is seen by comparing II Pet. ii. 22 with I Pet. ii. 25:--

“For ye were as sheep going astray, but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls” (I Pet. ii. 25).

The true seed—those for whom Christ died—are spoken of as having gone astray from Him, and as returning to Him, whereas the others return not to Him, but to their own uncleanness.

The challenge of the scoffer, “Where is the promise of His coming?” (II Pet. iii. 4) and the reply of the apostle, “The Lord is not slack concerning His promise” (II Pet. iii. 9), complete the references in the epistle to this most great and precious promise.

Peter’s words to the dispersion apply, of course, in their primary interpretation to that “royal priesthood and holy nation”, but we trust that the elemental lessons that are also here may not be lost to those who know other great and precious promises that have been made peculiarly to them.

**#3. “By grace, to the end the promise might be sure”
(Rom. iv. 16).
pp. 101 - 103**

We have looked at the way in which promises are used in Scripture, and have seen what an incentive they are to practical sanctification (II Cor. vi. 16 - vii. 1). We have also seen that they are effective largely because they bring to the believer that divine nature, apart from which, though promised liberty, we should be as unchanged intrinsically as the “sow that is washed”.

It will be of service to us at this point to endeavour to discover wherein lies the great strength of the promises of God. Apart from the epistle to the Hebrews, which contains more references to the promises than any other book in Scripture, the epistles that are most concerned with this theme are those to the Romans and the Galatians. In these epistles the word “promise” in one form or another occurs twenty times, and almost every reference is associated directly or indirectly, with Abraham.

Great stress is laid by the apostle, both in Romans and in Galatians, upon the fact that the promise made to Abraham was addressed to faith, and that the law can have no place in the promises except to make them void. Let us hear the inspired argument, first from Rom. iv. and then from Gal. iii.:--

“For the promise that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed” (Rom. iv. 13-16).

The word “it” in verse 16 refers, not to the promise but to the inheritance. It is “out of faith” (*ek*) “with the object that” (*hina*) it might be “according to” or “in harmony with grace” (*kata*), “to the end (*eis*) that the promise might be sure”.

As it is not our intention in this series to go into detailed exposition, but rather to minister the “comfort of the Scriptures” in a simple fashion, we turn to the passage parallel to Rom. iv. that is found in Gal. iii.:--

“Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though it be but a man’s covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto. Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many: but as of One, And to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise. Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one” (Gal. iii. 15-20).

The exposition of this passage demands a very high standard both of critical and exegetical ability and of spiritual appreciation. Such gifts are not, however, demanded of us at the moment. The general trend of the apostle’s teaching is sufficiently clear to enable us to comprehend the thought expressed in Rom. iv. 16:--

“Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed.”

The argument, borrowed from the affairs of men, is that if a *man’s* covenant or will is inviolable when once it is confirmed, then it is most certainly true that the covenant made by *God* cannot be nullified by the coming in of the law of Sinai some four hundred and thirty years after. The conditional covenant of Sinai has no reference to the unconditional covenant of promise made to Abraham.

The argument is rounded off by the enigmatic statement of verse 20: “Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one.” *Alford’s* note to this verse is of interest:--

“The explanation of this verse, so obscure from its brevity, are so numerous (*Winer* counted 250; *Jowett* mentions 430) that they require a bibliography of their own.”

This is certainly not the place to attempt an exposition of such a verse, but a few notes concerning it will clear the way for a fuller study:--

- (1) The reference to the mediator is not to Christ; the whole context compels us to regard it as a reference to Moses and the law of Sinai.
- (2) The expression “God is one” must not be taken as a revelation of the great doctrine of the unity of the Godhead. Such a doctrine has no place in the argument, and its inclusion here would only cumber the mind with extraneous ideas.

The apostle’s argument both in Rom. iv. and Gal. iii. is that the promise is by faith and grace, and that, whereas the law is conditional, this is unconditional. It is clear that, where there are conditions, there will be two contracting parties, and two contracting parties necessitate a mediator. In the case of the covenant promised to Abraham, however, in order that there should be no semblance of condition or obligation on the part of Abraham, *God put him to sleep* (Gen. xv. 9-17). This is the meaning of the phrase, “But God is one”; there was only one party in the covenant with Abraham—God Himself. The promise, therefore, is sure; it comes by way of faith and grace, and so can be used, as it is, by God to encourage His people in their upward way. The promise and the inheritance are sure, for in the realm of grace the crippling yoke of legal obligation is unknown.

May the ministry of this wonderful aspect of the great and precious promises encourage the children of God. “Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us”

#4. “Ye are all one in Christ Jesus” (Gal. iii. 28). pp. 141 - 143

The truth of the remark made in the preceding article of this series as to the difficulties of the passage then under consideration—Gal. iii. 15-20—was probably obvious to the reader. The character of these short articles precludes our usual method of approach to such deep mines of doctrine, and consequently many points of importance must be passed by in silence.

When quoting Gal. iii. we purposely made no comment on verse 16:--

“Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.”

The argument of the apostle is that the word “seed” must not be considered as plural, but as singular: “Not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.” It has been hastily said that the Hebrew word for “seed” has no plural, but this is

not true, for in I Sam. viii. 15 and Dan. i. 12 we have instances of the word taking the plural ending. It might be thought that the apostle is alluding here to an O.T. passage in which the literal and numerous descendants of Abraham are not in view, but it would be disastrous to base our belief on mere vague thought. Is there such a passage? And if not, what is the answer to the difficulty raised by the apostle's deliberate statement?

The possible references are limited to those which contain the promise made to Abraham, and consequently occur in Genesis, chapters xii. to xxv.:-

“Unto thy seed will I give this land” (Gen. xii. 7).

“The land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, *and to thy seed for ever*” (Gen. xiii. 15).

“Unto thy seed have I given this land” (Gen. xv. 18).

“I will give unto thee, *and to thy seed after thee, the land*” (Gen. xvii. 8).

Of the above references (Gen. xiii. 15 and xvii. 8), two contain the exact words of the apostle, “And to thy seed”. Upon examining the contexts of these passages, however, we are faced with the fact that the literal and numerous seed of Abraham are in view. Immediately after the verse considered in Gen. xiii. we have:--

“And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth, so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered” (Gen. xiii. 16).

Plurality is not only to be inferred here; it is most pointedly emphasized. Yet this appears to be one of the passages which the apostle had in mind. We find the same contextual significance in the other reference (Gen. xvii. 8):--

“I will multiply thee exceedingly thou shalt be a father of many nations thy seed after thee in their generations I will be their God” (Gen. xvii. 2-8).

Here we have plurality reiterated: “multiply”, “many”, “their generations”, “their God”. We need not, however go as far back as the book of Genesis. In the chapter of Galatians where our passage occurs, and as a continuation of the argument of which verse 16 is a part, we have a recognition of the fact that the “seed” is plural:--

“And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise” (Gal. iii. 29).

Before examining this verse further, we would refer back to Rom. iv. to establish one point. The apostle asks how righteousness was reckoned to Abraham. Was it in circumcision or in uncircumcision? The answer is, In uncircumcision.

“That he might be the father of all them that believe though they be not circumcised it is of faith that it might be by grace: to the end the promise might be sure to ALL THE SEED, not to that only which is of the law, but that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all” (Rom. iv. 10-16).

It is abundantly clear from this passage that Gentile believers of the dispensation that covers the period of the Acts, as well as Jewish believers, together constitute “the seed of

Abraham”, who is father of all, whether Jew or Gentile. We can now go back to Gal. iii. and give a fuller quotation from the close of the chapter:--

“For as MANY of you as have been baptized into *Christ* have put on *Christ*. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for YE ARE ALL ONE IN CHRIST JESUS. And if ye be Christ’s, then ye are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise” (Gal. iii. 27-29).

The “one” of Gal. iii. 16 is explained by the “one” of Gal. iii. 28. Abraham’s seed in Gal. iii. 16 is Christ; all who believed, as Abraham did, were baptized into Christ, they put on Christ, and became “all one” in Christ Jesus. So that Gal. iii. 16, far from denying the thought of the many, has a most valuable lesson to teach. The many are not seen as so many separate individuals. Whether by birth they were Jews or Greeks is of no importance. Whether bond or free, whether male or female, they were heirs according to the promise because *in Christ they were all one*.

Let us observe, too, that when the apostle wishes to indicate the individual Person, he uses the full title “Christ Jesus”; while when he wishes to indicate the company which forms the Christ, in the mystical sense, he uses the title “Christ” by itself. We have, therefore, an added reason for rejoicing in the promises of God, for although they are made to each of us personally, yet are they so made as to exclude any participation in them apart from the Lord Jesus Christ, and our union with Him.

The words “Ye are all one in Christ Jesus” taken from Gal. iii. 28 are often quoted as though they applied to the church which is His Body. This, however, is not the theme of Galatians, and such an interpretation is contradicted by the apostle’s own conclusion: “Then are ye Abraham’s seed.” The church of the mystery is not Abraham’s seed; but the truth to be learnt from Gal. iii. concerning the enjoyment of the promises of God is a truth applicable to all dispensations and spheres. The apostle was perfectly right when he said, “And not to seeds, as of many”, for the promises were never made to individuals independently of Christ, and they can never be enjoyed except by those who are “all one in Christ Jesus”.

One further argument to show that individual Israelites, apart from those “in Christ”, are not contemplated as the seed, is found in Gal. iii. 19:--

“It was added till the seed should come to whom the promise was made.”

The actual number of the “seed” of Abraham at the giving of the law must have exceeded a million, yet, according to Gal. iii. 19, the seed to whom the promise was made had not then come. Let us rejoice to know that by shutting us up to Christ, the promise is made sure to all the seed. Which of us that has any knowledge of Christ would have it otherwise?

**#5. “In Him is the Yea, and through Him the Amen”
(II Cor. i. 20).
pp. 181 - 183**

In our last article we learnt the valuable lesson that the promise made to Abraham’s seed did not contemplate individuals as such, but regarded them collectively as “all one in Christ Jesus”. “If ye be Christ’s, *then* are ye Abraham’s seed” is the apostle’s insistent assertion.

It will not be a waste of time if we pursue this subject further and learn that not only the promise to Abraham, but all the promises found in the Scriptures are to be enjoyed only in and through Christ. A passage that makes this very clear is II Cor. i. 20:--

“For all the promises of God in Him are Yea, and in Him Amen unto the glory of God by us.”

To appreciate this statement some acquaintance with the context is necessary, and although it is not our intention in this series to go into detail or to attempt a systematic exposition of the passages before us, the context of II Cor. i. 20 is so involved that it will be a saving of time if we can see the structure of the section even though it be shorn of all detail. Elsewhere (*see The Apostle of the Reconciliation*, page 183) we have given the structure of II Corinthians as a whole, from which we find as one complete member II Cor. i. 13 - ii. 13. As this member contains the verse under consideration we will give its structure in the simplest outline:--

II Cor. i. 13 - ii. 13.

- A1 | i. 13-16. I was minded to come to you that ye might have a second benefit.
- B1 | i. 17-22. Yea and Amen.
- A1 | i. 23. To spare you I came not as yet unto Corinth.
- A2 | ii. 1. But I determined this with myself that
I would not come again to you in heaviness.
- B2 | ii. 2-11. Punishment and forgiveness.
- A2 | ii. 12, 13. I came to Troas I went from thence to Macedonia.

It will be seen that both statement concerning the promises of God, and also the reason advanced in “B2” arise out of the projected journey of Paul to Macedonia and his promised visit to Corinth. Without discussing the readings of the different Greek texts, it is necessary to point out the distinction between two related words used here, *boulomai* and *bouleuomai*. The former conveys the idea of a wish, the latter more of a determined purpose:--

“And in this confidence I was desirous (not ‘determined’ but the imperfect, ‘I was wishing’) before to come unto you, in order that a second benefit (grace, or joy) ye might have, and by your means to pass unto Macedonia, and again from Macedonia to come unto you, and by you be sent forward unto Judæa. When I therefore was thus desirous, did I show fickleness?” (II Cor. i. 15-17).

The apostle expresses his wishes in this passage, but we must not assume that he was ruled by them. His wishes were ruled by his will, even as his will, as he is yet to show, was always subservient to the will and purpose of God.

To show how unfounded was any possible charge of fickleness, the apostle states categorically his reason for not visiting Corinth as he had wished to do:--

“Moreover, I call God for a witness upon my soul that to spare you I came not as yet to Corinth but I determined this with myself that I would not come again to you in heaviness” (II Cor. i. 23, ii. 1).

Resuming our reading at verse 17, we find a change. Leaving his desires which, though expressed, were nevertheless subservient to his sense of right and wrong, he comes to the deeper matter of his purposes and plans:--

“Or the things that I purpose (i.e., ‘resolve’, *bouleuomai* as distinguished from *boulomai*, ‘I desire’), do I purpose them according to the flesh (i.e., with carnal willfulness) in order that with me the yea should be yea and the nay should be nay?”

Or, to give a rather free paraphrase of the apostle’s words:--

“Do I of my own fleshly will decide whether I shall or shall not do a thing? Or whether my plans and purposes shall or shall not be altered? This cannot be, for who can use such terms but God only? Not only do I submit my own *wishes* to my own *purposes*, but I also submit those same purposes to the revealed will of God.”

Thus, as *Wordsworth* says, the apostle disposes of two objections:--

“the first, charging him with capricious fickleness in his wishes; the second, imputing to him arbitrary imperiousness of will.”

The apostle, by a natural transition, turns from his actions and criticism of them, to related doctrine and the possible criticism of that:--

“But as God is faithful, our word toward you is not yea and nay, for the Son of God, Jesus Christ, Who was preached among you by us, even by me, and Sylvannus and Timothy, became not yea and nay, but Yea in Him hath it become. For how many soever be the promises of God, in Him is the Yea, wherefore also through Him is the Amen, unto the glory of God through us” (II Cor. i. 18-20).

Thus is most striking contrast with the inability of the best of his servants either to desire or to determine anything that shall be an unalterable Yea or Nay, stand the promises of God. Those promises, as we saw when dealing with Gal. iii. 16 in the

previous article, are all in Christ. *In Him* is the great affirmative “Yea” and *through Him* the great confirmative “Amen”:

“We bless Thee, O Thou great Amen,
Jehovah’s pledge to sinful men,
Confirming all His Word.
Doubtful no promises remain
For all are Yea, and all Amen,
In Thee, the faithful Lord.”

#6. The holy promissory Spirit (Eph. i. 13, 14). pp. 226 - 228

Before concluding this series of articles, we must devote some space to the use of the word “promise” in the epistles particularly concerned with the truth of the mystery.

Apart from the statement concerning the law of God and “the first commandment with promise”, we have but three references in the epistle to the Ephesians:

- “Ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise” (i. 13).
- “Strangers from the covenants of promise” (ii. 12).
- “Partakers of His promise in Christ by the gospel” (iii. 6).

Throughout the five preceding papers of this series we have been dealing with promises that were Abrahamic in character, and it will be fitting if we first of all face the fact revealed in this epistle, that as Gentiles in the flesh we were both “aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise”. There are three very serious objections to the translation: “Guests of the covenants of promise”, for—

- (1) The apostle is not speaking about what Gentiles were by faith or in spirit, but what they were “in the flesh”.
- (2) Before he speaks of either the commonwealth or the covenant, he says that such Gentile were “without Christ”, and
- (3) He follows these statements by saying, moreover, that they had “no hope” and were “without God” or “Godless” in the world.

There is no allusion to the standing of believing Gentiles either before the Lord came or after, for the sphere “in the flesh” and “in the world” precludes the idea, as do also their hopeless, Christless, Godless, state. So far as the covenants of promise were concerned the Gentile was a “stranger”.

It was the blessed privilege of the apostle in Eph. ii. to reveal the creation of the new man:

- “For to create (not make) in Himself, of the twain, one new man” (Eph. ii. 15).

The fact that a new creation is brought in here, precludes the idea that the Gentile, who was once a stranger to the covenants of promise, is now brought into relationship with these self-same covenants—that would deny the essential meaning of “create” and “new”. The Gentile is taught to realize the utter undone condition of his natural state, in order that he may the better realize the transcendent glory that has made him nearer than any member of the commonwealth of Israel could ever be. With this as a background we turn to Eph. iii. 6, where the revelation of the mystery is the theme.

The essential feature of the relationship here revealed is that of absolute equality. This is expressed in verse 6 by a threefold use of the preposition *sun*, “together with”. Quite a number of Greek words are translated “with” in our versions, and it is necessary to differentiate them:--

Meta indicates “proximity”, like a row of houses.

Para means “beside”, as two *parallel* lines or as in the construction of a *parable*.

Pros really means “towards”, and indicates a unity of intention as when one says, “I am with you in that undertaking”.

Sun means “union”, “fellowship” and “oneness”, more intimate than is indicated by any other Greek preposition.

In order to express the vital oneness that is inherent in the preposition *sun*, we will give it here the somewhat expanded rendering: “in vital oneness together.”

Casting their shadow over the Gentile in Eph. ii. 11, 12 are the two dark expressions, “in the flesh” and “in the world”, while illuminating with their glory the blessings of the mystery are the two expressions of Eph. iii. 5, 6, “in Spirit” and “in Christ”:--

“IN SPIRIT

The Gentiles are to be

Heirs in vital oneness together and a

Body in vital oneness together, and

Partakers in vital oneness together

Of the promise

IN CHRIST” (Eph. iii. 5, 6).

The item that is most intimately associated with the promise is the third, and that promise is not only “in Christ” but “through the gospel” of which Paul was made a minister.

Coming now to the first occurrence of the promise in Ephesians we read:--

“In whom ye also upon hearing the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also upon believing, ye were sealed with that holy promissory Spirit, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory” (Eph. i. 13, 14).

Here, the “word of truth”, “the gospel”, “hearing” and “believing” are most prominent. We translate “that holy promissory Spirit” because of the words that follow, “which is the earnest” pledge, or, as the O.T. translates it, “surety”. It is not so much that

the Spirit was *promised*, or that the Spirit *promises* anything, but rather that the Spirit is the pledge and the earnest.

The reader who has followed this series will no doubt be thinking of II Cor. i. 20:--

“For howsoever many be the promises of God, in Him is the Yea: Wherefore also through Him is the Amen, unto the glory of God by us. Now He which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God, Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts” (II Cor. i. 20-22).

Here, as in Eph. i. 13, 14, we have the promise, the seal and the earnest associated with the Spirit, and with a oneness on the part of the recipients of grace. Turning to Gal. iii. we observe that there, where the promise is, is the reference to the Spirit also:--

“That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith” (Gal. iii. 14).

What encouragement there is in these words for the Lord’s children. Not only have they promises that are “sure to all the seed”, being by faith and by grace, but further, these promises are all and only “in Christ”, and can be enjoyed only as we are “all one in Christ Jesus”. These promises, howsoever many and varied they may be, are all confirmed and assured in Christ, and to us, in addition, is given the earnest and the seal, until the day when promises shall be enjoyed no longer in prospect but in reality.

“Helpers of your joy.”

#10. On seeking the Lord. pp. 28 - 31

Among the many and varied exhortations that we find in the Scriptures addressed to the believer, and influencing his joy and peace, is the exhortation to seek the Lord, His face and His way. Before we look at some of these exhortations, it seems fitting that we should recognize in the Lord Himself the greatest Seeker of all. We should most certainly never seek the Lord unless He had already sought us. This may be proved by a comparison of two passages. In Acts xvii. the apostle tells the Athenian some simple facts that pertain to all men, quite apart from grace or revelation:--

“God that made the world hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation, *that they should seek the Lord*, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us” (Acts xvii. 24-27).

What light this throws upon such everyday matters as *History*—“the times appointed”, and *Geography*—“the bounds of their habitation”, to which might be added “rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons” (Acts xiv. 17), that constituted God’s own witness among the heathen. Nevertheless it is written:--

“There is none that seeketh after God” (Rom. iii. 11).

If, therefore, man is ever going to seek the Lord, the Lord must first of all seek man, for this ingratitude, blindness and indifference is the result of sin, and needs salvation.

Among the many and beautiful figures that the Lord has used to reveal His love, His grace, His condescension and His patience toward His erring children, that of the Seeker stands out as one particularly gracious, especially when we consider Who it is that seeks and who are those sought. Let us hear the Lord Himself as He utters this word of pity and of grace:--

“For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke xix. 10).

First of all we note the Seeker. He is “The Son of man”. It is not our intention to enter into a lengthy disquisition upon this blessed title: that would take us too far afield for our immediate purpose. Enough that the title was not given by men to Christ. It was used by Himself. Its first occurrence in Matt. viii. 20 suggests something of its intention. That the Son of man had not where to lay His head suggests a very real association of the Lord Jesus with man in his present state. He Who was the Son of man is called in the self-same Gospel: “The Son of God”, and in Matt. i. 23: “they shall call His name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.” The Seeker was none other than “God manifest in the flesh”, and revealed the heart of the Father as no other manifestation could have done.

If we think of the Seeker as a Shepherd, as we may (Luke xv. 4), what a wealth of revelation does this one figure supply of the character of the God of all grace! What did this Seeker come to do? He came to seek and to save that which was lost. Look at that epitome of the Divine plan of redemption. “Seek save lost.” The word “lost” signifies two things. One may be lost, like a lost coin, a lost sheep, or a lost child: such need “finding”. One may be lost as a lost soul, a lost sinner: such need “saving”. That both conceptions are intended in the word “lost” is evident, for the Seeker did not only come to seek the lost, but to save the lost as well.

This coming “to seek and to save” necessitated the Lord of glory laying aside all that belonged to His exalted position in the higher heavens, taking upon Him flesh and blood, and being made in the likeness of men and in the form of a slave. In prosecuting this search for the lost, He not only traveled all the way from glory to Bethlehem’s manger, but to Calvary’s cross, and Joseph’s tomb; and He Who sought *found*, He Who sought *saved*. The passage in Luke xix. that supplies us with the text before us, speaks of Zacchæus, who was so far “lost” as to have become “chief among the publicans”—an odious position in the eyes of Israel—a man who gathered taxes for a Pagan oppressor. When the great Seeker found Zacchæus, He said:--

“This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham”
(Luke xix. 9).

This restored son of Abraham immediately manifested the fact of his salvation by his new attitude:--

“And Zacchæus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything by false accusation, I restore him fourfold”
(Luke xix. 8).

It must not be assumed that Zacchæus implied that this was his normal attitude, but that it was to be his new attitude. He uses the present tense, as *The Companion Bible* comments, “I give, i.e., now propose to give. Referring to a present vow, not to a past habit”. Again, the next statement, “If I have taken any thing by false accusation”, does not mean that the case was purely hypothetical: it assumes the fact. Zacchæus had done what most tax-gatherers had done, and what the baneful system of government almost compelled them to do to make a living out of their profession. This custom is referred to by John the Baptist in Luke iii. 13 when he advised the publicans, who came for baptism unto repentance, to “exact no more than that which is appointed you”. The word that Zacchæus used for “taking by false accusation” is *sukophanteo*, which is our English “sycophant”, a word of odious meaning. The Son of man saved this “sinner” (Luke xix. 7) from the degradation into which sin had led him, and restored him to his rightful position as a “son of Abraham”.

Here then is a picture of that great work accomplished by the Lord for fallen man. To seek them, He left heaven’s glory; to save them, He became the Son of man, and in saving them He not only saved them from the consequences of their guilt, but he saved

them from its shame. He restored them there and then to some approximation of what the real and final deliverance will accomplish.

Let us extract all the comfort that this precious passage has for ourselves. When we are cast down by circumstances, or tripped up by ourselves, when we feel forsaken, or when things appear black and antagonistic, let us just stop in the midst of it all and say, “for this cause”, because of all these and many other terrible reasons, “for this cause” did the Lord of glory become the Son of man, become the *Seeker* and the *Saviour* and the *Restorer*. If at any time we feel “lost”, quite apart from the matter of eternal salvation and security, depend upon it, there in that “lost” portion of our affairs or our estate, there the Seeker is near, and there the lost may be saved.

While we must ever give pre-eminent place to the one great initial act of seeking and saving that took place at the Cross, let us not miss the blessing that lies in the fact that the Lord is still the great Seeker. He seeks us still; His attitude is that of an intercessor; He Who *died* for us, still for us *lives*. When we remember how long and how untiringly He has sought us, what an inducement for us to seek the Lord and His grace.

#11. On seeking the Lord. **pp. 98 - 100**

One of the consequences of being sought and found and saved is that the saved in their turn begin themselves to seek the Lord. The words of the angels to the women at the sepulchre are words that we do well to ponder, to pray over, and to preach to others:--

“Why seek ye the living among the dead?” (Luke xxiv. 5).

As we read the story of the crucifixion and burial of the Saviour, we are conscious of much devotion and love, but it was love heavy with grief, and choked with despair. Joseph of Arimathæa braves the judgment of his fellows, and begs the body of Jesus, laying it in his own new tomb. The women also who came from Galilee, “beheld the sepulchre and how His body was laid”, and returned to prepare spices and ointments. Nicodemus had stepped out into the open and brought an hundred pound weight of myrrh and aloes. The two who walked and talked on the way to Emmaus were “sad”; they even went so far as to mention “the third day” without believing the promise of resurrection. Even when the risen Saviour stood in their midst, the disciples were “frightened”, “troubled”, and “believed not for joy”. And the testimony of Mary Magdalene and the other women who were with her “seemed like idle tales” to the apostles themselves.

These things should help us to perceive that naturally no man will believe the resurrection of the Lord. There will always be a tendency to “seek the living among the dead”.

Apart from the writers of the four Gospels, recording the historic fact of the crucifixion of the Saviour, no writer in the N.T. is to be compared with the apostle Paul as a preacher of the cross. Yet no writer is so emphatic in pointing onwards to the resurrection, declaring that without that resurrection the gospel is vain and faith is void. We need to remember the angels' words, and, while gratefully recognizing that the cross is the beginning of our salvation and the ground of our peace, to check the tendency that we shall discover in ourselves and in others to *remain* at the cross. While the devotion of Joseph, of Nicodemus and of the women is beautiful indeed, how much more beautiful it would have been if one of the Lord's disciples had really believed Him, and so had found no cause for so blind and misdirected a love. In three days the spices and the linen were valueless. "He is not here, but is risen." "Why seek ye the living among the dead?"

We cannot believe that any regular reader of *The Berean Expositor* could for one moment regard "spiritualism" in any other light than that of a Satanic travesty of truth, but it may be of service to view the subject from the standpoint of the angels' words. Grief stricken men and women, knowing not the Scriptures nor the power of God, seeking comfort and assurance both for themselves and others, have been tempted to seek the living among the dead. The words of Isa. viii. 19, 20, together with the angels' words at the empty tomb, should be known and considered by all:--

"And when they shall say unto you. Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: Should not a people seek unto their God? for the living should they seek unto the dead? To the law and to the testimony; of they speak not according to this word, surely there is no morning for them."

How many, too, have sought the living Christ among dead forms and ceremonies and ordinances which have been imposed upon man and never lead higher than the attainments of unsatisfied flesh. He is not here, but is risen and, as fellow-helpers of your joy, we would point away from all these things to where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

The symbol of our nation's grief and honour for those who died in battle is known as the Cenotaph, a word which means "an empty tomb", for no soldier lies buried beneath it. It is inscribed, "To our glorious dead". The believer, too, has a Cenotaph—"an empty tomb" indeed, and one that needs not the inscription, "To our glorious dead", for He Who was dead is alive for evermore, and death has no more dominion over Him.

Let us then, while we glory in the cross, remember also that we seek not the living among the dead, and that He Who died for us, now lives for us, and bids us seek those things which are above.

Ministering to the saints.

By J. E. Mills.

“Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift” (II Cor. ix. 15).
pp. 3 - 12

With these beautiful words of thanksgiving Paul concludes that section of II Corinthians which exhorts the brethren to give bountifully to the needs of the saints. The love of God to man cannot be known apart from the gift of the Lord Jesus Christ as man's Saviour: in that supreme gift we see God's love exemplified:--

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him, should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John iii. 16).

We trust that the reader has believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, and has thereby appropriated to himself that finished work of salvation. If so, then he can join with Paul and say: “The Son of God, Who loved *me*, and gave Himself for *me*” (Gal. ii. 20).

It is the realization of this gift that should call forth a practical response from the believer. Under the law Israel was required to give a tenth of all their increase to that which constituted the service of God in those days: but the knowledge that the Lord Jesus Christ has come and given Himself for us, changes the whole tenor of the ministry of giving. No longer should this be done because it is required, but rather because Christ gave. If we view our position in the Lord Jesus aright, we see that through His work we cease to be our own and become His:--

“For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's” (I Cor. vi. 20).

Every doctrinal fact has its practical equivalent. The attitude of the Macedonian believers can well be taken as an example of what the practical outcome of being bought with such a price should be:--

“Praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering of the saints. And this they did, not as we hoped, but *first gave their own selves to the Lord*, and unto us by the will of God” (II Cor. viii. 4, 5).

This puts the matter of giving in the right order, ourselves first, and then, because of all this, all that is ours is to be considered as a trust from the Lord.

Many are the promises made to those who take part in this happy ministry. In the broadest outline this is the principle of Christian giving as set forth in the New Testament.

In Paul's testimony during the period covered by the Acts of the Apostles, the ministering to the needs of the saints had a very definite place and character. To trace

carefully the record of these gifts reveals the close connection between the witness of Paul during the Acts and those epistles written contemporary with that witness, and incidentally throws light upon the special circumstance that gave rise to those gifts.

Paul's epistles to the churches of Galatia was written to warn the Gentiles concerning those who had gone among them seeking to bring under the bondage of Jewish rites and ceremonies (Gal. i. 6, 7; iii. 1-3; iv. 9-11; v. 1-12; vi. 12). In exposing the error of this misapplied teaching, Paul was led to recount the manner in which he had received that gospel which he preached among the Gentiles, and to declare its independence of any Jewish authority. Paul himself was an apostle appointed by God (i. 1); his conversion was the result of the direct dealing of God (i. 16). After his conversion, he said:--

“I conferred not with flesh and blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia” (Gal. i. 16, 17).

When at last Paul went to Jerusalem three years later it was only a visit of an unofficial character. To emphasize the importance of the fact Paul makes a bold interjection:--

“Now the things that I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not” (Gal. i. 20).

The gospel which was preached of Paul was not after man:--

“For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ” (Gal. i. 12).

This gospel Paul proclaimed in entire independence. But evidently the church at Jerusalem had shown some hesitance in recognizing his testimony, and because of this he paid a special visit to Jerusalem:--

“Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also. And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preached among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation” (Gal. ii. 1, 2).

What was the result of this conference? Titus, because he was a Greek, was not compelled to be circumcised; the Judaizers were allowed no place; Paul was given right hand of fellowship by the true pillars of the church; not only in one matter could they make a suggestion:--

“Only they would that we should remember the poor” (Gal. ii. 10).

The sole burden that the church of Jerusalem could lay on the backs of the believing Gentiles—“Remember the poor!” This Paul “was forward to do”, and thus the ministry to the saints became a special aspect of Paul's testimony among the Gentiles. The poor as we shall see were the needy saints at Jerusalem.

The precise place of this visit to Jerusalem in the record of the Acts is a debatable point into which we do not seek to enter here: we note simply the following five visits:--

First visit (Acts ix. 25-29).—This corresponds with that of Gal. i.

Second visit (Acts xi. 29, 30; xii. 25).—The first of an official character, the purpose being to take a gift from the church at Antioch to the brethren in Judæa. This is the first that could correspond with that of Gal. ii.

Third visit (Acts xv. 1-32).—A close comparison of this account with Gal. ii. makes it difficult to feel that they are one and the same; here the exhortation to the Gentile churches is: “That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication; from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well” (Acts xv. 29—based on Gen. ix. 1-7). At the visit of Gal. ii. the *only* exhortation was: “Remember the poor.”

Fourth visit (Acts xviii. 21).—The last that could correspond with Gal. ii. In the previous two visits Paul had been the messenger sent from the churches. In this it was rather against their desire: for some reason it was imperative:--

“I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem: but I will return again unto you, if God will” (Acts xviii. 21).

This suggests that Paul “went up by revelation” (Gal. ii. 2). Nothing is recorded in Acts of his stay there.

Fifth and last visit (Acts xxi. 15).—With a gift from the Gentiles (Rom. xv. 25-28).

Thus Paul’s first and last official visits to Jerusalem were connected with gifts to the Jews.

It becomes evident in considering the circumstances of these visits what an important position and influence the apostles at Jerusalem held, even Paul with his divinely-appointed independence giving due regard to their word.

Assuming that Paul’s fourth visit (Acts xviii. 21) was that of Gal. ii.—we do not say it was—we have the very latest occasion on which he could have received the suggestion: “Remember the poor.” After this visit Paul went on the last missionary journey of the Acts:--

“After these things were ended, Paul purposed in spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome” (Acts xix. 21).

While still on the outward journey Paul realized that he must return yet again to Jerusalem. Why not go straight to Rome? Why go to Judæa where the Jews were so opposed to him? The answer is in that word: “Remember the poor.”

During this last tour we know for certain that Paul wrote I & II Corinthians and Romans. Let us turn to these for further information. In I Cor. Paul gives instructions concerning a collection for the saints:--

“Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem. And if it be meet that I go also, they shall go with me” (I Cor. xvi. 1-4).

All we know of the order given to the churches of Galatia is that word from the elders of Jerusalem: “Remember the poor.” This order is now sent to the Corinthians in view of Paul’s coming to them on his way to Jerusalem. “Now I will come unto you, when I shall pass through Macedonia, for I do pass through Macedonia” (I Cor. xvi. 5).

Having passed through Macedonia, Paul writes to Corinth again in prospect of the near approach of his expected visit. What had been Paul’s business in Macedonia?

“Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia. How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality: for to their power I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves; praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering of the saints” (II Cor. viii. 1-4).

Evidently Paul’s first epistle to the Corinthians had stirred them up to give generously, so that he could set them as an example to the Macedonia:--

“For as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you: for I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal hath provoked very many” (II Cor. ix. 1, 2).

The Macedonians had exceeded Paul’s expectations (II Cor. viii. 5). In the event, therefore, of some of the Macedonians coming with him to Corinth he writes again:--

“Yet have I sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this behalf; that, as I said, ye may be ready: lest haply if they of Macedonia come with me, and find you unprepared, we (that we say not, ye) should be ashamed at this same confident boasting” (II Cor. ix. 3, 4).

Brethren were sent before to prepare for Paul’s coming (II Cor. viii. 6, 17-19; ix. 3-5), which accords with Acts xix. 22.

The only church in Macedonia to which Paul wrote an epistle is that of Thessalonica, which appears to have been most progressive church in that part (I Thee. i. 7, 8; iv. 10). No mention of this collection is made in either epistle, for both were written before Acts xvii. 21, but there is a connection between them and the believers in Judæa:--

“For ye became followers of the churches of God in Judæa” (I Thee. ii. 14).

The commandments they had received as to how they should walk to please God (I Thess. iv. 1-3) were evidently those suggested by the church at Jerusalem in Acts xv. When Paul went through Macedonia on his last tour it is evident that those of Thessalonica would have been among the many who were so ready to “remember the poor”.

Romans was written towards the end of this last tour, and there Paul refers again to this collection:--

“But now I go up to Jerusalem to minister unto the saints, for it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia (in which was Corinth) to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem” (Rom. xv. 25, 26).

The reason for this gift is then given:--

“It hath pleased them verily, and their debtors they are; for if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things” (Rom. xv. 27).

In this same epistle Paul “proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin” (Rom. iii. 9). And so concerning salvation he wrote: “Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe, for there is *no difference*” (Rom. iii. 22). The Lord Jesus was all in all to them both:--

“For there is *no difference* between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him” (Rom. x. 12).

But when it comes to the question of their position, there was a very decided difference between the Jew and the Gentile. The word of salvation was: “To the Jew first” (Rom. i. 16), which was observed in the preaching during the Acts (iii. 26; xiii. 46). All the blessings that were before the believers were Jewish blessings: of these the Gentiles were made partakers. Rom. xi. 13-24 explains the position:--

“And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them *partakest* of the root and fatness of the olive tree” (verse 17).

The gift of the poor saints at Jerusalem was the result of the recognition of this:--

“For if the Gentiles have been made *partakers* of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things” (Rom. xv. 27).

Galatians, in which the exhortation to “Remember the poor” is given, shows also that “They which be of faith are blessed *with* faithful Abraham” (Gal. iii. 9). Gal. vi. 6 may express the same thought as Rom. xv. 27. The gift of the Gentiles to the Jews was therefore something more than the alleviation of the needy:--

“For the administration of this service *not only* supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God; whiles by the experiment of this ministration they glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ, and for your liberal distribution unto them, and unto all men” (II Cor. ix. 12, 13).

This gift was to be the proof to the Jewish believers at Jerusalem of the sincerity of the Gentiles (II Cor. viii. 19, 24).

All this seems very beautiful, and if we only had this information we might rightly imagine that Paul went to Jerusalem with a light heart and quickened step for the joy that the charge of such a gift would give him. What, however, do we find? Paul had no doubt that the offering was of God:--

“Nevertheless, brethren I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given me of God; that I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost” (Rom. xv. 15, 16).

What Paul evidently did doubt was whether the Jews would accept the gift, for he beseeches the Romans to

“Strive together with me in your prayers to God for me, that I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judæa, and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be *accepted of the saints*” (Rom. xv. 30, 31).

This gift proved the sincerity of the Gentiles, but it was at the same time a test to the Jews as to whether they would really accept the Gentiles. Was the gift acceptable? It is not told us, but we do know that it failed to cause them to receive the Gentiles. The fears Paul entertained were confirmed every step he took towards Jerusalem:--

“Behold, I go bound in spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there; save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me” (Acts xx. 22, 23).

This journey was not an apostolic mistake, but was “The will of the Lord” (Acts xxi. 14).

When at last Paul reached Jerusalem he did not delay, but with the gift of the Gentiles in his hands, and Representatives of the Gentiles accompanying him, we read that on

“The day following Paul went in with us unto James; and all the elders were present. And when he had saluted them, he declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry” (Acts xxi. 18, 19).

When the true ones heard this, they glorified the Lord, but nevertheless reiterated the suggestion they had made as to the Gentiles at the conference of Acts xv. (*see* Acts xxi. 25)—points of which Paul, during his last journey, had not been led to emphasize (*see* I Cor. viii.)—then, referring to the thousands of Jews which believed and

were all zealous of the law (Acts xxi. 20), they warn Paul of a rumour, and ask him to conform to a rite. The tangible evidence of the sincerity of the Gentiles is unheeded; the thought that the Gentiles were blessed with the Jews seems absent; one rumour—that Paul had taken Greeks into their earthly temple—drove the whole city into an uproar (xxi. 27-32), endangering his very life.

Then standing on the steps of the garrison Paul addressed the Jews in their own tongue, and spoke of his life and conversion up to the day when the Lord said to him:--

“Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles. And they gave him audience unto this word, and then lifted up their voices, and said, Away with such a fellow from the earth” (Acts xxii. 21, 22).

This was but the climax of an attitude among the Jews that had obtained during the Acts period:--

“Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins always: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost” (I Thess. ii. 16).

Paul was then taken to Rome where he called for the elders of the Jews (Acts xxviii. 17), and expounded to them concerning Jesus out of Moses and the Prophets, but because they definitely failed to believe he said:--

“Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it” (Acts xxviii. 28).

The history of the gift of the Gentiles is therefore closely related to the apostacy of the Jews, and it was one of the steps that led to the setting aside of Israel in Acts xxviii. The gift, it will be remembered, was prompted by the fact that the Gentiles had been made partakers of Israel’s spiritual blessings (Rom. xv. 27). With the setting aside of Israel there was also the postponement of the hope of Israel, and consequently the hope of the Gentiles blessed with Israel—the very cause of the gift had been removed.

After Acts xxviii. 28 Paul was led to write from his prison five epistles: Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, II Timothy and Philemon. In these the subject of gifts is again met with, but it is no longer influenced by the thought of being blessed through Israel. The Philippians sent a gift to Paul (Phil. iv. 10-18). Paul rejoiced “not because I desire a gift, but I desire fruit that it may abound to your account” (verse 17). There is no question now of whether it would be accepted by any body of men, but Paul writes to assure them that it was “a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God” (verse 18).

In the matter of the gift to the poor saints at Jerusalem, all of the churches to whom Paul wrote before Acts xxviii. had some part or interest—the Galatians, Thessalonians, Corinthians and Romans. What Paul was doing is reflected in the epistles written at the time. After the change of Acts xxviii. he writes to other churches, and in each epistle makes mention of his imprisonments (Eph. iii. 1; iv. 1; vi. 19, 20; Phil. i. 7, 13, 14, 16; Col. iv. 3, 10, 18; II Tim. i. 8; ii. 9; iv. 16).

The interest that the churches of the first group had in Paul's ministration of this gift was because he was their Representative to bear to the Jews the outward token of their appreciation of and gratitude for the grace of God that had enabled them—as outside, far off Gentiles—to become partakers of Israel's spiritual blessings (Rom. xv. 27).

The interest that the churches in the later group had in Paul's imprisonment was because he had been made “the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles” (Eph. iii. 1). Paul was a prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles by reason of the truth that was revealed through him to them:--

“Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God; even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to His saints. To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ among you, the hope of glory” (Col. i. 25-27).

The truth of the mystery was not committed to writing by Paul until after Israel as a whole, for the time being, had been set aside. With the truth of the mystery is connected a new sphere of blessing—“the heavenly places”, and another company of believers called “The church which is His body”:

“And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (Eph. ii. 6).

“The exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all and gave to Him to be the Head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all” (Eph. i. 19-23).

In this company the Gentiles do not partake of Israel's spiritual blessings, but Jews and Gentiles without distinction are blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavens:--

“Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God” (Eph. ii. 19).

There is only place for One to have any pre-eminence in this company—the Lord Jesus Himself:--

“Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free; but Christ is all, and in all” (Col. iii. 11).

In all matters in which there was no difference between Jews and Gentiles during the witness of the Acts, the teaching of the epistles is the same—the fact of the believer having died together with Christ, been buried, and raised together with Him, the walk in newness of life, etc.—but in the things relating to the blessings of the Gentiles there is a very great difference between the earlier and later epistles of Paul. In the earlier epistles the Gentiles were brought into blessing with Israel (the record of this gift to the saints is but one illustration of the fact), the sphere of those blessings being connected with the

heavenly Jerusalem (Gal. iv. 26). In the later epistles Jews and Gentiles partake of the “all spiritual blessings” in the heavenlies.

The purpose of this study has been to show this distinction, a distinction that should be considered and prayed over very carefully. In the first great epistle of the mystery (Ephesians) there are two prayers for the saints, prayers that we should pray for ourselves, for they request enlightenment into that truth which God would make known to His saints (Col. i. 26, 27).

If the realization of what it meant to be blessed with Israel called forth from the Gentiles such a liberal gift to those through whom they had been blessed, how much more should the wonder of being blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies cause us to contribute to the work of the Lord in this day. In this the Philippians are an example, for they sent to the one who had been used of God to reveal the truth of the mystery; to-day we also should support the means used to commit the same truth to faithful men. The need for promoting gospel testimony cannot be over estimated, but there is a real occasion to emphasize the need of seeking to be allowed to make known (by gift or whatever other way we can) the mystery. We say “allowed” advisedly, for we are confident that the highest privilege ever granted man is to speak of these truths which are so vitally associated with the present headship and glory of our Lord Jesus Christ at the right hand of God in the heavenlies.

The consideration of *giving* has led us to the subject of our *blessings*; let us then conclude with the benediction with which these blessings are first introduced:--

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ” (Eph. i. 3).

The Ministry of Consolation.

#39. “Lift up your hands” (Heb. xii. 12); “Lift up your heads” (Luke xxi. 28). pp. 19, 20

We have looked at one or two passages of Scripture where there is a real “lift up” for the believer. It is helpful to observe the character of those who receive this spiritual uplift. For example, Psa. cxlvii. 6 says: “The Lord lifteth up the meek: He casteth the wicked down to the ground.” The Psalmist moreover says: “Unto Thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul” (Psa. lxxxvi. 4), and as the soul often stands for the whole person, it will include the lifting up of the hands and eyes in prayer (Psa. xxviii. 2; cxxiii. 1). While, therefore, there are many avenues open for prayerful investigation, we desire in this short article to turn to another aspect of this matter of uplift, and find the word in Heb. xii. 12, 13:--

“Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; and make straight paths for your feet.”

The fact that this exhortation opens with the word “wherefore”, teaches us to look back in the chapter to discover the connection. Heb. xii. opens with an exhortation to lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily besets us, and to run with patience the race set before us, with the great example of the Lord in view. Then follows a lengthy disquisition upon the nature, necessity and aim of chastisement, which reaches its conclusion in verse 11. Verse 12 immediately follows with the exhortation quoted above. We are evidently taken back to the opening of the chapter, and the figure of the race and the runner is resumed. The words “lift up” used here do not mean so much to elevate, as one does the hands, but to “set right” as in Luke xiii. 13 and Acts xv. 16, where the word occurs. The hands, knees, feet and paths all indicate the chief purpose of the exhortation. Heb. xii. 12 is a quotation from the O.T.:--

“Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees” (Isa. xxxv. 3).

The whole chapter of Isa. xxxv. is prophetic of the great millennial day, and the connection of the exhortation with the theme of the chapter is made more evident by reading the verse that follows the one quoted:--

“Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not; behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; He will come and save you” (Isa. xxxv. 4).

With this exhortation, therefore, to lift up the hands that hang down, we couple that of Luke xxi. 28:--

“And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh” (Luke xxi. 28).

To all, therefore, who are passing through the shadows, who feel the burden of the day, come the many encouraging words of “uplift” from the Word.

He is the “lifter up” of our head (Psa. iii. 3). His countenance lifted up upon us is the greatest sign of good we have here below (Psa. iv. 6). We should not then lift up our eyes to the hills, but to Him from Whom our help cometh. We should lift up our soul, our eyes, our hands, our feet, and seek grace to run with patience the race set before us. “Lift up the hands which hang down”: “Look up, and lift up your heads.”

The Epistle to the Romans.

#40. Sanctification.---First a sphere. Newness of life (vi. 1-14). pp. 31 - 38

The true sequel of Rom. v. 12-21 is Rom. viii. where the condemnation brought in by Adam is entirely removed from all who are “in Christ Jesus”. The Spirit of God, however, knew the heart of man; and how easily even believers may misread liberty for licence, or abuse the overwhelming grace of God. Already the spirit that necessitates Rom. vi. and vii. has shown itself. For in Rom. iii. 7 we have the beginnings of the idea opened up in Rom. vi., where the thought that “the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto His glory” is echoed by the question: “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?”

It is not a question of shall I ever fall into sin, or shall I never discover hidden uncleanness, but shall I “continue in” sin. *Epimeno* is used in Rom. xi. 22, 23, where it is used of “continuing in His goodness”, and of “abiding still in unbelief”. In Rom. vi. 2 the balancing clause to “continuing in” is “living in”:

“How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?”

Let us notice for our good that the apostle does not temporize with this question. He does not embark upon a lengthy discourse concerning grace; he does not attempt to mitigate the fullness of superabounding grace; he goes straight to the heart of the matter, revealing it to be a matter of life and death.

Grace is grace because of righteousness—so teaches Rom. v. 21: “Even so might grace reign through righteousness”, and the only way that grace could reign through righteousness is for sin to have been dealt with righteously—and we know that the wages of sin is death.

The answer to the question of Rom. vi. 1 is found in vi. 3-14. Verse 2 is not so much an answer as a refusal to admit the validity of the objection that superabounding grace will encourage laxity of morals. The close of verse 14 corresponds with verse 2 in setting the objection aside as incompatible with the “grace wherein we stand”. The answer (3-14) is divided into three main sections:--

- (1) Identification of the believer in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ (3-10).
This we shall discover is subdivided into three features.
- (2) Reckoning of the believer that all this is true.
- (3) Practical results of this identification and reckoning: “Let not”, “Yield not”.

This, together with the associated doctrine of Rom. v. 20, 21 which gave rise to the objection, we now set out before the reader.

Romans v. 20 - vi. 14.

A1 | v. 20, 21. STATEMENT.—“Where sin abounded grace did much more abound.”

B1 | vi. 1. QUESTION.—“Shall we continue in sin that grace abound?”

C1 | vi. 2. REPUDIATION.—“God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?”

D1 | vi. 3-14. ANSWER.—

| A2 | vi. 3-10. | 2-5. | a1 | Know ye not?

b1 | Dead to sin.

6, 7. | c1 | Knowing this.

d1 | Freed from sin.

8-10. | a1 | Knowing that?

b1 | Died to sin.

| B2 | vi. 11. Reckon. | e | Dead to sin.

f | Alive to God.

| A2 | vi. 12-14. | 12. | a2 | Let not sin reign.

b2 | In your mortal body.

12, 13. | c2 | Not obey lust,

neither yield to sin.

d2 | Yield to God,

instrument of righteousness.

14. | a2 | For sin shall not have dominion.

b2 | Over you.

C1 | REPUDIATION.—“Ye are not under the law but under grace.”

There is an insistence throughout this whole passage upon death followed by life, and it is of the utmost importance that we do not miss the teaching of Scripture upon this basic argument. First of all the insistence upon death:--

“How shall we that are *dead to sin*” (vi. 2).

“Baptized into His *death*” (vi. 3).

“Buried with Him by baptism into *death*” (vi. 4).

“Christ was raised up from the *dead*” (vi. 4).

“In the likeness of His *death*” (vi. 5).

“He that is *dead* is freed from sin” (vi. 7).

“Now if we be *dead* with Christ” (vi. 8).

“Christ being raised from the *dead*, *dieth* no more; *death* hath no more dominion over Him” (vi. 9).

“In that He *died*, He *died* unto sin once” (vi. 10).

“Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be *dead* indeed unto sin” (vi. 11).

“As those that are alive from the *dead*” (vi. 13).

Here, in the space of thirteen verses, are fourteen references to death, independently of the allied words “buried” and “crucified”. It would be a mistake to leave the matter here. Far too many have stressed “death” and “the cross” without realizing that power can only begin with us when we receive new life and stand on resurrection ground. Consequently we must go through these verses again to note the recurrence of life and resurrection:--

“Like as Christ was *raised up* from the dead even so we also should walk in *newness of life*” (vi. 4).

“We shall also be in the likeness of His *resurrection*” (vi. 5).
 “We believe that we shall also *live* with Him” (vi. 8).
 “Christ being *raised* from the dead dieth no more” (vi. 9).
 “In that He *liveth*, He *liveth* unto God” (vi. 10).
 “Reckon yourselves *alive* unto God” (vi. 11).
 “Yield unto God as those that are *alive* from the dead” (vi. 13).

Here are nine references, not including the passages that speak of deliverance from the dominion of death and sin. It is evident that if we miss the meaning of the apostle relative to these two great themes we shall miss his teaching entirely. Therefore we must patiently examine them, and first of all the words with which the objection is repudiated. What is meant by “dead to sin”?

There is a system of teaching that appears to take these words as meaning abstaining from, resisting, mortifying sin, in which there can be degrees of “depth”. Hence the expression: “To die more and more unto sin.” There is most truly an experimental entering into the death of Christ, but we are persuaded such is not intended here. In Rom. vi. 2, 7, 8 and 9 the verb “to die” is not *thnesko*, but *apothnesko* = “to die out, to expire, to become quite dead”. Moreover, it is *the actual death of Christ* that is in view, “His death “ (3 and 5), death “with Christ” (8), and it is death “to sin”. Here again we need care. It is not death to the *power* of sin, but death to its *guilt* that is here intended. Our death to sin is not mentioned here as of our *conduct* or our *character*, but of our STATE before God. The R.V. recognizes the *aorist* tense, and translates the passage, “We who died to sin”, in place of the A.V., “We that are dead to sin”. Into the vexed question of the true rendering of the Greek *aorist* we cannot go. On verse 7 Dr. Weymouth gives the following note, which is of weight:--

“Lit. ‘has died’ not ‘is dead’. The distinction cannot be expressed in Latin or French, but can in English and in Greek. The classical scholar will find an excellent example in Euripedes *Alc.* 541 ‘Those who have died (*aorist*) and are dead (*perfect*).’”

Up to Rom. v. 11 the burden of the epistle has been justification by faith. Rom. v. 12-21 adds its quota of superabounding grace, and when the apostle says in vi. 2: “How shall we who died to sin live any longer therein?” he is not introducing some new aspect of death, but referring to what has already been established. In other words, he replies to the objection by saying, Justification by faith cannot lead to living in sin, for the simple reason that justification is based upon death to sin and guilt. The fact that the apostle uses, in verse 10, the same expression of Christ Himself: “In that He died, He died unto sin once”, shows that he had in view death to its guilt. As Calvin says:--

“The very form of the expression, as applied to Christ, shows that He did not, like us, die to sin for the purpose of *ceasing to commit it*.”

The Lord was never under the *power* of sin. He took *the guilt* of sin that belonged to us, and for that He died:--

“He that has died is freed from sin” (vi. 7).

The word translated “is freed” is *dedekaiotai*, the perfect tense of the verb *dikaioo* = “to justify”. It is most important that this word noted in the margin should be re-instated: “Justified from sin.” Rom. iii. 20-30 is the classic passage on “Justification”, and there *diakaioo* is used five times. Rom. v. 9 sums up the matter by saying: “Being now justified by His blood.” In vi. 2 the apostle declares that the believer “died to sin”. In vi. 7 he reveals the glorious result of that death—he is “justified”.

Anticipating a little the result of our studies, we would say that the phrase found in vi. 19, “righteousness unto holiness”, aptly epitomizes the intention of these chapters. We are already justified: Shall we continue in sin because grace is free? No, for the very process of our justification involved us in crucifixion, death and burial, so utter and complete that apart from an entirely “new life” we are for ever powerless. This division of our theme is extremely important. *Death* is related to our justification, and *life* to our sanctification, and we shall do well not to confuse the issues.

We have passed from verse 2 to verse 7 in our attempt to fix the meaning of “death to sin”. We must now retrace our steps and learn how this was accomplished. In verses 3-5 the apostle speaks of death and burial, and turns to the symbol of baptism to enforce his teaching, just as he uses circumcision in Colossians. The baptism of Rom. vi. must include baptism in water, for that was practiced during the Acts period and by the apostle himself (I Cor. i. 16), although it did not occupy the same place in his ministry as it did in the ministry of the Twelve. The use of both circumcision and baptism in Col. ii. shows that there they are used spiritually, the appeal to the external rite being no longer valid:--

“Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?” (Rom. vi. 3).

The R.V. corrects the A.V. and gives the true title of the Lord. The expression, “baptized into Christ Jesus”, is similar to that found in I Cor. x.:--

“For I would not, brethren, have you ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea” (I Cor. x. 1, 2).

Israel were “baptized into Moses”, and therefore into the law and all that the law stood for. The believer was baptized into Christ and all that Christ and grace stood for. The apostle insists that the union with Christ typified and set forth by baptism, set forth the identification of the believer with the Lord in His death: “You were baptized into His death.” The two statements must be read together:--

“Baptized into Christ Jesus.”
“Baptized into His death.”

The one involves the other. They are inseparable. The apostle in Gal. iii. 27 uses this expression in a different context, but it is worth noting:--

“As many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”

The force of “into” here is fully realized in the sequel; such have “put on Christ” and so are “in Him”. So real is this death, and so real is this identification, that just as surely as Christ died and was buried, so surely must burial be included as one of the blessings that follow union with the Lord. When once this baptism “into” Christ Jesus is mentioned, there follows the fact that the believer is “in Christ Jesus” (vi. 11, R.V.; viii. 1).

The burial of Christ forms one feature of the apostle’s gospel (I Cor. xv. 4); it is the evidence and assurance that the person in view is really dead. No words have the sense of finality about them as these, “Dead and buried”. The little gathering of mourners have paid their last tribute. Prayers and willing service have been rendered while the battle for life lasted, but when “dead and buried”! what more is to be done? The next movement *must* come from God, and that is the apostle’s thought here. I Cor. xv. 3, 4 says that “Christ died” and that He was “buried”, but it does not stay there; it goes on to say that He was “raised” from the dead:--

“That like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life” (vi. 4).

The walk in newness of life is our experimental answer to His resurrection. The full truth is that when He died, we died: when He was buried, we were buried; and being dead and buried our hope both *now* during the life which we live in the flesh (Gal. ii. 20), and in the future glory in the life to come, is entirely dependent upon Him. If that risen life is also ours, then even now we may “walk”. If it is not—being dead and buried—we can do nothing but wait amid a groaning creation for the redemption of the body.

The first note in the chord of sanctification has now been struck. Instead of “living in sin” we who have died to sin may “walk in newness of life”. This is more than “a new life”, for the abstract word *kainoteti* conveys the idea of “newness”. There are two words in the Greek for “new”: *kainos* (that gives us “newness” in Rom. vi. 4) and *neos*. Both come together in Col. iii. 10: “And having put on the new man (*neos*), being renewed (*anakainoo*):--

“In other words, we have put on the new, young, rejuvenate man, fresh, vigorous, prime, with all the glorious future stretching out in its limitless possibilities by the grace of God, and have been renewed with a life that standing beside the empty tomb looks back at the past, dead, buried, excluded, finished. *Neos* turns our faces toward Christ, the last Adam; *kainos* looks back to the first Adam. The one says ‘life has begun’, the other ‘that life has finished’.” (Volume XV, page 138).

As we proceed, we shall see that the dominion of sin and death is manifested by the fact that men are their slaves (servants). These slaves have been set free. Grace reigns where sin once reigned, and they are now free, free to serve another, and so, “Walk in newness of life” finds its sequel in “Serve in newness of spirit” (Rom. vii. 6).

We may safely take these terms as revealing most truly an essential aspect of sanctification. It must be in “newness of life”. Anything savouring of death brings defilement, as we may learn from the type of Numb. xix. 16:--

“And whosoever toucheth one that is slain with a sword in the open fields, or a dead body, or a bone of a man, or a grave, shall be unclean seven days.”

So all must be cleansed from “dead works” before any progressive sanctification is possible.

Having reached this great feature of truth, here we must stay. Sanctification demands newness of life—how then can anyone think of “continuing in sin” that grace may abound? We may all take to ourselves the words of the apostle, making them a prayer where we cannot state them as an experience:--

“I am dead to the law (as Rom. vi., ‘dead to sin’). I have been crucified with Christ (as Rom. vi., ‘the old man was crucified with Him’), nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God (‘newness of life’) Who loved me and gave Himself for me” (Gal. ii. 19, 20).

#41. Sanctification.---Second a Condition. Union (vi. 1-14). pp. 76 - 78

The first item in the doctrine of sanctification which we have established is “newness of life”. True, “death to sin” must precede this new life, but death to sin is not sanctification, any more than a good concrete foundation is a dwelling house. Power for sanctification is life, and the study now before us is to discover from the passage as to what that life is, and how its power may be received and its effects:--

“For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin” (Rom. vi. 5-7).

The R.V. alters the reading “planted together” to “become united with”, and this is undoubtedly the meaning. “Planted together” would truly describe a field of wheat, but each plant would nevertheless be independent: the word *sumphutos* used here indicates something more intimate, more akin to “grafting” than “planting”. The word is used in the LXX of Amos ix. 13 for “melt”, and is employed by *Xenophon* to describe the “growing together” of man and horse known as the “Centaur” of ancient myth. The R.V. margin is closest of all to the truth of the passage, and is the rendering of *Alford*:--

“If we have become united with the likeness of His death, so shall we be also with His resurrection.”

There is a real link between “united” and likeness”, the contrasted thought being found in Rom. viii. 3:--

“For that which was not in the power of the law because it was weak through the flesh, God (did) having sent His own Son in the likeness of the flesh of sin, and on account of sin condemned sin in the flesh.”

The Lord had a nature like our sinful nature, but had not Himself a sinful nature. If the apostle had not used the word “likeness”, it would have appeared that Christ partook of *sinful* flesh, which of course He did not. So the believer is united to the Lord in the “likeness” of His death, for that death itself allows of no possible partner. He suffered alone and suffered once for all. He died actually and literally, that we might be reckoned to have died with Him. Moreover, as we shall see in the next verse, “the likeness of His death” is most certainly a reference to the *kind* of death of an acclaimed victor, but the death of a slave, the death of the accursed, death by crucifixion. All this is included in the original statement of verse, “dead to sin”.

It is of the utmost importance that we shall realize the place that *union with Christ* occupies in this great doctrine of sanctification. Here, in the short compass of four verses, we have such extraordinary expressions as: “baptized into His death”; “buried with Him”; “united with Him”; “crucified with Him”; “Like as Christ”; and “the likeness of His death”. Union with Christ is the very essence of sanctification:--

“For both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are ALL OF ONE as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same” (Heb. ii. 11-14).

He was made “in the likeness of men” (Phil. ii. 7).

The ultimate goal of sanctification is expressed in Rom. viii. 29:--

“For whom He did foreknow He also did predestinate to be conformed to the IMAGE of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.”

The zenith is conformity to the IMAGE, the commencement is union with the LIKENESS of His death and resurrection life.

We have dwelt upon the likeness of His death, but let us not stay there. Life, not death, is the sphere of sanctification and, to us, that life must be resurrection life; so the apostle does not reach his goal until he completes the argument. “If we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection.” Verses 4 and 5 follow the same line:--

“Buried into His death. That like as Christ was raised—so we should be.”
“United together with the likeness of His death. We shall also in the likeness of His resurrection.”

The future “we shall be” must not be taken to refer to the yet future resurrection of the dead, but is the employment of the future for what is called “the ethical necessity”, as for example:--

“Thou *shalt* worship the Lord thy God” (Matt. iv. 10).

“What *shall* we do then?” (Luke iii. 10).

Future resurrection is, of course, implied, but the apostle is more concerned with present “walk”, and to show that its only hope of success lies in the fact of the risen life already there in Christ at the right hand of God. Much the same course is pursued in Col. iii., where the fact that we have been raised with Christ is brought forward as the incentive to set our mind on things above where Christ is, and so to mortify our members that are upon the earth.

As we shall serve our readers best by dealing with one point at a time, and as the next verse introduces yet a further development in the doctrine of sanctification, we will close this present article here, having established point No. 2, namely, that sanctification, whose sphere is newness of life, is possible only by union with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection.

#42. Sanctification.---Third: a state, freedom (vi. 1-14). pp. 116 - 120

We have seen in previous studies that sanctification has a sphere—“newness of life”, and a condition—“unity with the likeness of His death and resurrection”; we now proceed to the consideration of a third feature, a state—“liberty”.

Verse 6, where our study is resumed, ends with the words: “That henceforth we should not serve sin.” From this point to the close of the chapter we have many references to “servants” (literally “slaves”) who were once under an awful dominion, but are now “free”. With chapter vii. comes a change of figure, from that of a slave to that of a married woman under the law, who is set “free” from her marriage and all its obligations by the death of her husband. This is appropriately brought to a conclusion in verse 6 with service “in newness of spirit”.

The following passages will help us to see how prominently “freedom” and “servitude” figure in these chapters; in each case one of the verbal forms of *eleutheros* is used:--

“Being then *made free from* sin, ye became the servants of righteousness” (Rom. vi. 18).

“For when ye were the servants of sin, *ye were free from* righteousness” (Rom. vi. 20).

“But now being *made free from* sin and become servants to God” (Rom. vi. 22).

“If her husband be dead, she *is free from* that law” (Rom. vii. 3).

“For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath *made me free from* the law of sin and death” (Rom. viii. 2).

“Because the creature itself also *shall be set free from* the bondage of corruption into *the freedom* of the glory of the children of God” (Rom. viii. 21).

We must now look at the various derivations of the word translated “bondage”:

- “That henceforth we should not *serve* sin” (Rom. vi. 6).
- “*Servants* to obey, his *servants* ye are” (Rom. vi. 16).
- “Ye were the *servants* of sin” (Rom. vi. 17).
- “Ye became the *servants* of righteousness” (Rom. vi. 18).
- “*Servants* to uncleanness *servants* to righteousness unto holiness” (Rom. vi. 19).
- “When ye were the *servants* of sin” (Rom. vi. 20).
- “Now having become *servants* to God” (Rom. vi. 22).
- “We should *serve* in newness of spirit” (Rom. vii. 6).
- “With the mind I myself *serve* the law of God” (Rom. vii. 25).
- “Ye have not received the spirit of *bondage*” (Rom. viii. 15).
- “Shall be delivered from the *bondage* of corruption” (Rom. viii. 21).

How is this freedom attained and what is the nature of the bondage from which it liberates? The first part of the question is answered in Rom. vi. 7; the second in vi. 14 and viii. 21:

“He that is dead is freed from sin” (Rom. vi. 7).

We have already drawn attention to the fact that the word translated “freed from” is literally “justified from”. There is, however, no error here; the A.V. translation is gloriously true. But we must see for ourselves. The book of Job contains the thought that in death “the servant is free from his master” (Job iii. 19). And the Talmud has a maxim: “When a man dies, he is freed from the commands.” In Rom. vi. we have moved from the doctrine of justification from sin’s penalty and guilt (Rom. i.-v.) and have passed on to the consideration of the doctrine of sanctification, and the believer’s freedom from sin’s dominion and service. *Alford’s* comment on Rom. vi. 7 is worth quoting here:

“The difficulty of this verse arises from the apostle having in a short and pregnant sentence expressed a whole similitude, joining as he elsewhere does in such cases the subject of the first limb of the comparison with the predicate of the second. Fully expressed, it would stand thus: For, as a man that is dead is acquitted and released from guilt and bondage (among *men*: no ref. to *God’s* judgment of him); so a man that has died to sin is acquitted from the guilt of sin and released from its bondage.”

To make sure that every reader will appreciate this note we set out the passage, with verse 7 in the centre, showing what is the “first limb of the comparison”, and what is “the predicate of the second”:

Rom. vi. 2-6.	The believer is “dead to sin”.	\
Rom.	/ He that is dead	/
vi. 7.	\ Is freed from sin.	\
Rom. vi. 8-14.	Let not sin therefore reign that ye should obey it.	/

It is clear that freedom from bondage is the main theme here, and that this freedom has some vital connection with death to sin. The question as to the basis of this freedom is answered in verses 6 and 9:--

“*Knowing this*, that our old man was crucified with Him, in order that the body of sin might be rendered inoperative, that we should no longer serve sin.”

“*Knowing that* Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him.”

The subject here is a sacred one; let us tread reverently for this is indeed hallowed ground. The first passage (“knowing this”) points us to the cross; the second (“knowing that”) to the empty tomb. Together, they form the basis and charter of the believer’s freedom.

In Rom. vi. 6 we have the crucifixion of the “old man”; in vii. 6, the “oldness of the letter”. In vi. 6, the body of sin is “destroyed” (*katargeo*); and in vii. 6, we ourselves are “delivered” (*katargeo*) from the law. In both cases the end is “service”:--

“That henceforth we should not serve sin” (Rom. vi. 6).

“That we should serve in newness of spirit and not in oldness of the letter” (Rom. vii. 6).

The “newness” of the spirit is in contrast with the “oldness” of the letter; and we must find also something “new” to contrast with what is connected with the “old man”. This something “new” is found in verse 4: “newness of life.” As we have already remarked (Article #40) the word “newness”, standing here beside an empty tomb, looks back at the past which is dead, buried, excluded and finished.

The “old man” is crucified, with an object in view—“that the body of sin should be rendered inoperative”. In Rom. vii. 24 we have “the body of this death”; and in Rom. viii. 3 (literally) “the likeness of sin’s flesh”. We read in Rom. vi.-viii. and elsewhere of “a law of sin which is in my members”. This body, “sold under sin”, dominated by sin and death, is the seat of human depravity, the source of much of human temptation, and the active instrument in the outworking of evil. In a future day, the children of God shall stand in absolute freedom—“the freedom of the glory” (Rom. viii. 21)—and then they shall have attained to the “redemption of the body”. During our life on earth we still have “mortal bodies” in which sin *may* still reign, though its dominion is broken (Rom. vi. 12). Our only freedom springs from the canceling of sin and the ending of its dominion. We were all slaves to sin and death, “sold under sin” (Rom. vii. 14). The punishment for a slave was crucifixion; and so we read: “Our old man was crucified with Him.” This particular word translated “*crucified with*” is used in one other epistle, that written to the Galatians:--

“I through the law am dead to law, that I might live unto God. I have been *crucified with* Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I but Christ liveth in me: and the life that I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me” (Gal. ii. 19, 20).

“I am dead to law I have been crucified with Christ”, are the words of the apostle in Gal. ii. “I am dead to sin Our old man was crucified with Him”, says the same apostle in Rom. vi. And, in Gal. ii.: “That I might live unto God I live, yet not I.” And then, in Rom. vi., the words of the same apostle: “Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus.”

How are we to understand the serious expression: “crucified with Him”? Its only other occurrences in the N.T. are in the Gospels, and there we shall learn this meaning:--

“The thieves also, which were *crucified with Him*, cast the same in His teeth” (Matt. xxvii. 44).

“They that were *crucified with Him* reviled Him” (Mark xv. 32).

“Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was *crucified with Him*” (John xix. 32).

Reader, as you look at this record, do you realize that these dying thieves are a picture of yourself? Here indeed is the “offence of the cross”, the exposure of the utter hopelessness of the flesh—“none good”, “none righteous”, all condemned to a criminal’s death, “the death of the cross”.

It will be noticed that Matthew, Mark and John have been quoted in this connection. What has Luke to say? It is Luke who shews the inner meaning of the cross and its three victims:--

“And when they were come to the place called Calvary, there they crucified Him, and the malefactors, one on the right and the other on the left” (Luke xxiii. 33).

Each of these three crosses bore a condemned and dying man, for the Lord Jesus Himself entered into condemnation “for us”. Both of the malefactors were “in the same condemnation” (Luke xxiii. 40), but here their likeness ends. One of them railed upon Christ, but the other rebuked him saying, concerning their own condemnation: “And we indeed justly: for we receive the due reward of our deeds.” This dying man bows before the doctrine of Romans, that “all have sinned”, and that “the wages of sin is death”. But, looking at the central figure, the Son of God, he says:--

“But this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord”

We are not concerned for the moment as to what else he said. He said “Lord”; and if the dying Man was indeed the “Lord”, and if “He has done nothing amiss”, then He was the great Sacrifice for sin, so long promised, and at last offered. Here took place the great transfer upon which all our hopes depend. The dying thief ceased to be merely, as an accident of time and place, “crucified with” Christ, and, becoming “united with the likeness of His death”, was brought into salvation.

“Crucifixion with Christ” is set forth in Rom. vi. as having a specific object in view: “to render the body of sin inoperative” (*katargeo*). *Katargeo*.—There are five other occurrences of this word in Romans (iii. 3, 32; iv. 14; viii. 2, 6) where it is rendered “make without effect”, “make void”, “loosed from” and “delivered from”. In no case

can the word “destroy” in its true sense be rightly substituted. The following passages give some further A.V. renderings of the word:--

“To bring to nought” (I Cor. i. 28).
“Come to nought” (I Cor. ii. 6).
“Done away”; “Abolished” (II Cor. iii. 7, 11, 13, 14).
“Make of none effect” (Gal. iii. 17).
“Become of no effect” (Gal. v. 4).
“Then is the offence of the cross ceased” (Gal. v. 11).
“Who hath abolished death” (II Tim. i. 10).
“Destroy him that had the power of death” (Heb. ii. 14).

The word speaks of nullifying a covenant, or a promise. Take for instance, the last two references. Death is not yet “abolished” in an absolute sense; that will only be true when for the first time it can be said, “There shall be no more death” (Rev. xxi. 4). What is true, however, is that death has been *nullified* by the resurrection of Christ. Believers still die, but the sting of death has been extracted; it is now only to fall asleep in Christ (I Cor. xv. 56). Again, in Heb. ii. 14, Satan has not been destroyed—that is a future event—but his power has been “nullified”. He can no longer hold in bondage the child of God through fear of death, because Christ has died and risen again. So with the body of sin—it has been annulled, its dominion has been made void, and the believer, though still possessed of a “mortal” body, is now “free”—and free to serve the new Master.

(To be concluded).

**#42. Sanctification.---Third: a state, freedom
(vi. 1-14). *(concluded)*.
pp. 157, 158**

We now proceed to the second passage:--

“Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him: knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him. For the death which He died unto sin, He died once for all; but the life which He liveth, He liveth unto God” (Rom. vi. 8-10).

Let us observe the phrases, “to sin” and “to God”. They are purposely indefinite, so that the teaching of the apostle shall not be missed.

When the Lord “died to sin” He passed into a state in which sin could have no more to do with Him, either in its temptation or in its demand for atonement, or by contract with its odious presence. All this He accomplished and settled “once for all”. And, when we read that He now lives “to God”, we understand this simple statement to include the glorifying of the Father and the Son, the seating at the right hand of the Father, and the

pledge that because “He lives we shall live also”. The source and spring of our new life can never fail. It is as eternal as the personal life of the Son of God.

Let us never lose hold of the one dominant fact that in all these relations we are “one”, whether it be with Adam in his sin and death, or with Christ in His righteousness and life. In II Cor. iii. 7, 11, 13, 14 we have four times repeated the “nullifying” or “doing away” of the Old Covenant (the word translated “destroyed” in Rom. vi.). This is followed in II Cor. iii. by the thought of “freedom”, as in Rom. vi. 6: “Where the Spirit of the Lord is, *there* is liberty” (II Cor. iii. 17). This, then, is the third essential of sanctification.

In conclusion, let us again see the subject as a whole:--

- (1) A SPHERE.—*Newness of life.*
- (2) A CONDITION.—*Union.* Crucified with, dead with, buried with, raised with.
- (3) A STATE.—*Freedom.*

#43. Sanctification. How it is apprehended---“Reckon” (vi. 1-14). pp. 164 - 168

We have now considered three different phases of sanctification. It is a new sphere of activity: “newness of life”. It is possible by virtue of a new condition: “united with Christ.” And it can only be enjoyed in a new state: “freedom from dominion.”

The next enquiry is, How do these blessings become mine? Mine experimentally and effectively and not only in purpose and in Christ? Speaking without special consideration, we should probably reply that it is “by faith”. This is true, but what do we mean by “faith”? In the whole of the inner section of the epistle (Rom. v. 12 - viii. 39), the word “faith” occurs not at all, and “believe” but once: “We believe that we shall also live with Him” (Rom. vi. 8). This is very striking, especially if we compare the absence of “faith” here with its presence in the outer section.

In Rom. i. 1 - v. 11, we have the verb *pisteuo*, “to believe”, 9 times, and in Rom. ix.-xvi., 11 times. *Pistis*, “faith”, occurs 26 times in the earlier, and 12 times in the later section. There is, therefore, a total of 58 occurrences, as compared with one in Rom. vi. 8. A glance at the structure given on page 33 will show that in the three divisions we have the phrases: “Know ye not”; “Knowing this”; and “Knowing that”. In an earlier article (Volume XXII, page 224) we drew attention to the two words used for “knowing”, *ginosko* and *oida*, one indicating a personal acknowledgment, the other a less personal perception, e.g.:--

- “I had not *acknowledged* (*ginosko*) sin, but by the law” (Rom. vii. 7).
- “I had not *perceived* (*oida*) lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet” (Rom. vii. 7).

It would appear from this that “faith” has advanced and become “knowledge” as Peter says:--

“Add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren, nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ” (II Pet. i. 5-8).

The reader will observe that the end in view here is “fruit”, and will immediately turn back to Rom. vi. and vii. to see that this, too, is the goal before the apostle.

To return, then, to our theme: How is the believer to make these blessings something more than a part of a creed, and so believe them that his knowledge shall be neither barren nor unfruitful? The answer is found in Rom. vi. 11: “Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin; but alive unto God, in Christ Jesus.”

As the true meaning of the word “reckon” is vital to our appreciation and appropriation of the work of Christ, no pains must be spared to arrive at as true and complete an understanding of it as possible. *Logizomai*, “to reckon”, comes from *leloga*, the middle perfect of *lego*, “to gather or collect” as in I Cor. xvi. 1, 2. Its proper meaning is to reckon arithmetically, and is so used in the LXX version of II Chron. v. 6.

The usage of the word in the N.T. will enable us to get some idea of its general bearing:--

(1) TO REASON OR ARGUE RATIONALLY.

“They *reasoned* with themselves” (Mark xi. 31).

“When I was a child I *thought* as a child” (I Cor. xiii. 11).

(2) TO INFER, CONCLUDE OR BALANCE AFTER HEARING REASONS.

“Therefore we *conclude* that a man is justified by faith” (Rom. iii. 28).

“I *reckon* that the sufferings of this present time” (Rom. viii. 18).

“*Accounting* that God was able to raise him up” (Heb. xi. 19).

(3) TO THINK.

“And *thinkest* thou this, O man?” (Rom. ii. 3).

(4) TO ACCOUNT.

“Let a man so *account* of us, as of the ministers of Christ” (I Cor. iv. 1).

“Not that we are sufficient of ourselves, to *think* anything as of ourselves” (II Cor. iii. 5).

“To him that *esteemeth* anything to be unclean” (Rom. xiv. 14).

“He was *reckoned* among the transgressors” (Luke xxii. 37).

“We are *accounted* as sheep for the slaughter” (Rom. viii. 36).

(5) TO IMPUTE.

“Unto whom God *imputeth* righteousness without works” (Rom. iv. 6).

“Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not *impute* sin” (Rom. iv. 8).

“To whom it shall be *imputed*, if we believe” (Rom. iv. 24).

(6) TO IMPUTE FOR (*logizomai eis*).

“Shall not his uncircumcision be *counted for* circumcision?” (Rom. ii. 26).

“Abraham believed God, and it was *counted* unto him *for* righteousness” (Rom. iv. 3).

“His faith is *counted for* righteousness” (Rom. iv. 5).

“The children of the promise are *counted for* the seed” (Rom. ix. 8).

While we have not given every occurrence of the word, we believe we have accounted for every phase of its meaning. It will be observed in Rom. iv. that where “sin” and “righteousness” are being dealt with, these are “imputed”; but where faith is being dealt with, it is “imputed for”. Faith is not righteousness; it is “reckoned for” righteousness. In Rom. vi. 11 there is no “imputing for”; it is as actual and real as the imputation of sin to a sinner.

When we were considering the usage of the words “crucify with”, we observed that it was Luke who recorded the incident of the dying thief, and thus illuminated the doctrine which the words implied. This is as we might expect, if it is true that Luke was raised up to work with Paul. So here, again, it is Luke who gives us the one clear passage that bears most upon our theme. Let us give the passage—Luke xxii. 37 in full:--

“For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in Me, And He was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning Me have an end.” (The verb, “to be accomplished”, is *teleo*; the noun, “end”, is *telos*).

The Lord declared that something that was “written” was to be accomplished. Where is this written prophecy recorded? The reference is to Isa. liii. 12:--

“He was numbered with the transgressors: and He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.”

Earlier in this chapter the prophet had said:--

“He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed” (Isa. liii. 5).

The things concerning Him had an “end”—not merely a termination, but a goal, something attained and accomplished. When the Saviour cried with a loud voice, “It is finished”, the words meant more than that His sufferings were at last ended; they meant that He had “finished the work” which the Father had given Him to do. In Rom. vi. we stand looking at that finished work. He died for sin, He died to sin; and He rose again, the Victor over death. With Him we also died to sin; with Him we rose again victors over death. We were buried “into His death” and so became “in Christ”. And just as surely as He was “reckoned” (or “numbered”) among the transgressors, so are we to “reckon also ourselves” to have died unto sin and to be alive unto God in Him.

Let us examine verse 11 still more carefully. It commences with “Likewise”, *Houto*. This is usually translated “so”; other renderings are: “in like manner”, “on this fashion”, “thus”, etc. The words, “indeed but” are a translation of “*men de*”; they express the idea conveyed by the English form: “on the one hand on the other hand”, indicating two sides of a story. Most important of all is the rendering, “in Christ Jesus”. Whether the words, “our Lord”, should be included or not is not a serious matter; but the translation of *en Christou Iseou* by “through Jesus Christ” is a double error. Firstly, the title “Christ Jesus” is important, emphasizing that the Lord is the risen and

ascended One, Who once walked the earth. Secondly, we are not dealing with the mediatorship of Christ which would be rightly expressed by the preposition “through”, but with our oneness expressed by the preposition “in”. We died to sin in the likeness of His death, we walk in the likeness of His resurrection; but we live, actually and really, “in Him”.

This, then, is the mode of apprehending this most important truth. We “reckon”, with a reality as great as that with which Christ was reckoned with the transgressors. Just as surely as He was treated as a transgressor as a result of that reckoning, nothing being abated of all the horror of desertion, crucifixion and death; so, as surely, shall we be treated as justified and free from the dominion of sin, when we, too, reckon ourselves to have died to sin on the one hand, and, on the other, to be alive to God “in Christ Jesus”.

The reader is requested to notice the entire absence from this passage of any approximation to the language of a certain school of teaching, which urges its followers to “crucify themselves” and to “die more and more” if they would enter into this blessed state. Instead of exhorting us to crucify ourselves, the next section goes on to urge that we should “yield ourselves unto God as those that are alive from the dead”. It is good for us to abide by the Word of God, and He assures us that the “crucifying” was done for us by His blessed Son. The “dying” was in our room and stead. Before anything else of an experimental nature is introduced we are told to “reckon”.

The following extract from the writings of *Romaine* are much to the point here:--

“True spiritual mortification does not consist in sin not being in thee, nor in it being put upon the cross daily, nor yet in its being kept upon it. There must be something more to establish perfect peace in thy conscience; and that is the testimony of God concerning the body of sin. He has provided for thy perfect deliverance from it in Christ. Everything needful for this purpose was finished by Him upon the cross. He was thy Surety the law has no more right to condemn thee, a believer, than it has to condemn Him. Justice is bound to deal with thee as it has with thy risen and ascended Saviour. If thou dost not see thy complete mortification in Him, sin will reign in thee If it be not mortified in its power This believing view of his absolute mortification in Christ is the true gospel method of mortifying sin in our own persons.”

We have considered sanctification in its three aspects, and may now add the scriptural method of apprehending it in its fullness.

Sanctification.

- (1) A sphere: newness of life.
- (2) A condition: oneness with Christ.
- (3) A state: freedom from bondage.
- (4) It is apprehended by “reckoning”.

**#44. Sanctification. Its sphere: “Under grace” (vi. 1-14).
pp. 206 - 210**

We now have, for the first time in the epistle, an exhortation:--

“Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under law, but under grace’ (Rom. vi. 12-14).

In these three verses we have three features:--

The exhortation, *negatively*: “Let not”; “Yield not.”
The exhortation, *positively*: “Yield yourselves and your members.”
The assurance, *positionally*: “Under grace.”

Dr. Weymouth’s rendering in modern speech is suggestive:--

“Let not Sin therefore reign as king in your mortal bodies, causing you to be in subjection to their cravings; and no longer lend your faculties as unrighteous weapons (tools or implements) for Sin to use. On the contrary, surrender your very selves to God as living men who have risen from the dead, and surrender your several faculties to God, to be used as weapons (tools or implements) to maintain the right.”

When we were studying the epistle to the Hebrews, we observed that it was at the point where doctrinal instruction ended that exhortation began. “Having therefore let us let us let us” (Heb. x. 19-24). And so it is in Rom. vi. as it must ever be.

The word “reign” includes in its scope the word “king”, just as “dominion” carries with it the thought of the “Lord”. These verses in Rom. vi. refer back to Rom. v. 12-21:--

- (1) Death reigned (Rom. v. 14). \ through ADAM.
- (2) Sin reigned (Rom. v. 21). /
- (3) Grace reigns (Rom. v. 21). \ through THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.
- (4) Believers reign (Rom. v. 17). /

The reign of sin and death is over so far as we are concerned. Why is this? Is it because we are not now mortal? That cannot be, for quite apart from experience, the context itself speaks of our “mortal bodies”. Is it because sin has ceased to exist within us? This, too, would be quite contrary to our experience, and would deny the whole argument of Rom. vii. The true reason is that “death hath no more dominion over HIM” (Rom. vi. 9). He died for and to sin, and death reigns only through sin. The sting of death is sin. But in Him, all that has passed. We are on resurrection ground, and can no more be bondslaves to sin than Israel could be bondslaves to Pharaoh after the crossing

the Red Sea. At the Red Sea, Pharaoh died, his dominion ended, Israel were baptized into Moses, and were at length free to serve the Lord. He had said: "Let My *Son* go that He may *serve* Me" (Exod. iv. 23). And in this command lies the essential teaching of Rom. vi. 12-14. Service as bondslaves yields to service as sons, law gives place to grace, Egypt to the wilderness, and brick-making for idolatrous kings to the building of a tabernacle for the King of kings.

We are particularly warned against the "mortal body" and its "lusts". The body is mortal because of sin; we possess such a body because Adam sinned and was expelled from the garden of Eden. It is the medium of the deceitful and corrupting lusts of the "old man" (Eph. iv. 22); and when we put on the new man, we walk in love as children of light.

The apostle, in Rom. vi. 13, speaks of our not yielding our members to sin but to God; and in Eph. iv. he goes on to speak definitely of the newly-yielded "hand" and "mouth" (Eph. iv. 28, 29), which, as representing our words and deeds sum up most of our activities.

John speaks of the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life. A corrective to this is to remember that the body is mortal; if we realize this, it will not minister to any false "pride of life".

Rom. vi. 12 is an outworking of the truth of Rom. vi. 6, where the "old man" is crucified, so that the body of sin (called "the mortal body" in verse 12) might be rendered null and void, "that henceforth we should not serve sin". As Gal. v. 24 says: "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passion and lusts."

Notice how everything here seems to focus upon service. The walk in "newness of life" of Rom. vi. 4 is expressed in the service in "newness of spirit" of Rom. vii. 6. The crucifixion of the old man, and the nullifying of the body of sin, have in view the canceling of our service to sin (vi. 6). The delivered believer is exhorted to yield himself and his members to God; and his members are called "instruments", shewing that service is still in view. In the next section, too (vi. 15-23), the entire argument revolves around the thought of "service".

The wonderful freedom and deliverance of the believer is further explained in vi. 14 by showing that he is entirely removed from the dominion of law as well as that of sin, and is now under grace:--

"For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under law, but under grace."

It should be observed that there is no article before "law". It is not sufficient to be delivered from a ceremonial law, for the mere abolition of rites and ceremonies could not exempt from obedience to moral law. We are now found under a new economy, that of grace. Under the dispensation of grace, however, the moral law will be kept as certainly as if our salvation depended upon it. The dispensation of grace only sets the law aside as a means of salvation; when the law enunciates moral truth, this remains as true under

grace as before. The apostle himself has raised this question, in order to correct a false impression that Christian liberty can countenance licence:--

“For brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another (notice the thought of service again). For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself” (Gal. v. 13, 14).

This principle is more fully developed in Rom. xiii. 8-10:--

“Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.”

The truth enunciated in the opening section of chapter vi. (verses 1-14) is expanded and expounded in what follows. Rom. vi. 15 - vii. 6 corrects any false idea that being “under grace” imperils morality. Rom. vii. 7-25 deals with various aspects of law, the written and the unwritten law, the law without and the law within. And Rom. viii. shows that grace itself is by no means lawless:--

“For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death” (Rom. viii. 2).

The statement of Rom. viii., however, will be better appreciated when the utter failure both of the law and of the flesh is realized. It is the office of Rom. vii. to impress this upon the believer, so that, while recognizing that the law was rendered utterly ineffective in that it was weak through the flesh, he may realize with joy that God has in grace accomplished all His purpose in the gift of His own Son. “What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh” sums up Rom. vii., while the whole of Rom. viii. is an exposition of what grace has wrought through Christ.

We have now reached the conclusion of the first part of Rom. vi. and have seen that sanctification has:--

A *sphere*: “newness of life.”

A *condition*: “oneness with Christ.”

A *state*: “freedom from bondage.”

An *apprehension*: by “reckoning”.

And it affords the practical possibility of freedom to serve the Lord, not as a slave but as a son, not under law but under grace.

Seven precious things.

#2. The precious trial of faith (I Pet. i. 6, 7). pp. 17 - 19

The setting of the first of Peter's precious things is in "heaviness", "temptation" and "trial".

The apostle uses a number of expressions to soften the severity of the "fiery trial" through which the believer is called to pass, among which let us gratefully note the following:--

"For a season" (oligon).—The word literally means: "for a little while." We find it in I Pet. iii. 20 where it is translated "few", and more to our point in I Pet. v. 10 where the apostle says:--

"But the God of all grace, Who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered *a while*, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you."

This throws a comforting light upon the trial of faith: at most, it is but for "a little while", and it leads to perfecting, stablishing and settling.

Another mitigating feature in the trial of faith is expressed by the words: "if need (*dei*) be." There is a "need be" for every thorn, for every hour of darkness. The "need be" may be in ourselves, our need of discipline, some element of dross that must be purged. There may be a "need be" because of the outworking of the great purpose of God, and if so surely it is an honour to suffer anything that is associated with that mighty plan. There is also a "need be" because of others, for none of us liveth or dieth to himself. Thus we find the word (*dei*) translated "behove" in Luke xxiv. 46 ("Thus it behoved Christ to suffer"), and "must" in John xii. 34 ("The Son of man must be lifted up"), and "must needs" in Acts xvii. 3 ("Christ must needs have suffered").

The most important note, however, is that sounded in I Pet. i. 7 in the expression, "The trial of faith". As the word itself indicates, and the very explanatory note of Peter proves, the "trial" refers to the testing of a metal, the refining of gold. The words, "though it be tried with fire", may of course refer to the faith, but a fuller sense is given if we read them as referring to the gold. The intention of the apostle is expressed as follows:--

"That the trial of your faith (*being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it (the gold) be tried with fire*) might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ" (I Pet. i. 7).

Gold is called by the chemist a "noble metal" by reason of its resistance to the attack of acids. Peter, however, says that it "perishes", yet he adds: "even gold that perishes stands the test of fire; how much more then your faith?"

A further item of interest and importance is that the Greek word translated “honour” in I Pet. i. 7 is the same as that translated “precious” in I Pet. ii. 7. The trial of faith is indeed “precious” if it eventuates in “honour” before the Lord.

The “appearing” of I Pet. i. 7 is really the *apocalypse*, the unveiling, the revelation, of Jesus Christ. The word suggests that He is now hidden from our sight by a veil, and indeed the apostle goes on immediately to say: “Whom having not seen ye love.” The trial of faith synchronizes with the veiling of the Lord. It can but endure for a night, joy coming in the morning of His presence.

The church of the One Body has not the “appearing” or “revelation” of the Lord as its hope, but it surely has its hour of testing now in view of that day when Christ Who is our life shall appear. May some encouragement have been ministered by these words concerning *the trial of faith which is much more precious than gold*.

#3. “The precious blood of Christ.”

p. 60

The second jewel in this series of precious things is nothing less than “The precious blood of Christ” (I Pet. i. 18, 19). Peter, to reveal some of its preciousness, gives us two tests: (1) A contrast, and (2) A comparison.

A gem of the first water is enhanced if it be surrounded with stones of inferior quality, or against a background that is dark and lustreless. Let us look at this contrast:--

“Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold” (I pet. i. 18).

Both Peter and Paul were taught by grace to consider both silver and gold as of small value and of little worth, and it might be salutary for us all in this day of fictitious values to read what these servants of God have written and said as to silver and gold. To the lame man at the gate of the temple Peter said, “Silver and gold have I none” (Acts iii. 6), but in the name of Jesus of Nazareth he gave to the lame man more than gold or silver could buy.

“I have coveted no man’s silver, or gold” (Acts xx. 33) declared the apostle who gave so freely because of the grace bestowed upon him. To the Athenians he said: “The Godhead is (not) like unto gold or silver” (Acts xvii. 29), and both Peter and Paul strongly discouraged the “wearing of gold” and “putting on of apparel” (I Pet. iii. 3), and the adorning of oneself with “broided hair, or gold, or pearls” (I Tim. ii. 9). Equally with Peter, Paul emphasized the fact that the redeemed are “bought with a price” (I Cor. vi. 20), and both knew the truth of the statement of the Psalmist:--

“They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches; none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him. For the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever” (Psa. xlix. 6-8).

(To be continued).

#3. (contd.). “The precious blood of Christ.” pp. 79, 80

The redemption of their soul is indeed so precious that the multitude of riches could never pay the price. Nothing less than the precious blood of Christ will avail.

Let us now consider the comparison which the apostle makes:--

“But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world” (I Pet. i. 19, 20).

Gold, said Peter, was something that “perisheth” (I Pet. i. 7); gold and silver, said Peter, are “corruptible things” (I Pet. i. 18), but the precious blood of Christ is as of a lamb “without blemish and without spot”. He whose blood alone can redeem, was Himself, “holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners” (Heb. vii. 26). He whose offering for sin accomplished our justification before God, was Himself without sin:--

“For He hath made Him to be sin for us, Who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him” (II Cor. v. 21).

The reference to the “lamb” points back to the passover, and it is a glorious truth, basic to our redemption, that “Christ our passover hath been sacrificed for us” (I Cor. v. 7).

The lamb of God was attested “spotless” by a number of disinterested witnesses. Pilate said: “I find no fault in this man” (Luke xxiii. 4, 14) and “I have found no cause of death in Him” (Luke xxiii. 22). Herod, too, bore witness that “nothing worthy of death is done in Him” (Luke xxiii. 15). The dying thief bore his testimony, saying: “This man hath done nothing amiss” (Luke xxiii. 41). These, however, are negative in character. God’s testimony is positive: “This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased” (Matt. iii. 17).

A servant of God, having battled with the elements after speaking at a meeting in the country, found his murmurings turned to praise, when he entered the railway station and saw the text: “Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee” (Matt. ix. 2). All resentful feelings vanished, the discomfort of the storm was forgotten in the contemplation of that great fact.

Do we sometimes feel resentful regarding our circumstances, our health, our most prized schemes, our pilgrim trials? If we have been redeemed with “precious” blood, is it reasonable, or possible, that God can forget to be gracious? Let the preciousness of our redemption minister its blessed comfort to our hearts, knowing that the ransom paid for our redemption has also made us precious in the sight of Him Who paid it:--

“I gave for thy ransom Since thou wast precious in My sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee” (Isa. xliii. 3, 4).

#4. The elect and living stone. pp. 91 - 93

The precious blood of Christ having accomplished the redemption of His people, opens a door that leads to blessings beyond all that heart can think. In view of the riches that are the fruit of redeeming love, it is difficult to single out one as of more worth than another. We are therefore glad that the selection has been made, and made by the Lord Himself Who knows the value of every one of His blood-bought gifts.

The next precious thing in order of occurrence is the precious foundation stone upon which the redeemed are built. Redemption delivers from death, which is followed by newness of life:--

“Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever” (I Pet. i. 23).

These new-born babes grow by feeding upon “the unadulterated milk of the Word” (I Pet. ii. 2).

Having been redeemed, given life and growth, the redeemed reach the stage where their hope, destiny and calling become prominent. In I Pet. i. 3 we read:--

“According to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a *lively hope* by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.”

Therefore the next precious thing we are to consider is “the living Stone” upon Whom these “living stones” can be built:--

“To Whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious. Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house Behold, I lay in Sion, a chief corner stone, elect, precious; and he that believeth on Him shall not be confounded” (I Pet. ii. 4-6).

The transition from “babes” to “buildings” is not so extraordinary as at first sight it may appear, for these stones are “living”, and like the temple of Eph. ii., the house of which they form part is not only “built” but “grows”.

Man has “disallowed” this one great foundation, but God has chosen Him and calls Him precious:--

“He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him” (Isa. liii. 2).

It is a lesson that must be thoroughly learned and remembered, that what God calls “precious” man has rejected:--

“For that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God” (Luke xvi. 15).

Two words come together both in I Pet. ii. 4 and 6: “chosen” and “precious”. May we not see that the saints also are “precious” in His sight, for in I Pet. i. 2 and ii. 9 the same word “chosen” or “elect” is used of them. He is the living Stone and precious; they are living stones, and are they not precious in Him? He is “elect and precious”, and is not the chosen generation precious in Him?

The reference to the elect and precious living Stone of I Pet. ii. 4 receives amplification in verse 6:--

“Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion, a chief corner stone, elect, precious; and he that believeth on Him shall not be confounded” (I Pet. ii. 6).

The passage quoted is Isa. xxviii. 16, and as there is a slight difference in the wording of the two passages, we will set out that in Isaiah:--

“Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.”

In our meditation upon the earlier reference to the precious foundation stone, we made reference to Eph. ii. We must do so once more. In both Peter’s epistles and in Ephesians, Christ is spoken of as “the chief corner stone”. There are lesser stones that form part of the foundation, even as we read: “and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets” (Eph. ii. 20), but Jesus Christ Himself alone is the “chief corner stone”. In Eph. i. 10 Christ is seen as Head not only of the church, but of all things in heaven and in earth, and the same unifying feature is resident in the figure of the corner stone.

The dispensational difference between the church of the One Body and all other callings is not a difference in the foundation, but in the super-structure. The great corner stone beneath the temple binds all together. The figure changes as the verse develops, and “building” changes to “believing”:--

“He that believeth on Him shall not be confounded.”

The context of Isa. xxviii. 16 speaks of Israel's covenant with death and refuge in lies. All such, however, are doomed to failure. God has laid but one foundation, and no foundation save that one will stand the storm and the strain of coming judgment. This living stone, this elect chief corner stone is the precious foundation of all our hopes. He shall never be confounded who builds, and believes, on Him.

#5. He is precious. pp. 133, 134

“Unto you therefore which believe He is precious” (I Pet. ii. 7).

The person of the Lord had been partly hidden behind types and figures. He had been set forth as a Lamb without blemish and without spot. He had been set forth as a Chief Corner Stone laid in Zion. But He is now set forth as the supreme object of faith, and precious to all His believing people. Let us see what Peter has to say about “believing”:-

“Whom having not seen, ye love; in Whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory” (I Pet. i. 8).

“Who by Him do believe in God, that raised Him up from the dead, and gave Him glory” (I Pet. i. 21).

“Behold, I lay in Sion a Chief Corner Stone, elect, precious; and he that believeth on Him shall not be confounded” (I Pet. ii. 6).

“Unto you therefore which believe He is precious” (I Pet. ii. 7).

He is the object of love, though as yet unseen. He is the ground of rejoicing and unspeakable joy. He gives fullness of glory and, as the Risen One, He, Himself, has received glory at the Father's right hand. He is God's chosen foundation upon which all our hopes must rest. “Therefore”, concludes the scripture, to all who believe He must be “precious”.

If we consider the idea of preciousness from the standpoint of rarity and uniqueness, we can find it in the Son of God in fullest measure. Who but He claims our love, though He be yet unseen? Who, indeed, but He Who bare our sins in His own body on the tree. Where, outside of Christ, shall we find unmixed joy and unalloyed glory? The world may contribute “happiness”, but real joy, that is independent of what “happens”, it cannot give. Who but Christ is the Risen One, and risen, too, on behalf of His people? Who but He can hold out the hope of glory to any? What other foundation has God laid? Scripture answers, “None but Christ”. To us who believe, therefore, how precious He must be, for apart from Him, we are, and have, nothing.

B. W. Newton put forward the suggestion that the true meaning of the apostle in this passage is expressed by the translation: “Unto you therefore which believe *is the preciousness*”, for it will be seen that words “*He is*” are printed in italics in the A.V. This translation will also be found in *J. N. Darby's* version. All the preciousness that attaches to the Saviour belongs to His people. He is the Lamb of God, without blemish

and without spot. They, too, shall be presented holy, unblameable and unproveable. He is the elect and precious Corner Stone. They, the living stones, built on Him, partake of, and enter into, all His acceptableness in the sight of God. He is precious to the believer. All His preciousness is theirs.

There is no contradiction in these two renderings. The act of faith relinquishes all hope in self, and finds its all in Christ. The more we realize what the preciousness is that is reckoned to us in Him, the more shall we realize that He is precious in Himself. *“Lord to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life”* (John vi. 68).

#6. “Like precious faith.” **pp. 179, 180**

Peter’s first “precious” thing is associated with faith. With this thought he opens his second epistle:--

“Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ”
(II Pet. i. 1).

We have already seen that preciousness may be the result of rarity. Many precious things in the estimation of the world are mainly so because of their scarcity. This is true, for instance, of the first editions of books. A well-printed copy of Shakespeare can be obtained for a few shillings, but a copy of the first edition, not by any means so readable, could not be bought for anything less than thousands of pounds. The apostle, however, speaks of faith as being precious and yet at the same time possessed and shared by all believers—“like precious faith with us.” It is evident, therefore, that faith is precious because of its own intrinsic worth and not because it is the unique possession of a few.

Paul does not use the expression, “like precious faith”, but the same idea underlies his words to Titus: “The faith of God’s elect after the common faith” (Titus i. 1 & 4). Here the exclusive and inclusive character of faith is shown. None but the elect possess it, but all the elect share it. It is “precious” because it is “common”.

Jude, whose epistle follows Peter’s second epistle so closely, speaks of “the common salvation” and “the faith which was once delivered unto the saints”. Here again, faith is exclusively the possession of the saints, and is connected with a salvation which is common to all the redeemed.

We must bear in mind, in our present consideration, Peter’s early diffidence in having any fellowship with a man of another nation; and how he afterwards bore testimony at Jerusalem that “God gave them the like gift as He did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ” (Acts xi. 17). And again, when the matter came forward in Acts xv., he said, concerning the believing Gentiles:--

“And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as He did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they” (Acts xv. 8, 9, 11).

This, then, is the background behind the words: “like precious faith with us.”

Faith is the common possession of all the redeemed, because of the utter bankruptcy of man spiritually, and the precious fullness of Christ. So we find Peter declaring that this precious yet common faith is ministered “through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ” (Acts xv. 11). And, in the epistle, it is “through the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ” (II Pet. i. 1). That which is mediated through grace must be common to all, for grace resolutely rules out all idea of merit or precedence in the recipients. And that which comes by righteousness is just as surely common to all, for it is written that “there is none righteous, no, not one”.

Let us therefore rejoice in this communion in a precious gift. Let us reckon it to be prized above all earth’s wealth that we are included among that blessed company who have obtained “like precious faith” with Peter, Paul, Titus and Cornelius.

#7. “Precious promises.” pp. 219, 220

We now arrive at the seventh and the last of Peter’s precious things:--

“According as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue; whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust” (II Pet. i. 3, 4).

Two things stand out prominently like stars in this wonderful galaxy of truth: “divine power” and the “divine nature”. The divine power gives, the divine nature is shared. The thought of being “partakers” is one of fellowship, of having something in common. If the words were not written in Scripture it might sound presumptuous to speak in this way, but it is a mighty truth of which the members of the church which is His body have some knowledge too. The power that wrought in Christ when He was raised from the dead is “to usward who believe” and brings with it a participation in the life of Christ, Who indeed “is our life” (Col. iii. 4).

Peter declares that this divine power has given “all things that pertain to life and godliness”. In I Tim. iv. 8 Paul links together “the life that now is”, “that which is to come” and “godliness”. In this passage Peter probably refers to a life of godliness here and now, a state in strong contrast with that connected with the ineffective promises of

man as described in II Pet. ii. 18-22 (Further notes on these verses will be found in the series entitled: *Great and precious promises*).

The divine power is set forth in its positive bearing; “life and godliness”. The divine nature is set forth in its negative bearing: “having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.” Just as divine power and the divine nature are but two aspects of the life of Christ, so “life” and “godliness” as opposed to “corruption” and “lust” set forth two aspects of the pulsation of this life in the believer. The participation of the believer in this divine nature is indeed a precious gift of God, and we are not surprised, therefore, to discover that those promises that mediate this gift are described as “exceeding great and precious”. It is “by these” that it is possible to become partakers of this divine nature. Paul’s use of the word “promise” in Eph. iii. is somewhat similar:--

“That the Gentiles should be joint-heirs, and a joint body, and joint partakers of His *promise* in Christ by the gospel: whereof I was made a minister” (Eph. iii. 6, 7).

To become one with God, to realize the fulfillment of the gracious words of John xvii.: “I in them, and Thou in Me, that they all may be made perfect in one”; to experience the oneness of the “heavenly calling” of Heb. ii.: “For both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one”; to be able to appropriate the terms of Eph. iv.: “From Whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth”; this is an experience far above and beyond anything earth can give. As in any measure we realize this, we cannot but acknowledge that the faith that unites us to this glorious Lord must indeed be “precious”; that the blood that makes participation in the divine nature possible must be “precious”; and that the great foundation of all our hopes, the Lord Himself and those exceeding great promises that minister so much, must indeed be “precious” also.

“Unto you therefore that believe *is the preciousness*.”

A review, and sign of the times.

Pillar that may be Lot's wife.

p. 80

A problem for all time.

From the "Daily Telegraph" of 12th May, 1932.

"Sodom and Gomorrah were utterly destroyed by a rain of fire and brimstone because of their great wickedness, according to the Biblical story.

Striking confirmation of this is provided by recent archæological excavations on the site of these twin cities by the shores of the Dead Sea, in Palestine, which have been made by Father Mallon, of the Biblical Pontifical Institute of Jerusalem.

The whole four 'Cities of the Plain' have now been identified, and the site is dominated by Mount Nebo, from which Moses viewed the Promised Land.

With the new Biblical chronology necessitated by Prof. John Garstang's recent discovery of the date of the Fall of Jericho, Father Mallon's dating of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, formed from the archæological evidence, agrees exactly with the Biblical narrative.

On the plain below the hill on which these cities stood is a curious rock formation. It is about five feet high, and legend associates it with the story of Lot's wife, who, looking back at the burning cities, was turned into a pillar of salt. This, however, is one of the problems which archæology will never solve."

Bible relics found at Samaria.

p. 180

The following appeared in *The News Chronicle* of June 16th, 1932:--

Beautiful ivory panels, dating from the year B.C.800 and depicting lotus buds and flowers, strange animals and celestial beings from the Egyptian Pantheon, have been discovered at Samaria, the ancient capital of the Kingdom of Israel.

The site of this discovery leaves no doubt that these ivories belonged to the 'House of Ivory' mentioned in the Bible (I Kings xxii. 39), for the inscription carved on one of them bears the name of Hazael, King of Damascus, B.C.850-800.

One panel shows a fight between a bull and a lion, in relief. Others show cherubs and sphinxes. A third represents the personification of eternity.

These discoveries, which are due to the joint work of British and American archæologists, are of the greatest importance in illustrating the civilization of the period.—*Reuter*.

The passage in the Book of Kings referred to reads:--

"Now the rest of the acts of Ahab, and all that he did, and the ivory house which he made and all the cities which he built, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?"

The Mizpah Gate open again after 2,600 years.

p. 200

The following extract from *The News Chronicle* of 20th June, 1932, will be of interest to our readers:--

*“The Assyrian came down like a wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold.”—Byron.*

After 2,600 years, the great East Gate of ancient Mizpah is open again.

When sudden destruction overtook the city at the hands of Sennacherib in B.C.701, the gate was only partially destroyed, and it was found under the debris of centuries, well preserved.

A gigantic tower of solid rock, forty-four feet square, protected the entrance court on the east side, while soldiers on the city wall could command the approach from the other side.

The long brown stone benches in the sheltered court shimmer in the sun and look as if the contemporaries of Amos, Hosea and Isaiah had left them only yesterday.

Undoubtedly there were times when these prophets stood there and warned the Israelites against the Assyrian peril.

When the Assyrians attacked the fortress in Biblical times, the besieged tore down their walls and houses to form a barricade. But in vain; the enemy must have made a breach in another part of the city wall and entered.—*Reuter.*

“This God is our God.”

#4. Elohim and Jehovah. Titles of relation. pp. 63 - 66

We have seen that Scripture does not attempt to prove the existence of God, but teaches that they that come to God must believe that “He is”.

We take a step forward in our study when we learn from John iv. 24 that “God is Spirit”, and from the first epistle of John that this God is both “light” and “love”. We now go back to the Hebrew revelation of God to see how all fits together. The two great names of God revealed in the O.T. generally translated “God” and “Lord” are *Elohim* and *Jehovah*. The relationship of these titles to the invisible God Who is Spirit, and to the Lord Jesus Christ, God manifest in the flesh, we seek to show in this article, and first of all by means of the following diagrammatic disposition of the subject.

- - - Illustration - - - (BE-XXIII.64).

God, Who is Spirit, has two great all-embracing attributes. He is “Light” and He is “Love”. These two attributes are associated with the two great names under which God has made Himself known, “Elohim” and “Jehovah”. Both the attributes and the names are gathered up once more in the lower realm of the flesh, and are found in Emmanuel, God with us, God manifest in the flesh.

In other articles we have demonstrated that every attribute ascribed to God in the Scriptures is also ascribed to the Lord Jesus Christ, with the one obvious exception, namely, that of invisibility. We do not intend traversing that ground again here, but propose an examination of the two great titles under which the invisible God has made Himself known to man through the Word, Elohim and Jehovah.

The reader will recognize in the word Elohim the plural form “im” occurring in other well-known words as “Cherubim”, etc. Although the word is plural, and should naturally take a plural verb, we nevertheless find in a number of occurrences that the verb used is in the singular. This is the case in Gen. i. 1, where “created” (*bara*) is the third person, masculine singular perfect of the verb “to create”. To leave the matter here, however, would be to state but half the truth, and consequently to state a falsehood. Elohim is also followed by verbs in the plural as may be seen in Gen. i. 26:--

“And Elohim said” (*vay-yo-mer*), the third person, masculine singular). “Let us make” (*na-seh*, first person plural).

In this self-same chapter we have, in such a fundamental matter as the nature of God, a most remarkable use of the singular and the plural verb. Quite apart from the fact of inspiration, we should expect that Moses would not use language that was in any way misleading on such a vital subject. He evidently seeks to express the fact that *Elohim* stands for a unity. This unity, therefore, may be sometimes said to act in the singular number or in the plural, a feature of divine revelation that meets us on the very threshold, and warns us that there is no possible way of understanding the nature of God by human means. We must believe *what* He says of Himself, and *all* that He says of Himself, even though (as in the case of the use of both singular and plural verbs, pronouns and adjectives) the matter does not come within our experience nor can be made to conform to our reasoning. The Elohim Who created in such a way that it demanded a singular verb to explain the truth, nevertheless can be said to take counsel at the creation of man:--

“And Elohim said (singular), Let US (or WE will make [plural]) man in OUR image, according to OUR likeness.”

Moreover, while the O.T. teaches that God is One, we have the remarkable passage in Eccles. xii. 1, which reads: “Remember thy Creators” not “Creator”.

The idea that God took counsel with angels, or received assistance from any creature is repudiated by Isa. xlv. 24. There is no alternative, therefore, but to bow before the revelation of truth, and confess that the title Elohim is taken by God to reveal to man a Unity, and not a Being of solitary and absolute one-ness.

If the reader will glance at the diagram on page 64 once more, he will see that both the names Elohim and Jehovah are not in the realm of pure Being (that is expressed in the words “God is Spirit”), but are in the realm of manifestation, creation, redemption or *relation*. All that we know of God is relative, not absolute, and it is a fallacy to attempt to reason back from either the word Elohim or Jehovah into that realm where neither time nor space have any place.

Now, instead of this fact causing the simple believer to shrink back from such a theme, the very fact that God, Whom no man hath seen nor can see, Who recognizes neither the limits of time nor space, Who cannot be found out into perfection by searching, the very fact that He has revealed to us, His creatures, as much as can be grasped, by minds like ours, of His Person and attributes *so far as they relate* to the ages and their purpose, should fill us with abounding thanksgiving.

With this introduction to these two great titles, let us here conclude, and be prepared in our next article to examine as fully as time and space will permit the meaning that Scripture attaches to them:--

“Jehovah our Elohim (plural) is Jehovah One” (a unity) (Deut. vi. 4).

“This God is our God.”

#5. Elohim and Jehovah.
God in His relation to creation and redemption.
pp. 103 - 108

We now enter upon the important study of the meaning of the title first used of God in the Scriptures—*Elohim*. There are two avenues of approach to this study. One is to discover, if possible, the root meaning of the Hebrew word; the other to learn from its usage all that we may, so that the mental image we receive shall be as near the truth as possible. The etymology of the word is beset with many difficulties. Some would derive it from a word meaning “strong”; some from a word meaning “to worship”. Havernick goes to a Hebrew root now lost.

We feel that with so much diverse opinion, it may be as well to go afresh to the Book. While the supposed root “to worship” is not found in the Scriptures, and while the root for “strong” must be reserved for the title *El*, which is not to be confounded with *Elohim*, a root in constant use, and, therefore, one well known to all readers of the original, is *alah* = “to invoke, to make an oath and to curse”. To this day, the words “swearing”, “cursing” and “oaths” have a double meaning. They may be the most solemn utterances that can come from holy lips, or they may be the foulest blasphemies. The word *Elohim* if derived from this root would indicate that God under this title was the maker of an oath.

We are immediately in the presence of One Who has a purpose in creation and the ages, and Who has engaged Himself to carry that purpose through. In this light we read I Pet. i. 19, 20, where Christ is spoken of as the Lamb “foreordained before the foundation (or overthrow) of the world”. In this light, too, we read II Tim. i. 9, where we read of a purpose and a choice made in Christ “before the age times”. Yet once more, Eph. i. 4 reveals a choice in Christ before “the overthrow of the world”, and takes us back to Gen. i. 1, to the very presence of that God Who has sworn by Himself that to Him every knee should one day bow, and every tongue should one day swear or confess.

The title *Elohim* occurs some 2,700 times in the O.T., its first occurrence linking it with creation. If we now open the Scriptures at Gen. i., and read right on to Gen. ii. 3, the only title of God that is used is *Elohim*. At Gen. ii. 4, however, we find a change to the title of *Jehovah-Elohim* = “The Lord God”, where the two great names of God are united. Readers will be already acquainted with the fact that the book of Genesis is divided into two sections, viz., i. 1 - ii. 2—The introduction, and ii. 4 - l. 26—The eleven generations. There are only two portions of the book of Genesis in which these two titles of God appear separately:--

- i. 1 - ii. 2 uses the name of *Elohim* only.
- x. 1 - xi. 9 uses the name of *Jehovah* only.

In that portion which deals solely with creation, where man is seen in the image of His Maker, and where sin and death have not yet been manifested, the name of God is *Elohim*. After the flood and the placing of Noah upon the earth as a sort of “second man”, that portion contains no title other than that of *Jehovah*, and is concerned with the distribution of the nations on the earth, the rebellion of Nimrod and Babel. In this section *Jehovah* is used seven times.

When we look at the opening generation of the series of generations contained in Gen. ii. 4 - iv. 26, it seems to fall naturally into two parts:--

- (1) In the garden of Eden (Gen. ii. 4 - iii. 24).
- (2) Outside the garden of Eden (Gen. iv. 1-26).

The distribution of the divine titles is in harmony with the subject-matter:--

Inside the garden.

JEHOVAH-ELOHIM only.—Man innocent and unashamed (Gen. ii. 4 - iii. 1).

ELOHIM only.—In mouth of the Serpent and Eve (Gen. iii. 1-5).

JEHOVAH-ELOHIM only.—Man fallen and ashamed (Gen. iii. 8-24).

Outside the garden.

JEHOVAH only.—The birth of Cain, the offering of Abel and the banishment of Cain (Gen. iv. 1-16).

ELOHIM only.—The birth of Seth (Gen. iv. 25).

JEHOVAH only.—The birth of Enos, and the calling on the name of the Lord (Gen. iv. 26).

Some light is cast upon the two relationships intended by these two great names of God if we observe their use in the following passages:--

“And they went in male and female of all flesh, as God (*Elohim*) had commanded, and the Lord (*Jehovah*) shut him in” (Gen. vii. 16).

“And it came to pass when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, It is the king of Israel. Therefore they compassed about him to fight: but Jehoshaphat cried out, and the Lord (*Jehovah*) helped him; and God (*Elohim*) moved them to depart from him” (II Chron. xviii. 31).

It will be seen that there is a more intimate relationship intended by the name *Jehovah* than by the name *Elohim*. One indicates the Creator and His creature, the other the covenant-keeping God. We have already found that the name *Elohim* indicates God in the capacity of One Who had a purpose, an oath, a promise; this is the name which He assumed in connection with the aspect that creation bears to that purpose.

We now consider the name *Jehovah*, and find that this title indicates the same God, Who, as *Elohim*, created heaven and earth, but Who now limits Himself to “the ages”, and enters into covenant relationships involving the whole process of redemption and restoration, together with the overthrowing of Satan and his seed. The name *Jehovah*

occurs 7,600 times in the O.T. About 6,800 times it is rendered “LORD” and 800 times “GOD”. In Exod. vi. 3; Psa. lxxxiii. 18; Isa. xii. 2 and xxvi. 4, the A.V. uses the English equivalent “*Jehovah*”. The name also occurs in the English title *Jehovah-Jireh*, *Jehovah-Nissi* and *Jehovah-Shalom*.

Should any be disturbed by the theories of Higher Criticism regarding this name, it may be helpful to remind them that the Moabite Stone, which was erected in the days of II Kings iii., has the name *Jehovah* engraved upon it, the spelling being exactly as we find it in the Hebrew Bible to-day.

The title is a combination in one word of the three periods of existence. It places the future first: *Yehi* = “He will be”, then the present participle *hove* = “being”, and finally the short tense used in the past, *hahyah* = “he was”. This meaning of the word is supported by the *Targum of Jonathan*, and better still by the book of the Revelation:--

“Who is, and was, and is coming” (Rev. i. 4, 8).—The hope of His people.

“Was, and is, and is coming” (Rev. iv. 8).—The hope of creation.

“Who art, and wast” (Rev. xi. 7).—The future omitted. The kingdom set up.

The R.V., following the critical texts, omits from the last passage the words: “is to come.” The promise involved in the covenant name having been at last attained, that part of the title omitted.

In one passage of the book of Genesis, the title *Jehovah* is explained by the Lord Himself, and to this we must turn. The passage is Gen. xxi. 33, and the context speaks much of covenant and oath. As a result of the oath between Abimelech and Abraham, the name of the place was called *Beer-Sheba* = “The well of the oath” (Gen. xxi. 31), and it was there that Abraham called upon the name *Jehovah El olam* = “The God of the age”.

The moment we realize that the title *Jehovah* indicates the great invisible God, Who is Spirit, as “The God of the age”, we immediately perceive that this title is in direct opposition to that which belongs to Satan, “The god of *this* age” (II Cor. iv. 4).

With the record of Eden and the advent of the Serpent, comes the introduction of the title “*Jehovah-Elohim*”, and He Who in fullness of time condescended still more to become *Emmanuel* = “God with us”, definitely came in the flesh and blood “to destroy him that had the power of death, that is the Devil” (Heb. ii. 14), and was manifested to “undo the works of the Devil” (I John iii. 8).

Jehovah is essentially the title of God in redemption:--

“By My name JEHOVAH was I not *known* unto them I will *redeem* ye shall *know*” (Exod. vi. 3-7).

While the name *Jehovah* is used in Genesis by Abram, Isaac and Jacob, they did not *know* experimentally, as did Israel at the exodus, the great redemption with which the

name is associated. The Lord revealed Himself to Moses, as follows, at the time when the great deliverance from Egypt was about to be accomplished:--

“ ‘I AM THAT I AM’ this is My Name for the age. And this is My memorial unto all generations” (Exod. iii. 14, 15).

This is one part of the threefold name *Jehovah*, and covers the age and all generations to the time when the Lord shall put forth His great power and reign (Rev. xi. 17).

The reader who is acquainted with Newberry's Bible will remember that he translates Exod. iii. 14 by: “I will be that I will be”, but adds, “But as the so-called future or long tense expresses not simply the future, but also and especially continuance, the force is: ‘I continue to be, and will be, what I continue to be, and will be’.” *Rotherham* translates the passage by: “And God said unto Moses, I will become whatsoever I please”, and devotes a chapter in his introduction to the name *Jehovah*, which is well worth the reader's attention. Regarding his translation of Exod. iii. 14, he says:--

“The name itself (JEHOVAH) signifies ‘He Who becometh’, and the formula by which that significance is sustained and which is rendered in the Authorized Version, ‘I am that I am’, expresses the sense, ‘I will become whatsoever I please’, or, as more exactly indicating the idiom involved, ‘I will become whatsoever I may become’. We amplify the ‘may’ and more freely suggest the natural latitude which the idiom claims, by saying, ‘whatsoever I will, may, or can become’.”

The sense of the formula given above is very simply and idiomatically obtained. The formula itself is *'ehyeh, 'asher, 'ehyeh*, in which it should be noted that the verb *'ehyeh* = “I will become”, runs forward into a reduplication of itself: for it is that which constitutes the idiom. We have many such idiomatic formulæ even in English: “I will speak what I will speak”, and the like. We have in the Old Testament at least three examples in which the recognition of this simple idiom brings out an excellent sense. I Sam. xxiii. 13 (A.V. and R.V), “And they went whithersoever they could go” (Heb. “*way yithhalleku ba'asher yithhallaku*”). Freely: “And they wandered wheresoever they could, would or might wander.” So in II Sam. xv. 20 and in II Kings viii. 1 the same idiom occurs.

If we remember that the words, “what I please”, when used by God indicate the “good pleasure of His will”, then Exod. iii. 14 reveals that the name *Jehovah* stands for God in relation to the ages and His redeemed people, coming necessarily into conflict with Satan, and into contact with sin and death, and guaranteeing the complete success of the purpose of the ages: “I will become whatsoever I purpose”—*Jehovah*.

“This God is our God.”

**#6. Further titles of God considered:
El, Jah and Adon.
pp. 144 - 147**

We have considered, in a simple way, the two great titles of God, *Elohim* and *Jehovah*, but there are other titles used in the Scriptures that must be given attention in order that our preliminary survey may be complete. There are four titles which have a similar sound, though derived from different roots. They are *El*, *Eloah*, *Elyon* and *Elohim*.

El means power. In Psa. l. 1 we read: "The mighty God, even the Lord, hath spoken", which in the Hebrew reads, "*El, Elohim Jehovah* hath spoken". Here the word "God" is the translation of *Elohim*, and the word "mighty" is the translation of *El*. In each of the following passages, the word "mighty", "power", or "strong", is the rendering of the Hebrew *El*:--

- "Give unto the Lord, O ye *mighty*" (Psa. xxix. 1).
- "God standeth in the congregation of the *mighty*" (Psa. lxxxii. 1).
- "The *strong* among the mighty shall speak" (Ezek. xxxii. 21).
- "Because it is in the *power* of their hand" (Micah ii. 1).

This title *El* is the one with which many of the divine attributes are associated. It is used in each of the following passages:--

- "The almighty God" (Gen. xvii. 1).
- "The God of the age" (Gen. xxi. 33).
- "A God of truth" (Deut. xxxii. 4).
- "The living God" (Josh. iii. 10).

While *Elohim* is a plural word, *El* is a singular word, and the thought of the concentration in God, of the divine attributes, conveyed by this title, indicates that though plurality must be understood in the Godhead, yet in essence God is spirit, and in attributes God is one.

Closely allied with the title *El* is the added title *Shaddai*. The words *El Shaddai* occur in combination seven times in the following passages Gen. xvii. 1; xxviii. 3; xxxv. 11; xliii. 14; xlviii. 3; Exod. vi. 3; Ezek. x. 5. In the remaining 41 occurrences it stands alone, and is rendered "The Almighty": of these 31 occur in Job, the remaining 10 being found in Genesis, Numbers, Ruth, Psalms, Isaiah, Ezekiel and Joel. In spite of this consistency of translation, almightiness is not the true idea conveyed by *Shaddai*; rather is it bountifulness and full sufficiency: an almighty power, certainly, but viewed in the light of its competency to provide.

Eloah appears to be derived from a root meaning “to worship”, and presents God as the one, supreme, Object of adoration and worship. Its first occurrence associates the name with worship:--

“He forsook God which made him They sacrifice unto devils, not to God’
(Deut. xxxii. 15-17).

The title occurs about 56 times, 41 of which are in Job.

The third of these similar sounding titles is *Elyon*. It may be helpful to warn the reader against attempting derivations of the Hebrew words by their appearance in English. For instance, the likeness between *El* and *Elyon* is superficial, the letter “E” having to stand for both of two very different letters in the Hebrew alphabet. The word is derived from *elah* or *alah*, “to ascend”. *Elyon* itself is translated 26 times by the following:--

“uppermost” (Gen. xl. 7); “upper” (Josh. xvi. 5); “high” (Neh. iii. 25);
“higher” (Psa. lxxxix. 27); “highest” (Psa. lxxxvii. 5); “on high” (Deut. xxviii. 1).

and 27 times by “most high”.

Jah.—This title is considered to be a contraction of Jehovah. Its first occurrence is in Exod. xv. 2:--

“The Lord (JAH) is my strength and my song, and He is become my salvation”
(Exod. xv. 2).
“Extol Him that rideth upon the heavens by His name JAH” (Psa. lxxviii. 4).

The title recurs in verse 18, thereby revealing the glorious fact that it, too, belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ. The total number of occurrences is exactly 49, a number of significance, being seven times seven, thus denoting perfection and completeness.

There remain three titles, variants of the word meaning “Lord” or “Ruler”.

Adon.—This word is used both of God and man. Sarah uses it of Abraham (Gen. xviii. 12); and Eleazar uses it of Abraham when he speaks of him as his “Master” (Gen. xxiv. 27). The first occurrence of the title is in Exod. xxiii. 17—“*Adon Jehovah*.” *Adonai* (literally “My lords”) is the plural form, and its first occurrence is found in Gen. xv. 2—“*Adonai Jehovah*.”

We learn, then, that God, Who is spirit, Whom no man hath seen nor can see, has yet manifested Himself, so far as it is possible for the human mind to receive and apprehend, under these titles which we now assemble, and all of which reveal God in some one or more of His condescending Self-limitations; for it must ever be that God Himself is transcendently above every name.

As *El*, a name in the singular number, we have the idea of Almighty Power, in Whom are to be conceived all the attributes of the Godhead. As *El Shaddai*, this Omnipotence

becomes the All-sufficiency of His people, carrying with it the pledge that He will accomplish all His purpose. As *Eloah* this almighty and all-bountiful God is in His holy temple, where we gaze upon Him as the supreme Object of all worship and all praise. The title *El Elyon* emphasizes His exaltation: He is the Most High, with Whom none can compare. Great was the influence upon Abraham of the two revelations of God's character, which His names *El Shaddai* and *El Elyon* enshrine (see Gen. xiv. 22 and Gen. xvii. 1).

The almighty One is also made known by the word *Elohim*, a plural noun that frequently takes a singular verb, warning us that we must not reason from the nature of man to the nature of God. This title associates God with creation, and by its derivation associates that creation with a mighty oath and purpose, and so glances at the rebellion of the anointed cherub before the creation of Adam (Ezek. xxviii.).

Jehovah is the name of God "for the age". In its import it spans all time, being composed of the parts of speech that indicate future, present and past. The Almighty God, Who is the Most High and All-sufficient, has entered into covenant relationships with His people, particularly in the matter of sin and death, and in these characters is closely associated with that sphere of His divine purpose which is covered by redemption. As redemption could only be accomplished by a "Kinsman", the title "*Jehovah*" belongs to the Lord Jesus, "God manifest in the flesh".

Jah indicates God in the accomplishment of His great purpose—"He is become my salvation"—while the close association of the title in Psa. lxviii. With the ascension of Christ emphasizes the fact that the work is indeed "finished".

This mighty God and covenant-keeping Lord is indeed Master and Owner, ruling in the affairs of men, and yet to be the acknowledged King of kings and Lord of lords.

With the glimmerings of truth that these studies bring, can we not say with truth: "*O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth.*"

As we gather up all these wondrous revelations of the God Who has made Himself known in the Scriptures, is it not an unspeakable mercy for any one of us to be able to say with unfeigned faith: "*This God is our God.*"

#7. The immutability of God.
“I change not” (Mal. iii. 6).
pp. 183 - 186

We have now passed in review the names of God, under which He has been pleased to reveal some of His wondrous ways and acts as well as His essential Being. It is our desire to avoid, wherever possible, the language of theology. Instead, therefore, of speaking of the essence and attributes of God, we use the terms “Being”, “ways” and “acts”, as being less formal and also scriptural. The term “Being” is justified by the title “*I am*” revealed to Moses, and by the statement of Heb. xi. 6: “He is.” The outgoings of this glorious Being, known to us as *El*, *Elohim* and *Jehovah*, are spoken of as His “ways” and His “acts”:-

“He made known His ways unto Moses, His acts unto the children of Israel” (Psa. ciii. 7).

The Companion Bible gives the following note to this passage:-

“Ways: i.e. the reasons of His acts (esoteric) to Moses. Acts: i.e. the acts (exoteric) visible to the people.”

It is essential to a right understanding of our subject that we should not attempt to form a judgment of the character of God solely by His visible acts, for we shall discover that in His dealings with men there is of necessity an element of contingency:-

“Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you” (James iv. 8).

“With the merciful Thou wilt show Thyself merciful: with an upright man Thou wilt show Thyself upright: with the pure Thou wilt show Thyself pure: and with the froward Thou wilt show Thyself froward” (Psa. xviii. 25, 26).

Such are the “acts” of the Lord; but it would be misleading to attempt to construct His essential character from such information.

The thought underlying His “ways” is not so superficial; two opposite “acts” may spring from the same unseen “ways”. An illustration will perhaps make this clear. Judged superficially, Paul’s two acts regarding circumcision as recorded in Acts xv. 1, 2 with Gal. ii. 3, 14, and in Acts xvi. 1-3 with Gal. v. 3, would lead us to a very wrong conclusion about the character of that faithful servant of Christ. We can only rightly appraise both his actions and his character by learning what were the underlying “ways” that, meeting two different sets of circumstances, led to apparently contradictory lines of action. Our theme at the moment is the immutability of God, and we have only touched upon some of the ways in which He appears to change, so that this other aspect of the subject may not be forgotten or confused with our present line of study.

Underlying almost the whole scheme of revelation is the basic fact that the Lord changes not. If God could change, an element of uncertainty would enter into the whole fabric of the universe. His holiness and righteousness would be tarnished, His promises would become uncertain, and the gospel would lose its power. Christ may die and be raised again, but if God can change, all may be rendered null and void. Before, therefore, we attempt to speak of God's holiness, His righteousness, His power or His love, we must receive the assurance of the Word concerning His unchangeableness.

Were we attempting to write theological essays, we should speak of the necessary immutability of the Divine Essence, and show that we cannot speak of the possibility of change without introducing the idea of imperfection and the possibility of improvement. These matters, however, do not come within the scope of revelation. We cannot understand the Essence and Being of God considered absolutely; we must begin where He begins, in His relation with man, time and place. The words of Mal. iii. 6 are not written to reveal the Divine Essence; they are concerned with God's attitude towards His erring people with respect to His own purposes of grace:--

“For I am the Lord, I change not: therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed”
(Mal. iii. 6).

Parallel with this passage are the words of Rom. xi. 28, 29:--

“As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.”

In this respect, God contrasts Himself with man:--

“God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent”
(Numb. xxiii. 19).

“The Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent; for He is not a man that He should repent” (I Sam. xv. 29).

The passage already quoted from Heb. vi. 17 speaks particularly of the “immutability of His counsel”. This is seen in the many scriptures that speak of His unchanging word, His unalterable purpose, His “everlasting” love:--

“The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever (to the age), the thoughts of His heart to all generations” (Psa. xxxiii. 11).

Speaking of the Lord as the Giver of all good gifts, James says:--

“Do not err, my beloved brethren. Every good gift, and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with Whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning” (James i. 16, 17).

The unchanging Christ is the Rock upon which the whole of the epistle to the Hebrews is built:--

Heb. i. 10-12.—Creation itself will change and pass away, but “Thou remainest
Thou art the same”.

Heb. ii.-xii.—Moses, angels, priests, sacrifices, kingdoms, tabernacles and covenant; all
seen to be transient.

Heb. xii. 27 - xiii. 8.—“We receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved.” “That those
things which cannot be shaken may remain.” “Jesus Christ the same.”

If immutability be an attribute of Deity, we cannot but glory in the fact that it is here
unreservedly accorded to the Lord our Saviour.

“The Divine immutability, like the cloud which interposed between the Israelites and
the Egyptian army, has a dark as well as a light side. It ensures the execution of His
threatenings, as well as the performance of His promises; and destroys the hope which
the guilty fondly cherish, that He will be all lenity to His frail and erring creatures, and
that they will be much more lightly dealt with than the declarations of His own Word
would lead us to expect. We oppose to these deceitful and presumptuous speculations the
solemn truth that God is unchanging in veracity and purpose, in faithfulness and justice.”
(*J. Dick*).

“I change not.” “This God is our God.”

#8. The holiness of God.

**“Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil” (Hab. i. 13).
pp. 223 - 226**

We have learned that God, Who is Spirit, has been manifested to us as light and love,
and in the section headed “immutability”, that He is light, where there is no variableness
or shadow of turning. We now turn to another attribute of God that follows from the fact
that He is light:--

“God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all” (I John i. 5).

The holiness of God is such that there can be no possible countenance given to sin,
impurity or iniquity in any form:--

“Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look upon iniquity” (Hab. i. 13).

Unregenerate man will, in self-justification, often lay claim to righteousness, good
living or morality, but scarcely ever to holiness. Holiness, too, is so remote from earthly
experience that the word scarcely enters into the vocabulary of everyday life. Such
words as “right” and “wrong”, “good” and “bad”, “just” and “iniquitous”, are the
everyday language of commerce, but one would have to travel far to meet the
stenographer who had used the word “holy” once in a year’s correspondence. Holiness,
above all things, belongs to God. It is this attribute that is ascribed with threefold
emphasis by the Seraphim and Cherubim, night and day:--

“And one cried to another and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory” (Isa. vi. 3).

“And the four living ones had each six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come” (Rev. iv. 8).

Neither of angels nor men is it recorded that they ever cry of God, “Righteous, righteous, righteous”, or, “Mighty, mighty, mighty”. This triune ascription is reserved for the attribute of holiness.

How shall we estimate the nature of holiness? Perhaps if we discover the character of the man that shall “dwell in the holy place” or “stand in the holy place”, we shall get some conception of its meaning:--

“Who shall dwell in Thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart” (Psa. xv. 1, 2).

Walk, work and words, in righteousness and truth, manifested externally, and held “in his heart”, give some idea of the comprehensive claims of holiness:--

“He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour” (Psa. xv. 3).

The three positive are followed by three negative requirements. Holiness requires that there be no slander, no evil deed, no entertainment of evil report:--

“Who shall stand in His holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; Who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully” (Psa. xxiv. 3, 4).

Anything impure, despicable or vile is intolerable to holiness. Holiness is the quintessence of all virtues, and without holiness almighty power might indicate a monster, and the wisdom of God, without holiness, might but indicate the mind of a devil, for there is a power, and there is a wisdom that is from beneath, that is earthly, sensual and devilish. But the moment we couple these attributes with holiness, they are the sublime prerogatives of God alone. Holiness is akin to beauty, for beauty cannot embrace ugliness any more than holiness can abide impurity.

Worship and praise must be offered to the Lord in the “beauty of holiness” (I Chron. xvi. 29; II Chron. xx. 21; Psa. xxix. 2; xcvi. 9). We read of no device on the crown of king David, but the mitre of the *high priest* was incomplete without the golden plate bearing the inscription, “Holiness unto the Lord” (Exod. xxviii. 36). God’s ideal kingdom is a “kingdom of priests”, and His ideal nation is “a holy nation” (Exod. xix. 6). Five times over do we read of the sanctifying of the people and the priests, because the Lord they served was holy. Their sanctification was set forth symbolically, and assists us further to understand what is implied in the ascription of holiness unto the Lord:--

“Ye shall not make yourselves abominable with any creeping thing that creepeth, neither shall ye make yourselves unclean with them, that ye should be defiled thereby.

For I am the Lord your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy” (Lev. xi. 43, 44).

“I am the Lord that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy” (Lev. xi. 45).

“Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them: Ye shall be holy; for I the Lord your God am holy” (Lev. xix. 2).

Then follow laws regarding obedience to parents, observance of the sabbath, avoidance of idolatry, and great variety of commands dealing with ceremonials and morals, as far removed from one another in subject as seeking after wizards, and using false weights and measures (Lev. xix. 1-37). Lev. xx. 26 is set in a similar context, enjoining holiness and defining it by righteousness and purity of life, worship and walk:--

“Ye shall therefore *put a difference* ye shall be holy unto Me, for I the Lord am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be Mine” (Lev. xx. 25, 26).

The theme is continued into Lev. xxi., where it deals with defilement by the dead, by the following of heathen customs, and by contracting marriage with any but a pure woman (Lev. xxi. 1-8).

The holiness of God is beyond the possibility of comparison:--

“There is none holy as the Lord” (I Sam. ii. 2).

“Who is like unto Thee, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like Thee, glorious in holiness?” (Exod. xv. 11).

God’s throne is a throne of holiness (Psa. xlvii. 8). God’s dwelling place is “His holy heaven” (Psa. xx. 6). His “habitation”, “hill”, “place”, “mountain” and “city” are holy (Psa. lxxviii. 5, iii. 4, xxiv. 3; Isa. lxxv. 25; Rev. xi. 2). The “Scriptures”, “promises”, “covenant” and “law” are holy (Rom. i. 2; Psa. cv. 42; Luke i. 72; Rom. vii. 12).

It is because God is holy that sin could not be put away except by sacrifice. The only time that the Saviour used the title, “Holy Father”, was in view of His great sacrifice (John xvii. 11). It is because God is holy that none can enter His presence except by the new and living Way consecrated for us through the veil. It is because God is holy that the shedding of blood is necessarily associated with the forgiveness of sins. When once we grasp the basic fact of the essential holiness of God, the slightest tendency on the part of any doctrine to associate Him with sin in any shape or form—however specious may be the arguments, however, it may appear to magnify His greatness and His almighty power, however it may appear to explain the problem of evil or to justify God with men—must be repudiated as coming from beneath and not from above, where “no darkness at all” is the great shining truth:--

“For thus saith He that is high and lifted up, inhabiting futurity, and holy is His name: a high and holy place will I inhabit, also with the crushed and lowly in spirit” (Isa. lvii. 5, *Rotherham’s Version.*).

“This God is our God.”

The truth that makes free.

#1. “The truth shall make you free” (John viii. 32). pp. 71 - 76

In the series of articles on “Sanctification” in Volumes XXI and XXII we had occasion to refer to the words of John xvii. 17: “Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy word is truth.” It was not there possible or desirable to depart from the theme in order to deal with the questions concerning the truth that these words raise, but the matter is important enough to merit a separate consideration; and we hope in the present series to consider what it is, where it is found, and what it accomplishes.

There are many who adopt Pilate’s attitude, and ask, “What is truth?” without waiting for an answer. Let us examine the context of Pilate’s question. The Saviour stands before him, and Pilate asks:--

“Art Thou the King of the Jews? Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this of thyself, or did others tell it thee of Me? Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered Thee unto me. What hast Thou done? Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: If My kingdom were of this world then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is My kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto Him, Art Thou a King then? (or possibly, ‘Thou art a King then’). Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a King. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth My voice. Pilate said unto Him, What is truth?” (John xviii. 33-38).

Much as we would rejoice to discern even in Pilate the beginnings of grace, we fear that his question was but the expression of a polite indifference characteristic of the philosophy of his generation. His words imply that there is no such actuality as truth and his action suits his words—for he does not wait for an answer. The words of the Lord, however, to those who are of the truth, tell us that truth is real and positive, and that in the Person and work of the Son of God we shall see its fullest manifestation and delineation. He came, as He told Pilate, to bear witness to the truth, and in John xvii. 17 He has left us without doubt that the “truth” and the “Scriptures” are synonymous:--

“Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth” (John xvii. 17).

“I have given them Thy Word” (John xvii. 14).

“I have given unto them the words which Thou gavest Me” (John xvii. 8).

We do not propose to go over the ground already covered in other articles, or to consider at length the doctrine of the inspiration of all scripture; this doctrine is assumed in every article published in *The Berean Expositor*, and its repudiation would shatter the whole fabric of our testimony. We simply draw attention to the fact that the Lord put forward no philosophy as to “truth”, but declared that it was resident in the “Word” and “words” of God and embodied in His own life and witness. This is solid ground in a world of shifting sand. Truth is real; truth comes from God; and truth has been expressed.

Another important principle with reference to the truth is the imperative necessity for its “right division” (II Tim. ii. 15). This, too, is so fundamental to all our witness, and its application so evident in every issue, that we do not propose to deal with the matter here.

Accepting, then, the Scriptures as the vehicle of truth, and their right division as a necessity, we propose in this series to occupy the reader’s attention with some of the applications and implications of the truth. We find our opening theme in the words of John viii. 32:--

“Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

It would take us too far afield to set before the reader in any detail the section of John’s Gospel of which this verse forms a part. We will give the barest possible indications so that some benefit may be received by the realization of the wider context of the passage.

John vii. 11 - viii. 59 records a series of arguments with the Jewish leaders at the feast of tabernacles. They are divided for us by the Holy Spirit in five different places where we read of the failure of the Lord’s enemies to apprehend Him. As these are key-passages we quote them below:--

- (1) “Then the Jews sought Him no man spoke openly of Him” (John vii. 11-13).
- (2) “Then they sought to take Him: but no man laid hands on Him, because His hour was not yet come” (John vii. 30).
- (3) “And some of them would have taken Him: but no man laid hands on Him” (John vii. 44).
- (4) “And no man laid hands on Him, for His hour was not yet come” (John viii. 20).
- (5) “Then took they up stones to cast at Him, but Jesus hid Himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by” (John viii. 59).

The reader will find food for thought and much profit in carefully comparing the teaching of the intervening sections. This, however, is outside the scope of our present enquiry. Our immediate concern is with the section between the citations from John viii. 20 and viii. 59. If at some subsequent time we take up the study of John’s Gospel, we shall naturally devote more space to the analysis of these passages, but for our present purpose, the following will suffice:--

John viii. 20-59.

- A | 20. No man laid hold on Him.
B | 21-24. | a | I AM from above.
 b | Ye shall die in your sins.
C | 25, 26. CHRIST THE TRUTH.
 c | I said (*laleo*).
 d | From the beginning.
 e | He that sent Me is true.
D | 26-28. | f | I speak (*laleo*).
 g | Do nothing of Myself.
E | 28, 29. | h | I speak (*laleo*).
 i | The Father with Me (*meta*).
F | 30-37. | j | He spake (*laleo*).
 k | The truth shall make you free.
E | 38, 39. | h | I speak (*laleo*).
 i | With my Father (*para*).
D | 40, 41. | f | I told (*laleo*).
 g | Ye do the deeds of your Father.
C | 42-50. DEVIL THE LIAR.
 c | He speaketh (*laleo*).
 d | From the beginning.
 e | He sent Me.
B | 51-58. | b | Never see death.
 a | Before Abraham was I AM.
A | 59. They took up stones to stone Him He passed by.

It is impossible to survey the structure of this section without realizing that “truth” for the believer can never be a philosophical abstraction. It is intensely real, and intimately associated with the Person and work of the Son of God, even as the “lie” is closely linked with the person and work of the Devil. Truth goes back to the “beginning” of things. It involves the recognition of God as God, a truth which the lie, and all that pertains to it, denies.

In the beginning Satan, at that time the Anointed Cherub, attempted to usurp the throne of Deity. This constituted him a liar, and this character will again be manifested when the son of perdition attempts the same blasphemous act. In II Thess. ii. “the love of *the truth*” is placed in contrast with “the belief of *the lie*”; and in Rom. i. the lie is almost synonymous with idolatry:--

“They changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into *an image*”
(Rom. i. 23).

“They changed the truth of God into *a lie*” (Rom. i. 25).

Referring once more to the structure of John viii. 20-59, we observe that the passage which contains the statement, “The truth shall make you free”, occupies a position at the centre of the section, so that it cannot be understood apart from the whole scope of the context. It is impossible to be free, without the knowledge of the truth so vividly set forth in this passage. Satan’s bondage will never be relinquished while any error is entertained

concerning his character in opposition to God and His truth. Only as we realize the clear-cut distinction between “the authority of darkness” and “the kingdom of His dear Son” can we realize the liberty of the children of God.

In John viii. 32 and 36 “the truth” and “the Son” are placed in correspondence:--

“*The truth* shall make you free.”

“If *The Son* therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.”

In the passage before us it is three times stated that Christ was the Sent One:--

“He that sent Me is true, and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of Him” (John viii. 26).

“He that sent Me is with Me: the Father hath not left Me alone: for I do always those things which please Him” (John viii. 29).

“If God were your Father, ye would love Me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of Myself, but He sent Me” (John viii. 42).

These are three references in the section before us, but in the Gospel itself the fact that Christ was “sent” is stated more than forty times, and associated with that sending are many precious doctrines, all calculated to make the believer free. As examples, we may take two of these:--

Immunity from condemnation and the gift of eternal life (John iii. 16, 17; v. 24; xvii. 3).

An assurance that the doctrine enunciated is absolutely true (John vii. 16).

The special freedom that is in view in John viii. is freedom from the bondage of sin:--

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the slave of sin” (John viii. 34).

“If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins” (John viii. 24).

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep My saying, He shall never see death” (John viii. 51).

This last clause, when repeated by the Jews, becomes “never taste of death”. This change is not necessarily a perversion, but shows how the Lord’s words were regarded by the Jews. “Seeing death” and “tasting death” differ from “dying in sin”. For the believer, the sting of death is removed, and he is delivered from the fear of death that once held so many in bondage (Heb. ii. 15).

While it may be true that the believer’s deliverance is entirely the result of the finished work of Christ, and does not depend upon the quality of his faith, or the purity of his creed, yet experimentally he can never enter into this freedom apart from the truth, and the truth must be “known”.

“Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John viii. 32).

Such would be “disciples indeed” and “free indeed”. All around us are men and women whose sins have been atoned for, who are nevertheless in serious bondage. There

is one means whereby they can be set free; they must “know the truth”. It may be that many of our readers could be used in this liberating ministry. Here, then, is instruction for us all:--

“The servant of the Lord must not strive: but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves: if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the TRUTH; and they may recover themselves out of the SNARE OF THE DEVIL, who are taken captive by him at his will” (II Tim. ii. 24-26).

#2. Deliverance from the snare of the Devil (II Tim. ii. 24-26). pp. 112 - 115

Our previous article dealt with the statement of the Lord: “Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.” We concluded with a quotation from II Tim. ii. 24-26, a passage which we must now consider more carefully.

It is concerned with those who are “approved concerning the truth”, even as II Tim. iii. 1-9 is concerned with the corresponding member: “disapproved concerning the faith.” The passage is divided into three sections:--

- (i.) The workman and the *truth* (14, 15).
- (ii.) Error and the *truth* (16-23).
- (iii.) The servant and the *truth* (24-26).

Our subject in this article is the third of these sections, as it deals with the practical application at the present day of the words of the Lord: “The truth shall make you free.” II Tim. ii. 24-26 not only reveals the liberating power of the truth, but it gives a very clear indication that the character of the one presenting the truth is a consideration not to be lightly set aside. It shews, moreover, the binding power of error, Satan’s chief means of enslaving the child of God.

The instruments in the delivery of the Devil’s captive are two: the servant of the Lord, and the acknowledging of the truth. The word “servant” is literally “bond-slave”. The servant of the Lord was once himself in the snare of sin, but has been set free, bought with a price, and is now owned by a gracious Master. He does not approach the captive as would an angel from glory who had never known sin or bondage, but as one who has himself received mercy. There are several characteristics essential to the success of the servant’s mission.

In the first place, he must not *strive*. A reference to verses 14 and 23 of the same chapter will show the nature of the striving that the servant of the Lord must avoid:--

“Charging them before the Lord, that they *strive not* about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers.”

“Foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. And the servant of the Lord must *not strive*.”

The word “unlearned” is the negative form of the word “instructing” in verse 25. There are questions that minister grace to the hearer, but there are also questions that gender strife—such are unlearned, not encouraging growth and understanding. The Scripture is plain concerning such questions, its words are, “avoid” and “must not”. The servant of the Lord must be willing to be misunderstood because of silence rather than to achieve a passing reputation for cleverness. We are His servants; we seek His glory, and the liberation of our fellows, and no pains are too great with such a goal in view.

The exhortation not to strive is negative; the apostle goes on to speak of the positive qualities which are necessary. He must be gentle unto all; he must be apt to teach; he must be patient; and he must instruct with meekness those that oppose themselves. Such qualifications are not to be found in the old nature; they are the product of grace.

The word here translated “patient” is *anexikakon*, from *anechomai* = “to bear”, and *kakos* = “evil”. *Anechomai* occurs in I Cor. iv. 12: “Being persecuted, *we suffer* it.” It is not our purpose to criticize the teaching or actions of other servants of God, but for the truth’s sake we must say that such a word compels us to “avoid” the teaching of those who, in the name of “overcoming”, adopt an attitude which is the very reverse of a patient endurance of evil. There is a scriptural “undergoing” as well as a scriptural “overcoming” and, whatever views we entertain, the Scripture here is clear, that if we would be used to liberate others, we must be gentle, we must be meek and we must be ready to suffer evil.

We next observe from the words of the apostle the one great power for setting the captive free: “apt to *teach*”; “in meekness *instructing*”; “repentance to the acknowledging of the *truth*”. Those who minister in the sphere of the kingdom, who are among those who must preach the gospel of the kingdom for a witness among all nations, will meet circumstances comparable to those of the Gospels and the Acts. Such will encounter evident demon possession, and must act appropriately. To such we have no word to say, but to those who minister the truth of the dispensation of the mystery, we ask if there is a single reference to demon possession or to the casting out of demons in the whole of Paul’s prison ministry. We certainly read of demons in I Tim. iv., but not of demon possession. What is stated there is entirely in harmony with the teaching of II Tim. ii. 24-26:--

“Giving heed to seducing spirits, and *doctrines* of demons” (I Tim. iv. 1).

Those who “believe and know the *truth*” (I Tim. iv. 3) are proof against such demonism. No allusion is made to the casting out of demons; it is simply an application of the Lord’s words: “Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

We have made investigation, and have many times asked the following questions of those who have been associated with the casting out of demons, or with those who have been apparently demon-possessed:--

Have you ever found one instance of a case of demon-possession unaccompanied by a failure rightly to divide the Word of truth?

Have you ever found a case of demon-possession where there has been a clear appreciation of the revelation of the mystery?

We have never received an affirmative answer to either of these questions.

While error is entertained Satan has power to bind, but with the advent and acknowledgment of the truth, his captivity ceases. So we search II Tim. ii. 24-26 in vain for instruction concerning the exorcising of evil spirits. What we find is instruction as to how we must apply the one infallible remedy—"the truth". So in verse 25 we read of "repentance to the acknowledging of the *truth*". Repentance involves "a change of mind" (*metanoia*) and a change of mind that acknowledges the truth is all that is necessary:--

"That he may wake up out of the snare of the Devil" (II Tim. ii. 26).

The snare of the Devil is undispenational truth; and there are many children of God ensnared by the wrong application of Scripture. The members of the Galatian church were enslaved and ensnared by those who came down from Jerusalem with "chapter and verse" to prove that unless they were circumcised and kept the law of Moses they were not in covenant relationship with God. This was truth out of place, truth belonging to the dispensation of law, misapplied and so used of the Devil to enslave the Galatians.

Paul, by his noble stand, cast out this demon—"that the truth of the gospel might continue" (Gal. ii.); and we must follow his example.

Satan's abuse of Scripture is seen in II Cor. iii. and iv. II Cor. iii. places together the old and new covenants, and by comparison, the glory of the one is as nothing in the light of the excelling glory of the other. The symbol of the old covenant is the veiled face of Moses (II Cor. iii. 13); the symbol of the new is the unveiled face of Christ (II Cor. iv. 6). The figure of the veil is continued in the words of II Cor. iv. 3, 4, which we translate as follows:--

"But if our gospel be veiled, it is veiled by those things that are perishing (i.e., the old covenant that is 'done away' and 'abolished'—II Cor. iii. 7, 11, 13), by which the god of this age hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, Who is the image of God, should shine unto them For God, Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (II Cor. iv. 3-6).

Liberty comes with "the light of the knowledge" of the truth for the time. So with ourselves; our most effective method of liberation is to "preach the Word", for the Word of truth and the Spirit of truth agree, and "where the Spirit of the Lord is *there* is liberty" (II Cor. iii. 17).

We return now to II Tim. ii. 26: “Taken captive by him at his will.” It is beyond our power to decide whether the words “at his will” refer to Satan or to God. *The Companion Bible* takes the view that they refer to God; commentators are about evenly divided. While we must still seek the truth of the passage, the ultimate interpretation of this clause leaves untouched the practical instruction already considered.

What is clear, and important to us, is the great fact that error enslaves and truth sets free, and that the Devil’s chief instrument of bondage to-day is that of undispensational truth. As we grow in grace and knowledge, we step out into fuller freedom; as we entertain error, we become entangled in bondage. Let us once again state the wonderful words of the Lord: “*Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*”

#3. “The truth of the gospel” (Gal. ii. 5 and 14). pp. 153 - 157

In the two preceding articles the close association of the truth with liberty, and of error with bondage is too evident to need further elaboration. However, the importance of the theme is such that it finds a further exposition in the epistle to the Galatians—that epistle of liberty. That Galatians is pre-eminently an epistle of liberty the following references will sufficiently show, and if this is so, we shall readily perceive that other doctrines enumerated in the epistle will necessarily constitute factors in all that goes towards effecting that blessed liberty. Of these doctrines, the truth of the gospel will have a place as we have already seen.

We give below every passage in Galatians in which the words indicative of bondage and liberty appear (*doulos, douleia, douleuo, douloo, katadouloo, eleutheria, eleutheros* and *eleutheroo*). While, for the present article, such a list is in the nature of a supplement, the theme is by no means of secondary interest, and should be studied for its own sake.

Bondage and liberty in Galatians.

“If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ” (i. 10).

“False brethren who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage” (ii. 4).

“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus” (iii. 28).

“Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all” (iv. 1).

“Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world” (iv. 3).

“Thou art no more a servant, but a son” (iv. 7).

“When ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods” (iv. 8).

“How turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?” (iv. 9).

“Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman, was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from mount Sinai which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all” (iv. 22-26).

“What saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free. Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage” (iv. 30 - v. 1).

“Brethren, ye have been called unto liberty: only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve (as bondslaves) one another” (v. 13).

Here is a wealth of teaching to which we may have to return, but for the moment we are still considering the relation for the truth of the gospel with liberty. The passages that call for attention are as follows:--

“To whom we gave place by subjection, no not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you” (Gal. ii. 5).

“When I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?” (Gal. ii. 14).

Quite apart from their contexts, the citation of these verses is enough to indicate that here is recorded a conflict for the truth. But in order to understand the nature of that conflict, the one, yet glorious, stand of the apostle, the close association of our liberty with the recognition of his distinctive apostleship and gospel, and the triumph of the truth over error and its bondage, we must see these two passages in their place in the chapter. In other words, we must ascertain the scope of the section, and that we discover most surely by laying bare its literary structure. And here we would say that we feel it to be of service to our readers to draw attention to the fact that the following structure, which is based upon a careful evaluation of all the literary correspondences of the passage, is not found in any other publications than those associated with *The Berean Expositor*.

Gal. ii. 1-14.

- A | 1, 2. | a | Paul goes to Jerusalem; *for the faith*.
b | Barnabas stands fast.
- B | 3-5. | c | Titus not *compelled* to be circumcised.
d | Paul's stand for THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL.
- C | 6-10. | e | Seemed to be somewhat.
f | Added nothing to me.
g | Gospel to Circumcision.—PETER.
g | Gospel to Uncircumcision.—PAUL.
e | Seemed to be pillars.
f | Remember the poor.
- A | 11-13. | a | Peter comes to Antioch; *overthrow faith*.
b | Even Barnabas carried away.
- B | 14. | d | Peter's walk; against THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL.
c | *Compelled* Gentiles to Judaize.

The opening verses of chapter ii. tell of a visit which the apostle paid to Jerusalem, accompanied by Barnabas and Titus, when he laid before the Church at Jerusalem “that gospel which he preached among the Gentiles”, the case being crystallized for us in the account of the treatment of Titus:--

“But neither Titus, who was with me being a GREEK, *was compelled* to be circumcised” (Gal. ii. 3).

This is in direct contrast with the subsequent defection of Peter who by his conduct *was compelling* the Gentiles to Judaize (ii. 14). Paul's stand for the truth thus set forth in Titus' immunity from the law was in contrast with Peter's walk which was not according to the truth of the gospel, but would put the believer under law. The truth of the gospel is the truth that declares every believer in Christ *free* from the law, whether the ceremonial law, as imparting special sanctity, or the code of works, providing a righteousness before God. It needs an exposition of the epistle to exhibit in any measure of fullness this blessed liberty, and this we hope to give in due time. The background provided by Acts xv. will, however, make manifest something of the nature of that truth of the gospel which makes the believer free.

A door of faith had been opened to the Gentiles through the ministry of the apostle Paul (Acts xiv. 27). Yet many of the saints at Jerusalem, instead of rejoicing in the spread of the truth, seem to have opposed it and sought to load the gospel of grace with obsolete laws and ceremonies:--

“And certain men, which came down from Judæa, taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, YE CANNOT BE SAVED” (Acts xv. 1).

This cause great searching of heart among the newly-converted Gentiles, and much dissension and disputation among the leaders, with the result that Paul and Barnabas are led to go to Jerusalem to settle the matter, the inner history of the visit being given in Gal. ii.

The truth of the gospel was intimately associated with the absolute freedom of the believer from the law:--

“I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God” (Gal. ii. 19).

“He that is dead is freed from sin” (Rom. vi. 7).

“A man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ” (Gal. ii. 16).

“If righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain” (Gal. ii. 21).

At that memorable conference at Jerusalem Peter recognized the “truth of the gospel”, for he said:--

“Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?” (Acts xv. 10).

Yet this same Peter is an example to us all of the warning that the “fear of man bringeth a snare”, for

“Before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision” (Gal. ii. 12).

The apostle realized that the tendency of the Jewish section of the church was toward bondage (Gal. ii. 4), and against this he stood with all the strength that God gave, so that the truth of the gospel, and the freedom that that gospel brings, might continue, unalloyed, right through to the Gentiles. While it is true that the doctrine of Galatians is as true for us to-day as then, dispensational associations have radically changed since the epistle was written. Some, not realizing this, have questioned our consistency in quoting Galatians, but we are not here attempting either to correct their misapprehension or to justify ourselves.

As our present purpose is to present a series of brief studies that revolve around the fact that it is the *truth* that makes free, we are not pursuing the subject beyond the point necessary to establish that one feature. We cannot, then, do better than finish the article with the apostle’s own words—words which couple the liberty found in the gospel with the bondage of any other approach to acceptance with God:--

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen by grace” (Gal. v. 1-4).

#4. The veil that keeps in bondage (II Cor. iv. 3, 4). pp. 190 - 193

We have now made three brief studies of the subject that it is the truth that makes free. We now turn attention to a passage which discloses still further the methods of the god of this age in his attempts to enslave and ensnare the child of God:--

“Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not: but have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully: but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God” (II Cor. iv. 1, 2).

The stress here is not upon preaching the truth, but upon the *manifestation* of the truth; something in contrast to the “hidden things of dishonesty” and the veiling of the truth from the eyes. To appreciate fully the apostle’s attitude it is necessary to take a wider view than can be obtained by limiting ourselves to verses 1 and 2 of this fourth chapter.

Chapter iii. is largely occupied with a series of comparisons which are intended to show the superiority of the New Covenant over the Old. This can be seen by the following structure taken from *The Companion Bible*, p. 1731:--

II Corinthians iii. 7-11.

- A1 | 7. The OLD COVENANT came with glory, but Israel could not look upon it.
- B1 | 8. The NEW COVENANT also comes with glory.
- A2 | 9. The OLD COVENANT, which brought condemnation, came with glory.
- B2 | 9. The NEW COVENANT, which ministers righteousness, exceeds it in glory.
- A3 | 10. The OLD COVENANT had no glory in inflicting death.
- B3 | 10. The NEW COVENANT has surpassing glory in giving life.
- A4 | 11. The OLD COVENANT, which is annulled, was with glory.
- B4 | 11. The NEW COVENANT, which abides, will abide in glory.

When the subject of II Corinthians is before us as a whole, certain adjustments and modifications in the above structure may be necessary. For our present purpose, however, it will be sufficient to state the teaching that was in the apostle’s mind when he spoke of the “manifestation” of the truth. Manifesting the truth, or “speaking plainly”, is in contrast with “veiling” the truth, as symbolized by the veiling of the face of Moses and the veiling of the heart of Israel.

Had we had no preparation, we should have expected II Cor. iii. 17 to have placed illumination in contrast with the veil, but, instead, the apostle uses the word liberty, for the veil will be seen to be error fabricated out of the truth that belongs to the Old Covenant, and so, now, undispensational, while the removal of the veil is equivalent to that freedom wherewith the truth makes free: “and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.”

Following the quotation with which this article opens, are words that, if we would preserve the truth, need most careful treatment. We first of all quote from the A.V.:--

“But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, Who is the image of God, should shine unto them” (II Cor. iv. 3, 4).

It is somewhat difficult to analyze this passage as given by the A.V. That the god of this world blinds the minds of them that believe not, of this we are certain, and that he uses such further to hinder the spread of truth is equally certain; but precisely what is meant by the words: “*In whom* the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not”?

The preposition *en* often has the meaning “by”. If the A.V. had translated *en* “in” in every instance, we should have, in Matt. v. 34, 35: “sware not neither *in* heaven nor *in* earth.” To limit ourselves to II Corinthians, we point out that *en* is used in i. 12, where it is translated, “*with* fleshly wisdom” and “*by* the grace of God”, and in vi. 4-7 it occurs nineteen times, and is translated eight times “by” instead of “in”.

There can be no question that in II Cor. x. 12 *en* is rightly translated “by”—there is no sense in saying “measuring themselves in themselves”. Verse 15 is another example against which there is a marginal note in the A.V. Now we believe *en* in II Cor. iv. 4 should be translated “by”:--

“*By* whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not.”

We must now look back to verse 3. The word “hid” is the verbal form of the word “veil”, which figures so largely in chapter iii. So far as the apostle was concerned, he had used great plainness of speech, and by manifestation of the truth had done the very opposite of emulating Moses. Yet he had to admit that the glorious truth of the gospel did appear to be veiled from some. What caused the veil? Who made it, and with what intent?

In speaking in II Cor. iii. of the fact that the Old Covenant was obsolete and finished, the apostle used strong terms. Not only did he speak of this Covenant as “the letter that killeth”, as “the ministration of death”, and as “the ministration of condemnation”, but he also said that it had no glory when placed beside the excelling glory of the New Covenant, and that it was to be “done away” and “abolished”. The word thus rendered is elsewhere used to speak of the “destruction” of the Devil (Heb. ii. 14) and of death (II Tim. i. 10), and of the breaking down of the middle wall of partition (Eph. ii. 15). Our last article of this series closed with the words of Paul in Gal. v. 1-4, where the words, “Christ is *become of no effect*”, translate this same strong term.

With this in mind, we return to II Cor. iv. 3 and once more look at the phrase: “it is hid to them that are lost.” If we are correct in opening verse 4 with the words “by whom”, it is possible that the words of verse 3 refer to the perishing and abrogated law, rather than to lost sinners, and this is what we understand the apostle to be teaching here.

He says, in effect, that while because of sin, condemnation, and the failure of the flesh, the Old Covenant is associated with veiling the truth, the New Covenant is associated with an “unveiled face”, for the believer (II Cor. iii. 11), and “the face of Jesus Christ” (II Cor. iv. 6). Satan, however, the god of this age, is busy fabricating a veil out of the obsolete and abrogated law, so that the believer shall be so occupied with shadows and types, forms and ceremonies, and the attempt to help his salvation by a modicum of law-keeping, that he shall not see “the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ”, and that he shall not see the “light of the gospel of the glory of Christ”, for if “with unveiled face” he once saw that, he would be changed “from glory to glory”, that is, from the fading glory of the law to the excelling glory of the New Covenant, even as by the spirit of the Lord, and where the spirit of the Lord is, *there* is liberty. We accordingly submit the following translation to the prayerful consideration of the reader:--

“But if our gospel be veiled, it is veiled by those things which are perishing, by which the god of this age hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest”

Members of the body of Christ, who are blessed under the terms of Eph. i. 3-14, have no connection with the New Covenant. But the truth of the underlying principle of this passage is as true for them as for all others. The god of this age is still busy making veils. He uses the Acts of the Apostles, the New Covenant itself, and the dispensational portions of Paul’s early epistles, to blind the minds of the believer to the glory that excelleth in the revelation of the mystery. In Eph. i. 15-19 the apostle assumes that “the eyes of the heart are enlightened” before he can go forward and speak of the calling and the riches of glory. We earnestly plead with every reader to see to it that no veil, made out of truth pertaining to earlier dispensations, be allowed to come between the eyes of his heart and the glory that belongs to the ascended Lord, Who has ascended up far above all heavens.

Once again we see it is the truth that makes free. Let us remember the association of the following passages:--

“Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty” (II Cor. iii. 17).

“By manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God” (II Cor. iv. 2).

The volume of the Book.

#19. How the O.T. is quoted in the N.T. pp. 47 - 60

It is evident, from the review we have given of the quotations from the O.T. that are found in the New, that not only will it be profitable to give careful attention to exact parallels, and to departures either from the Hebrew, the LXX or from both, but also that other features associated with the quoting of O.T. Scriptures are likely to be helpful to the interested student.

Rosenmuller has reduced the quotations of the O.T. in the New to the following heads:--

- I. When the thing predicted is literally accomplished.
- II. When that is done, of which the Scripture has spoken, not in a literal, but in a spiritual sense.
- III. When a thing is done, neither in a literal nor in a spiritual sense, according to the fact referred to in the Scriptures; but is similar to that fact. The passages thus cited, may briefly be termed quotations in the way of illustration.
- IV. When the sacred writers have made simple allusions to passages in the Old Testament.

Under the first heading come those direct prophecies that relate to the Person, work, life and death of the Lord Jesus. The following table (Nos. 1 to 19) of the principal prophecies, with their accomplishment, in the very words of the New Testament, has been taken from *Horne's* "Introduction to the Holy Scriptures".

(1) That a Messiah should come.

Prophecy.—Gen. iii. 15. *He* (the seed of the woman) shall *bruise* thy head, and thou shalt *bruise* his heel. Compare Gen. xxii. 18; xii. 3; xxvi. 4; xxviii. 4; and Psa. lxxii. 17. Isa. xl. 5. The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together. Hag. ii. 7. The desire of *all* nations shall come.

Fulfilment.—Gal. iv. 4. When the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a *woman* (4,000 years after the first prophecy was delivered). Rom. xvi. 20. The God of peace shall *bruise* Satan under your feet shortly. I John iii. 8. The Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the *devil* (that old *serpent*, Rev. xii. 9). See also Heb. ii. 14. Luke ii. 10. I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to *all* people.

(2) When He should come.

Prophecy.—Gen. xlix. 10. The sceptre shall *not* depart from Judah, nor a law-giver from between his feet, *until* Shiloh come.—The Messiah was to come at a time of nearly

universal peace, and when there was a general expectation of Him; and while the second temple was standing, seventy weeks (of years, i.e., 490 years) after the rebuilding of Jerusalem. See Hag. ii. 6-9; Dan. ix. 24, 25; Mal. iii. 1.

Fulfilment.—When the Messiah came, the sceptre *had departed* from Judah; for the Jews, though governed by their own rulers and magistrates, yet were subject to the paramount authority of the Roman emperors; as was evinced by their being subject to the enrolment of Augustus, paying tribute to Cæsar, and not having the power of life and death. Compare Luke ii. 1, 3-5; Matt. xxii. 20, 21; and the parallel passages; and John xviii. 31. When Jesus Christ came into the world, the Roman wars were terminated, the temple of Janus was shut, and peace reigned throughout the Roman empire; and all nations, both Jews and Gentiles, were expecting the coming of some extraordinary person. See Matt. ii. 1-10; Mark xv. 43; Luke ii. 25, 38; and John i. 19-45, for the expectation of the Jews. The two Roman historians, Suetonius and Tacitus, confirm the fulfilment of the prediction, as to the expectation of the Gentiles.

(3) That the Messiah should be God and man together.

Prophecy.—Psa. ii. 7. Thou art My *Son*, this day have I begotten Thee.—Psa. cx. 1. The Lord said unto my Lord. Isa. ix. 6. The mighty *God*, the everlasting Father. Mic. v. 2. Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.

Fulfilment.—Heb. i. 8. Unto the *Son* he saith, thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever. Compare Matt. xxii. 42-45; I Cor. xv. 25; Heb. i. 3. Matt. i. 23. They shall call His name Emmanuel, that is, *God* with us. John i. 1, 14. The *Word* was with God, and the *Word* was *God*. The *Word* was made flesh, and dwelt among us. Rom. ix. 5. Of whom (the fathers) as concerning the flesh Christ came, Who is *God* over all, blessed for ever. See also Col. ii. 9; I John v. 20.

(4) From whom He was to be descended.

Prophecy.—From the first woman (Gen. iii. 15). From *Abraham* and his descendants (Gen. xii. 3, xvii. 18); viz., *Isaac* (Gen. xxvi. 4); *Jacob* (Gen. xxvii. 14); *Judah* (Gen. xlix. 10); *Jesse* (Isa. xi. 1); *David* (Psa. cxxxii. 11; lxxxix. 4, 27; Isa. ix. 7; Jer. xxiii. 5; xxxiii. 15).

Fulfilment.—Gal. iv. 4. When the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman.

Acts iii. 25. The covenant, which God made with our fathers, saying unto *Abraham*, And in thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed. (See Matt. i. 1). Heb. vii. 14. It is evident that our Lord sprang out of *Judah*. Rom. xv. 12. Isaiah saith there shall be a root of *Jesse*. John vii. 42. Hath not the Scripture said, that Christ cometh of the seed of *David*? See also Acts ii. 30; xiii. 23; Luke i. 32.

(5) That the Messiah should be born of a virgin.

Prophecy.—Isa. vii. 14. Behold a *virgin* shall conceive and bring forth a *Son*. Jer. xxxi. 22. The Lord hath created a new thing on the earth; a woman shall compass a man. (N.B. *The ancient Jews applied this prophecy to the Messiah, whence it follows, that the later interpretations to the contrary are only to avoid the truth which we profess; viz., That Jesus was born of a virgin, and therefore is THE CHRIST or Messiah.*—Bishop Pearson on the Creed, Art. III, p.171, edit. 1715, folio).

Fulfilment.—Matt. i. 24, 25. Joseph took his wife, and knew her not, till she had brought forth her first-born son. Compare Luke i. 26-35. Matt. i. 22, 23. All this was done, that it might be fulfilled, which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold a *virgin* shall be with child and shall bring forth a son.

(6) Where the Messiah was to be born.

Prophecy.—Mic. v. 2. Thou *Bethlehem* Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah; yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be the ruler in Israel.

Fulfilment.—Luke ii. 3-6. All went to be taxed (or enrolled), every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, with Mary his espoused wife, unto *Bethlehem*; and while they were there she *brought forth her first-born son*. Compare also Luke ii. 10, 11, 16 and Matt. ii. 1, 4-6, 8, 11; John vii. 42.

(7) That a prophet, in the spirit and power of Elias, or Elijah, should be the Messiah's forerunner, and prepare His way.

Prophecy.—Mal. iii. 1 and iv. 5; Isa. xl. 3; Luke i. 17. Behold, I will send My messenger, and he shall prepare My way before Me.

Fulfilment.—Matt. iii. 1. In those days came *John the Baptist* preaching in the wilderness of Judæa, saying, Repent ye, the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Matt. xi. 14; Luke vii. 27, 28. This is Elias which was for to come.

(8) That the Messiah was to be a Prophet.

Prophecy.—Deut. xviii. 15, 18. I will raise them up a *Prophet* from among their brethren, like unto thee.

Fulfilment.—John iv. 19. The woman saith unto Him, Sir, I perceive that Thou art a *Prophet*. John ix. 17. He is a *Prophet*. Matt. xxi. 46. They took Him for a *Prophet*. Mark vi. 15. It is a *Prophet*, or as one of the Prophets. Luke vii. 16. A great *Prophet* is risen up among us. John vi. 14. This is of a truth *that Prophet*, which should come into the world. John vii. 40. Of a truth this is *the Prophet*. Luke xxiv. 19. Jesus of

Nazareth, which was a *Prophet*, mighty in deed and word before God and all the people. Matt. xxi. 11. This is Jesus *the Prophet* of Nazareth of Galilee.

(9) That the Messiah should begin to publish the Gospel in Galilee.

Prophecy.—Isa. ix. 1, 2. In *Galilee* of the nations, the people that walked in darkness have seen a great light.

Fulfilment.—Matt. iv. 12, 17. Now when Jesus heard that John was cast into prison, He departed into *Galilee*. From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

(10) That the Messiah should confirm His doctrine by great miracles.

Prophecy.—Isa. xxxv. 5, 6. Then the *eyes* of the *blind* shall be *opened*, and the *ears* of the *deaf* shall be *unstopped*; then shall the *lame* man *leap* as an hart, and the *tongue* of the *dumb* sing. Isa. xlii. 7. To *open* the *blind eyes*. Isa. xxxii. 3. The *eyes* of them that *see* shall not be dim; and the *ears* of them that *hear*, shall hearken. Isa. xxix. 18. The *deaf* shall *hear* the words of the book; and the *eyes* of the *blind* shall *see* out of obscurity and darkness.

Fulfilment.—Matt. xi. 4, 5. Jesus said, go, and show John those things which ye do hear and see: the *blind* receive their *sight*, and the *lame* *walk*; the lepers are cleansed, and the *deaf* *hear*, the *dead* are *raised* up. Luke vii. 21. In the same hour, He cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many that were *blind*, He gave *sight*. Matt. iv. 23, 24. Jesus went about all Galilee healing all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease among the people They brought unto Him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those which had the palsy, and He healed them. Matt. xv. 30, 31. And great multitudes came unto Him, having with them those that were *lame*, *blind*, *dumb*, *maimed*, and many others; and cast them down at Jesus' feet, and He *healed* them. Insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the *dumb* to *speak*, the *maimed* to be *whole*, the *lame* to *walk*, and the *blind* to *see*. Acts ii. 22. Jesus of Nazareth, a Man approved of God among you by *miracles* and wonders and signs; which God did by Him in the midst of you, as ye know.

(11) In what manner the Messiah was to make His public entry into Jerusalem.

Prophecy.—Zech. ix. 9. Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Jerusalem, behold thy King cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, even upon a colt the foal of an ass.

Fulfilment.—Matt. xxi. 7-10. The disciples brought the ass and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and set Him (Jesus) thereon (that is, *upon the clothes*). And great multitudes spread their garments, &c., &c. Matt. xxi. 4, 5. *All this was done*, that it

might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy king cometh, &c.

**(12) That the Messiah should be poor and despised,
and be betrayed by one of His Own disciples for thirty pieces of silver
(at that time the ordinary price of the vilest slave);
with which the potter's field should be purchased.**

Prophecy.—Isa. liii. 3. There is no beauty that we should desire Him. He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were our faces from Him: He was despised, and we esteemed Him not. Psa. xli. 9 and Psa. lv. 12-14. Yea, mine own familiar friend in whom I trusted, who did eat of my bread, hath lift up his heel against me. Zech. xi. 12, 13. So they weighed for my price *thirty pieces of silver*. And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prized at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord.

Fulfilment.—Luke ix. 58. The Son of man hath not where to lay His head. II Cor. viii. 9. For your sakes He became poor. John xi. 35. JESUS WEPT. Luke xxii. 3, 4. Then Satan entered into Judas, being one of the twelve, and he went his way and communed with the chief priests how he might betray Him unto them. Matt. xxvi. 14. And Judas went unto the chief priests, and said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver Him unto you? and they covenanted with him for *thirty pieces of silver*. Matt. xxvii. 3-8. Then Judas, who had betrayed Him, brought again the thirty pieces silver, saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood; and he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself. And the chief priests took the silver, and they said, It is not lawful to put it into the treasury, because it is the price of blood. And they took counsel, and bought with them the *potter's field*, to bury strangers in.

**(13) That the Messiah should suffer pain and death
for the sins of the world.**

Prophecy.—Psa. xxii. 16, 17. For dogs (that is, the *heathens*, whom the Jews called dogs), have compassed Me; the assembly of the wicked have enclosed Me; they pierced my hands and my feet. I may tell all my bones; they look and stare upon Me. Isa. l. 6. I gave My *back* to the *smiters* and My cheek to them that plucked off the hair. I hid not My face from *shame* and spitting. Isa. liii. 5, 8. He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities; by His stripes we are healed. He was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of My people was He stricken. Isa. liii. 12. And He *bare* the sin of *many*.

Fulfilment.—John xix. 1, 2. Then Pilate took Jesus and *scourged* Him. And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and they *smote* Him with the palms of their hands. Matt. xxvii. 30; Mark xv. 19. And they did *spit* upon Him and *smote* Him on the head. Mark xv. 25. And they crucified Him. I Pet. ii. 23, 24. Who, when He was reviled,

reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not. Who *bare* our sins in His own body on the *tree* (the cross).

(14) That the Messiah should be cruelly mocked and derided.

Prophecy.—Psa. xxii. 12, 13, 7, 8. Many bulls have compassed Me; strong bulls of Bashan (that is, the wicked and furious Jews, who like the beasts fattened on the fertile plains of Bashan, “waxed fat and kicked”; became proud and rebellious) have beset Me round. They gaped upon Me with their mouths as a ravening and roaring lion. All they that see Me, laugh Me to scorn; they shoot out the lip, saying, *He trusted in God that He would deliver Him; let Him deliver Him*, seeing He delighted in Him.

Fulfilment.—Matt. xxvii. 39, 41, 42; Mark xv. 31, 32; Luke xxiii. 35, 36. And they that passed by, reviled Him, wagging their heads. Likewise also the chief priests, and the rulers also with them, derided, *and* mocking, said among themselves, with the scribes and elders, He saved others, Himself He cannot save; if He be Christ, the chosen of God, let Him now come down from the cross, and save Himself, that we may see, and we will believe Him. *He trusted in God, let Him deliver Him* now if He will have Him. And the soldiers also mocked Him, saying, If Thou be the King of the Jews, save Thyself.

(15) That vinegar and gall should be offered to the Messiah upon the cross; and His garments should be divided, and lots cast for His vesture.

Prophecy.—Psa. lxix. 21. They gave Me also gall for My meat, and in My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink. Psa. xxii. 18. They part My garments among them, and cast lots upon My vesture.

Fulfilment.—John xix. 29; Matt. xxvii. 48; Mark xv. 36. And they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to His mouth. John xix. 23, 24. And the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also His coat; now the coat was without seam. They said therefore, Let us not rend it, but cast lots whose it shall be.

(16) That not a bone of the Messiah should be broken, but that His side should be pierced.

Prophecy.—Psa. xxxiv. 20. He keepeth all His bones; *not one* of them is *broken*. Zech. xii. 10. And they shall look upon Me whom they have *pierced*.

Fulfilment.—John xix. 32-34. Then came the soldiers and brake the legs of the first and of the other which was crucified with Him; but when they came to Jesus, and saw that He was dead already, the *brake* NOT HIS LEGS. But one of the soldiers with a spear *pierced His side*, and forthwith came there out blood and water.

**(17) That the Messiah should die with malefactors,
but be buried honourably.**

Prophecy.—Isa. liii. 9. And He made His grave with the wicked, and with the rich in His death.

Fulfilment.—Matt. xxvii. 38, 57-60. Then were there two thieves crucified with Him. There came a rich man of Arimathæa named Joseph, and begged the body of Jesus; and he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and laid it in his own new tomb.

**(18) That the Messiah should rise from the dead,
and ascend into heaven.**

Prophecy.—Psa. xvi. 9, 10. My flesh also shall rest in hope. For Thou wilt not leave my soul in *hell*, neither wilt Thou suffer Thine holy One to see corruption. Isa. liii. 10. When Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin, He shall prolong His days. Psa. lxxviii. 18. Thou hast *ascended* up on high; Thou hast led captivity captive; Thou hast received gifts for men, that the Lord God might dwell among them.

Fulfilment.—Acts ii. 31. (David) spake before of the resurrection of Christ, that His soul was not left in *hell*; neither did his flesh see corruption. See also Acts xiii. 35; Matt. xxviii. 5, 6. The angels said unto the women, He is not here, for He is *risen*, as He said. See Luke xxiv. 5, 6; I Cor. xv. 4. He rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures. Acts i. 3. He showed Himself alive, after His passion, by many infallible proofs. Mark xvi. 19; Luke xxiv. 51; Acts i. 9. So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, while He was blessing them, and while they beheld, He was parted from them, and *carried up* into heaven, and sat at the right hand of God. Compare also I Pet. iii. 22; I Tim. iii. 16; Heb. vi. 20.

(19) That the Messiah should send the Holy Spirit, the Comforter.

Prophecy.—Joel ii. 28. I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and daughters shall prophesy.

Fulfilment.—See all these promises and predictions fulfilled in Acts ii. 1-4; iv. 31; viii. 17; x. 44; xi. 15.

The foregoing examples (Nos. 1 to 19) are direct prophetic fulfillments relative to the coming, sufferings, resurrection and ascension of Christ. To these we might add other lengthy lists dealing with His various offices, such as a Prophet, a Teacher, a Preacher, a Priest, a King, a Shepherd, a Mediator, an Intercessor and a Sacrifice. For the moment, we leave the joyous task to the reader, who is lovingly urged to make a list containing at least one reference for each title.

Under the second heading (II.) where a spiritual rather than literal fulfillment is intended, *Horne* gives the following list:--

O.T. reference.	Cited and applied in.
Gen. xiv. 18, 20.	Heb. vii. 1-10.
Gen. xv. 5.	Rom. iv. 18.
Gen. xvi. 15.	Gal. iv. 22.
Gen. xvii. 4.	Rom. iv. 17.
Gen. xviii. 10.	Rom. ix. 9.
Gen. xxi. 1-3.	Gal. iv. 22, etc.
Gen. xxi. 12.	Rom. ix. 7.
Gen. xxv. 23.	Rom. ix. 12.
Exod. xvi. 13-15.	John vi. 31, 49; I Cor. x. 3.
Exod. xvii. 6; Numb. xx. 11.	I Cor. x. 4.
Exod. xix. 6.	I Pet. ii. 9.
Exod. xxiv. 8.	Heb. ix. 20.
Lev. xxvi. 11, 12.	II Cor. vi. 16.
Numb. xxi. 8, 9.	John iii. 14.
Deut. xxi. 23.	Gal. iii. 13.
Deut. xxxii. 21.	Rom. x. 19.
II Sam. vii. 14.	Heb. i. 5.
Psa. ii. 9.	Rev. ii. 27.
Psa. viii. 4-6.	Heb. ii. 6-8.
Psa. viii. 6.	I Cor. xv. 27.
Psa. xviii. 49.	Rom. xv. 9.
Psa. xxxv. 19; lxix 4; cix. 3.	John xv. 25.
Psa. xl. 6-8.	Heb. x. 5-7.
Psa. lxix. 9.	John ii. 17.
Psa. civ. 4.	Heb. i. 7.
Isa. xl. 6, 7.	I Pet. i. 24, 25.
Isa. lii. 7; Nahum i. 15.	Rom. x. 15.
Isa. liv. 1.	Gal. iv. 27.
Isa. lxiv. 4.	I Cor. ii. 9.
Jonah i. 17; ii. 1; iii. 5.	Luke xi. 30, 32; Matt. xii. 40, 41.
Hab. ii. 3.	Heb. x. 37.
Hab. ii. 4.	Rom. i. 17; Gal. iii. 11; Heb. x. 38.

Under heading (III.), where the quotation is one of illustration rather than of direct fulfillment, *Horne* gives the following:--

O.T. reference.	Cited in.
Gen. xv. 5.	Rom. iv. 18.
Gen. xv. 6.	Rom. iv. 3; Gal. iii. 6; James ii. 23.
Gen. xviii. 10.	Rom. ix. 9.
Gen. xix. 15, 26.	Luke xvii. 28, 29, 32.
Gen. xxi. 12.	Rom. ix. 7.
Gen. xxv. 33.	Heb. xii. 16.
Gen. xxvii. 28, etc.	Heb. xi. 20; xii. 17.
Exod. ix. 16.	Rom. ix. 17.
Exod. xxxii. 6.	I Cor. x. 7.
Exod. xxxiii. 19.	Rom. ix. 15.
Lev. xi. 45.	I Pet. i. 16.
Lev. xviii. 5.	Rom. x. 5; Gal. iii. 12.

Deut. vi. 13.	Matt. iv. 10; Luke iv. 8.
Deut. vi. 16.	Matt. iv. 7; Luke iv. 12.
Deut. viii. 3.	Matt. iv. 4; Luke iv. 4.
Deut. xxv. 4.	I Cor. ix. 9; I Tim. v. 18.
Deut. xxvii. 26.	Gal. iii. 10.
Deut. xxxii. 35.	Rom. xii. 19; Heb. x. 30.
Deut. xxxii. 36.	Heb. x. 30.
Deut. xxxii. 43.	Rom. xv. 10.
Josh. i. 5.	Heb. xiii. 5.
I Sam. xxi. 6.	Matt. xii. 3,4; Mark ii. 25,26;
	Luke vi. 3, 4.
I Kings xix. 14, 18.	Rom. xi. 3, 4.
Psa. v. 9; cxl. 3.	Rom. iii. 13.
Psa. x. 7.	Rom. iii. 14.
Psa. xiv. 1-3; liii. 1-3.	Rom. iii. 10-12.
Psa. xix. 4.	Rom. x. 18.
Psa. xxiv. 1.	I Cor. x. 26.
Psa. xxxii. 1, 2.	Rom. iv. 7, 8.
Psa. xxxiv. 12-16.	I Pet. iii. 10-12.
Psa. xxxvi. 1.	Rom. iii. 18.
Psa. xlv. 22.	Rom. viii. 36.
Psa. li. 4.	Rom. iii. 4.
Psa. lxix. 9.	Rom. xv. 3.
Psa. lxix. 22, 23.	Rom. xi. 9, 10.
Psa. lxxviii. 2.	Matt. xiii. 35.
Psa. lxxxii. 6.	John x. 34.
Psa. cxii. 9.	II Cor. ix. 9.
Psa. cxvi. 10.	II Cor. iv. 13.
Psa. cxvii. 1.	Rom. xv. 11.
Psa. cxviii. 6.	Heb. xiii. 6.
Prov. i. 16; Isa. lix. 7, 8.	Rom. iii. 15-17.
Prov. iii. 11, 12.	Heb. xii. 5, 6.
Prov. iii. 34.	James iv. 6.
Prov. x. 12.	I Pet. iv. 8.
Prov. xxv. 21, 22.	Rom. xii. 20.
Prov. xxvi. 11.	II Pet. ii. 22.
Isa. i. 9.	Rom. ix. 29.
Isa. vi. 9, 10.	John xii. 40; Matt. xiii. 14, 15;
	Luke viii. 10; Rom. xi. 8.
Isa. viii. 12, 13.	I Pet. iii. 14, 15.
Isa. viii. 17, 18.	Heb. ii. 13.
Isa. x. 22, 23.	Rom. ix. 27, 28.
Isa. xxviii. 16.	Rom. x. 11.
Isa. xxix. 10.	Rom. xi. 8.
Isa. xxix. 13.	Matt. xv. 8, 9; Mark vii. 6.
Isa. xxix. 14.	I Cor. i. 19.
Isa. xxix. 16; xlv. 9.	Rom. ix. 20, 21.
Isa. xlv. 23.	Rom. xiv. 11; Phil. ii. 10.
Isa. xlix. 8.	II Cor. vi. 2.
Isa. lii. 5 with Ezek. xxxvi. 20.	Rom. ii. 24.
Isa. lii. 7; Nahum i. 15.	Rom. x. 15.
Isa. lii. 11, 12.	II Cor. vi. 17.
Isa. lii. 15.	Rom. xv. 21.
Isa. lvi. 7 (and Jer. vii. 11)	Matt. xxi. 13; Mk. xi. 17; Lk. xix. 46.
Isa. lxi. 1, 2.	Like iv. 18, 19.
Isa. lxxv. 1, 2.	Rom. x. 20, 21.

Isa. lxvi. 1, 2.		Acts vii. 49, 50.
Jer. xxxi. 15.		Matt. ii. 17, 18.
Jer. xxxi. 33; xxxii. 38 (w/ II Sam vii. 14)		II Cor. vi. 18.
Hosea xi. 1.		Matt. ii. 15.
Hab. ii. 4.		Rom. i. 17.
Joel ii. 32.		Rom. x. 13.
Mal. i. 2, 3.		Rom. ix. 13.

It cannot escape observation, that by far the larger portion of the preceding passages is cited and adapted to the purpose of illustration by the apostle Paul. *Dr. John Taylor* has some useful remarks, of which the following, Nos. (1) to (4), are an abstract on the various designs with which Paul cited them:--

(1) Sometimes his intention goes no further than using the *same strong expressions*, as being equally applicable to the point in hand. Thus, in Rom. x. 6-8, he uses the words of Moses (Deut. xxx. 12-14) not to prove anything, nor as if he thought Moses spoke of the same subject; but merely as intimating that the strong and lively expressions, used by Moses concerning the doctrine he taught, were equally applicable to the faith of the Gospel. So, in Rom. x. 18, he quotes Psa. xix. 4, though it is not unlikely that those expressions were used by the ancient Jews in application to the Messiah, as the apostle applies them.

(2) Sometimes the design of the quotation is only to show that the *cases are parallel*; or that what happened in his times correspond with what happened in former days. See Rom. ii. 24; viii. 36; ix. 27-29; xi. 2-5, 8-10, and xv. 21.

(3) Sometimes the quotation is only intended to *explain a doctrinal point*. See Rom. i. 17; iv. 7, 8, 18—21; ix. 20, 21; x. 15 and xv. 3.

(4) Sometimes the quotation is designed to *prove a doctrinal point*. See Rom. iii. 4, 10-18; iv. 3-17; v. 12-14; ix. 7, 9, 12, 13, 15, 17; x. 5, 11, 13; xii. 20; xiv. 11.

Lastly, when a passage of the Old Testament is quoted in the New, in order to prove a point of doctrine, the person or writer applies it, though not always in the precise words of the original, yet constantly according to its genuine sense as it stands there. Examples of such application will be found in Deut. viii. 3 compared with Matt. iv. 4; Deut. vi. 16 compared with Matt. iv. 7; Deut. xxxii. 35 and Prov. xxv. 21, 22 compared with Rom. xii. 19, 20. The expression in Hos. vi. 6, *mercy and not sacrifice*, is applied to a different purpose in Matt. ix. 13, but to both properly.

And finally, under heading (IV.), where the quotations are in the nature rather of allusions, *Horne* gives the following list:--

O.T. reference.		Alluded to in.
Gen. 1. 6, 9.		II Pet. iii. 5.
Gen. i. 27.		Matt. xix. 4; Mark x. 6; I Cor. xi. 7;

Gen. ii. 2, 3
Gen. ii. 7.
Gen. ii. 21, 22.
Gen. ii. 24.

Gen. iii. 6.
Gen. iii. 4, 13.
Gen. iii. 16.
Gen. iv. 4.
Gen. iv. 8.

Gen. v. 24.
Gen. vi., vii.

Gen. xii. 1-4.
Gen. xiii. 15.
Gen. xv. 13, 14.
Gen. xvii. 10.
Gen. xviii. 3; xix. 2.
Gen. xviii. 10.
Gen. xviii. 12.
Gen. xix. 24.
Gen. xxi. 12.
Gen. xlvi. 27.
Gen. xlvii. 31.
Gen. l. 24.
Exod. ii. 2, 11.
Exod. iii. 6.
Exod. xii. 12, 18.
Exod. xiv. 22.
Exod. xix. 12, 16, 18, 19.
Exod. xx. 12-16; Deut. v. 16-20.

Exod. xiii. 2; Numb. viii. 16, 17;
xviii. 15, 17
Lev. xiv. 3, 4, 10.
Lev. xix. 12.
Lev. xix. 18.
Numb. xi. 4.
Numb. xiv. 23, 29, 37; xxvi. 64, 65.
Numb. xxi. 4-6.
Numb. xxii. 23, 39.
Deut. xviii. 1.
Deut. xxiv. 1.
Josh. ii. 1; vi. 22, 23.
Josh. vi. 20.
Judges, the whole book generally.
I Sam. viii. 5; x. 1.
I Sam. xiii. 14; xv. 23; xvi. 12, 13.
I Kings xvii. 1; xviii. 42-45.
I Chron. xxiii. 13.
Psa. xc. 4.
Prov. xxvii. 1.
Isa. xii. 3.

James iii. 9.
Heb. iv. 4.
I Cor. xv. 45.
I Cor. xi. 8; I Tim. ii. 13.
Matt. xix. 5; Mark x. 7; I Cor. vi. 16;
Eph. v. 31.
I Tim. ii. 14.
II Cor. xi. 3.
I Cor. xiv. 34.
Heb. xi. 4.
Matt. xxiii. 35; Luke xi. 51;
I John iii. 12; Jude 11.
Heb. xi. 5
Matt. xxiv. 37, 38; Luke xvii. 26, 27;
Heb. xi. 7; I Pet. iii. 19, 20;
II Pet. ii. 5; iii. 6.
Acts vii. 3; Heb. xi. 8.
Rom. iv. 13.
Acts vii. 6, 7.
Acts vii. 8.
Heb. xiii. 2.
Heb. xi. 11.
I Pet. iii. 6.
I Pet. ii. 6; Jude 7.
Heb. xi. 18.
Acts vii. 14.
Heb. xi. 21.
Heb. xi. 22.
Heb. xi. 23-27; Acts vii. 20-29.
Mark xii. 26; Acts vii. 31, 32.
Heb. xi. 28.
I Cor. x. 2; Heb. xi. 29.
Heb. xii. 18-20.
Matt. xix. 18, 19; Mark x. 19;
Lk. xviii. 20; Rom. xiii. 9; Jas. ii. 11.
Luke ii. 23.

Matt. viii. 4; Mark i. 44; Luke v. 14.
Matt. v. 33.
Matt. v. 43; Gal. v. 14.
I Cor. x. 6.
Heb. iii. 16, 17; Jude 5.
I Cor. x. 9.
II Pet. ii. 15, 16; Jude 5, 11.
I Cor. ix. 13.
Matt. v. 31; Mark x. 4; Luke xvi. 18.
Heb. xi. 31; James ii. 25.
Heb. xi. 30.
Acts xiii. 20; Heb. xi. 32.
Acts xiii. 21.
Acts xiii. 22.
James v. 17, 18.
Heb. v. 4.
II Pet. iii. 8.
James iv. 13, 14.
John vii. 38.

Isa. lxvi. 24.		Mark ix. 44.
Jer. vi. 16.		Matt. xi. 29.
Lam. iii. 45.		I Cor. iv. 13.
Dan. iii. 23-25.		Heb. xi. 34.
Dan. ix. 27; xii. 11.		Matt. xxiv. 15; Mark xiii. 14.
Hosea xiii. 14.		I Cor. xv. 55.
Hosea xiv. 2.		Heb. xiii. 15.
Amos v. 25, 26, 27.		Acts vii. 42, 43.

We must leave this matter of the quotations at this point, as the many instances given have occupied considerable space, but we must return to it in our next article in order that one or two important features shall be considered.

#20. How the O.T. quotations are introduced in the N.T. pp. 93 - 96

As we have already seen, the two principal sources from which the quotations in the N.T. are derived, are the Hebrew and the Septuagint versions. The citations from, and the influence of, the Apocrypha, we shall best consider as a separate subject as it is not one that is generally known, and will need fuller explanations than can be given here.

The N.T. writers use a great variety of introductory formulæ in quoting the O.T. Scriptures. It must be understood that, at that period, the Bible was not divided up into chapters and verses, so that reference was usually made merely to the writer, as for example: "Moses said" (Matt. xxii. 24); "Moses wrote" (Luke xx. 28); "Moses describeth" (Rom. x. 5). It was left to the reader to discover the actual passage if he so desired. One or two more specific references are somewhat obscured in the A.V., for example, in Mark xii. 26:--

"Have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him?"

If we consult the R.V. we read:--

"Have ye not read in the book of Moses, *in the place concerning the bush*, how God spake unto him?"

The Rabbis selected some important word found in a passage and used it as a designation, where we should now use chapter and verse. The Mohammedans, in a similar way, distinguished the *suras* or chapters of the *Koran* by the formulæ "in Eli", "in Solomon", etc.

In Rom. xi. 2 we have another example:--

"Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias?"

The Greek of this passage is *en Elia*, “In Elijah”, and refers to that portion of the First book of Kings (chapters xvii.-xix.) where Elijah’s actions are recorded.

Rashi, the Rabbi, commenting upon Hos. ix. 9 says:--

“Some are of opinion that this is Gibeah of Benjamin in the concubine, that is in that chapter of Judges, namely, xix., where the matter of the concubine is predominant.”

Surenhusis, in his *Biblios Katallages* (Amsterdam, 1713), has with great labour collected together the various rules found in the Talmud and Rabbinical writings in order to demonstrate and justify all the modes of quotation made from the Old Testament in the New. He shows that, while we in modern times might scarcely feel that a passage should be quoted unless it had a direct association with the subject in hand, the wider range permitted by Rabbinical usage is in accord with that of the N.T. For example, the use of Deut. xxx. 12-14 in Rom. x. 6-8 does not represent a method of quotation which we should naturally use to-day.

While we do not intend to give an exhaustive analysis of the various introductory formulæ found in the N.T., some remarks upon their distribution among the various books may be of service. Matthew uses the formula:--

“*Hina plerothe to rhethen hupo kurion dia tou propheton*” (In order that there might be fulfilled the word spoken by the Lord through the prophet).

This is found, unabridged, in Matt. i. 22 & ii. 15 and in the following passages, either simply abridged, or slightly altered and abridged: Matt. ii. 17; iii. 3; iv. 14; viii. 17; xii. 17; xiii. 14, 35; xxi. 4; xxvi. 56; xxvii. 9 and 35. The words, “Now all this was done that” which occur in i. 22, xxi. 4 and xxvi. 56 occur nowhere else.

In addition to this type of introduction, Matthew uses *gegraptai* (It is written) and similar terms. Mark, Luke and John also use *gegraptai* and similar expressions.

The Acts of the Apostles uses a variety of introductory formulæ in keeping with the fact that it is not the record of any one speaker, no two clauses are exactly alike. The epistle to the Romans uses the formula, *kathos gegraptai*, “As it is written”, more frequently than any other, so that this form of introduction may be considered as characteristic of the book. The dispensational chapters (ix.-xi.) depart from this usual form and use expressions such as, “Isaiah saith”, “Moses saith”, “In the place where it was said”, “It was said” (*rheo*), etc.

In Paul’s epistles the usual formula is, “It is written”. A more personal form is used in II Cor. vi. where, instead of “It is written” we have “For He saith”, “As God hath said”, “Saith the Lord” and “Saith the Lord Almighty” (verses 2, 16, 17, 18). The emphasis upon the fact that God said these words is worthy of attention; the subject of II Cor. vi. is a most solemn and personal one and may account for the change.

Galatians introduces a personal note in a different way, speaking of the scripture as “foreseeing” and “preaching”, and “concluding all under sin” (Gal. iii. 8, 22).

Quotations from the O.T. in the Prison Epistles are exceedingly rare; two references in Ephesians are introduced by the words, *Dio legei*, “Wherefore He saith” (Eph. iv. 8; v. 14).

The introductory formulæ of the epistle to the Hebrews differ considerably from those used in the other epistles. *Grapho* is never used, but instead *legei* (“he, or it saith”), *marturei* (“he, or it, testifies”), *eireke* (“it has been spoken”), *phesi* (“saith He”). The manner of citation adopted by the apostle in writing to the Hebrews is very like the style of the Jewish writer *Philo*, and was evidently chosen by God in addressing this special people. While quotations from the O.T. occur in the first three chapters of Hebrews, no writer is named until after the memorable statement in Heb. iii. 7: “Wherefore, as the Holy Ghost saith.” There is a strong emphasis in Hebrews upon the fact that God has spoken: “God has spoken”; “The Holy Ghost saith”; “The word spoken by angels was stedfast spoken by the Lord” (the Lord Jesus).

It seems evident that the writers of the N.T. took into account the people to whom they wrote and introduced their quotations accordingly. Take as an example the way in which Matthew, Mark and Luke introduce the reference made by the Lord to Psalm cx.:--

“He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call Him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord” (Matt. xxii. 43, 44).

“For David himself said by the Holy Ghost, The Lord said unto my Lord” (Mark xii. 36).

“And David himself saith in the Book of the Psalms, The Lord said unto my Lord” (Luke xx. 42).

Matthew, writing to Jewish readers, simply refers to David’s words “in spirit”. Mark, writing to Roman and Gentile hearers, who were nevertheless closely associated with the kingdom message of Matthew’s Gospel, makes the inspiration of the words a little more emphatic, but neither Matthew nor Mark feel it necessary to tell their readers where to find these inspired words of David. Luke, however, wrote for Gentile readers, particularly those who came under the ministry of the apostle Paul, and to these he is explicit: “David himself saith *in the Book of the Psalms.*”

The reader will find further evidence of this accommodation to the reader, by comparing Matt. xxii. 24 with Mark xii. 19 and Luke xx. 28; and Matt. iii. 3 with Mark i. 2, 3 and Luke iii. 4. Where Matthew speaks of what “Moses said”, Mark and Luke speak of what is “written”. The Gospel according to Matthew, the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the Epistle of James indicate by the use of the Jewish mode of introductory quotation, “God said”, “It is said”, etc., that they have the Hebrew in view, whereas the Epistles written to the Churches generally refer the reader to what is “written”. The insistence by the apostle when writing to the Churches upon what is “written” may have had in view the attempts of the Judaizing party to force the so-called oral, or unwritten, law upon the Gentiles.

Not only are the introductory formulæ modified to suit the *persons* addressed, but they also have some reference to the *purpose* for which such quotations are made. Where the writer intends a literal fulfillment of prophecy, he will naturally use a different mode of citation from that in which Scripture is being used as a support for some doctrine or exhortation.

These and many other lines of study are open to the student who considers no time ill-spent that makes the message of the Word clearer and more intelligible both to himself and to others. We have, however, to remember our limitations; our space is limited, the patience of our readers is limited, and we must not assume that all will benefit alike from these somewhat exacting studies.

**#21. The quotation of the O.T. in the N.T.
The problem of Matt. xxvii. 9, 10.
pp. 135 - 140**

An analysis of the quotations of the O.T. in the New, demands not only an acquaintance with the originals of the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures, but some understanding of the work of the Massorites. Before, therefore, we go further into this field of study, we propose devoting some space to an explanation of the labours of the Sopherim and Massorites, and their influence upon the received text of the Hebrew Scriptures, but as a concluding article of the present portion of the series dealing with the quotation of the O.T. in the New, we propose a consideration of that most vexed question: What is the true import of Matt. xxvii. 9,10?

We regret to be unable to render adequate acknowledgment to the writer whose findings upon this subject have been of great service. He published his book anonymously, and we can, therefore, only make this scanty recognition and pass on.

There are 55 passages in the N.T. in which the author of an O.T. quotation is named. In all of these places, with the exception of Matt. xxvii. 9, 10, it is generally agreed that the authorship cited in the N.T. is that which is found in the Old. The excepted passage, which is the one before us, reads:--

“Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of Him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value, and gave them for the potter’s field, as the Lord appointed me.”

Whether the difficulty be handled by friend or foe, there is unanimity in referring this quotation to Zech. xi. 12, 13, and not to Jeremiah. Among the suggested solutions of the difficulty put forward by those who believe God’s Word may be mentioned the following:--

“There are many items that are parallel in Zechariah and in Jeremiah, and consequently Jeremiah may have prophesied the same things as did Zechariah, although they are only recorded in the writings of the latter.”

Scrivener says:--

“However *Ieremiou* may perplex us, it is unquestionably the true reading. No solution seems so easy as *Lightfoot's*, who supposes that the book of Jeremiah, being actually arranged by the Jews as first of all the prophets, gave its name to the whole book of writings: an opinion which is somewhat countenanced by chapter xvi. 14: ‘Jeremiah or one of the prophets’.”

Alford says:--

“The citation is not from Jeremiah, and is probably quoted from memory and inaccurately.”

The argument put forward by many, namely, that Matt. xxvii. says: “which was *spoken* by the prophet Jeremiah”, instead of “which was *written*”, does not hold good, for quite a number of quotations that were manifestly *written* by the prophet named in the respective passages, are introduced by the same formula. For example, Matt. ii. 17 and iii. 3.

Turning from these endeavours to reconcile the apparent inaccuracy, we turn to Matt. xxvii. 9, 10, and ask, “What is the event, or incident, or transaction, which involved a fulfilling of the ancient prophecy quoted?” The answer is: “The buying of a field”:

“And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter’s field to bury strangers in. Wherefore that field was called, “The field of blood, unto this day” (Matt. xxvii. 7, 8).

Where in the N.T. the treachery of Judas is the subject of O.T. quotation, Psalms xli., lxi. and cix. are cited. Matt. xxvii. 9, 10, however, is concerned rather with what was done with the thirty pieces of silver which Judas cast down into the temple:

“They took the thirty pieces of silver and gave them for the potter’s field.”

But neither in verses 12 or 13, nor anywhere in Zech. xi., is a field so much as mentioned. While it is true that Zechariah speaks of thirty pieces of silver, there is no statement that anything, certainly not a field, was purchased with the money.

In the attempt to make the passage in Zechariah correspond with Matt. xxvii., it has been taught that:

- (1) Zechariah spoke contemptuously when he said: “If ye think good, give me my price.”
- (2) That the thirty pieces of silver was a paltry sum.
- (3) That the money was “flung” down in contempt.
- (4) That the word “potter” is a correct translation, and means a worker in clay.

Let us deal with the features in order:--

(1) The word “goodly” in Zech. xi. 13 is the translation of *eder*. The cognate adjective, *addip*, is variously rendered “lordly”, “excellent”, “glorious”, “noble”, “mighty”, etc., and there is no instance where it is used ironically. The words “price” and “prized” are translations of *yagar*. This word is translated “honour” and “precious” elsewhere, without the slightest hint of irony ever being associated with it, and indeed it may be added that irony is not discoverable anywhere in Zechariah’s writings. We must therefore dismiss the suggestion of irony and contempt as being the invention of those who wished to justify their explanation of the difficulty found in Matt. xxvii.

(2) The thirty pieces of silver are said to be a paltry sum to offer the prophet. Neh. v. 15 records the fact that

“Former governors were chargeable unto the people and had taken of them bread and wine, beside forty shekels of silver.”

Judg. xvii. 10 states that Micah offered the Levite ten shekels of silver *a year*, a suit of apparel and his victuals. A *fourth part* of a shekel of silver was considered to be sufficient to offer to the man of God by the servant of Saul (I Sam. ix. 8). These facts and the seriousness of Jeremiah in weighing out the seventeen shekels of silver for the price of the field in Anathoth (Jer. xxxii.), set aside all argument which would regard thirty shekels of silver as a contemptuous and paltry sum.

(3) The suggestion that Zechariah “flung down the silver in contempt” must next be examined. The word “cast”, which translates *shalak*, is used of Moses when he cast the tree into the bitter waters (Exod. xv. 25); of Elijah when he cast his mantle upon Elisha (I Kings xix. 19), and of Elisha when he cast salt into the waters and meal into the pot (II King ii. 21 and iv. 41). In II Chron. xxiv. 10, 11, where it is used of silver in connection with the house of the Lord, it approaches very near to Zechariah’s use of the word.

(4) It is assumed that the word translated “potter” in Zech. xi. means necessarily “a worker in clay”. This should be easily capable of proof. The word translated “potter” is *yatsar*. The verb denotes the act of forming or fashioning, but indicates nothing as to the material with which the forming or fashioning is done. Where pottery or working in clay is referred to, it is necessary that the passage say so. It may, for instance, be pointed out that the word is used of a worker in metals. In Isaiah it is “The Smith” working with bellows and furnace that “forms” (*yatsar*) the weapon (Isa. liv. 16, 17). Again in Isa. xlv. 9-12:--

“The *fashioners* of a graven image who hath *fashioned* a god or a molten graven image fashioneth it with hammers.”

Here it would be ridiculous to introduce the idea of a potter, a worker in clay; yet the same word is used that gives us the word “potter”. So in Hab. ii. 18, 19, which the reader should consult. The common noun, *pot*, unlike its cognate, *potter* and *pottery*, is applicable to metallic vessels, as well as earthen ones. So, likewise, the Hebrew

participial noun, *yatsar*, is every whit as applicable to a fashioner of wood or metal as to a fashioner of clay. The statement as to the presence of a “potter” in the house of the Lord has no sanction from the Word of God. What material did the so-called “potter” of Zech. xi. work in? The prophet was commanded to cast the silver he had received to this craftsman, who was in the house of the Lord, and the context demands that this craftsman was none other than *a silversmith*.

The prominence given to the gold and silver vessels in the Sanctuary, particularly in that part of the book of Ezra that refers to the days of Zechariah, will suffice to account for the presence of a silversmith or goldsmith in the house of the Lord. We need not, however, go even so far afield as Ezra: we have but to turn to Zech. vi. 11 to see the imperative necessity for some such craftsman being in attendance at the temple at that very time:--

“Take silver and gold and make crowns, and set them upon Joshua the son of Josedech the High Priest” (Zech. vi. 11).

This passage, moreover, is unique: it is the only place where a crown is ever said to be made of silver.

Concluding this section, we observe that the LXX reads: “Cast them into the furnace”, in both places where the A.V. has “potter”.

We now deal positively with the passage in Matt. xxvii. 9, 10, ignoring all that has been read into Zechariah to justify the reference to that prophet. Let us enquire where there is a reference in Jeremiah to a command of the Lord to buy a field for silver.

“Thou hast said unto me, O Lord God, *Buy thee the field for silver*” (money) (Jer. xxxii. 25).

“*Men shall buy fields for silver*” (money) (Jer. xxxii. 44).

Need we search further for the prophecy of Jeremiah which was fulfilled when the potter’s field was purchased for silver?

We now have to consider the parenthetical clause, viz., verses 9 and 10, of Matt. xxvii. over which most of the trouble has arisen. Let us illustrate what we are about to show is true in Matt. xxvii. by reference to quotations from Scripture elsewhere. Matt. i. 22, 23 quotes Isaiah’s prophecy, but no one has any difficulty in consequence of the insertion of the parenthetical and explanatory words: “which being interpreted is, God with us”, for they are very evidently added to the quotation by the Evangelist himself. Again, in Matt. xxi. 13 we read: “It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves.” If we prosecute a search we shall discover that two separate passages are here quoted by the Lord: one from Isa. lvi. 7, and the other from Jer. vii. 11. Now supposing Matthew had said here: “As it is written in the prophecy of Isaiah”, would anyone refuse to admit the fact that Jeremiah was also quoted? Let us see how the parenthetical words of Matt. xxvii. would be understood if they had been otherwise worded. Supposing, for illustration, that

the chief priests had fixed the price of betrayal at thirty pieces of silver because of the law that made that sum the compensation for injury done to a servant, and we had read in Matt. xxvii.--

“Then was fulfilled that which was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver (*the price given in Israel to compensate for injury of a servant*), and they gave them for the potter’s field, as the Lord appointed me.”

Would anyone be found who would teach that the prophet Jeremiah was not quoted, but rather the writer of the book of Exodus? For the sake of clearness let us have two further hypothetical examples:--

“Then was fulfilled that which was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet, saying, And they took the twenty pieces of silver (*the price of him who was sold by his brethren into Egypt*); and they gave them for the potter’s field, as the Lord appointed me.”

“Then was fulfilled that which was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet, saying, And they took the four hundred shekels of silver (*the price paid to Ephron the Hittite for the field of Machpelah as a burial place*), and they gave them for the potter’s field, as the Lord appointed me.”

It is, moreover, evident that the “him” who was priced and valued, and the “me” whom the Lord appointed to buy the field, *cannot have been one and the same man*. We exhibit the parenthetical reference to Zechariah, together with the quotation from Jeremiah, so that the reader may see what Matthew has done:--

“Then was fulfilled that which was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet, saying,

And they took the thirty pieces of silver.	They shall buy fields for silver.
(the price of him who was priced, whom they of the children of Israel did price),	(the amount of the price that I was priced at of them),
and they gave them for the potter’s field,	And fields shall be bought in this land.
As the Lord appointed me.	Thou, O Lord Jehovah, hast said unto me, But to thyself the field for silver.”

One further illustration of the way in which Matthew quotes the prophets is found in Matt. xxi. 5. The words: “Tell ye the daughter of Zion”, are quoted from Isa. lxii. 11, while those which follow are quoted from Zech. ix. 9. Both here and in Matt. xxvi. 31 Zechariah is quoted without being named, which is in keeping with the silence of Matt. xxvii. in regard to the parenthetical words, “the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value”.

Both the passages quoted in Matt. xxvii. have one feature in common, which in some measure links them together. In Jeremiah, concerning the proposal to purchase the field, we read: “And I knew this was the word of the Lord” (Jer. xxxii. 8), and in Zechariah, when the staff was broken, we read: “The poor of the flock who observed me *knew that this was the word of the Lord*” (Zech. xi. 11).

This is not the place to go into all the teaching that resides in this passage of Matt. xxvii. We have dealt with it as *a sample* of the way in which the O.T. is quoted in the N.T., and have endeavoured, incidentally, to inculcate that careful regard for all which is “written” that will lead the reader steadily on where others, lacking that absolute confidence in the utter trustworthiness of all Scripture, have missed their way. “Learning” may not always lead to a “knowledge of the truth”. A God-given “repentance”, or “change of mind”, involving a childlike simplicity rather than a scholar’s profundity, is needed to arrive at the “knowledge of the truth” (II Tim. iii. 7 and ii. 25).

Here we must conclude this survey of the quotations from the O.T. as found in the N.T., trusting that what, at the first, may have seemed a slight matter has now, in measure, been shown to have the important place that it really occupied.

#22. The Revised Version.
“To increase its fidelity without destroying its charm”
(Revisers’ note).
pp. 194 - 197

Before we allow the Revised Version to speak for itself, we feel bound to give some sort of prefatory note, lest our endeavour to be fair and to give all the credit possible should be misconstrued as unreserved commendation.

Dr. Robert Young wrote:--

“This Revised Version will disappoint all parties interested in the work, *the advanced or sceptical party*, who expect to find old doctrines erased, or new ones introduced, *the conservative party*, who cling to old terms and phrases, as well as *the earnest inquiring party* who wish to find a reliable standard to test the conflicting statements of commentators and critics.”

If a canvass of opinion were taken we believe the result would show that the “Modernist” on the whole favours the R.V., while the “Fundamentalist” favours the A.V. That there are many errors in the A.V., students of all shades of opinion would agree; and that there are corrections of considerable value in the R.V. all would acknowledge; and yet, in spite of all this, there is something about the R.V. repellent and chilling which leaves the reader unsatisfied and suspicious.

After we have set forth the reasons why every student should be acquainted with the R.V. we shall be obliged, in faithfulness, to point out some grievous departures from sound doctrine and some unwarranted interference with the Greek text that prevent us from giving anything like wholehearted commendation to this great work. The human channels also have to be considered; and when we learn that one of the Revisers was a

prominent Unitarian, and others self-confessed sacerdotalists, we feel the necessity of using the results of their labours with care and discretion. We therefore make it clear at the outset that, while we draw the reader's attention to the value of the R.V., we most certainly do not advocate its general use. With all its faults, the A.V. is to be preferred for general reading and public ministry. The place for the R.V. is on the desk, one volume of many which the student consults in his examination of the sacred text and its translations. We hope to place the reader in possession of enough material to enable him, dispassionately, to arrive at a sound conclusion.

The revision of the Authorized Version of the New Testament was undertaken in consequence of a resolution passed by both Houses of the Convocation of the Province of Canterbury, and the new version was first published in May, 1881. We propose in this article to give the reader some idea of the task of the Revisers and the rules under which they worked.

The foundation of the A.V. must be sought in the work of *William Tyndale*; the versions of the English Bible that followed were reproductions or revisions of *Tyndale's* efforts. Authoritative revision is divided into three stages: the Great Bible of 1539-41, the Bishops' Bible of 1568 & 1572, and the King's Bible of 1611. The last of these came to be known as the Authorized Version. The revision of 1881, though following after a greater lapse of time than that that intervened between the earlier revisions, must not be considered an innovation.

The compilers of the A.V. used the Greek text that was to hand; the manuscripts were of late date and few in number. The main principles governing the production of the A.V. will give a general idea of its character:--

- (1) The ordinary Bible read in the Church, commonly called the Bishops' Bible, to be followed, and as little altered as the truth of the original will permit.
- (2) When a word has diverse significations, that to be kept which hath been most commonly used by most ancient fathers, being agreeable to the propriety of the place and the analogy of the faith.
- (3) No marginal notes at all to be affixed, but only for the explanation of the Hebrew and Greek words which cannot without some circumlocution so briefly and fitly be expressed in the text.

The comment of the Revisers upon the A.V. is worth quoting:--

“We have had to study this great Version carefully and minutely, line by line; and the longer we have been engaged upon it the more we have learned to admire its simplicity, its dignity, its power, its happy turns of expression, its general accuracy, and the felicities of its rhythm. To render a work that had reached this high standard of excellence still more excellent, to increase its fidelity without destroying its charm, was the task committed to us.”

The fundamental rules adopted by the Convocation of Canterbury on the third and fifth days of May, 1870, were as follows:--

- (1) That it is desirable that a revision of the Authorized Version of the Holy Scriptures be undertaken.
- (2) That the revision be so conducted as to comprise both marginal renderings and such emendations as it may be found necessary to insert in the text of the Authorized Version.
- (3) That in the above resolutions we do not contemplate any new translation of the Bible, or any alteration of the language, except where in the judgment of the most competent scholars such change is necessary.
- (4) That in such necessary changes, the style of the language employed in the existing Version be closely followed.
- (5) That it is desirable that Convocation should nominate a body of its own members to undertake the work of revision, who shall be at liberty to invite the co-operation of any eminent for scholarship, to whatever nation or religious body they may belong.

The Principles and Rules agreed to by the Committee of Convocation on the twenty-fifth day of May, 1870, were as follows:--

- (1) To introduce as few alterations as possible into the Text of the Authorized Version consistently with faithfulness.
- (2) To limit, as far as possible, the expression of such alterations to the language of the Authorized and earlier English Versions.
- (3) Each Company to go twice over the portion to be revised, once provisionally, the second time finally, and on principles of voting as hereinafter is provided.
- (4) That the Text to be adopted be that for which the evidence is decidedly preponderating; and that when the Text so adopted differs from that from which the Authorized Version was made, the alteration be indicated in the margin.
- (5) To make or retain no change in the Text on the second final revision by each Company, except *two-thirds* of those present approve of same, but on the first revision to decide by simple majorities.
- (6) In every case of proposed alteration that may have given rise to discussion, to defer the voting thereupon till the next Meeting, whensoever the same shall be required by one-third of those present at the Meeting, such intended vote to be announced in the notice for the next Meeting.
- (7) To revise the headings of chapters and pages, paragraphs, italics, and punctuation.
- (8) To refer, on the part of each Company, when considered desirable, to Divines, Scholars and Literary Men, whether at home or abroad, for their opinions.

The time devoted to the work was ten years and a half. The first revision occupied about six years, the second about two years and a half. The remaining time was spent in the consideration of the suggestions from America on the Second Revision, and of the many details and reserved questions arising out of the earlier labours.

The reader who would rightly appraise the R.V. should give due consideration to Rule 5. Whatever our own opinion may be regarding any alteration of the A.V., the fact that on the final revision no alteration was permitted "except *two-thirds* approved of the same", should at least cause us to give these revisions a respectful consideration.

#23. The Revised Version.
“Our task was revision, not re-translation”
(Revisers’ note).
pp. 229 - 231

The first consideration before the Revisers was that of the Greek Text. This, to use their own language, “was the necessary foundation of our work”:-

“Textual criticism, as applied to the Greek New Testament, forms a special study of much intricacy and difficulty, and even now leaves room for considerable variety of opinion among competent critics In the early part of the work every various reading requiring consideration was discussed and voted upon by the company. After a time the precedents thus established enabled the process to be safely shortened; but it was still at the option of every one to raise a full discussion on any particular reading, and the option was freely used Many places still remain where, for the present, it would not be safe to accept one reading to the absolute exclusion of the others. In these cases we have given alternative readings in the margin, wherever they seem to be of sufficient importance or interest to deserve notice” (*Reviser’s Preface*).

Passing from the question of the text to the translation, the Revisers were enjoined “to introduce as few alterations as possible, consistently with faithfulness”. Their task, to use their own language, “was revision, not re-translation”, and this fact must be given due place in any consideration of the resulting Version. Speaking of the changes that were necessary in spite of this enjoiner, the Revisers say:-

“In the application however of this principle to the many and intricate details of our work, we have found ourselves constrained by faithfulness to introduce changes which might not at first sight appear to be included under the rule.”

The alterations found in the R.V. may be roughly grouped in five principal classes:-

- (1) Alterations positively required by change of reading in the Greek Text.
- (2) Alterations made where the A.V. appeared either to be incorrect, or to have chosen the less probable of two possible renderings.
- (3) Alterations of obscure or ambiguous renderings into such as are clear and express in import.
- (4) Alterations of the A.V. in cases where it was inconsistent with itself in the renderings of two or more passages confessedly alike or parallel.
- (5) Alterations rendered necessary *by consequence*, that is, arising out of changes already made, though not in themselves required by the general rule of faithfulness.

The frequent inconsistencies of the A.V. caused the Revisers much embarrassment, where even in the same chapter the same Greek word would be rendered several ways. Their alterations made necessary *by consequence* they explain as follows:-

“When a particular word is found to recur with characteristic frequency in any one of the Sacred Writers, it is obviously desirable to adopt for it some uniform rendering. Again, where, as in the case of the first three Evangelists, precisely the same clauses or

sentences are found in more than one of the Gospels, it is no less necessary to translate them in every place in the same way. These two principles may be illustrated by reference to a word that perpetually recurs in St. Mark's Gospel, and that may be translated either 'straightway', 'forthwith' or 'immediately'. Let it be supposed that the first rendering is chosen, and that the word, in accordance with the first of the above principles, is in that Gospel uniformly translated 'straightway'. Let it be further supposed that one of the passages of St. Mark in which it is so translated, is found, word for word, in one of the other Gospels, but that there the rendering of the A.V. happens to be 'forthwith' or 'immediately'. That rendering must be changed on the second of the above principles; and yet such a change would not have been made but for this concurrence of two sound principles This is but one of many instances of consequential alterations which might at first sight appear unnecessary, but which nevertheless have been deliberately made, and are not at variance with the rule of introducing as few changes in the A.V. as faithfulness would allow."

Two other features are noted by the Revisers in reference to their work. One is the subject of language:--

"We have never removed any archaisms, whether in structure or in words, except where we were persuaded either that the meaning of the words was not generally understood, or that the nature of the expression led to some misconception of the true sense of the passage."

The other feature is that of the marginal notes:--

"They represent the results of a large amount of careful and elaborate discussion, and will, perhaps, by their very presence, indicate to some extent the intricacy of many of the questions that have almost daily come before us for decision."

The marginal notes fall into four main groups:--

- (1) Differences of reading deemed to be of sufficient importance as to warrant particular notice.
- (2) Exact renderings of Greek words, which, for the sake of the English idiom, were not so exactly rendered in the text.
- (3) A few notes give some explanation which the original seemed to require.
- (4) Alternative renderings in difficult or debatable passages.

It is important to remember that where the text of the R.V. agrees with that of the A.V., at least one third of the Revisers supported the retention, whereas where the R.V. differs from the A.V., the different reading was supported by at least two thirds of the Revisers who were present at the second revision (*see* page 196).

As a general rule, italic type used in the R.V. to indicate the absence of any words in the original which the sense seemed to require in the translation. The text is arranged in paragraphs, and the Revisers pertinently remark:--

"The serious obstacles to the right understanding of Holy Scripture, which are interposed by minute subdivisions are often overlooked; but if anyone will consider for a moment the injurious effect that would be produced by breaking up a portion of some standard work into separate verses, he will at once perceive how necessary has been an alteration in this particular."

Regarding punctuation they say:--

“Our practice has been to maintain what is sometimes called the heavier system of stopping, or in other words, that system which, especially for convenience in reading aloud, suggests pauses as will best ensure a clear and intelligent setting forth of the true meaning of the words. This course has rendered necessary, especially in the Epistles, a larger use of colons and semicolons than is customary in modern English printing.”

Finally, attention is drawn to the list of readings and renderings preferred by the American Committee, recorded at their desire. These are printed immediately after the book of the Revelation and should not be omitted by the earnest reader.

Having now given some idea of the work undertaken by the Revision of 1881, we hope, in subsequent articles, to draw the reader's attention to some of the advantages that accrue from a comparison of the Authorized and Revised Versions.

“What manner of persons ought ye to be.”

#1. The relation of doctrine and practice. pp. 1, 2

Human testimony, however honest and however well intentioned, will always carry with it those evidences of frailty that belong to all things mortal. The criticism of the witness of *The Berean Expositor* over the past years leaves us with no illusion on that matter. There has been, we admit, a preponderance of doctrine. There has been a most careful scrutiny of the meaning and usage of words. But while admitting this, and wishing that our testimony had been more complete, and that more space had been devoted to the practical aspect of the truth, we believe that there is some justification for the methods we have pursued, and for the line of teaching that has been uppermost.

First of all, *The Berean Expositor* was not inaugurated to fill the role of a magazine for general Christian reading: it commenced with a mission “to make all men see”, so far as grace enabled, “what is the dispensation of the mystery”. The subject was by no means popular, and for years our testimony was like “a voice crying in the wilderness”. The very fact that every item of our teaching would be criticized, quite apart from the positive necessity to “prove all things”, made us adopt methods of research that involved the setting out of structures and the concordant study of words, all of which may to many have seemed heavy reading. In the next place, our space was always circumscribed, and when we would have expanded a theme and “pointed the moral”, the limit had already been reached.

While the subject of the mystery will never be popular, it has been our joy of late years to see that others, in this land and elsewhere, have joined in the witness. We therefore feel more at liberty to devote some of the attention given in time past to doctrine and dispensation, to the necessary practice without which the knowledge of Christ remains “barren and unfruitful”. Moreover, this order is scriptural. Practice can never precede doctrine. Practice is the fruit of doctrine. I must *know*, before I can *do*. I cannot walk worthy of a calling that I do not believe or understand. I cannot adorn a doctrine that I do not know or believe.

Those of our readers who have any knowledge of the epistle to the Ephesians, will be already acquainted with the perfect balance of truth presented in that marvelous epistle. Three chapters of doctrine are balanced by three chapters of practice in such a way that practically every item of doctrine finds its corresponding item of practice. This has been graphically set out on page 15 of our book entitled: *The Testimony of the Lord's Prisoner*, which the interested reader is asked to consult. The word translated “worthy” in Eph. iv. 1 has associations with “the beam of a balance”, and to walk worthy of our calling brings to mind the idea of practice balancing doctrine.

This series of articles upon practical themes we have entitled: *What manner of persons ought ye to be*, from II Pet. iii. 11; and a consultation of the context will show that Peter's exhortation is based upon doctrine:--

“Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness.”

We therefore hope in future, not only to put before our readers the glorious doctrine of the Scriptures, trusting that they themselves will seek the grace to translate all into terms of practice, but also, in this series, to re-inforce this teaching with more definite exposition of the practical issues involved, and a fuller opening up of the ways and means revealed in the Scriptures for the attaining of that coveted condition where doctrine is balanced by practice, where the walk is worthy of the calling, and where the life manifested here sets forth in some measure that life which is hid with Christ in God.

#2. His service is perfect freedom (Chrysostom). pp. 41, 42

We trust that no reader expects us to launch out into a system of legalism, setting out what he is to *do*, and where he is to *go*, as though the epistles of the mystery were addressed to servants instead of *sons*, and as though Sinai had not given place to the right hand of God. The closing verses of Col. ii. should preserve us for all time from this reprehensible misunderstanding of our position in Christ. There will be, we trust, no approximation to “touch not, taste not, handle not”, in this series.

The apostle Peter has asked what manner of persons ought ye to be, and the introduction of that word “ought”, so often on the lips of believers when dealing with “another man's servant”, is rare in the Word of God. The apostle Paul used the word “ought” (*opheilo*) but once in the epistles of the mystery when he said: “So *ought* men to love their wives” (Eph. v. 28), and even this passage is no exception to the rule that practice flows from doctrine, for the exhortation beginning with the word “so” cannot be isolated from the preceding glorious doctrine concerning Christ's love for His church.

The first item that we feel constrained to bring forward is the fact that all service rendered to God, if it is to be acceptable, must be “reasonable service”. This is stated by the apostle in Rom. xii. 1:--

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”

We are immediately faced with the necessity of making sure that every term used in this important passage shall be understood and appreciated—but that will be to leave the practical issues for the doctrinal, the very thing we here seek to avoid. We trust, however, that this very persistence on the part of doctrine, meeting us again and again,

will help all to realize how impossible it is to contemplate “practice” apart from a knowledge of truth. Avoiding the purely doctrinal issues which will the better come in the direct exposition of the epistle, we might notice that the apostle “beseeches”, but does not “command”. He would have our practice the grateful response to “the mercies of God”, for service rendered in any other spirit may not prove “acceptable unto God”.

Not only must true service be rendered “in love” and not “in law”, but it must also be “logical” or “reasonable”. This implies a fair acquaintance with the teaching of the Scriptures, and a perception on the part of the believer of the direction and goal towards which all doctrine points. This logical or reasonable service goes so far as to include the presentation of our bodies as living sacrifices, an aspect of truth not by any means “reasonable” in the eyes of the unsaved. This warns us that “logic” moves on certain planes. What is logically true of man, as such, is not necessarily true of God: for example, man cannot be in two places at once, whereas the Lord cannot be so limited.

Again, the apostle not only “beseeches”, but he says “present” or “yield”. Reasonable service of the redeemed cannot be forced, it must be free, and finds its typical expression in those “freewill offerings” which the law allowed, and about which the Psalmist prayed:--

“Accept, I beseech Thee, the freewill offerings of my mouth, O Lord” (Psa. cxix. 108).

#3. Pre-requisites for service. pp. 81, 82

Pursuing the theme commenced in our earlier article that the service of the believer must be reasonable and free, we turn to the words of Christ, uttered in the day of His rejection: “Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me” (Matt. xi. 29).

It is desired in this present article to indicate some of the necessary conditions for learning the truth. Mere reading, even of the Scriptures, is by no means sufficient. “Learning” does not necessarily lead to “a knowledge of the truth” as the solemn passage in II Tim. iii. 7 makes plain. If we were asked to prepare a list of the paraphernalia associated with “learning”, how many of us would indicate a “yoke”? A yoke suggests service and fellowship. To work yoked with another, necessitates keeping step, walking in the same path, pursuing the same goal, serving the same Master. Here we have another of those inter-relations of doctrine and practice that it is so necessary to remember.

There is, moreover, very pointed mention of the state of heart of those who would engage in this yoked service. The Lord said: “I am meek and lowly in heart.” This special attribute of Christ and its intimate connection with “learning” is found in the prophecy of Isaiah:--

“The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary. He wakeneth morning by morning, He wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned. The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back” (Isa. l. 4, 5).

Another very essential preparation of heart that must precede all true “learning” is repentance. Just as we should not naturally include a “yoke” among the necessary equipment of the learner, so we should most likely enumerate a number of spiritual qualifications before we thought of repentance. The passage that teaches its necessity is II Tim. ii. 25:--

“In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth.”

Without this repentance, one may be “ever learning and never able to come to a knowledge of the truth” (II Tim. iii. 7). While we desire to keep in mind that we are not dealing with the doctrinal issues of the passages quoted in this series, yet, owing to a very prevalent misconception of the meaning of repentance, we feel it necessary to say that it indicates “a change of mind”. Until this change of mind is granted, all argument and exhortation are in vain.

One further item in the learner’s equipment is that of affliction and suffering. The Psalmist said:--

“It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn Thy statutes” (Psa. cxix. 71).

The apostle Paul learned in this same school, for he said:--

“I have *learned*, in whatsoever state I am, to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: everywhere and in all things I am *instructed* both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengthened me” (Phil. iv. 11-13).

And lastly, of the Lord Himself it is written:--

“Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered” (Heb. v. 8).

If true service is “reasonable service”, and if we must learn the will of the Lord before we can hope to do it, it will be seen that while grace is all-sufficient, yet we should not enter upon this path without some preparation of heart, for the path is not always smooth, neither is it without its trials. We may, however, in it all find rest to our souls in fellowship with the Lord Himself.

#4. Symbols of Service: Ambassador, Apostle, Angel. pp. 121 - 123

Having seen something of the nature of, and preparation for, scriptural service, we turn our minds to the consideration of what service involves. We might note the different titles of service, such as “walk” or “work”, or the different spheres of service suggested in such passages as “preach the Word”, “fellow-soldier”, “we wrestle”, “sow”, “reap”, etc., or yet again we might note the examples of true acceptable service with which Scripture abounds, and yet once again, we could bring into prominence all who are called “servants”, or who are said to have “served”. Then it will be necessary to note the spirit that underlies service, and it will not be too far removed from the practical orbit to give attention to the fact that service will be rewarded by the Lord.

The bare summary of possible avenues of approach reveals so much ground to be covered that we shall have to deal with the subject under different heads to avoid confusion. We purpose for the present to bring before the reader’s notice a series of symbols of service that we find in the Scriptures. Every reader will not find each symbol of personal help. Service is too wide for generalization, but we trust that each reader will find his own special calling illumined as time proceeds. Moreover, there is always room for the reader to remember in prayer those whose service is so different from his own, and this of itself will enable us patiently to consider service in all its aspects, even though our own particular branch be not immediately in view.

The symbols of service that we will consider in this first review are three, viz., ambassador, apostle and angel. While each word has its own distinctive meaning and cannot be used interchangeably with the other two, they have one or two features in common, which may be of help to us in this series.

Firstly, ambassadors, apostles and angels are *sent ones*.—To go at one’s own charges, or upon one’s own responsibility, would disqualify anyone from the use of these titles. Angels are messengers, and as such must be sent on their errand: “Are they not all ministering spirits, *sent forth* to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation” (Heb. i. 14).

When we read concerning John the Baptist: “Behold, I *send My messenger* before Thy face” (Matt. xi. 10), we not only have the word “send”, but in the word “messenger” we also have the word “angel”, for the Greek word is *aggelos*.

The very idea of the word “apostle” is that of a sent one, for *apostello* is translated “to send” scores of times. For example:--

“How shall they preach except they be *sent*?” (Rom. x. 15).

“Christ *sent* me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel” (I Cor. i. 17).

The same holds good of the word “ambassador”. An ambassador who did not represent a person or power who sent him is a contradiction in terms:--

“Now then we are *ambassadors* for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us” (II Cor. v. 20).

“He sendeth an *ambassage*, and desireth conditions of peace” (Luke xiv. 32).

Secondly, ambassadors, apostles and angels *deliver the message given to them*.—This most obvious fact is not, alas, so patent when we begin to take stock of our own service or that of others. The apostle said to the Corinthians:--

“I *delivered* unto you first of all that which I also *received*” (I Cor. xv. 3).

The close association of being “sent” and being told what to “say” is exemplified in the commission of Isaiah:--

“Whom shall I *send*, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I: *send* me. And He said, Go and tell” (Isa. vi. 8, 9).

Lastly (and this note we hope to strike again and again for our encouragement and for an example) these special features of service are found in all their fullness in the Son of God Himself. Neither Peter nor Paul can claim the title, “The Chief Apostle”, for this belongs to the Lord: “Consider the *Apostle* and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus” (Heb. iii. 1). He was pre-eminently the Sent One, and, as such, He delivered the message entrusted to Him:--

“My doctrines is not Mine, but His that *sent* Me” (John vii. 16).

“I have not spoken of Myself; but the Father which *sent* Me, He gave Me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak” (John xii. 49).

If Paul, in his conception of what a true ambassador should be, could say, “as though God did beseech you by us”, how much more could this be said of Christ!

“No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him” (John i. 18).

“He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father” (John xiv. 9).

Further, the prophet Malachi refers to Christ under the symbol of an angel, saying:--

“The Lord Whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple, even the *messenger* (angel) of the covenant” (Mal. iii. 1).

Let us learn from these symbols of true service what is essential in our own, so that, however lowly our *ambassage* may be, or however limited the sphere of our ministry, we shall at least have the comfort and the encouragement of knowing that we have been “sent”, and that He has said, “Go tell”. Jeremiah knew this double aspect of service, and with the Lord’s words to him on the day when he was commissioned, we will end this article:--

“Thou shalt go to all that I shall SEND thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt SPEAK” (Jer. i. 7).

**#5. Symbols of Service:
Bondservant, builder and burden-bearer.
pp. 161 - 163**

The glorious doctrine of liberty which is characteristic of the ministry of the apostle Paul must ever be ours to maintain against all odds. It is interesting, however, to notice that, while this liberty is sounded out with clarion notes in the epistle to the Galatians, at the close of the epistle the apostle shows that he, the champion of freedom, who stood alone before the Council at Jerusalem against those who would bring the believer into bondage, was at heart the bondslave of Jesus Christ: "I bear in my body the marks (*stigmata*, brand marks of a slave) of the Lord Jesus" (Gal. vi. 17). Again, in Gal. v. 13: "For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another." Redemption, which sets us free, binds us for ever to the Lord: "Ye are not your own. For ye are bought with a price" (I Cor. vi. 19, 20).

The reader should remember that in the following passages the word "servant" in the A.V. is the translation of *doulos*, meaning, literally, "a slave":--

- "Paul, a *servant* of Jesus Christ" (Rom. i. 1).
- "Ourselves your *servants* for Jesus' sake" (II Cor. iv. 5).
- "If I pleased men, I should not be the *servant* of Christ" (Gal. i. 10).
- "He took upon Him the form of a *servant*" (Phil. ii. 7).
- "The *servant* of the Lord must not strive" (II Tim. ii. 24).

Peter, James and Jude, equally with Paul, rejoice to call themselves "the bondslaves of Jesus Christ" (James i. 1; II Pet. i. 1; Jude 1). In the following passages in the A.V. the word translated "to serve" is, in the original, *douleuo*, "to serve as a slave":--

- "That we should *serve* in newness of spirit" (Rom. vii. 6).
- "Fervent in spirit; *serving* the Lord" (Rom. xii. 11).
- "Use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love *serve* one another" (Gal. v. 13).
- "Ye turned to God from idols to *serve* the living and true God" (I Thess. i. 9).

The first occurrence of *doulos* in the N.T. is in Matt. viii. 9, and the words of the centurion give us a good idea of what the service of the Lord's bondmen involves:--

"For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me; and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my *servant*, Do this, and he doeth it."

The words of Mary might well be the motto for all who would serve thus: "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it."

The second symbol of service that we are to consider is that of the builder. We propose to divide the subject into three sections: the foundation, the building and the materials.

(1) *The foundation.*—Every building needs a foundation. A house “founded upon a rock” stands; “built upon the sand”, it falls (Matt. vii. 25-27). The foundation for all spiritual building must be Christ:--

“For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ” (I Cor. iii. 11).

All service subsequent to the initial service of the apostle Paul, is related to his work, as the work of the builder is to that of the architect. “As a wise architect (“master builder”: Greek, *architekton*), I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon” (I Cor. iii. 10). No service that we can render can be acceptable unless we build upon the one foundation laid by God’s architect, which foundation is Christ Himself.

(2) *The building.*—Our chief concern is in the building; God Himself has secured the foundation. If we are to serve acceptably, not only must we build upon God’s foundation, but we must see that what we build is God’s building, for any other erection there is unwarranted:--

“For we are labourers together with God: ye are God’s husbandry, ye are God’s building” (I Cor. iii. 9).

How much service is rendered useless by the one fact that what is being built is not “God’s building”. Each reader who reads these words of God, should review the work he has in hand, and ask himself whether or not his energies are engaged in “God’s building”. This enquiry must not be limited to social and philanthropic service, for the highest service, even the preaching of His Word, may fail in relation to “God’s building”, as did that of those who preached Christ “even of envy and strife” (Phil. i. 15).

(3) *The materials.*—In any building scheme, quite apart from spiritual things, the material used is of great importance—as can be seen by inspecting the architect’s specifications for a large building. Supposing that we *are* building upon the true foundation, and that we *are* occupied with God’s building, all will be in vain if our materials is not according to specification. It is evident from I Cor. iii. that the building material represents the builder’s “work” and that it is to be tried by fire:--

“Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man’s work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is” (I Cor. iii. 12, 13).

Enough has been said, we trust, under this head, to throw some light upon service viewed as building. We now close with a reference to the third subdivision:--

Burden-bearing.

“Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ” (Gal. vi. 2).

“We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves” (Rom. xv. 1).

“Support the weak, be patient to all men” (I Thess. v. 14).

The first thought is that of burden-sharing. Gal. vi. 2 does not exhort that the strong should bear the burdens of the weak, but that each should bear the other’s burdens. How far do we respond to this? Perhaps our own burdens would be lightened if we thought more of the burdens of others. A person may feel unwell and very sorry for himself, but an accident to another, happening in his presence and demanding immediate help, will usually enable him to forget his own troubles in the endeavour to share others which are greater.

Some burdens are referred to as “infirmities” of the “weak”, and, with regard to these, those who are “strong” must remember that their strength is not for selfish ends but for the common good.

Finally, burden-bearing must be accompanied by patience, and must be devoid of self-pleasing; otherwise the service rendered will lose its spiritual value.

Ambassador, Apostle, Angel, Bondservant, Builder, Burden-bearer.—These constitute the Christian’s “A B C” of service. When they have been learned, we shall be able to make further advance.

#6. Symbols of Service.

A calling, a cleansing and a committing.

pp. 216 - 218

We have seen that none can truly serve who have not been *sent*, and that none can truly build unless occupied with *God’s building*. We are now to learn the related truth that no man takes office of himself:--

“And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not Himself to be made an High Priest” (Heb. v. 4, 5).

The servant of the Lord says, “Here am I, send me”, but never, “Here am I, I’m going”.

The first symbol of service, then, is *calling*, and the apostle, whose office has already been before us as that of a “sent one”, is also a symbol of true service in that he is likewise a “called one”. “Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle” (Rom. i. 1). Strictly speaking the words read, “a called apostle”. In Rom. i. 5, Paul

speaks of “*grace* and apostleship”, and in Gal. i. 15, again speaking of his office, he says:--

“But when it pleased God, Who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by His *grace*.”

The call to service is “by *grace*”, for there is no more room for merit here than in our salvation.

The word “calling”, in Scripture, denotes occupation, employment, or profession, and is therefore identical in meaning with present-day usage:--

“Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called” (I Cor. vii. 20).

Let us remember that our service is a calling: that we cannot serve without divine appointment, and that it is far better to serve in a lowly capacity, and please God, than to grieve the Holy Spirit of God by selfchoosing, remembering, together with our opening text, Hebrews v. 4, 5, that “Even Christ pleased not Himself” (Rom. xv. 3).

Let us now give attention to the second symbol of service, namely, *cleanliness*, that those who are called to serve the Lord are called to be clean:--

“Be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord” (Isa. liii. 11).

We naturally turn to the great symbolic teaching of the tabernacle for illustration of this important qualification. Lev. xxii. sets forth the necessity for the priests of Israel to be clean:--

“Say unto them, Whosoever he be of all your seed among your generations, that goeth unto the holy things, which the children of Israel hallow unto the Lord, having his uncleanness upon him, that soul shall be cut off from My presence: I am the Lord” (Lev. xxii. 3).

The whole chapter should be read and the several items re-interpreted in the light of spiritual realities. One passage that puts the same truth in New Testament terms in II Tim. ii. 20, 21:--

“But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master’s use, and prepared unto every good work.”

Fellowship among saints is not based upon knowledge, or even upon agreement as to interpretation of Scripture. It is based upon the fact that all are saved by *grace*, that all are in Christ, and that all are built upon the one foundation. Some, however, would extend this to form a ground for fellowship in ministry. This is quite a different matter. Such must “purge themselves from these”.

We are apt to limit the cause of uncleanness of the servants of the Lord to contact with others, but there is at least one aspect where uncleanness arises from the servant himself. In the verse we quote the word “pure” is often translated “clean”, and it has that meaning here:--

“Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men, for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God” (Acts xx. 26, 27).

It is evident by the presence of the word “for” that any teacher who does withhold truth from those under his charge is not clean in the sight of God.

The symbol of this phase of service is a watchman, as set forth in Ezek. xxxiii. 1-6, where it is enunciated that if a watchman give not warning and any die by the sword, “His blood will I require at the watchman’s hand”.

The third symbol of service in this group is *committal*. Let us note how the apostle speaks of this to Timothy in his two epistles:--

“The glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust” (I Tim. i. 11).

“O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust” (I Tim. vi. 20).

“I know Whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which was committed unto Him against that day That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us” (II Tim. i. 12-14).

“The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also” (II Tim. ii. 2).

Something has been committed to our trust. This we must guard as life itself. Nothing, however attractive, however apparently good or useful, can ever warrant the slightest departure from faithful stewardship.

All true service necessitates a *call*, demands *cleanness*, and is a glorious *committal*.

“When the commandment came”

(Being a series of articles based upon the testimony of readers as to the particular passage of Scripture that was used to enlighten them as to the unique character of the Dispensation of the Mystery).

#1. Matthew xiii. and deliverance from tradition. pp. 201 - 204

In *The Berean Expositor* for April, 1933, the following note appeared:--

“THE EDITOR TO HIS FRIENDS.

In conversation with several of our readers, we have been interested to learn of the various passages of Scripture that have been used to enlighten and bring about conviction as to the truth of the Dispensation of the Mystery. We believe it would form the basis of a useful series of articles, if we knew what ‘commandment came’ (Rom. vii. 9) to our readers in this connection.

May we ask all who can, to let us have a note stating simply what passage of Scripture was thus used. We need hardly say that all communications on the subject will be treated in confidence, and in any subsequent use of the information no clue will be given as to the identity of the writer.

We believe that personal testimony is often of weight where studied argument fails, and we hope that the series contemplated may assist to fill out our witness.”

A number of readers have replied, answering our question and giving information concerning the particular passage that was used of God to open their eyes to the truth of the mystery.

While using the information given, we shall respect the anonymity of each writer, and trust that nothing we say in comment will do other than magnify the grace of God, lead some hesitating reader to a reconsideration of the testimony of the Lord’s prisoner, and so be instrumental in leading the redeemed of the Lord on to the heights of grace as revealed in this present dispensation.

We select for our opening article the case of one who by the exposition given of Matt. xiii. had prejudice removed, found tradition untrustworthy, was made willing to “search and see”, and so was led to full acceptance of the truth.

Matt. xiii. contains not one single word that refers to the church of this present dispensation. It deals with the new phase of kingdom purposes that necessarily followed the non-repentance of Israel (Matt. xi. 20-24) and the rejection of the Lord in His three great offices (Matt. xii. 6, 41, 42). Matt. xiii. gives us “The mysteries of the kingdom of heaven”, and it is a distortion of truth to attempt to make that clearly defined kingdom cover either the real or the professing church. Tradition has great hold upon Matt. xiii. Not only does it attempt to fit into it the history of Christendom during the past 1,900 years, but it degrades the gospel of the grace of God by attempting to illustrate its

glories by such symbols of evil as “leaven”, or it frustrates the apostle’s insistence upon grace without works, by misusing the parable of the “pearl” as of a seeking sinner, who has to “sell all he has” to purchase a free salvation!

The recognition of these features had their cumulative effect, but the item above all else that broke the shackles of tradition was the fact that expositors actually omitted one parable. Book after book, and quotation after quotation can be read where “The seven Parables of Matt. xiii.” are spoken of with complete assurance.

Some few years before *The Berean Expositor* was issued a spiritual crisis in the life of the Editor made him declare that from henceforth he would accept no man’s statement—however learned or however good—but would bring every interpretation, translation or structure, whatever it might be, to the touchstone of the Word. The reader will consequently understand why this magazine was called “The *Berean Expositor*”.

The need having arisen for an exposition of Matt. xiii., the present writer remembers some 27 years ago taking a sheet of paper and writing the heading: “The seven Parables of Matt. xiii.” After commencing an examination of the chapter, it occurred to him that he was allowing to pass unquestioned the number “seven”, and though it appeared foolish, he nevertheless thought it would be good to see for himself. The result was so illuminating, and the blow to traditional teaching palpable, that not only did it prove the commandment that “came” to the one upon whose convictions we are now commencing, but it settled for ever the policy of the Editor as to all subsequent investigations.

Instead of seven parables, Matt. xiii. contains eight. These are arranged in perfect symmetry, and form the only true basis for their exposition. Whoever has once seen this perfect correspondence realizes that no amount of erudition or ability will ever compensate for its omission. As some of our readers may not possess Volume II/III (which, however, is obtainable from the Secretary), we set out afresh the structure of the parables of Matt. xiii., so that all may see for themselves that this disposition of subject-matter and this enumeration of the parables is true:--

The eight parables of Matthew xiii.

A		1-9.	The SOWER. The sowing of the seed into four kinds of ground.	--\	
			They (Israel) did <i>not</i> understand.	\	The first four parables
B		24-30.	The TARES. Good and bad together. Separated at the harvest (the end of the age); the bad are cast into a furnace of fire, there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.	\ } /	spoken outside the house to great multitudes.
C		31, 32.	The MUSTARD TREE. One Tree.	/	
D		33.	The LEAVEN. Hid in three measures of meal.	--/	
D		44.	The TREASURE. Hid in a field.	--\	
C		45, 46.	GOODLY PEARLS. One pearl.	\	
B		47-50.	The DRAG NET. Good and bad together. Separated at the end of the age; the bad are cast into a furnace of fire, there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.	\ } /	The last four parables spoken inside the house
			They (disciples) <i>did</i> understand.	/	to the disciples.
A		51, 52.	The SCRIBE. The treasure opened to those in the house.	/	
				--/	

[NOTE.—Appendix 145 of *The Companion Bible* was our contribution at the request of the Editor of that wonderful work.]

It is not our purpose to give an exposition of these parables. We content ourselves here with their place in the testimony. One positive feature that gave added weight to this interpretation of the parables, however, must be included.

We observed that not until the Lord was evidently rejected (Matt. xi., xii.) did the word “mystery” appear upon the pages of Scripture, and that it is coupled with a very solemn quotation from Isa. vi. 10. An examination of the Acts of the Apostles shows that as Israel in the *land* rejected their Messiah, so did Israel of the *dispersion*, and therefore Acts xxviii. stands to the wider testimony as Matt. xiii. does to the people of the land. In Acts xxviii. Israel fail, and evidential miracles cease. This failure is anticipated in Matt. xi. 20-24 and xiii. 58. There (Acts xxviii.) as in Matt. xiii., Isa. vi. 10 is solemnly quoted, and immediately after the rejection of Israel which then took place “mystery” again follows, this time, not the mystery of the kingdom of heaven, but the dispensation of the mystery as made known to Paul, the Lord’s prisoner.

We gather from this testimony, that one of the greatest hindrances to the full acceptance of the truth is the blinding power of tradition, that confuses kingdom with church, and does not recognize the true place of the gospel of the kingdom in the purpose of the ages. We commend this testimony to all who seek to know “what is the dispensation of the mystery” (Eph. iii. 9, R.V.).

#2. Ephesians i. 1 and the breaking of prejudice. pp. 221 - 222

In our opening article we gave the testimony of one who was delivered from the bondage of tradition and so made ready to receive the truth.

Those who subscribe to traditional views are often very godly and well-meaning people, and fear that unless drastic action is taken, they will not be able to prevent some of their friends from being “led astray”. This is of course commendable in its spirit, even though it confuses light with darkness, but many times, however, this zeal for traditional teaching leads to incorrect statements and misrepresentation. It is necessary to our witness that we stress the importance of giving heed to the four *prison epistles*—Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and II Timothy, but we have never forgotten that the letter to Philemon is also a prison epistle, although obviously it does not occupy the fundamental place that these four do.

This omission has been seized upon by a critic, but we have felt it to be too trivial to merit an explanation. Our emphasis upon the four prison epistles was taken up by those who oppose our teaching, and the warning was sounded: “*This man will rob you of your Bible, his consists of four epistles only.*”

This was the line of argument used in an endeavour to persuade the reader whose testimony we now give. Instead, however, of being deterred by the denunciation, this believer felt it was at least scriptural to let the Editor speak for himself, and a meeting was attended despite all warnings. The presence of this reader was unknown to the Editor at the time, and the subject dealt with was the epistle to the Ephesians, one of the four books that supposedly constituted the speaker’s “Bible”. The particular passage under consideration was Eph. i. 1, and the special feature of that verse was the word “faithful”. Almost—as if in answer to the questioning that was going on in the hearer’s mind (and who will deny that the Lord does intervene in His own time and way?)—the speaker turned from the peculiar testimony of the four prison epistles and, lifting up his Bible, declared that though it was maintained that in these four epistles alone could be discovered the revelation of *the mystery*, nevertheless believers in the mystery, as all other saints, needed the whole of the Scriptures from Genesis to Revelation in order that they might understand their own peculiar calling and sphere, and further, that the initial salvation and justification all must possess must be theirs also.

The stress upon the necessity for all Scripture, together with the presentation of the meaning and purpose of the word “faithful”, was the commandment that “came”. Entrance into the high glories of the mystery was perceived to be by “faith”, just as salvation, peace, and any other blessings made known in the Word. Subsequently the warning that such teachers had no room for the rest of the Bible was found to be not only foolish but really a slander, for Eph. i. 4 demanded a close understanding of Gen. i. 2,

and Eph. i. 7 demanded for its elucidation every type in the ceremonial law, together with the witness of the four Gospels, the Acts, and all the other Epistles.

It is not for us to argue about the elective purposes of God, but to remember that “faith” is as closely related to our appreciation of the teaching of Ephesians (i. 13, 15; ii. 8; iii. 17; iv. 5, 13; vi. 16) as it is with our justification or acceptance of the gift of life. While we preach and teach “the mystery”, it is untrue or suggest that we “make a mystery of it”. We seek by exposition, by exhortation, by printed page, and by spoken word to “make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery” (Eph. iii. 9, R.V.).

We hope this series of simple testimonies will be honoured by the Lord and used to remove prejudices, to illuminate darkness, and bring light and blessing to many of our readers. Not only so, but we trust that our readers will find them of service when seeking to minister these precious doctrines to others. We cannot say which the Lord may use, either “this or that”, so we publish, in faith, what has been sent, and leave the choice with Him.

“With all thy getting, get understanding” (Prov. iv. 7).

#6. Definition.

pp. 38 - 40

One of the most fruitful causes of fallacy and false reasoning is lack of definition, or the use of faulty definition. “Gentlemen, define your terms”, is a wise saying that bears repetition.

Much of the criticism of the teaching for which *The Berean Expositor* stands is so much wasted effort because of this very thing. Our critic, either through a disregard of our definitions, or the intrusion of their own into their criticism of our ministry, often beat the air. With us the terms “mystery”, “dispensation of the mystery”, “The prison ministry of Paul”, “Acts xxviii.”, “Pentecost”, “hope and prize”, “new covenant”, “kingdom truth”, and “dispensational truth”, have all received definition, and are used in our writings with, we believe, precision. If this be ignored our critics must not be displeased if their remarks appear to fall upon deaf ears.

A definition signifies the laying down of a boundary, and is used in logic to signify an expression which explains any term in such a manner as to *separate* it from everything else. It will, therefore, be fitting if the article on Classification is followed by one on Definition. Definitions are *nominal*, when they establish the meaning of the word, or *real* when they establish the nature of a thing. A good definition states what are regarded as the “constituent parts of the essence”, and must contain “the constituent characteristics of the concept” (a concept being the general notion or idea representative of a whole class of things, as man).

Such a definition must be clearly and grammatically expressed in unambiguous terms, and must be universally true of the defined class. It must, moreover, be reciprocal, as, for example, “A parallelogram is a four sided figure with parallel sides”. So, in Eph. i. 22, 23, following the Greek, we read: “and gave Him Head over all things to the church, which is the body of Him.” The definition “The church is the body” is in nowise impaired if reversed—“The body is the church”.

If the definition be a good one the subject and the predicate must be reversible without prejudice to the sense. Several rules have been laid down for the framing of a definition:-

- (1) The definition must be adequate; i.e., neither too extensive nor too narrow for the thing defined; e.g., to define a ‘fish’ as ‘an animal that lives in water’, would be too *extensive*, because many insects, etc., live in water. To define a fish as ‘an animal that has an air-bladder’, would be too *narrow*, because many fish are without any.”
- (2) The definition must be in itself plainer than the thing defined. This rule includes the style in which the definition is framed as well as its truthfulness. Figurative expressions should be avoided, too great brevity may obscure, just as prolixity may confuse. Tautology is a fault to be shunned. Thus to define a parallelogram as ‘A four-sided figure whose opposite sides are parallel *and equal*’, would be tautological

. . . . the insertion of the words 'and equal' leaves, and indeed leads, a reader to suppose that there may be a four-sided figure whose opposite sides are parallel and *not equal*. Much is often inferred in this manner which was by no means in the Author's mind; thus, he who says that it is a crime for people to violate the property of a *humane* landlord who *lives among them*, may perhaps not imply that it is no crime to violate the property of an absentee landlord, or of one who is not humane; but he leaves an opening for being so understood.

Many attempts at definition fail because they do not name the *genus*. It is no definition to say, "So and so is a *thing* which", etc., or "So and is *when*", etc. "A thing" and "when" do not state the *genus* and lead to nowhere. At school most of us learned that "a noun is the name of anything", but this definition fails to give the *genus*, for it does not make clear that a noun is a word. How should we define the word "rock"? "A rock is anything which forms part of the earth's crust" fails because it does not name the *genus*. But "A rock is a material substance which forms part of the earth's crust" would be a correct definition.

The first rule of definition is:--

"A definition should not contain more than the connotation of the term in question" (*Venn*).

Suppose I were to define a student as "A human being residing in an educational institution, and devoted to the pursuit of knowledge", I should violate this rule. The undue limitation of the class by the quality "residing in an educational institute" makes the definition worthless.

A further rule is:--

"A definition should not contain less than the full connotation" (*Venn*).

The following is an example of failure to observe this rule: "A map is a representation of some part of the universe." This definition fails in two respects: it lacks the word *pictorial* and unnecessarily includes too much, namely, "the universe":--

"This is perhaps the commonest fault of any, as we are apt to feel satisfied if our definition covers the case we have in our immediate view, and to omit to examine whether it does not also admit something else of which we were not at the moment thinking" (*Venn*).

"A definition must not contain the name defined", says *Jevons*, for by subjecting a term to definition we assume that it is not thoroughly understood, and the repetition of the unknown term cannot, therefore, make it known.

The following are examples of definitions faulty in this respect:--

A noun is the name of anything.
Life is the sum of vital functions.

The fact “noun” and “name”, “life” and “vital” are essentially identical is sufficient to render the definitions valueless:--

“A definition must not be negative where it can be affirmative” (*Jevons*).

The importance of all this to the student of Scripture, the teacher and preacher, requires, we trust, no further emphasis. Before any article of our faith can be clearly believed by ourselves, or made known to others, it must be thrown into the form of a proposition that either affirms or denies some attribute of the subject. How can we affirm or deny if we use our terms loosely? What an incentive, therefore, to go to the Scriptures and seek true definitions that shall be neither too wide or too narrow; that shall be reciprocal, grammatical and unambiguous. Surely every reader will feel a desire to be able thus to complete the following affirmations: God is Faith is Sin is Justification is Sanctification is, etc. To do so is to have taken a great step toward that understanding which Scripture itself places so highly.

#7. Propositions. **pp. 88 - 90**

We have now run over the chief elements that go to compose a proposition. Logic, strictly speaking, is occupied with proof, not assertion, but in these articles we are free to consider any and all aspects of the question as to what constitutes a valid argument. Many a time the error does not lie in the mode of reasoning, but in the proposition itself and, therefore, before proceeding to give some idea of the syllogism, and its use in arriving at a “proof”, we will bring together in this article one or two somewhat axiomatic notes concerning assertions or propositions.

An assertion has reference to facts contained in a proposition. A proof discriminates between true and false propositions. Assertion, moreover, cannot be separated from the kindred study of the meaning of words, definitions, and the like:--

“Every proposition asserts that some given subject does or does not possess some attribute, or that some attribute is or is not (either in all, or in some portion, of the subject in which it is met with) conjoined with some other attribute.”

Let us now review the four different kinds of propositions. The first form is called the “contrary”. Its formula is one of the following. Either “All A is B” or “No A is B”. It is obvious that the two propositions cannot both be true, and we therefore would do well to remember the axiom.

Contrary propositions may both be false. They cannot both be true. While the first item, “contrary propositions may be false”, is obvious, it is necessary to be on one’s guard, for a false reasoning sometimes assumes that while contrary propositions

may both be false, *one must be true*. This, however, is a snare. Simply to deny that “All A is B” does not, of necessity, admit that “No A is B”.

Contrary propositions differ in quantity, quality, or both, and the truth or falsity of any proposition depends on the subject-matter of the proposition.

Subject-matter may be (1) Necessary, or (2) Contingent. For example, *Whately* gives the following illustration:--

- (1) NECESSARY MATTER.—“ ‘All islands are surrounded by water’. This must be so, because the matter is *necessary*. To say ‘No islands are surrounded by water’ or ‘Some islands are not surrounded by water’ is *manifestly* false.”
- (2) CONTINGENT MATTER.—“ ‘Some islands are fertile’: ‘Some are not fertile’. These assertions are both true because the matter is contingent. If we use ‘All’ or ‘No’ with contingent matter our propositions will be false. It is necessarily true that all islands are surrounded by water; it is not necessarily true that all islands are fertile, barren, sandy, rocky, etc., etc.”

We trust the reader will not lightly set these things aside: to keep these principles well before the mind will save from many snares. We arrive, therefore, at the following:--

All affirmatives, *in necessary matter*, are true, and negatives false.
All universals, *in contingent matter*, are false, and particulars are true.
“All” and “No”, in contingent matter, render the proposition false. Many erroneous doctrines will be found under this heading.

The second form of proposition is called the “Sub contrary”. In this case, both positive and negative may be true: they cannot, however, both be false. We must therefore learn to distinguish these “sub contraries” from the ordinary contraries. The formula for this proposition is “Some A is B”. “Some A is not B.” It is self-evident that if some A is B then some A is not B. In Col. i. we learn that principalities and powers are among those which have been reconciled by the cross. In Col. ii. we learn that principalities and powers were among those that were spoiled and stripped off by the cross. To use “all” in either of these cases will be evidently untrue. We must say:--

“Some principalities and powers were reconciled to God by the cross, and Some principalities and powers were not reconciled to God by the cross.”

If the reader will consult the writings of those who advocate *universal reconciliation*, he will discover great prominence given to the passage that occurs in Col. i., but great reticence over the passage that occurs in Col. ii.

We now come to what is called the “Contradictories”. The formulæ are as follows: “All A is B”; “Some A is not B”, and “No A is B”; “Some A is B.”

The rule to remember is that of two contradictory propositions, one must be true and the other false. If it is true that “all men are sinners”, then it is false to assert that “some men are not sinners”. If it be true to assert that “No men are righteous”, then it is false to affirm that “Some men are righteous”. If, therefore, we discover that the Scriptures in

one place say “There is none righteous”, and in another place speak of a man as “righteous”, we are immediately aware that the word is being used in two different senses. Our proposition therefore needs amending, so as to read:--

No men are righteous by nature.
Some men are righteous through grace.

The fourth kind of proposition is called the “sub-alternate”. The formulæ for this are: “All A is B”; “Some A is B”, and “No A is B”; “Some A is not B.”

It stands to reason that if “all men are sinners”, then “some men are sinners”. There can be no “exceptions”.

Of two sub-alternate propositions, the truth of the universal (“all”) proves the truth of the particular (“some”), but the truth of the particular (“some”) does not necessarily imply the truth of the universal (“all”). This is a most important reservation, and one that is often forgotten. Because Christ has redeemed some men, it does not necessarily follow that He has redeemed all: that still remains to be proved on other grounds.

In conclusion, let the reader ponder the following statements:--

“Logic is the entire theory of the ascertainment of reasoned or inferred truth.”
“Inconceivability is no criterion of impossibility.”

How many put forward as a valid argument such statements as: “It is not conceivable that a God of love should” This is not an argument. It has no valid premises, and appeals merely to sentiment, bias or sectarianism. Again, do not be misled by such a statement as the following: “An assertion is either true or false”, for some propositions are called “unmeaning” because they do not use terms in an intelligent sense. What is true is:--

“A proposition must be either true or false, provided the predicate be one which can be in an intelligent sense an attribute of the subject.”

It is because this is so, that we have devoted so much space and time to the elements that go to make up the proposition, and seeing that we, as students of the Word, find our material in the inspired words of Scripture, what a need there is, before we begin to reason or argue, to be as sure as possible that the terms we use are fit representations of the truth as given by God.

#8. The Syllogism. pp. 129 - 133

“There are three operations of the mind which are immediately concerned in Argument; which are called by logical writers: 1st Simple Apprehension; 2nd Judgment; 3rd Discourse or Reasoning” (*Whately*).

Simple Apprehension refers to that act of the mind which receives a notion of an object. Such apprehension may be Incomplex, as of “a book”, or “a shelf”, or Complex, as of “a book on a shelf”.

Judgment compares together two notions, and pronounces whether they agree or disagree. Judgment either affirms or denies.

Reasoning or Inference proceeds from certain judgments to others founded upon them. If the process of reasoning be from particulars to generals it is called “Induction”. If from generals to particulars it is called “Ratiocination”.

Modern Science is largely inductive. The scientist observes some phenomenon. He gathers data, examples and parallels, until he arrives at a general principle. Such a general principle becomes one of the so-called “laws of nature”. The “laws” may or may not be true. There can of necessity be no finality about the process by which they are obtained, and at any moment some added discovery may upset the whole preceding calculation.

We do not, in our study of Scripture, use the inductive process so much as the deductive. We start with revealed truth, and descend from the general to the particular. The Scripture does not set out to prove the existence of God by induction. It says: “He that cometh unto God must believe that He is” (Heb. xi. 6).

The syllogistic form of argument is one that can be used successfully by the student of Scripture, and we propose to give this form an examination. The Greek word *sullogizomai* that gives us the word “syllogism” is found in Luke xx. 5, 6:--

“And they *reasoned* with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; He will say, Why then believed ye Him not? But and if we say, Of men; all the people will stone us: for they be persuaded that John was a prophet.”

Every argument consists of two parts: that which is proved, and the means whereby it is proved. If the conclusion be stated last, which is the strict logical form, then the means used are called the *premises*, and the conclusion is introduced by the word “therefore”.

Every syllogism has three and only three terms.

The conclusion is called the *minor term*; the predicate, the *major term*; and that with which each is separately compared, in order to judge whether each agrees or not, the *middle term*.

Every syllogism has three, and only three, propositions.

The first proposition is the major premise, in which the major term is compared with the middle term; *the second proposition* is the minor premise, in which the minor is compared, again with the middle term. And in *the third proposition*, the minor term is compared with the major. An example will perhaps make the syllogistic form of reasoning clearer:--

Light is contrary to darkness.
Sunshine is light; therefore
Sunshine is contrary to darkness.

We have chosen this particular illustration because we desire to point out one or two possible pitfalls in argument:--

The ambiguous middle term.

Light is contrary to darkness.
Feathers are light; therefore
Feathers are contrary to darkness.

The inaccuracy arises out of the fact that the word "light" has two meanings; and shows most forcefully the necessity for a definition of terms before an argument is begun.

The undistributed middle term.

White is a colour;
Black is a colour; therefore
Black is white.

Here the use of the word "colour" is misleading.

The illicit process of the major.

All quadrupeds are animals;
A bird is not a quadruped; therefore
It is not an animal.

This is a case of the illicit process of the major term, and the inaccuracy arises from the employment of the *whole* of the term "animal" in the conclusion, when only *a part* of it has been employed in the premises. "No term must be distributed in the conclusion which was not distributed in one of the premises."

From negative premises nothing can be inferred.

A fish is not a quadruped.
A bird is not a quadruped.

No further step can be taken.

If one premise be negative, the conclusion must be negative.

There are nineteen forms or figures in which syllogisms may appear, but all valid argument admits of being stated in the first of these figures with its four moods. As we are not writing for students of logic, but simply to help the student of Scripture, we shall not burden the reader with an explanation of these nineteen figures, but will deal only with the first of them.

The first mood is suited to the discovery or proof of the *properties* of a thing. Its construction is as follows:--

All B is C All Scripture is inspired (II Tim. iii. 16).
All A is B Paul's epistles are scripture (II Pet. iii. 16).
THEREFORE
All A is C Paul epistles are inspired.

The best illustration of this mood is three concentric circles, the largest being "C", the next "B" and the smallest, "A".

The second mood is suited to the discovery or proof of the *distinctions* that exist between things. Its construction is as follows:--

No B is C "The mystery" is not revealed in the O.T.
All A is B "Gentiles in heavenly places" is part of "the mystery".
THEREFORE
No A is C "Gentiles in heavenly places" is not revealed in the O.T.

Here we must imagine two concentric circles "B" and "A" with one separate circle "C" standing apart.

The third mood is suited to the discovery or proof of *instances and exceptions*. Its construction is as follows:--

All B is C The doctrine of redemption belongs to the whole Bible.
Some A is B Some of the teaching of the mystery is the doctrine of redemption.
THEREFORE
Some A is C Some of the teaching of the mystery will be found in the whole Bible.

It will be seen that this form of argument is adapted to exceptions. As a revelation, the mystery does not form a part of all Scripture, but belongs to the prison ministry of Paul. There is need, however, to distinguish between the doctrinal basis which it shares in

common with other callings, and that dispensational super-structure that constitutes its distinctive feature.

The fourth mood is suited to the discovery or proof of *the exclusion of different species of a genus*. Its construction is as follows:--

No B is C	No covenants are found in the mystery.
Some A is B	Some scriptural blessings are new covenant blessings.
	THEREFORE
Some A is not C . . .	Some scriptural blessings are not found in the mystery.

These four forms constitute the four moods of the first figure of the syllogism, and, as all propositions may be reduced to one or other of these forms, we shall not pursue the matter further. "If an argument can be analyzed into these forms, and you admit its propositions, you are bound in consistency to admit the conclusion" (*Minto*).

The axiom of the syllogism has been expressed in many ways; perhaps the easiest is the following: "What is said of a whole is, said of every one of its parts." If you admit that a leaf is in a book, and that the same book is in your pocket, you admit that the leaf must be in your pocket also.

We can quite understand that the foregoing pages may prove very unattractive to some of our readers. We can only treat our subject by stating the facts and giving examples; and this we have done with as few technical terms as possible. It would make the matter clearer to the reader if he would himself compose a few examples of each of the four moods here given, if possible visualizing them in diagram form, using concentric, separate and interlocking circles. We now leave the syllogism for other features that we trust will prove of service in the quest of "understanding".

#9. The fallacy.
An example of fallacious reasoning.
pp. 175 - 178

Before embarking upon any classification of fallacies, we would seek to interest the reader and prepare the way by considering one or two examples of fallacious arguments that bear upon the teaching of Scripture and touch upon subjects of great interest to all who in any measure endorse the teaching of *The Berean Expositor*.

We therefore draw attention to the "unsound mode of arguing, which appears to demand our conviction, and to be decisive of the question in hand, when in fairness it is not", that is found in a pamphlet entitled: *Is Conditional Immortality True?* (by *F. W. Pitt*).

The pamphlet opens with an attempt to prejudice the reader against the doctrine of Conditional Immortality, by associating it with Evolution:--

“It is a remarkable fact that with the advancement of the Darwinian Theory of Evolution the doctrine of annihilation became popular.”

No attempt is made to justify this association; it is left to work upon the sensitiveness of the believer. A further appeal to prejudice is the substitution without comment or explanation of the word “annihilation” for “conditional immortality”.

The next paragraph reads:--

“When belief in the fall of man was widely abandoned and a more or less materialistic view of his nature was adopted, a restatement of the doctrine of eternal punishment followed as a matter of course.”

Again, this creates a prejudice and would lead the uninstructed to imagine that the doctrine of Conditional Immortality denies the fall of man, an inference which would be completely false.

Again, the author writes:--

“It would be difficult to find a pamphlet written by opponents of eternal punishment which does not prejudice its argument by the suggestion that it is inconceivable that a loving, heavenly Father will punish His children with endless torment.”

We can at least find one pamphlet that makes no such appeal—our own pamphlet entitled: *Hell, or Pure from the blood of all men*. Moreover, it is not the teaching on either side that a loving, heavenly Father punishes “His *children*”, either by destruction or by eternal torment. He punishes the *unsaved*.

Further, the author writes:--

“Without going to the Word of God, even for its terms, Conditionalists have decided that, since the Fall, man has in his nature no element which survives death.”

Anyone who is acquainted with the work of *Edward White*, *Canon Constable* and *J. R. Norrie*, to mention only three names, will know that the above statement is not true to the facts.

The appeal to prejudice continues throughout the pamphlet. “A hesitating support”; “Texts are bent to the theory”; “Figures are manipulated”. Such expressions as these appear in its pages without reference, proof or support.

Another phase of prejudice is illustrated by further statements on pages 5 and 6. *Mr. Pitt* writes:--

“It is impossible to believe the scriptural truth of the Atonement and the doctrine of Conditional Immortality at the same time.”

And the reasons given are as follows:--

“The Conditionalist must be wrong, because if Christ *did* substitutionally dies for sinners, He was annihilated.”

“When we argue that Christ must have been annihilated, if annihilation is the penalty of sin, the Conditionalist retorts that He must suffer endless torment, if that is what the unsaved is to endure.”

Mr. Pitt cannot see the perfect fairness of this retort; the argument that condemns the Conditionalist condemns him also, but prejudice prevents him from realizing it.

Throughout this pamphlet we find illustrations of another type of false argument, which is very common in controversy—the process of putting words and phrases into the mouth of one’s opponent and then condemning him. Advocates of Conditional Immortality quote the words, “The wages of sin is death”; *Mr. Pitt* puts into their mouths the words “annihilation”. If death were not followed by resurrection, then death would approximate to annihilation; but the latter term can rightly be used of the *second* death, for Conditionalists universally acknowledge the teaching of Scripture concerning a resurrection of both just and unjust.

Another weak point in the pamphlet is the way in which “authorities” are introduced. On page 6 we read:--

“*Montgomery* says in an exquisite concentration of truth, ‘It is not all of life to life; not all of death to die’.”

And on page 7:--

“The spirit returns to God Who gave it, not to be ‘merged in the ocean of eternal energy’ as *Spencer*, a high priest of materialism, says, but to some abode appointed by God.”

Strictly speaking, what was said by *Montgomery* or by *Spencer*, the high priest of materialism, is irrelevant; we are only concerned with “What saith the Scriptures?”

The following paragraph might almost serve as a classical example of the creation of prejudice in the writer’s favour:--

“ ‘Absent from the body’—‘Present with the Lord’. To make this passage fit their theory, Conditionalists say that ‘Present with the Lord’ means present with Him after the resurrection. The context, however, is quite clear in its reference to the disembodied state. Taken as it is written, it leaves no doubt that the only reason for its perversion is that it is fatal to the annihilation theory” (page 12).

On page 9, the writer, speaking of this same passage, refers to “the statement that absent from the body is to be present with the Lord”. After, therefore, misquoting the

passage twice, *Mr. Pitt* has the temerity to speak of taking it “as it is written”. Moreover, he appeals to the context, not by quoting it, but by assuming that it refers to “the disembodied state”. It will be found, however, that the context speaks of not desiring to be “unclothed”, but “clothed upon”, that “mortality might be swallowed up of life”. Surely this reference is not to “the disembodied state” (*see* I Cor. xv. 53, 54). The passage as it is written in II Cor. v. 8 is as follows:--

“We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.”

How, in face of the context, it “is quite clear in its reference to the disembodied state”, we are quite unable to understand.

Another example of prejudice is the following:--

“Christians who have a firm hold on the blessed hope of the Lord’s second advent will scarcely need to be warned that it is impossible to believe both in Conditional Immortality and the Rapture of the Saints.”

Mr. Pitt is difficult to follow; he commences with the Second Advent, but diverts immediately to the Rapture of the Saints, a different, though a related subject. That Conditionalism and belief in the Second Advent can go together is evident by the full title of the Mission that stands for Conditionalism in this country:--

“THE CONDITIONAL IMMORTALITY MISSION---INTERNATIONAL.
(FOR LIFE AND ADVENT TESTIMONY).”

“This mission was established to bear testimony by press and platform to (1) the plenary inspiration and integrity of Holy Scripture; (2) the full atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ; (3) life in Christ alone; that is, that life is not inherent in man, or in any part of him, but is the free gift of God, through Jesus Christ, to all believers, and (4) the pre-millennial personal advent of Christ to reign over restored Israel and all nations.”

While it is true that believers hold varying views as to what constitutes “a firm hold on the blessed hope of the Lord’s second advent”, and as to the “Rapture of the Saints”, it is clear that *Mr. Pitt’s* statement quoted above is contrary to the facts.

On page 15 comes the final instance of prejudice:--

“It must suffice in a pamphlet to establish from Scripture the undeniable fact that the spirit of man is conscious after his body has been laid in the grave.”

The reader whose critical caliber is such as to have been misled by the discussion of II Cor. v. 8 quoted above, will probably believe that *Mr. Pitt’s* pamphlet is really packed with overwhelming proofs. It contains not one; yet such is the mind of man, that reasoning like this can pass for truth.

We consider this pamphlet an example of what to guard against in controversial literature.

Words in Season.

#17. Simple gospel notes on John iii. 16.

(i.) The twofold basis.

pp. 97, 98

Two words will occupy our attention in this article. They are those with which John iii. 16 opens: *For God*. Taken together they bring before us the twofold authority for the good news called “the gospel”.

For.—The first word, “for”, takes us back to verse 14, and so to the inspiration and authority of the Old Testament:--

“And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up.”

A superficial view of Christianity might lead one to ask whether it really matters what views are held as to the nature and extent of the inspiration of the O.T. Scriptures, provided that the death and resurrection of Christ are faithfully preached. To this we would reply by quoting the Lord’s own words in the same Gospel:--

“Had ye believe Moses, ye would have believed Me: *for he wrote of Me*. But if ye believe not his writings, *how shall ye believe My words?*” (John v. 46, 47).

Here the matter is challenged by the Lord Himself, and a solemn responsibility rests upon every preacher of the gospel to face its issues. If Moses did not lift up the serpent in the wilderness, if the Book of Numbers is but a “pious fraud” belonging to a priestly caste, if the Saviour was mistaken concerning the Old Testament type, then we have no certainty, for the Lord may also have been mistaken concerning the reality. *The cross and its purpose* are at stake.

In the same way the gospel cannot be faithfully preached if the story of Jonah be denied, for the words of the Lord in Matt. xii. 39-41 show that a denial of the truth of the record of Jonah imperils the truth of the resurrection, and if the resurrection be touched, we have no gospel to preach (I Cor. xv. 14, 17). Or, again, if the record of the flood and of the days of Noah be repudiated as “myth”, what becomes of “the coming of the Son of man” (Matt. xxiv. 37-41)? Or, coming to the gospel as proclaimed by Paul, can the epistle to the Romans remain unshaken if the historical accuracy of Genesis concerning Adam and Abraham be denied?

Our first note, therefore, is that the truth of the gospel and the inspiration of the Scriptures are inseparable:--

“The word of the Lord endureth for ever. And THIS IS the word which by the gospel is preached unto you” (I Pet. i. 25).

God.—If the Word of God underlies the gospel, the God of the Word is its Author. The gospel is called “The gospel of God” (Rom. i. 1). It is “the power of God unto salvation” (Rom. i. 16). It is concerned with “the salvation of God” (Acts xxviii. 28). Its basis is “the righteousness of God” (Rom. i. 17). It issues in “the peace of God” (Phil. iv. 7), and its character is that of “the gospel of the grace of God” (Acts xx. 24).

No gospel that is authorized by the Scriptures originates from a Source lower than God Himself. The healing power was not in the serpent of brass, or in Moses who erected it, but in God: “Pray unto the Lord that *He* take away the serpents” (Numb. xxi. 7: *See also* II Kings xviii. 4). It was God Who prepared the great fish (Jonah i. 17). Jonah prayed to the Lord, and the Lord spake unto the fish and returned Jonah to the land of the living (Jonah ii. 10). Not all the carpenters in the days of Noah could have constructed an ark to withstand the onslaughts of that great deluge. It was the Lord Who shut Noah within the ark (Gen. vii. 16), and it was God Who “made a wind to pass over the earth” so that “the waters assuaged” (viii. 1).

This, then, is the twofold basis of the gospel—the inspired Word, in its type, prophecy, history and doctrine; and God, as the Author and Provider of all things necessary to make that gospel His power unto salvation.

#18. Simple gospel notes on John iii. 16.
(ii.) The manner and mainspring.
pp. 158 - 160

We have looked at the important bearing of the opening words of John iii. 16: “For God.” Let us consider now the message contained in the words, “so loved”.

So.—In this word is expressed the “manner” of the manifestation of the love of God: “For *thus* God loved the world.” An illustration of this translation of the word is found in John iv. 6:--

“Jesus, therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat **THUS** upon the well.”

The word can also be translated, “after this manner” or “on this fashion” (*See* Matt. vi. 9; I Cor. vii. 7; Mark ii. 12).

It is of great importance, both in the preaching of the gospel and in the receiving of it, that we realize the importance of the way in which the love of God was manifested towards a sinful world. This, however, must be deferred while we look for a moment at the great mainspring of the gospel—*love*.

Three statements stand out in the N.T. concerning the Being of God: “God is *spirit*” (John iv. 24); “God is *light*” (I John i. 5); and “God is *love*” (I John iv. 8 and 16).

These three phases are related, in the same sequence, to worship, to fellowship, and to salvation. The three statements are made by John, one in the Gospel and two in the Epistle. The third, with which we are concerned in the present paper, is repeated twice.

The word “so” draws our attention to the “manner” in which God loved the world. The epistle of John reveals the one great “manifestation” of this love.

As we have seen in an earlier paper, “manifestation” is one of the key-words of this epistle. The Gospel of John commences with the words, “In the beginning”, and deals with a time and work before man was created; the Epistle commences with, “That which was from the beginning”, and immediately goes on to speak of “the life” that was “*manifested*” (verse 2). (*See also* I John iii. 10: “The children of God are *manifested*, and the children of the devil”; and iii. 2, 5, 8). So when the apostle speaks in chapter iv. of the love of God, he immediately proceeds to its one great demonstration:--

“IN THIS was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him” (I John iv. 9).

“IN THIS is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins” (I John iv. 10).

“God so loved the world *that He gave* His only begotten Son” (John iii. 16).

The prime originating cause of salvation is the love of God. If this love is shewn to the undeserving, as it is, it is called “grace”. If it contemplates the hopeless misery of man, it is called “mercy”. If it saves many from sin and its consequences, it provides “righteousness”. Just as Christian love is sub-divided (as in I Cor. xiii.) into its many aspects, so is the love of God. Christian love is greater even than faith and hope; and so God’s love, while embracing all its outgoings in the scheme of salvation, is greater than them all:--

“Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends” (John xv. 13).

“But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. v. 8).

#19. Simple gospel notes on John iii. 16.
(iii.) Object, measure and gift.
pp. 238 - 240

“He that hath not the Son of God hath not life” (I John v. 12).

We have already seen the twofold basis of the gospel, God and His Word, and have seen something of its mainspring and the “manner” in which God’s love in the gospel was manifested. We continue our theme by considering the words: “The world”; “He gave”; “His only begotten Son”.

The manner in which the love of God was manifested can be more fully understood as we view its object.

The object---The world.

In the first chapter of the Gospel, we read: “The world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not” (i. 10). John the Baptist spoke of the Saviour as the One Who “taketh away the sin of the world” (i. 29). But, though the world was so loved, we are told in iii. 19 that men loved darkness rather than light:--

“This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.”

God has set no bounds to His love, the sin of the world has been taken away by the Lamb of God; yet of those who did not believe, the Lord says that they “shall die in their sins” (John viii. 24). The love of God has provided the Saviour, and the salvation is for whosoever “believeth”. But what if some do not believe?

When John iii. 16 uses the word “world”, other passages speak of “sinners”, of the “ungodly”, and of “enemies” as the objects of love. Some, however, will die in their sins; some will be ungodly when the Lord comes; some will be enemies when the Millennium is over.

The measure---“God so loved that He gave.”

The measure of the love of God is the measure of His unspeakable, indescribable gift (II Cor. ix. 15). This, too, is the measure of the love of Christ:--

“The Son of God Who LOVED me and GAVE Himself for me” (Gal. ii. 20).
“Christ LOVED the church and GAVE Himself for it” (Eph. v. 25).

John iii. 16 is alone in stating that God loved the world. The statement is never repeated in Scripture; of the 135 occurrences of *agapao*, “to love”, this is the only place where we read that God loved the world. We read that “the Father loveth the Son”

(John iii. 35), and that Christ said, "He that loveth Me, shall be loved of My Father also" (John xiv. 21), but God's love to the *world* was manifested once and for all in the gift of His Son. It is vain to look for the love of God apart from Christ. God may still make His sun to shine upon the just and the unjust, He may still defer the long-threatened day of vengeance, He may feed and clothe and sustain in life those who deny Him; but His love is manifested and exhausted in Christ. To be outside of Christ, is to be outside the pale of the love of God.

The Gift.

This bring us to the Gift: "He gave His only begotten Son." Not simply that "He gave His Son", but His "only begotten Son". Isaac is called "the only begotten son" of Abraham (Heb. xi. 17). (It is impossible to miss the meaning of the word "beget" in Matt. i. 1-16). Christ is called "the only begotten Son" for the first time in John i. 14, in immediate connection with the words: "The Word was made flesh."

Antichrist denies that Jesus Christ came in the flesh (I John iv. 2, 3), but the truth of this great fact is vital to our faith. In the flesh Christ could be our Kinsman-Redeemer (Heb. ii. 14, 15). In the flesh He could be a great High Priest (Heb. v. 1), and could offer the one great Sacrifice (Heb. x. 5-10). As Man, He is the one Mediator between God and men (I Tim. ii. 5), and, as Man, shall yet be Judge of quick and dead (John v. 22-27). All this and more is involved in the gift of the only begotten Son. There is no gospel, no salvation, no life, no peace, no hope, apart from God.

The love of God, apart from Christ as the only begotten Son, could never have saved sinful men. God so loved the world that He spared not His only begotten Son, and we can be sure that if salvation could have been provided by any other means, or the love of God have save apart from righteousness, Christ would not have suffered the death of the cross. With John iii. 16 before us, we cannot but believe that it is vain to look to the "uncovenanted love of God" for those who have loved darkness rather than light. Such will die in the presence of the gift of life; they will starve within reach of the true bread of heaven; they will be lost in darkness, though the true light shines:--

"There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins" (Heb. x. 26).

"Christ dieth no more" (Rom. vi. 9).