

The Student of Scripture.

Edited by Percy W. Heward

"Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time." 1 Peter 5. 6.

"He giveth grace unto the lowly." Proverbs 3. 34.

"The meek will He guide in judgment; and the meek will He teach His way." Psalm 25. 9.

A Word of Introduction.

*T*HERE is no doubt as to God's loving approval of meekness. How important that we should not come to Him with self-confidence. The knowledge of grammar and earthly scholarship will not guarantee understanding of the Scripture. Far from it. We need His own teaching, and the heart must be open to Him. Human ability may be the greatest danger for it may be the vantage ground of the enemy to encourage pride. These pages are not issued to increase bare mental study but to help loving discipleship. True, a devoted humility will be reverent as to the full inspiration and the exact words, but the Holy Spirit's use of such prayerful diligence is quite contrasted with all unsanctified confidence in the flesh. Love never boasts except in the Lord Jesus; heart-obedience never calls attention to "itself."

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"The Sons of Korah."

WHY are eleven of the Psalms (42, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 84, 85, 87, 88) thus entitled? We are accustomed to headings with a personal name, as David or Asaph, but this plural is unusual. The persons themselves are unnamed, but their father, or ancestor, is specially brought before us. Why? And who was he? We quickly call to mind the solemnizing history. His own name is the saddest in all the inscriptions. Korah is mentioned first in the insurrection against Moses and Aaron in Numbers 16. Alas, he sought "the priesthood" (verse 10).

How serious are jealousy and a "coveting" of that which God has given to another. Korah was the cousin of Aaron (Ex. 6. 18, 21). O that we may never strive against God's sovereign choice, nor despise the lowly service which God has entrusted to us, even if it seem to be "only" one talent.

We know the dread result of "gainsaying" (Jude 11). The families were identified with Dathan and Abiram (Num. 16. 27-33), and all the 250 men who offered incense with Korah were consumed by God's fire, "notwithstanding the children of Korah died not" (Num. 26. 11). They, like the Gibeonites, were spared for a purpose, and that purpose was praise. "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound," is the application spiritually to us. "The people which were left of the sword found grace" (Jer. 31. 2). Scripture is full of such unveilings.

Hence we find the sons of Korah in Exodus 6. 24, and when we reach 1 Chronicles we begin to partake of the rich spiritual food in the often overlooked genealogies, for we discover in chapter 6. 33, 34 that Shemuel (Samuel) the son of Elkanah was from this very line. The child who was given in answer to prayer (1 Sam. 1. 27), and who was himself characterized by calling on the Name of the Lord (Ps. 99. 6), and who received so prominent a position among God's prophets (Acts 3. 24), sprang from the spared family. How definitely he must have realized the plan of God's grace wrapped up in the words, "notwithstanding the children (lit. sons) of Korah died not."

We have now two precious lines of thought, one concerning a privileged servant of God, and the other uniquely amid all the headings of the psalms—"the sons of Korah." Yes, they received mercy to be worshippers. And this is the more clearly emphasized, as we have seen the exact literal rendering of Numbers 26. 11. "I shall not die but live, and declare the works of the Lord" (Ps. 118. 17). "The living, the living, he shall praise Thee, as I do this day" (Isa. 38. 19).

Have we come to the end of our subject? By no means. What is the reason of the genealogy in 1 Chronicles 6? "These are they that waited with their children. Of the sons of the Kohathites: **Heman** a singer." Yes, he is the **first** among the singers of praise, mentioned in connexion with the joy of verses 31, 32. What a privilege to draw near to God. And how refreshing this is, after the humbling record of 1 Samuel 8. 1-3, which we would not forget. It is always needful to "rejoice with trembling" (Ps. 2. 11), for we would seek the godly homes of 1 Timothy 3 **throughout**. Heman's privilege as to worship is further seen in 1 Chronicles 15. 17, 16. 41, 42, 25. 1, and 2 Chronicles 29. 14.

And have we now exhausted the blessing? No! Heman's own children were richly blessed. The largest family, possibly, as to which we read in the whole of Scripture, with a **united** devotion to the Lord. "All these were the sons of Heman, the

king's seer, in the words of God, to lift up the horn. And God gave to Heman fourteen sons and three daughters. All these were **under the hands of their father** for song in the house of the Lord." What a precious unity! The temple **now** is spiritual, not material, but can there not be the same blessedness in home-devotion as to worship in spirit and in truth? Why should not this be ever our privilege? Thus out of the twenty-four portions for the singers, fourteen belonged to the family that was foreseen by God when "the sons of Korah died not" (1 Chron. 25. 8-31). Surely we admire His gracious object. And we, too, dear fellow believers, are spared in infinite mercy that we may give thanks unto His Holy Name, and triumph in His praise (Ps. 106. 47). "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits" (Ps. 103. 2).

We have already spoken of the temple. At its dedication we beheld the joy of Heman's family (2 Chron. 5. 12); and all were together with the 120 priests, "as **one** to make **one** sound" (verse 13, cf. Rom. 15. 6). There was no rivalry against Aaron, or against any others. The singers could draw **spiritually** near, and this was in holy antithesis with the reminder in Numbers 16. 38, 40, "The censers of these sinners against their own souls, let them make broad plates for a covering of the altar . . . to be a memorial unto the children of Israel, that no stranger . . . come near to offer incense before the Lord; that he be not as Korah and as his company." What a blessed contrast was thus granted, even as with Rahab when the walls of Jericho fell down, as with the Gibeonites spared to be Nethinim, and as with ourselves redeemed from the race of Adam, that now and eternally we may show forth the praises of Him Who hath called us out of darkness into "His marvellous light" (1 Pet. 2. 9).

The Lord does not give us strength, even for one moment ahead that exempts us from a continued humble and **absolute** dependence. We never have a supply of blessing that will meet our need **five minutes, even if we do not trust**. We are kept conscious of the words "without Me ye can do nothing." We are like the electric light, which cannot sustain itself for one second. The current is as needful after a year's experience as at first. Thus is it with the mature Christian, who is no more able to stand alone than the babe in Christ. He may, in a very blessed way, know more of "abiding," but he is not one whit more independent of "abiding."

The response of gratitude to the grace of God should be more than an echo or a habit, it should be a living fruit of experiencing His grace. If you say, "How are you?" I can reply by habit without thinking. If you say, "Good evening," it is **natural** to answer without consciousness of a definite wish for the "good" of the one concerned. Surely our thanksgiving should be far fuller, and richer and deeper.

"By Asking Meat for Their Lust."

Psalm 78. 18.

IN this narrative psalm how much space is given to the sin before us. It actually occupies verses 18-31. Why? Evidently God would impress upon us the importance of not seeking to misuse prayer for our own selfish "advantages." We recollect James 4. 3, "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume **upon your pleasures.**" Exactly the same thought. Israel's "asking" was not in faith, but because of discontent with God's manna, and a wish led by the mixed multitude, for the mixed diet and food of Egypt (Num. 11. 4-6). Instead of remembering the Lord they said, "We remember the fish." They limited God by their question ("Can God?"), and wanted an "also" (verse 20), i.e., something **as well as** the unchanging manna. And do we want something **added** to Christ, Whom the manna pictured? Are we disappointed with Christ **alone**? There was a parallel with Satan's attitude, who spoke in Genesis 3 as if God withheld something good (see Ps. 84. 11).

How important to distinguish between the prayer of faith and that of unbelief and self-centring. How dangerous would prayer be if it was not in accord with **the will of God**. This is our encouragement. We never lose by this limitation rightly perceived. It is God's prevention of harm to us: anything else would put a knife in a child's hand. Another psalm says. "He gave them their request: but sent leanness into their soul" (Ps. 106. 15). Thus the importance is still intensified by this further reference. And the statement is that "they tempted God." Their attitude was one of challenging Him. The world have often adopted this. But true prayer is an answer to His voice: "Surely I come quickly"—Amen. "Come Lord Jesus." No passages show more forcibly the blessedness of prayer according to the will of God, and of such prayer alone. May it ever be ours in the power of the Holy Spirit.

I tried to think of eternity: I measured it by time, but there was always infinity over. My mind could grasp that it could not grasp. But an **end** was equally beyond my apprehension. I was graciously brought to own my limitation and to rejoice in God's revelation, and He has declared there is no end. And now, though I do not know it, I know **Him**, or (shall I say?) He knows me, and my heart begins to know Him, having received eternal life, with a view to this knowledge (John 17. 3). O wondrous love! His love shall never cease to worthless me. An eternity of blessing! It seems **too** precious. And I might have been in an eternity of woe. Does my heart confess, "I deserved that"? O let me praise Him more. He does not seek my theorizing, nor my head-knowledge of words, but He does seek my love, and myself as a worshipper. Does my heart respond to His seeking?

Why I do not use the title Reverend.*

Dear Friend,

Greetings in the Lord Jesus. You may think it strange that I do not wish the title which you have, as a kindly token of respect, accorded me. May I briefly explain "Why?"

1. Because I do not discover any **authority** for it in Scripture. Do you? I do not find any parallel, although there was every opportunity for a hint of such language. The New Testament refers to many beloved servants of God. Can any **description** be met there that justifies such a **title** before the name of a brother in Christ? If so, where is it?

2. Because it seems definitely to contradict the Lord's clear appointments in Matthew 23. 8-10. Read, I beseech you, these verses again. Are not all "religious" titles thereby graciously set aside? And why? Notice the repeated word "One." Our Lord's own uniqueness and glory are concerned in this. Neither you nor I would wish to infringe on this, nor would we make light of His words (Matt. 28. 19, 20).

3. Because, in usage, it tends to obscure the united priesthood of all believers (1 Pet. 2. 9). There are, indeed, diversities of ministries granted, but it is worthy of notice that when the Lord Jesus gave or gives varied gifts to be exercised for the edifying of saints (Eph. 4. 11, 12), i.e., from God **manward**, He did not include anything of "priesthood" (which is **Godward**). All believers are **thus** privileged. I do **not** say, or think, that one accepting the title "Rev." **denies** this, but there is ever a danger in erecting barriers, and then some feel that only those thus designated can rightly "administer the sacrament." This may seem another subject, but I do not find the suggestion of "administering," nor the thought of "a sacrament," nor any hint of any brother "presiding," at the simple, but blessed, "breaking of the bread." There should be a Scriptural church, and reverent and godly order and discipline. But this is quite different. Permit my loving concern, even if it seems to imply a contrast with that to which you have been "brought up." Do we want **His** will alone?

4. Because it appears peculiarly unwise to choose an English term uniquely associated with the Lord alone, in Psalm 111. 9. Moreover, is it Scriptural for me to wish to be "revered"?

5. Because there is **no real parallel** with the use of ordinary earthly titles. These (e.g., King Herod, cf. "most excellent Theophilus") Scripture does approve: hence "Mr."—which is only civil, affords no ground for "Rev."

6. Hence, since there is no warrant, directly or indirectly, I should feel myself out of harmony with God's will, and causing others to stumble, if using a term which often has, I fear, misled. We need to be thoughtful for one another.

* Enlarged and reprinted.

7. Because the tendency of the human heart (seen in Freemasonry, etc.) is to seek titles, and words of dignity: but the children of God are encouraged to a holy difference, and a contrast with that which pleases the flesh.

8. Because the refusal of this title does not involve any spiritual **loss or hindrance**. God's work can be carried on without it. Godly recognition of true and loving ministry existed in the early churches without it (Heb. 13. 17). To **add** to Scripture, to produce "honour" and "order," seems, and is, a dangerous principle. God still protects His own arrangements, if trusted, even in days of socialism and rejection of authority. Let us look to Him, and return to Scriptural simplicity in the enabling of the Holy Spirit.

You will, therefore, not take it amiss when we omit the use of this title on envelopes,—it may be to **you**. No disrespect is intended, but simply personal preservation of "a good conscience to God," which no godly believer would wish anyone to ignore. I do not for one moment question the sincerity and motives of many who accept the term, but should feel myself wrong (may I say "unkind"?) to give to any a title which I believe to be disapproved by our Lord, and **forbidden**. Hence the true courtesy is to leave it out. And may I ask your prayer over the principles underlying these meditations, even though you may think you have heard them all before? We can all get nearer, in experience, to Him!

Yours in **the Lord Jesus Christ**, by grace,*
Percy W. Heward.

"Ye also shall bear witness **because**" (John 15. 27). How can we bear witness unless we are with the Lord (Acts 4. 13, cf. Mark 3. 14)? But Peter evidently misunderstood these words, when, instead of waiting for the Holy Spirit, he assumed that another apostle must have been "with" them (Acts 1. 22). The Lord was pleased to raise up Paul. We must not say "Shew whether (which) of **these two**" (Acts 1. 24): the Lord may have a **third**, and a different time.

Faith takes what God makes, and simply believes One Who never deceives.

"We are His making (workmanship)."

"Who hath made both one."

"Making peace." Ephesians 2. 10, 14, 15.

"**In times past ye walked . . .** the spirit that **now** worketh in the children (sons) of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation **in times past**."

* *Christ alone* is the Titled One in the New Testament, e.g. "the Lord Jesus." Such expressions as "the apostle Paul," and "Pastor so-and-so," are not warranted, though we rejoice in "Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ" (descriptor, not title), and rejoice in any to whom the Lord has granted the gift of a "pastor" (Eph. 4. 11). Two tracts on this subject are available:—gladly sent.

"Every one that findeth me shall slay me."

Genesis 4. 14.

HOW many times has this verse been used **against** the thought of **one** family. As we shall see it is, on the contrary, a remarkable evidence of this fact, the more impressive because indirect and quite unforced. Observe Cain speaks of "**every one**": he seems to view **all** as concerned by the death of Abel. Why? Was the avenger of blood of the same family, or another? Of the **same**! Some may know that the very word in Numbers 35. 12 and Deuteronomy 19. 6, 12 is employed for the **kinsman-redeemer**. 2 Samuel 14. 7 helpfully illustrates. **Genesis 9. 5 is the basis**. Hence Cain's words imply that **all then living were of Adam's family**. This is in harmony with God's command, "Be fruitful and multiply." Many forget that the sad murder was long after his birth, and that the first few pages of Scripture describe 1,656 years. There was ample time for many to be born. The word "find," moreover, confirms the **legal** aspect (Num. 35. 27). It is remarkable how the objections to Scripture only show its truthfulness. O that we, who believe Him, may be more thankful, and glorify His Name. Every difficulty is a background for blessing.

WALKING IN THE LIGHT.

"Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall **walk, O Lord, in the light** of Thy countenance."

Psaln 89. 15.

"If we **walk in the light** as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." 1 John 1. 7.

"O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us **walk in the light** of the Lord." Isaiah 2. 5.

Compare—"I am the Light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not **walk** in darkness, but shall have **the light of life**."

John 8. 12.

"**Walk** while ye have the **Light**" John 12. 35.

"Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye **light** in the Lord: walk as children of light." Ephesians 5. 8.

Contrast—"Walk **in the light** of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled." Isaiah 50. 11.

"The Lord telleth thee that He will make thee an house."

"He shall build an house for My Name."

"Thine house shall be established."

"I will settle him in Mine house."

2 Samuel 7. 11, 13, 16, 1 Chronicles 17. 14.

"With God all things are possible."

Matthew 19. 26.

THANKS be to God for this fact, and for its emphasis throughout Scripture. To Moses He said, "Who hath made man's mouth? . . . Have not I, the Lord?" (Ex. 4. 11), and to Jeremiah, "Is there anything too hard for Me?" (32. 27).*

The context in Matthew deals with salvation. The grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant to Saul of Tarsus, and in each saved soul also we behold a miracle of sovereign grace. Regeneration is not a human improvement: each one, grasped by grace, is a proof that God does the impossible.

And the same thought is before us as to a living faith that rests fully on His promises: "with God nothing shall be impossible" (Luke 1. 37). In this case the usual course of nature was not followed: the birth of the Promised Seed was a supernatural sign. God is not limited to what many call "laws of nature." Nature is His creation and servant, and He can do whatever He pleases.

Again in Matthew 17. 20. and Mark 11. 23, the same thought of God's dealing with impossibilities is emphasized as to the life of faith and prayer. If God wills anything, living faith is not affected by circumstances. How often we fail to realize this. We look at things, and our fears and actions are largely governed by them, unless our eyes are first and ever unto the Lord. "With God all things are possible":—whatever men say, whatever Satan plans, however our own timidity trembles. Let us seek grace to deny "self" in this matter also. We look not to mountains, but to God. Mountains before Zerubbabel become a plain when God works (Zech. 4. 6, 7), and we look higher than all the hills for our Father's love and intervention (Ps. 121. 1).

* This is the more impressive because the prophet had used these words in verse 17, and God alludes to this to keep His servant's faith to this holy standpoint. The prayer had begun with confidence, but he had gone on to speak of the "mounts," and of God's *unexpected* command to buy a field. How often we need encouragement to ENJOY what we have just SAID.

"With faith and love" was Paul's blessed experience of grace in Christ Jesus (1 Tim. 1. 14), hence he could write confidently to Timothy of holding fast the pattern of sound words "in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 1. 13). Our wrong experience can never alter God's testimony, but our right experience can impress it.

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*"If so be that the Lord will be with me,
Then I shall be able to drive them out,
As the Lord hath said."*

Joshua 14. 12.

A Word of Introduction.

WONDERFUL were Caleb's words, but they are not strange, whenever God is the Strength. Observe his continued faith after forty and five years. Old age is not fearful when God enables. Circumstances and experiences should be used to encourage, not to weaken, our confidence. When Caleb was old it was not with him as when Solomon was old.

Observe three points of the verse above. The Lord's PRESENCE was associated with the Lord's WORD (Hag. 2. 5). We dare not imagine His enabling AGAINST His word, NOR use His written words of old without His presence now. Nor should our attitude say, "The Lord will drive them out, and I can be idle." We are nothing without Him, but He often condescends to work through us. So in Deuteronomy 33. 27, "He shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall SAY, DESTROY THEM." Cf. "If YE through the SPIRIT do mortify." May these pages be used to encourage such faith and victory to God's glory.

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The Margin of your Bible.

THE translation of Scripture which we all possess is valuable, and it becomes more valuable as we read it regularly, and prayerfully; and further, in the enabling of the Holy Spirit, translate it into daily life. It is well to obtain a good type Bible, and the references in the margin are more helpful than many realize, in comparing Scripture with Scripture. Some children of God wish to secure other books but fail to bring into full use

those which they already have. "Possessing possessions" is an important subject (Obad. 17).

Again, in reading the Bible through, do you connect chapters with one another? Otherwise you will lose the helpful link of John 7. 53 and 8. 1, and our beloved Lord's gracious giving up (2 Cor. 8. 9). Nor can we forget the beauty of Romans 11. 36 with 12. 1, and 1 Corinthians 15. 58 with 16. 1 (to unveil the grace of giving), and Ephesians 1. 23 with 2. 1 ("and you"). But have you not something further in your Bible, which is often overlooked?—I mean the notes in the margin. Some of them have the word "or," with an alternative, but others are introduced with "Heb." or "Gr.", indicating a more literal explanation of the original, Hebrew and Greek, if the idiom is not usual in English. These are peculiarly valuable to those who do not know the Original. Let us start at the beginning of our Bible for a general view of some of these notes. In Genesis 1. 6, the firmament is called "expansion." Is not this the explanation? In ch. 2. 16, "Eating thou shalt eat" is in solemn and heart-searching contrast with "Dying thou shalt die" (2. 17). Again, in view of the precious type of Christ and the church (Eph. 5. 32), how beautiful is "builded" in 2. 22 (cf. Matt 16. 18),—as well as "Ish" and "Isha" (2. 23). Then in Genesis 8. 21 we reach the first occurrence of a sweet savour rightly explained as "a savour of rest." How many are the verses where this occurs (e.g., Ex. 29. 18, 25, 41, Lev. 1. 9, 13, 17, etc.), but they are not all indicated in the margin. How could there be "rest" apart from the "finished" work of the Lord Jesus (John 19. 30)? Glory be ever to His Name. We have spoken particularly of the letters "Heb.", but other notes are useful, e.g., Genesis 10. 11 would seem to emphasize Nimrod's tragic success as one of the first types of Antichrist.

Nor can we forget passages which, in full harmony with the instructive teaching of the Holy Spirit in Hebrews 7. 2 give the meaning of names. There are many, for example:—

"The Lord will see" (Gen. 22. 14).

"Room" (Gen. 26. 22).

"Drawn out" (Ex. 2. 10).

"The Lord send peace" (Jud. 6. 24).

"Fear round about" (Jer. 20. 3).

This study is not meant to be exhaustive, but suggestive, that you, dear reader, may continue it. For example, why should you not notice Genesis 43. 18, "Roll himself upon us" (an utterance of fear), in connexion with the happy faith of Psalm 37. 5 ("Roll thy way upon the Lord")? How willing HE is to bear our burdens (Ps. 55. 22), yea, to bear us on eagles' wings (Ex. 19. 4). We have a gracious God and Father! We cannot trust Him too much.

What shall we say about Judges 2. 19, "They let nothing fall of their own doings"? Unspeakably sad. But 1 Samuel

3. 19 shows God's opposite, "Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground." "The word of our God shall stand for ever" (Isa. 40. 8). Then have you noticed "redemption" in connexion with "division" in Exodus 8. 23? Is it not suggestive? May we learn much as to "consecration," and ourselves, from the margin of Exodus 29. 9 ("fill the hand of": note other passages, e.g., Num. 3. 3, 1 Chron. 29. 5, 2 Chron. 29. 31)? Is there not a blessing in the words "Speak ye to the heart of Jerusalem" ("comfortably," Isa. 40. 2, cf. 2 Chron. 30. 22, Hos. 2. 14)? And do we not enjoy encouragement as to worship in the Spirit in Exodus 30. 8?—"Causeth to ascend" (cf. Lev. 24. 2, Num. 8. 2). Further, we may well be stimulated by "Set you heart on your ways" in Haggai 1. 5. Do we not wish that our margin continued the reminder of the heart in the other passages (1. 7, 2. 15, 18)? We call to mind how often the word "understanding" is literally "heart" (Prov. 6. 32, 10. 13, 15. 32, etc.). May we keep our heart with all diligence (Prov. 4. 23, the other margin here also stimulates). Now mark the fulness of God's words, "O that there were such an heart in them" (Deut. 5. 29).

(If the Lord will, to be continued).

"OUR FATHER."

Matthew 6. 9.

How gracious is God's tender care;
How blest the answers to our prayer:
How real His love beyond our love,
To draw our minds to things above:
How generously our needs He meets,
And His own work in us completes.
The trials are giv'n for our good,
His med'cine is the choicest food:
Closed doors of earth but show the way,
That we may trust Him more and pray:
His grace can make **that** burden light,
His grace can make the darkness bright.
He knows the way His children take,
And He will ne'er one child forsake:
He is our Father, we can rest
Upon His love,—e'en in the test:
The Holy Spirit leads to praise,
E'en when we climb the steepest ways.
Soon will our glorious Lord come back;
But while we wait, what do we lack?
He is not dead, He lives to-day,
And we can come, and speak, and pray:
To-morrow's burdens but arrive.
When He doth first our strength revive.

The Kingdom impossible without Christ's atoning death.

IT is blessed to realize in Galatians 3 how the Lord Jesus came to remove every hindrance to the sure promises given to Abraham. His death has secured all. Hence we find varied attempts during His life to put this aside.

"Then Peter took Him, and began to rebuke Him, saying, Be it far from Thee, Lord: this shall not be unto Thee" (Matt. 16. 22).

On the transfiguration mount the disciple needed to learn yet once more that the feast of tabernacles could not come before the Passover.*

"Lord, it is good for us to be here: if Thou wilt let us make three tabernacles" was graciously interrupted by the cloud, and the gracious command to "Hear," not to arrange for the Lord Jesus, and His tender words in verse 7 soon led up to the story of His death (verse 9). The miracle of the fish, with redemption silver, impressed the message.

The Lord Jesus answered Peter in Matthew 16 with a reference to Satan, which takes us back to chapter 4, where the enemy offered the kingdom without the cross (verses 8-10). How different from Antichrist's attitude was that of the Lord Jesus. He "suffered" being tempted, and never yielded for a second in one iota.

We would not overlook Matthew 11. 12, "The kingdom of the heavens (the aspect of the kingdom of God associated with the death of Christ) suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." This was an impossible position: we need to "receive" not "snatch" (Mark 10 15). How many misunderstood the Lord Jesus, even in connection with riding into Jerusalem some appear to have connected "Hosanna" ("Save, I beseech thee") with the hope of earthly deliverance. How many from among Israel and Mohammedans think that the cross would nullify the work, but their only hope, and ours, is atonement. Blessed be God if our eyes are opened to see this, and tell of "Christ crucified."

* It is remarkable that in Israel's present arrangement of the year they actually reverse the order thus.

"TOOK."

"I took your father Abraham" (Jos. 24. 3).

"The Lord God of heaven, Which took me from my father's house" (Gen. 24. 7).

"I will take you to Me for a people" (Ex. 6. 7).

"I have taken your brethren the Levites" (Num. 18. 6).

"The Lord hath taken you" (Deut. 4. 20, 34).

"I took thee (David) from the sheep cote" (2 Sam. 7. 8, Ps. 78. 70).

"The Lord took me as I followed the flock" (Amos 7. 15).

"If that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus."

Self-Excusing.

"He received it at their hand and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf."

"Thou knowest the people that they are set on mischief . . . I said unto them, whosoever hath any gold let them break it off. . . . I cast it into the fire, and there came out this calf."

"The Lord plagued the people because they had made the calf, which Aaron made."

Exodus 32. 4, 22, 24, 35.

WE are not surprised that Saul said, "The people spared the best of the sheep," and also added "I feared the people, and obeyed their voice" (1 Sam. 15. 15, 24). But our hearts are deeply concerned that Aaron thus sinned. It is easier than we think to look at things differently when we are involved, and sin leads to sin, and thus is reached the awful climax of untruthfulness. But how wondrously God unmasks it all, for a warning to us, that we may beware of the beginning of any departure from Him. Aaron should have sought unto God at the first: he should have firmly depended on God at the outset. It is not easy to stop when we are going down hill. There is no sign or suggestion that Aaron wished to do this sin. He feebly tried to stem the tide, by "compromise." His action was partnership in the sin, and he said afterwards, "To-morrow is a feast to the Lord" (verse 5), in verbal contrast with the words of the people, "These be thy gods" (verse 4). But if we compromise, words can never excuse our participation in guilt. The only safe path, the only appointed path is separation.

The making was twofold. God did not excuse the people, nor did He shield Aaron (verse 35, cf. Ezek. 3. 18). In another sense the work was twofold: there was the melting in a mould, and then the graving, thus everything was sadly deliberate, it was not the action of a moment. And yet Aaron spoke excusingly to Moses, and left out all reference to this active share. Yea, he even implied that the calf "came out." O that we may learn the deep importance of non-participation in the sins of others (1 Tim. 5. 22), and likewise the reality of true confession of sin. "Mine iniquity have I not hid" (Ps. 32. 5). Everything that was written afore was written for our admonition. We may not be in Aaron's prominence (this narrative shows us the danger of special positions of privilege), but the enemy has sins of compromise to tempt us in every state. May we be guarded and on our guard.

Adam said, "I heard Thy voice . . . and I was afraid" (Gen. 3. 10): Habakkuk said, "O Lord I have heard Thy speech, and was afraid" (Hab. 3. 2): but how different the attitude and meaning. Blessed, indeed, are we if included in the words, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me" (John 10. 27).

The Word of God.

OUR hearts are impressed as we find, again and again, in the earlier Scriptures the declaration, "The word of the Lord came" (e.g., Jer. 1. 2, 4, 11, 13, Ezek. 1. 3, 3. 16, Hag. 2. 20, Zech. 4. 8, etc.). The emphasis on God's own definite utterance cannot be overlooked. "Theories" of inspiration to belittle the fact of inspiration are SIN and the great need is REPENTANCE. Moreover the fact that we have God's own words is enforced by many other expressions, e.g., "The Lord spake unto Moses, saying," "the Lord called unto Moses," etc. The whole of Scripture is unique. Any weakening of confidence in God's book is a deadly continuance of the work of the devil in the Garden of Eden.

We remember, moreover, that the Lord Jesus is called "the Word" not only in John 1. 1, 14, but in Luke 1. 2, 1 John 1. 1 and Revelation 19. 13, and we recognise an important relationship. How much of the Hebrew Scriptures has been associated with the "goings forth" (Mic. 5. 2) of our adorable Lord before He became flesh. And, further, the **living character** of that which is described when the word came (e.g., Jer. 1. 2) has an important bearing on our subject. It is blessedly true that "all Scripture is God breathed," and thus we are made conscious of the **verbal** inspiration of the original, but do we not also own that the vital power of truth is felt **when** the Holy Spirit applies to the heart? Is not this implied in Proverbs 6. 22, "When thou awakest it shall talk with thee," in fellowship with Isaiah 50. 4, "He wakeneth mine ear to hear as the taught ones"? Accordingly in Hebrews 3. 7 we read, "Wherefore as the Holy Ghost **saith**," and seven times in Revelation 2 and 3, "What the Spirit **saith** unto the churches."

When the gospel reached the Thessalonians, it came not in **word** only but also in power, and in **the Holy Spirit**, and thus they received **the Word** "with joy of the Holy Spirit" (1 Thess. 1. 5, 6). There is deep, and yet deeper, instruction for our hearts here. The gospel is the gospel whether men believe it or not, but the word preached does not profit, except it is mixed with faith (Heb. 4. 2). In the law God waited for man, and thus the law was not only weak but **strengthless** through the flesh (Rom. 8. 3). In the gospel, on the contrary, He tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men, but reveals grace reigning, and such grace is "exceeding abundant **with faith and love**" (1 Tim. 1. 14). Hence there is the beginning of that life in which the blessedness is ever freshly granted as the Word is mixed with living faith within (Jas. 2. 26). To the unsaved soul the sweet savour of Christ is made a savour of death (2 Cor. 2. 16), and the things of the Spirit of God are foolishness to him (1 Cor. 2. 14). Not that they **are** foolishness, but he sees no beauty in Christ or the gospel, because he himself is blinded. That which

is unto us a joy, is to a lost soul a stumbling block and foolishness (1 Cor. 1. 23). Thank God for the contrast: "Unto them which are called"—Christ (not only "Christ crucified," the language is changed because He is now risen, a living and present Saviour)—Christ is "the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God."

Hence the question, "What is Christ to **you**?" is searching, and may be linked with another, "What are the Scriptures to you?" Sometimes a believer has described his printed Bible as his sword. The underlying thought is precious, but the Word must **come** with living power to our hearts ere we can use it as a sword,—the Sword of the Spirit which is an utterance of God" (Eph. 6. 17). In like manner, we **read** the Scriptures, but do we find the expression, "Reading the Word of God"? This may be a new thought to some, as it was to me years ago when a brother mentioned it. How helpfully we can, and should, tell one another that which has proved a blessing in our own experience. One naturally speaks of "studying the Word of God," and "searching the Word," but can we find such expressions in Scripture? **What we mean** is there, and the Scriptures not only **contain**, but **are**, in the original, the verbally inspired message from God. There is no doubt as to this, but He has a **further** call to our hearts in His use of the term "Word." May we not receive profit in seeking to learn this?

When our beloved Lord was attacked by the tempter, He said, "It is written." The Scriptures were the Scriptures, whether the enemy loved them or not. They stood, to condemn as well as bless. But our Lord Himself had a different relationship, and, describing Himself, He said, "The Man shall not live by bread alone, but by **every word** that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt. 4. 4). We think of the Berean believers. "They

- (a) **received the Word** with all readiness of mind, and
- (b) **searched the Scriptures** daily" (Acts 17. 11).

"Receiving" was not only of the written Scriptures, mentally, but of **the Word**, spiritually, because the Holy Spirit made the truth a power within them. Accordingly we find in 1 Thessalonians 2. 13, "Ye received **the Word** of God which ye heard of us, . . . **the Word** of God which effectually **worketh also in you** that believe." The emphasis on the **inworking** "Word" is seen in Colossians 3. 16, Hebrews 4. 12, James 1. 18, 21, 1 John 2. 14. We call to mind, "If ye abide in Me, and My words **abide in you**." Romans 10. 8 is impressive "The **Word** is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the **Word** of faith which we preach" (here we have the same noun **rhema** as in Eph. 6. 17). This repeated emphasis is important. The Holy Spirit does NOT ignore the written words (John 14.

26), but He gives their tone and accent, and thus there is more than reading, and more than studying our Bible in which we may be "alone." There must be more than ONE if we "hear." God is present, there is COMMUNION WITH GOD. How often we feel our need for more, much more, of this blessedness.
(If the Lord will, to be concluded.)

THE BODY OF THE LORD JESUS.

"A body hast Thou prepared Me" (Heb. 10. 5).
 "The temple of His body" (John 2. 21).
 "This is My body Which is given for you" (Luke 22. 19).
 "Who His Own Self bare our sins in His Own body on the tree" (1 Pet. 2. 24).
 "Ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ" (Rom. 7. 4).
 "Yet now hath He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death" (Col. 1. 21, 22).
 "Through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Heb. 10. 10).
 "Joseph . . . begged the body of Jesus . . . and when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb" (Matt. 27. 57-60).
 "They found not the body of the Lord Jesus" (Luke 24. 3).
 "Who shall change the body of our humiliation, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body" (Phil. 3. 21).
 How important to emphasize that "Jesus Christ has come in the flesh" (1 John 4. 3), but how different was He, morally, from us! Not "the likeness of flesh," for "the Word became flesh" (John 1. 14); but "the likeness of sinful flesh" (Rom. 8. 3) reminding us of the words "that holy thing" (Luke 1. 35). How definite is the Holy Spirit in His emphasis that in Christ is no sin (1 John 3. 5, contrast 1. 8), and that He knew no sin (2 Cor. 5. 21). How glorious is the miracle of His incarnation and atonement, though He was "over all, God blessed for ever" (Rom. 9. 5). Beware of every attack, veiled or unveiled, on the Deity and Sinlessness of the Lord Jesus.

The grace of God never exonerates disobedience, but teaches us to live soberly, righteously and godly.

The psalmist rejoiced in the godly attitude of "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee," and so could pray "I am a stranger in the earth: hide not Thy commandments from me" (Ps. 119. 11, 19).

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The Student of Scripture.

Edited by Percy W. Heward

"Blessed is the man whom Thou choosest, and causest to approach."
 Psalm 65. 4.

A Word of Introduction.

GOD does not only save us "from": there is a blessed "to" and "into" and "for." The healed leper was not only welcome among his old time friends; he was welcomed by God. Deliverance is always with a view to praise and worship. God causes approach unto Himself. And this is the greatest and highest privilege: it excels work for God among men in this sense, though everything, appointed by God, is blessed in its time and proportion: everything that He marks out must be glorious and delightful. Christ did not only die for our sins but for US: He bought US, and we, as a whole, belong to God. Hence the wondrous blessing of access, emphasized in Romans 5. 2 and Ephesians 2. 18, 3. 12 alike. God desires us to claim what we have, and the Holy Spirit leads to this enjoyment.

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The Word of God.

(Concluded.)

There is a parallel when we read on from 2 Timothy 3. 16, "All Scripture," to 4. 2, "Preach the Word, be instant, in season, out of season." The preaching is ever to be in harmony with the Scripture, but if uttered, there is the stress on "the Word," and so the Scripture becomes God's utterance to us in living power, when graciously applied. The scholar, who is not born again, cannot enter into this: mere learning fails altogether. We need Him. How important is this. Without such contact, though we are "living," our experience becomes, in measure, dead; and have we not all been conscious of this? O that there may be a holy realization of God's will, that, both in our receiving and in our ministry, there may be this blessing, "If any man

speak, as the oracles of God," yes, "the living oracles" (1 Pet. 4. 11, Acts 7. 38). The Word of God is more than once brought before us in Acts as "growing" (6. 7, 12. 24, 19. 20). Why? It is living, "the seed is the Word" (Luke 8. 11, 1 Pet. 1. 23). The Word of God takes effect (Rom. 9. 6).

It is very blessed when a soul is brought for the first time to know the living power of truth. The Lord Jesus spoke to some, "Ye search the Scriptures; for IN THEM YE THINK YE HAVE eternal life: and they ARE they which testify of Me: and ye will not come to ME THAT YE MIGHT HAVE LIFE" (John 5. 39, 40). But if any truly come to Him, they find life, and their mere "thinking" is removed, and the Scriptures become a new and living power. A personal salvation is the key to all.

1 Peter 2. 6 tells of what is contained in the Scriptures, but, alas, as verse 8 shows, many who read them, "stumbled at the Word, being disobedient." But how different when we receive in the heart, then we "have" the "Word" in its "sure" and abiding power (2 Pet. 1. 19), and rejoice to know that no prophecy of the Scripture is of its own unfolding and explanation, but that men of God were moved by the Holy Spirit (2 Pet. 1. 20, 21). Thus can we enter into the language of our Lord Jesus in John 6. 63, for the Holy Spirit graciously takes of that which belongs to Him, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." Here is a fuller possibility than we may have yet realized. O that our life may be shining "more and more," in view of the nearness of "the perfect day" (Prov. 4. 18).

While pondering this subject we do well to notice Jeremiah 23, "Who hath stood in the counsel of the Lord, and hath perceived and heard His Word? Who hath marked His Word and heard?" (verse 18). "He that hath My Word, let him speak My Word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord. Is not My Word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces" (verses 28, 29). Thus we see the power of that Word.

In accord with this, we notice many times in Scripture such experiences as "I beheld, and lo" (Jer. 4. 23, 24, 25, 26, Dan. 7. 2, 5, 7, 13, etc.). Why does God thus call upon us to see? The prophet saw, but we do not have a new vision. No, but it is His purpose that the ancient writing should be more than a written message, even a present, living power, realized in our awakened hearts. This is our Father's gracious purpose. O that it may be our joy.

The regularity of the Holy Spirit in the use of the terms ("Scripture" and "Word") cannot be overlooked, and when it becomes more than a distinction in language, even an emphasis on His own vital work to-day, will it not, in increasing measure, affect our own choice of language? Yet we would, by grace, avoid all mere criticism of others, when we appreciate their true love to all that is of God, even though they may do what we have

so often done, and fail to manifest the perfect consistency of phraseology which the Holy Spirit Himself shows. Grace to seek personal accuracy (albeit with freedom); yet to avoid burdening others with a fear of making a "verbal mistake," and to appreciate the love of "one another" whenever there is no difference in "sound doctrine," may well accompany a loving wish to emphasize and realize how much more is possible for all redeemed by the precious blood of Christ,—possible as the living Holy Spirit becomes more real, in His leading and instruction. So will our Father be glorified, and His children love one another more and more.

Concerning Correspondence.

MANY readers, we hope, will remember a letter from a missionary (April, 1938), for we long that these pages may be used of God to bring together those who love Him and wish to illustrate Ezekiel 9. 4, and used to deepen prayer (2 Cor. 1. 11). The correspondence continues by God's grace, amid physical weakness, as to which also prayer is valued. Notes in a recent envelope illustrate concern as to the need, alas, in all parts: "A subtle weapon with which Satan makes war in the Church to-day is the spirit of levity." He suggests "a continued tendency . . . to joke in order not to give an appearance of being 'out of victory'; a making light of every movement of the Holy Spirit towards the perfecting of the saints." We are so thankful for all who are pleading for distinction between the joy of the Lord (Neh. 8. 10, cf. "in the Lord," Phil. 4. 4), and natural lightness and worldlikeness. We quote, further, "a lamentable weakness on the part of many believers in disciplining their children." O that there may be a revival of concern for all the children in believers' families to be led to Christ early. This will not make the home less joyous, in the true sense of the word. How often the responsibilities of parenthood are held all too lightly. It is unspeakably solemn for a believer's child to grow up without Christ, in view of eternity. It is blessed, indeed, to find a Christian home, lit up by His presence.

HIS GLORY.

"I beseech Thee, shew me Thy glory." Exodus 33. 18.

"We beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." John 1. 14.

"My soul thirsteth for Thee . . . to see Thy power and Thy glory, so as I have seen Thee in the sanctuary." Psalm 63. 1, 2.

"We . . . beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed." 2 Corinthians 3. 18.

"He . . . shewed me . . . the holy Jerusalem . . . having the glory of God . . . the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it." Revelation 21. 10, 11, 22.

"Father, I will . . . that they may behold My glory" John 17. 24.

The Margin of your Bible.

(Continued)

The margin unveils some striking Hebrew idioms, for example, Repetition. Notice the emphasis, and encouragement, in

"Justice, justice" (Deut. 16. 20).

"Peace, peace" (Isa. 26. 3, cf. 57. 19).

We are used to this in other Scriptures, "Unclean, unclean" (Lev. 13. 45). "Comfort ye, comfort ye" (Isa. 40. 1), etc. The contrasted thought of division is found when the word "and" is inserted, e.g.:—

"A stone **and** a stone" (Deut. 25. 13).

"An ephah **and** an ephah" (Deut. 25. 14).

"An heart **and** an heart" (Ps. 12. 2).

Further, observe the realization of God's greatness in:—

"A trembling of God" (1 Sam. 14. 15).

"The mountains of God" (Ps. 36. 6).

"The cedars of God" (Ps. 80. 10).

How different is the tendency of many to day, and the failure to see God's hand in nature and in miracles.

"Who will give salvation?" in Psalm 53. 6, may seem an unusual English idiom, but it is a very definite gain. How much stress on God's "giving" we find in Scripture, with the wondrous unveiling of John 3. 16. The English word "set" is often "give," as Deuteronomy 1. 8 indicates, but it is equally so in Genesis 9. 13, Deuteronomy 30. 15, Psalm 8. 1, Ezekiel 37. 26, 39. 21, etc.

Have you noticed Numbers 11. 20, "A month **of** days"? This "seems" unnecessary. But we shall learn, as we go further. We remember how Israel had a sabbath **year** as well as a sabbath **day**. NOW we can appreciate Daniel 10. 2, "Three weeks of days," **for emphasis**, because the previous reference to **weeks** is weeks of years (Dan. 9. 24-27, cf. Gen. 29. 27). Thus we are helped as to the prophecy of the "Seventy Sevens," or 490 years, graciously granted after Daniel's season of prayer and humbling.

When we realize the typical bearing of the **four** sin offerings Leviticus 4, the first two associated with the words "priest" and "congregation," and a heavenly aspect (verse 7), and rejection without the camp, and the latter two suggesting an earthly people, and the blessing to Israel in a day soon to come, the margin of verse 27 is strikingly helpful, "Any soul of the people of the land." The **ruler** or third offerer (verse 22) is unlike the priest, and is connected with the land, so is the fourth offerer. Thus the two pairs are balanced, and we find always such encouragements, leading to prayer for Israel (Rom. 10. 1), for the Lord Jesus died for that nation (John 11. 51), and the spared remnant shall yet become a strong nation, and blossom and bud, and fill the face of the earth with fruit. "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

(If the Lord will, to be continued).

"Ye are bought with a price."

1 Corinthians 6. 20, 7. 23.

The Christian, the World and Its Warfare.

TWICE the Holy Spirit emphasizes this purchase, and it affects everything in the daily Christian life. Salvation does not only concern the heart, or one day of the week, or one part of the body: the whole of a redeemed one, and all that he has alike belong to the Lord Jesus. This is fundamental and vital. It is the ground of the absolute command, "**Be not ye the servants of men.**" Here, moreover, is the solution of our problems. We have not **two** responsibilities, nor **two** objects in life: everything is contained within our responsibility to the Lord Jesus Christ. Hence we rejoice in the exhortations of Ephesians 6. 5, 6, "In singleness of your heart, **as unto Christ,**" "as the servants of **Christ**, doing the will of God from the heart." Likewise in Colossians 3. 23, 24 we read, "**as to the Lord**, and not unto men," "**Ye serve the Lord Christ.**" Now we can more fully understand, "No man can serve two masters" (Matt. 6. 24). He can easily have two employers, but the "**master**" before us here, and the "**service,**" must not be confused with a contract for a few hours' work. We **belong** to our Master: **everything** that is ours is His. A purchased one has no private property. None can have **divided** interests in such a case. It is impossible.

O blessed privilege—to belong to the Son of God! He died and rose for us, that He might be Lord (Rom. 14. 9). Our freedom is in Him and for Him. "Thou wast slain and hast redeemed to God by Thy blood" (Rev. 5. 9). This is the theme of Scripture, yea, and the joy of heaven. Is it not the delight of a believer, now, as he worships in spirit and truth? I **was** a slave of sin: I **was** in prison: I **am** bought, bought by One Whose love and wisdom and will and arrangements are good and acceptable and perfect. My bewilderment is removed. I have not to burden myself by trying to please men, nor to conciliate them. The death of Christ on Calvary has, we repeat, solved all problems, if only our hearts realize this. We have only One to please, and He is the most delightful Master there can be.

Other questions, too, such as success in business, are settled by this precious fact. We are not our own. Money and position are no longer to be the object. The background "**trivial task**" is now dignified if He appoints it. Of what worth is the world's opinion? But if the Lord Jesus wishes something to be done, it is truly precious. His will decides its value: everything which He wishes, He makes glorious in wishing it.

We cannot expect settled peace on earth till the Prince of peace reigns (Isa. 9. 6). Man's compromises are not the fruit of love, nor the work of righteousness (Isa. 32. 17). We thank God for all temporary lulls, and indeed for **all** that He, in perfect wisdom and overruling, permits. We thank Him "for kings and all that are in authority," and acknowledge such wholeheartedly

with tribute, custom, fear and honour (Rom. 13. 7, 1 Pet. 2. 17). But we can never say we "**belong**" to them. They did not "**buy**" us. We belong to Christ. Nothing can alter this unalterable relationship,—nothing! We readily pay taxes, because God has said so. We do not even ask how the money is spent. That is not our responsibility. We dare not resist authority (Rom. 13. 2): to us, as children of God, the powers that be are **unquestionably** of God. What if they should persecute us? Even this would be God's chastisement for us by the time it reached us (Ps. 119. 71), and they would still remain the ministers of God to us for good (Rom. 13. 4, 8. 28). No. we dare not "**resist**": we would ever be "**subject**" for conscience sake (Rom. 13. 5). But if a command infringes our belonging to Christ, and our loyalty to Him, we can only say, submissively and unresistingly, "We have no need to answer in this matter, if it be so, our God . . . is able to deliver . . . but if not . . . we will not" deny our Lord, Who died for us (Dan. 3. 16-18). Like Daniel we would purpose "in our heart" (Dan. 1. 8). Such deep and definite "**purpose of heart**" (Ps. 17. 3, Acts 11. 23) was never more needed than to-day. It is a time of "give and take," of compromise, expediency, and uncertainty. Often it appears that "Truth is fallen," but truth and the will of God are our trusteeship, not a matter of bargaining, and the believer is graciously encouraged to be firm by the Holy Spirit's ministry of the unchanging words, "Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price." Submission is not always obedience, but it is always non-resistance. "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5. 29): the Holy Spirit is given by God to those who obey Him (Acts 5. 32). "Him only shalt thou serve" applies not only to worship, but to every other part of our believing life. When a Christian was commanded by the Roman emperor to worship an image, he could give but one truthful answer, "Nay, I am bought with a price." And so as to all else, however popular and plausible, against "the law of Christ." As it was then, it is still to-day. There is no "development": the Lord's will remains. "Whose image and superscription?" is the searching question. The **money** bears Cæsar's: but we do not: we belong to Christ. **Taxes** we pay in current coin, but we cannot give "**ourselves**." The thoughtful believer may see herein God's Own solution of the problems as to warfare also. We honour the authority that bears the sword (Rom. 13. 4), but we are not **part** of the authority, we do not bear the sword, we would not "**reign**" before the time (1 Cor. 4. 8), even to the extent of a vote-share. We remain strangers and pilgrims here. We are not our own: our calling is heavenly (Heb. 3. 1), our citizenship heavenly (Phil. 3. 20). Romans 13 indicates just **what** we are to render, and we would loyally and gladly do this for Christ's sake, and in His Name. But we cannot sin against Him, in His Name. A Christian **cannot** be revolutionary to the glory of God; even in a land of atheism: he can only suffer submissively. Even to "**use threats**" is graciously forbidden him

(1 Pet. 2. 23). He would not wish to execute wrath if he could. To-day is not the time, and he is not the person to carry this out (Rom. 12. 19). Meekness is his appointed characteristic: **here** is the patience and the faith "of the saints" (Rev. 13. 10). Has Christ taken the sword? Nay, He **sits**, He has not risen up to judge. Then those who are "bought with a price" are to have their feet shod only with the preparation of the gospel of **peace**. I cannot preach Christ to a soul while I blow his brains out: and anything that is incompatible with the fulfilment of Mark 16. 15 does not belong to me as a member of Christ. "Bought with a price!"

(If the Lord will, to be continued).

The First Words.

IT is always helpful to observe God's order. Genesis 1. 1 is, in His appointment, the first verse, and the **opening** command of God to Adam (Gen. 1. 28) is full of instruction in its spiritual parallel. And so is it throughout Scripture. There is not one case of "wrong order" in His words. If He mentions anything first there is a purpose: even the order of names is significant (Heb. 7. 2). There is nothing haphazard or without meaning in His words and works. So when we reach the Gospel according to Matthew, the opening declaration of the Holy Spirit (verse 1) gives a key in the choice of David and Abraham and the first utterance of the Lord Jesus (to John) is a command (Matt. 3. 15), linked with an unveiling of His own object and perfect work. How striking that He, in Whom there was all fulness, emphasized the word "**fill**" at the very outset. His first words to the tempter are strikingly contrasted with Eve's (Matt. 4. 4), and again indicate a perfect carrying through of the Father's will, and unveils **Himself** in the prophecies of the books of Moses. Here He is the Living One, as in Romans 10. 5 and Revelation 1. 18. His continued answers to the tempter, without exception, lay stress on Scripture, and then we reach, in His fifth recorded ministry of the lips, His **first** statement that is not an "answer" to words addressed to Him. Strikingly it is a call to **repentance**, so little realized to-day. His gracious continuance of the work of the man sent from God, who prepared His way, is thus evident (see Matt. 3. 2, 3).

We have now reached **three** commands,—one to John, and he obeyed, one to Satan (Matt. 4. 10), and he could not resist, and the third to poor sinners. Blessed be God for all who have repented! A gospel of **mental** belief which ignores repentance, is quite foreign to Scripture. O that we may "hold fast the form of sound words." Next we have Christ's **first** words to those whom He made His disciples and apostles, and once again we have a command (Matt. 4. 19). This commandment, moreover, is with promise, a promise which implies that men are in the world with a wrong life, and need to be brought to "death": Matthew 3. 10 is similar: the gospel never speaks of a patching-up or a mere improvement. A "fisher of men" is

concerned that the old life may be dealt with in holy judgment. Thanks be to God for the other part of the picture—a new creation (2 Cor. 5. 17). It is remarkable that our Lord's last command to Peter is the same (John 21. 22), and how important that we should "follow" Him, in the Holy Spirit's enabling (John 12. 26). And now we arrive at Christ's first recorded utterance to gathered disciples. It is a well-known "beatitude,"—"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of the heavens" (Matt. 5. 3). Observe that there is an appointed order in these "blessednesses." All would suggest a contrast with the words from Sinai, where the repeated "not" is so striking. But **each** has its proper place, and true "poverty" is first, for our beloved Lord has no room for our riches and self-confidence. Isaiah 57. 15 is precious, and Psalm 32. 1, 2 is evidently to be remembered. Yes, the first unveiling of Christ's will for His gathered people is an entire setting aside of worldly theories. The principles of the kingdom of heaven must separate from the standpoint of the world. "They are not of the world even as I am not of the world." To sinners the Lord Jesus said, "Repent," and at once mentioned the kingdom: to believers He said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit," and at once mentioned the kingdom. The kingdom is deeply important. Satan had shown "all the kingdoms of the world," but Christ showed the contrast: "My kingdom is not of this world" (John 18. 36). Here is a clear-cut distinction from Judaism, and from Gentilism alike (Luke 22. 25). Here are Divine rules for disciples, not for nations. Human organisations are opposed, and earthly states cannot carry out heavenly principles in a world where Christ is rejected. The believer is encouraged to seek the reverse of earthly riches and glory. Such beatitudes must ever remain unpopular to the natural man, but before honour is humility, and "the meek shall inherit the earth" (Ps. 37. 11, Matt. 5. 5). A true grasp of the "Beatitudes" will separate believers from politics and warfare. The inherent retaliation in the latter is not the sphere of a "pilgrim." And the normal deceit in its warp and woof, and the present confidence in man-power, still further shut a thoughtful believer outside, for how could he engage therein "heartily, as to the Lord" (Col. 3. 23)?—and any other attitude is unapproved.

Our Lord's first prohibition is of wrong "thinking" (Matt. 5. 17), and again the precious word "fill" is in front of us. How blessed if we know what it is to receive out of His fulness (John 1. 16), and to understand the Holy Spirit's words, "Ye are filled full in Him" (Col. 2. 10). So we could continue the various "firsts" in Matthew, but the believing reader may already be helped to continue for himself or herself. These pages are not a substitute for, but a help to, personal and spiritual Bible study.

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The Student of Scripture.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"His mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue, and he spake, and praised God."
Luke 1. 64.

A Word of Introduction.

"**G**REAT is the Lord, and greatly to be praised" (Ps. 145. 3). The object of these pages is His glory. When Zacharias said, "Whereby shall I know this?" at the VERY time he was presenting the fragrant incense which spoke of accepted prayer (Prov. 15. 8), he became dumb, and never spoke, till God owned an ACT OF OBEDIENCE, and gave him back his tongue to praise therewith. It is a beautiful, yet solemnizing, thought. How often we lose POWER TO PRAISE (not, it may be, physically) through unbelief. Faith and obedience are stepping stones to blessing. God graciously grants POWER TO PRAISE when we are willing to use it. Have we sufficient concern to glorify God, or do we think more of our knowledge, our activity, our blessing? O to be PRAISE-FULL.

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The Holy Spirit's work in Luke 1 and 2.

"He (John) shall be filled with the Holy Spirit" (1. 15).
"The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee" (marg. 1. 35).
"Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit" (1. 41).
"Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit" (1. 67).
"The Holy Spirit was upon him (Simeon), and it was revealed unto him by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ, and he came by the Spirit into the temple" (2. 25-27).

How much the Holy Spirit is needed: how definite is the emphasis on the word "fill" in relation to Him.

"Did not our hearts burn within us, while He talked with us?"

LUKE 24. 32 is full of deep and helpful meaning. When the two disciples started on the way to Emmaus, the Lord Jesus was just as fully risen from the dead as when they arrived there, and the Scriptures were just as completely written. There was no addition to the facts, but the standpoint of the two who journeyed became quite changed. The fact of His finished work was the ground of joy, but the realization of it was the means of joy. Salvation cannot be made by "realization," Christ's accomplished work is the one foundation. But it is so important that there should be love's conscious appropriation by living faith. Without faith, I do not have a blessed experience. Faith is a hand, to take what God has graciously provided. Faith says "Yes" to God, and joyfully rests on His word and work. Unbelief is a miserable "No," and it is, indeed, a miserable thing. When we doubt, how can we be happy? The Lord Jesus rightly said to the two whom He overtook, "Ye are sad" (Luke 24. 17). But He did not leave them thus. They had looked at everything **without Christ**, at the Scriptures without Him, at the circumstances without Him. "They have crucified Him" was their goal, and just as a **dead** typical sacrifice could afford the worshipper no comfort, or peace of conscience, if there had been nothing beyond the death of Christ, His work would have been unavailing, for death without resurrection would imply absence of righteousness, and thus absence of eternal life. But how different was everything when He, Who was Himself the Key, gave the key, and opened the Scriptures, and the understandings. The facts were the same, but the hearts were not the same. Those hearts which "circumstances" had made gloomy, were made glad by the Lord Jesus Christ. And we, too, need **Him** to warm our hearts, not only to lukewarmness, but to a living fire. "Did not our hearts **BURN**?" He would not leave them half-encouraged. He was not content with a partial reviving. He caused a fire, not only contact with a fire, but a fire itself: **their** own hearts began to burn, the blessing was not only in hearing, the fire became theirs, and they became able to be a warming blessing to others. It is good to be blessed by contact, but such warmth soon becomes less. The warmth that abides is a fire within. The Lord always seeks this. "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up" (John 4. 14, cf. 7. 38).

Our verse has a precious message as to an assembly. It is so easy to preach **cold truth**. We may speak aright, but there is no power. We may refer to the Scriptures, but there is no real warmth. When the Lord Jesus taught, it was with auth-

ority (Matt. 7. 29), and when He expounded the Scriptures, **hearts burned**. The same verses were known before, but there was a freshness, when He revealed Himself there. Do we, too, make manifest what He is to us, so that when we speak, the messages of Scripture are really "opened"? Do we preach so that those who hear feel the power of the Holy Spirit is with us. Or is our ministry dull, and rather like to that of the scribes? Are we seeking that hearts may burn? Are we ourselves full of the Lord Jesus and His glory, so that we preach with a consciousness of what He is, and others are affected thereby? We remember 1 Corinthians 14. 25. Would those who come into our meeting feel "God is in you of a truth," or "God is absent from you of a truth"? The Bible may be made a dull book when the cold heart preaches it. We are often quite unfair to our wondrous message. We preach that which is glorious as if it were ordinary. We rob the message of its freshness and fulness, and then wonder that there is no fruit. A smoky lampglass can obscure a clearly shining light, and make it dim and disappointing. O that we may seek for burning hearts ourselves in the Scriptures, that other hearts may be caused to burn. "While He opened to us the Scriptures." Yes, the words of the Scriptures are still a mighty power if rightly used; and has not the Holy Spirit come down to continue the precious ministry which the Lord Jesus began on the road to Emmaus? "When thou awakest it shall talk with thee" (Prov. 6. 22) may illustrate the Holy Spirit's ministry in the words, and we remember the sevenfold present tense of Revelation 2 and 3, "What the Spirit saith." There is too much "dead" use of the Scriptures. O for a living consciousness of God's own gracious work thereby.

"No more conscience of sins" (Heb. 10. 2). What do these inspired words mean? The believing heart has a settled peace with God: no sin shall be raised up again to condemn (Rom. 8. 34). The law has once for all dealt with Christ. "Conscience of sins" **now** would be the denial of His atonement **then**. Am I in Him? Then how can God condemn Him, or me in Him? How many sins of mine did He bear? Some or all? Did He leave **one**? Some will tell me Christ died for all my sins except my unbelief. Blessed be His Name, He died for that also. His sacrifice does not leave me as a separate person to make peace, but I am never seen before God's throne of righteousness apart from Christ. I have consciousness of sin as a **child**, and I am grieved and humbled. I hate the sin, and seek my Father's forgiveness, but conscience of sins in connexion with the sacrifice, and involving the bearing of wrath again is unthinkable—impossible. "Perfected for ever" (Heb. 10. 14). O that the evidence and fruit may be seen more and more in "them that are being sanctified."

The Margin of your Bible.

SOME MARGINAL NOTES ON THE PSALMS.

We approach the longest book in the Bible. Appropriately the book of **praises**. The first note is "wicked" (1. 1), and even this is not unimportant, for it is the very word used for the wicked one in Psalm 50. 16. How blessed is separation. The second (1. 3) is the simpler rendering "fade," fittingly reminding of Isaiah 1. 30, 28. 1, 4, 40. 7, 8, in each case a contrast, and Ezekiel 47. 12, a parallel in nature yet to be. It is rendered "wither" only once elsewhere (Ps. 37. 2), hence we are thankful for the marginal help toward the principle of the same English expression for the same original of the Holy Spirit **whenever** possible.

We approach Psalm 2. "Tumultuously assemble" is more expressive of the sad fellowship and energy of men against the Lord Jesus, and "meditate" is not only more literal: it shows men's thoughts in secret, to encourage the holy contrast of Psalm 119. 15, 23, 48, 78, 148 with Joshua 1. 8. Our "meditations" reveal what we **are** (see also Ps. 9. 16, 92. 3, margins). "Anointed My King" (Ps. 2. 6) is helpful. The Lord Jesus is not yet placed there, but, like David, anointed before (1 Sam. 16. 1-13). He is marked out by God the Father as the true King of kings. "The hill of My holiness" is a usual idiom (cf. marg. in Ps. 5. 7, 20. 6, 28. 8, 41. 9, 74. 15, 89. 10). I find this translation more instructive, and would compare "the **gospel of the glory** of Christ" (2 Cor. 4. 4, 1 Tim. 1. 11), "The Son of His love" (Col. 1. 13, loved and loving altogether).

This article is not cataloguing all the notes: different ones may impress other readers. In Psalm 5. 5, "Before Thine eyes" is more definite: we think of Revelation 1. 14, and of the eyes of the Lord in every place (cf. 2 Chron. 16. 9). How solemn is God's view of men still (Ps. 14. 2). Again, not only is Psalm 5. 6 more helpful, through man's iniquitous degradation of language, but the plural "bloods" reminds us that this is common for life-blood (cf. Isa. 1. 15, Ezek. 16. 9). The blending of singular and plural, to emphasize **individual** responsibility is seen in Psalm 5. 9, "in **his** mouth" (cf. 12. 7, 17. 12). This is a lesson we ever need to learn. We note that the same verse renders "wickednesses" by "very wickedness": this plural may be one of emphasis, so we have "the lovingkindnesses of the Lord" in Isaiah 63. 7, and "our righteousnesses" in 64. 6 (note also "salvations" in 28. 8 marg., "strengths" in Ps. 90. 10 lit., "revenges," Ps. 94. 1, and "habitations," Ps. 132. 5 marg.: in each case a Divine and comprehensive stress).

How beautiful is the "crowning" of Psalm 5. 12: God does more than protect: so "a pure mitre" is placed upon the head of Joshua in Zechariah 3. We are richly blest (Ps. 103. 1-4).

Coming to Psalm 6, "every night" is a small point, but

more literal and suggestive. How real were the feelings of God's psalmists. This intensity did not hinder, nor was it hindered by, the verbal inspiration. God has used it to make the book a deep power in the experiences of His people. In Psalm 86. 3, contrastedly we are helped by "all the day": the continuance which is seen in Psalm 71. 8, 15, 24 reminds us of 1 Thessalonians 5. 17, 18. How irregular and indefinite we easily become. Continuance in prayer ("ask, seek, knock"), and in praise, pleases God.

Psalm 12. 3, "great things," reminds us of Joel 2. 20, and the blessed contrast of 21, with the manifestation of Psalm 126. 2, followed by the testimony, "The Lord hath done great things for us; we are glad."* Man ever boasts of his own greatness (Jer. 51. 55, Dan. 4. 30), but God ever looks to him that is humble and of a contrite spirit. "Great" is a helpful subject in Scripture, with the climax of Babylon's greatness ten times in Revelation 17-19, and the praise resounding there as of great waters to Him Who is greatly to be praised (Ps. 145. 3). "Who will give?" (Ps. 14. 7, 53. 6) is a theme that will bear repeated mention. The margin rightly speaks of Romans 11. 26, but why not 11. 35 also? The need for a new covenant to give Israel one heart and one way (Jer. 32. 39, Deut. 5. 29) shows the hopelessness of anything from the flesh. But Ezekiel 11. 19 shall come true, and our prayers should be fervent (Rom. 10. 1).

Psalm 18. 44 (cf. 81. 15) may explain how there will be found those who rise against the Lord Jesus at the end of the thousand years (Rev. 20. 8). Good government does not change man. But the words call **us** to truthful and frank devotedness, the rendering and surrendering, which spring from a loving heart, to Him Who loved and loveth us.

* Here, however, is the verbal form, see the helpful margin "magnified (made great) to do."

(If the Lord will, to be continued).

"Is it a light thing?" (Ezek. 8. 17). How easy it is to underestimate **sin** against God. How important to view it as that "abominable thing" that **God hates**. The blessing, moreover, in Ezekiel 9 is not upon those who argue against sin, or even on those who stand clear of it, but who "sigh and cry for all the abominations." True, it is needful to be personally separate as well, for if we "vex" our righteous soul, yet go into temptation, then, although the Lord lays hold of us and delivers out of all temptations, we can hardly have the **fuller** experience of an Abraham, who interceded for Lot, and who "obtained promises," and who was called "the friend of God" (see Jas. 4. 4).

"Ye are bought with a price"—Continued

1 Corinthians 6. 20, 7. 23.

The Christian, the World and Its Warfare.

Wondrous words, "Your bodies are the members of Christ" (1 Cor. 6. 15). Is it surprising then that believers are encouraged to "go forth unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach" (Heb. 13. 13)? The whole attitude is of one piece, and all over-reaching in business, and self-defence, and worldly "standing up for one's rights," and legal redress are cut out. The Christian is as a "sheep." His only safety from wolves is Christ. "Lo, I am with you all the days" (Matt. 28. 20). To act the Christian sometimes, and to use the world's threats at another, is to bring disgrace on His Name.

Herein then we find His searching call to holiness. If I humbly say, "I belong to Christ," I must not only plead conscience when dealing with "problems," but humbly "do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus" (Col. 3. 17). Has not the body been presented to Him (Rom. 12. 1, 2), and are not the members now for Him to use (Rom. 6. 13)? How can the hand presented to Him for His gracious work of bringing souls to Himself write a harsh letter, or work evil to another, any more than throw a bomb? That rifle does not fit the hand which would only minister love, and "make disciples of all the nations" (Matt. 28. 19). Have I a neighbour? I can only love (Rom. 13. 9). Have I an enemy? I can only love (Matt. 5. 44). "Bought with a price," I cannot suit myself to "circumstances." Without the "authority" of the Lord Jesus (Matt. 28. 18), how can I choose and act as if I were my own? Independence is robbery if I am bought. I am not free to sin, but only free to do His will.

The all-comprehensiveness of the claim of Christ, to His redeemed, answers any objections that may be raised. For example, we are asked: "What would happen if everyone took the same standpoint?" There is no Scriptural suggestion that believers will ever be a majority now: they remain a "little flock." But "IF" all took His standpoint in all things they could at least "follow His steps" (1 Pet. 2. 21). So the question, "What would happen?" only appeals to those whose ideal is a position in **this age**. If more had the joy of John 12. 25, 26, how blessed it would be. A kindly authority may say, "We own your loyalty, but what if we exempt you as Christians; what shall we do as to others who ask what you ask on far different grounds?" We answer that it is not ours to advise authorities, but we do not ask an undue "favour." If the authorities in any land persecute, they rob themselves far more than us. A Christian in the wrong place, stifling his conscience, would be a hindrance to all, but in the right place, honouring his Lord, he is an asset to the land. None can plead that we are favoured, unless they are willing for the "whole" of the standpoint, for

the reproach of Christ, and its surrender of much that men of the world hold dear. The simple standpoint of "Ye are bought with a price," will never attract the mixed multitude in man's day (1 Cor. 4. 3, marg.). 'Tis the same in a trades union. Whenever a child of God says "No," others may retort, "But you reap advantages." We answer:—You would not allow us to act otherwise: you demand that we receive these for your own sakes, not ours. And the true Christian gives far more than he receives: the persecutor loses far more than he gets. The humble believer is willing to surrender advantages, but not willing to surrender his Lord, or his Lord's will. Let him have his Lord in prison rather than be without his Lord in luxury. Believers are not citizens of the world, but they are the salt of the earth: how oft is God's judgment held back by praying Christians! "Bought with a price!"

What if some scorn and oppose? Did not the Lord Jesus say, "They are not of the world, **even as I am not of the world**," and again, "Because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you **out of the world**, therefore the world hateth you" (John 15. 19)? Is the path attractive? Yes, if **He** is; no, if **He** is not. O that you and I may yet find sweeter music in the glorious words, "Who gave Himself for us that He might deliver us **from** this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father" (Gal. 1. 4). This is no new theory. It has always been His will for **His** own, because they are not **their** own. The whole belongs to Him: shall He have His rightful purchase, or shall it be sinfully withheld? "You soon won't be able to do anything," says someone. On the contrary, we can truly be a blessing in daily life, and fill many spheres to God's glory. They may be "humble," but we shall seek to be found trustworthy. The faithful Christian should be the best subject and the most reliable employee, though he cannot present **himself** to his earthly master. He **has** presented himself once to one Master, owning that Master's sovereign right, but he can be faithful, and he will hate "eye-service," because of the honour of his one "Master." The Lord Jesus has not left His own without instructions. Professions and occupations which involve judgment and threatening are indeed closed, all that includes deceit and untruthfulness is obviously excluded, but they can work with their own hands the thing which is **good** (Eph. 4. 28), and the promise of Matthew 6. 33 is not a dead letter. We shall have food and raiment (1 Tim. 6. 8).

"Here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come," is true whether in London or New York, Berlin or Lenin-grad, Rome or Tokio:—we are not **earth's** citizens. The Lord has said: "My kingdom is **not** of this world: if My kingdom were of this world, **then would My** servants fight" (John 18. 36). "Now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly" (Heb. 11. 16). This describes our attitude. We are here to do the

will of God, and the little things become sanctified, and the daily duties have a new meaning (2 Cor. 5. 17). Let the believer bring the love of Christ into workshop and office, let the just weight, which is His **delight**, as much as the prayer of the upright (Prov. 11. 1, 15. 8), be found in constant use, and men will at least be compelled to say, "We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God" (Dan. 6. 5). Thus will there be a witness, and some will be ashamed (1 Pet. 3. 16), and drawn to Christ. But if those who bear Christ's Name plead conscience as to national and legal authorities, yet use tricks of trade in the dark, or urge that they cannot fight, yet welcome enlarged income by making munitions, the fine gold is become dimmed, and the ointment of the apothecary will send forth a stinking savour (Eccl. 10. 1). The "heavenly calling" is not to be put on when convenient, and then put off. "Because ye belong to Christ" affects seven days in the week. The believer has no time off: he is never "his own," except that in love he possesses his soul in the joy that his Lord possesses him for ever.

(If the Lord will, to be continued).

SOME TWOFOLD EXPRESSIONS.

The grace of God (1 Cor. 15. 10).
 The God of all grace (1 Pet. 5. 10).
 The righteousness of God (Rom. 3. 22).
 O God of my righteousness (Ps. 4. 1).
 The peace of God (Phil. 4. 7).
 The God of peace (Phil. 4. 9).
 The salvation of God (Luke 3. 6).
 The God of salvation (Ps. 68. 20).
 The truth of God (Rom. 1. 25).
 A God of truth (Deut. 32. 4).
 The judgment of God (Rom. 2. 2).
 The God of judgment (Mal. 2. 17).
 The glory of God (Ps. 19. 1).
 The God of glory (Acts 7. 2).
 The glory of the Lord (Isa. 40. 5).
 The Lord of glory (1 Cor. 2. 8).
 The God of Israel (2 Sam. 23. 3).
 The Israel of God (Gal. 6. 16).

The prayerful student may rejoice to increase the same. Examples of any expressions used by the Holy Spirit may well be used to promote further Bible meditation, and praise.

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The Student of Scripture.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me: for he wrote of Me." John 5. 46.

"If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." Luke 16. 31.

"Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." Luke 24. 27.

A Word of Introduction

[It is an unspeakable privilege to be "in Christ Jesus, and to see Him, by faith, in the Scriptures. A critic "thinks," a believer has assurance. The Holy Spirit is living and He takes of the things of Christ, and shows them to the redeemed. We have no hesitation in emphasizing the earlier Scriptures, the Bible our Lord Jesus used and which alone the first Christians possessed. If a reader finds nothing therein, the fault is in him, and it is a fault fraught with danger. Disbelief in the books God gave through Moses is disbelief in Christ. Moses wrote of Him, and esteemed His reproach riches (Heb. 11. 26). do we!]

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"A Sweet Savour."

THESE words apparently occur 42 times in the Old Testament regarding that which was presented to God, the fullest frequency being in Leviticus and Numbers, each claiming 17. Why this remarkable repetition and emphasis? Do we sufficiently realize God's standpoint, His will, His feeling and His joy? Are we sufficiently occupied with His delight in His beloved Son?—"Mine Elect in Whom My soul delighteth" (Isa. 42. 1), "the Lord is well pleased for His righteousness' sake" (verse 21), "This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased" (Matt. 17. 5). Such words should affect our whole attitude. What is the exact meaning of the expression used by the Holy Spirit? Numbers 28. 2 and Ezekiel 20. 41 answer, "a savour

of **rest**." God's creation—"rest" (another word) was disturbed by sin; yet He finds abiding rest—Where? Not in Adam, but in Christ. In accord with this do we not read concerning the appointed types of redemption, "Arise, O Lord, into Thy rest; Thou, and the ark of Thy strength," "This is My rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it" (Ps. 132. 8, 14)? When "the **earth** sitteth still and is at rest" (Zech. 1. 11) God is grieved. Till His centre has become man's centre, and His glory the great object, all "rest" is a counterfeit millennium. There is no "peace" except in Him Who is "our Peace." John 14. 27 and 16. 33 emphasize another aspect of this solemnizing contrast.

The first occurrence of "a savour of rest" is impressive (Gen. 8. 20, 21). As in Exodus 29 and Leviticus 1, the burnt offering, or **ascending** offering, is revealed as the ground of God's rest. In the same chapter God remembered **Noah**, the man of "rest," and those with him in the ark, and "the ark **rested**," and the dove evidently **found** rest (verse 12, contrast 9) after the olive told of the fruit of the Holy Spirit. The word here is the same throughout: the flood of judgment was past. The ark was a precious picture of the Lord Jesus: all "rest" is in Him and His work. Yes, only **in Him** can the Father rest. Leviticus 2. 12 strikingly refers to the Pentecost firstfruits baken with leaven, picturing believers in their walk and witness (Lev. 23. 17): "As for the oblation of the firstfruits, ye shall offer them unto the Lord: but they shall **not** be burnt on the altar for a **sweet savour**." We recollect heart-searchingly how the Holy Spirit came on the Lord Jesus as a **dove**, on the disciples as **fire**. We were not on the altar: our acceptance, every moment, depends on our Lord Jesus.

This leads up to the subject of "Fire." Evidently it does not always speak of judgment. There is a clear contrast between the fire of Leviticus 10. 2 and 9. 24. It is noteworthy that the verb for "burning" the "offering made by fire of a sweet savour" is uniformly "to burn **as incense**," not at all the general word for burning. The incense was a type of prayer, and **never** consumed in wrath, but in full approval and acceptance (Ex. 29. 13, 18, 25, 30. 7).^{*} Are there any confirmations of this deeply important thought? There are many:—

(1) The burnt offering is the **ascending** offering. Wrath is rather connected with a **descending**. Cf. the incense and the fire of the lamp "ascending" (Lev. 24. 2, marg.).

(2) The "sweet savour" was associated with God's "**bread**" (Num. 28. 2). The thought of judgment is quite distinct:—separation, **not food**.

(3) The "sweet savour" is associated in Leviticus 2 with the fine flour, frankincense and oil of the meal offering, **without blood**, emphasizing Christ's spotless character (cf. Jud. 6. 21).

^{*}A Concordance, as Young's, indicating the Hebrew words also, will make this perfectly clear. There is no confusion. "Incense" in Exodus 25. 6, etc., is from the same root. God never uses a word without a reason.

(4) God's reference to the travesty in Ezekiel 16. 19 illustrates the aspect of food, not judgment.

(5) The allusion in 2 Corinthians 2. 15 plainly excludes all thought of substitutionary wrath, and again emphasizes our acceptance in the Beloved.

Now we can see more fully the beauty of the threefold refrain in Leviticus 19. 13, 19:—

- (a) "A burnt sacrifice" (an ascending offering).
- (b) "An offering made by fire."
- (c) "A sweet savour" (savour of rest).
- (d) "Unto the Lord."

As soon as the sacrifice was **slain** (that action pictured wrath) the inward perfections were displayed, and became God's food. So in Matthew 3, when our Lord Jesus rose up from the type of having filled "all righteousness," having "finished" all, in bearing wrath, the Father at once referred to His enjoyment of His Beloved Son. It is the same thought, and precious to our hearts. Food is that wherein we are to take pleasure: it is a refreshment, with an appointed "taste." The fire received and took the food heavenward. Whether in the bush, or in the pillar, fire was the symbol of God's own presence. We repeat that there is no suggestion of devouring in judgment. This may remove a misconception, and show us the deep importance of the personal perfections of the Lord Jesus, in connexion with His substitutionary work for His people. To mention the bearing of wrath, without the stress on these, mutilates the Divine fulness of instruction. The sin offering aspect of Christ's work, and the removal of our guilt can never be too fully emphasized, but the sin offering was not the only aspect. Leviticus 1—6 makes this clear. We do not read of salvation by our Lord Jesus in a way that isolates His holy passivity from His blessed activity. He **gave** Himself, He **bare** our sins, and was ever active in fulfilling the will of the Father to the last (Heb. 10. 10). Indeed, it is impossible to "isolate" activity and suffering in One Who was perfect. Bearing the judgment without the full response of loving willingness, so that the obedience and the suffering are united to the last moment, would not have been perfect and sacrificial. How we should and would adore Him.

And now we realize that though, in ourselves, we are like the leavened loaves, even when the Holy Spirit has restrained, and still graciously restrains, the **working** of the leaven, "in Him" we are constantly "a sweet savour." The Father Himself says so (2 Cor. 2. 15) even as we are "the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. 5. 21). Who can exhaust the meaning of the words "in Him"? "Pause my soul, adore and wonder": it is all so wonderful. Think more and more of the Father's infinite delight in all the character and work of His Beloved Son. It is blessed to dwell on our salvation **from** wrath, but let not a self-centred view of the work of grace be made a hindrance. Let us realize more God's satisfaction, and **His** rest. A sacrifice

would not have been such, had not God Himself found fully "a savour of rest" therein. The burning did not make the acceptability it was the claiming of that which was acceptable. When our beloved Lord died, at once all was finished, and the veil was immediately rent, and it was seen that our guilt, with all its filthiness, which had been reckoned to Him as our Substitute had not changed or obliterated any of His personal Perfections. He was entitled to life. The Father found joy in His Person, His character and His work, and, wondrous fact, we as those for whom He was Substitute were thereby viewed as the Father's delight in Him.. Let us say the words once more, with reverent gratitude, they are the words of the Holy Spirit, written in the very same epistle where we read "the righteousness of God in Him." Yes, they are the words of absolute truth for each one, even the youngest believer, viewed in Christ, "We are unto God a sweet savour of Christ." It is not a matter of attainment in Christian experience. It is because of God's own covenant plan, viewing our sins laid on the Lord Jesus and Himself as our Substitute and Representative. It is evidently God's will that we should contemplate this aspect more, even as our hearts are not only primarily to think of Christ's Coming as an event for our relief, but as His receiving and presenting **His Own to Himself**, in His fulness of joy, when He shall see of the travail of His soul. Therefore let our grateful hearts take God's standpoint, and so we too shall enjoy the "sweet savour," and find undisturbed rest where God rests.

The Margin of your Bible. SOME MARGINAL NOTES ON THE PSALMS.

(Continued)

May I briefly touch on a few helpful margins?—Psalm 20. 3 ("turn to ashes," the fire of God's acceptance, cf. "a savour of rest, an offering made by fire"), 23. 2 ("pastures of tender grass": how real is His shepherding care), 28. 9 (when the Lord feeds, He leads and rules, when He leads and rules, He feeds), 29. 9 ("every whit of it uttereth, glory," is this true of our life? Ps. 103. 1, contrast Hab. 2. 11, 12), 31. 18 ("a hard thing," with Jude 15: let us not be irritated if men speak hard things against us **falsely**, Matt. 5. 11), 34. 5 (with Isa. 2. 2), 35. 18 ("strong people"—the "congregation" would emphasize all—and next the "strong," as in Isa. 53. 12, may remind us of a special encouragement to those who are faithful, and who do not faint in the day of adversity), 37. 7 ("Be silent to the Lord," cf. 62. 1, 65. 1—do we talk too much? Hab. 2. 1, Zech. 2. 13), 42. 5 (both renderings are warranted, and both are helpful: may our hearts enjoy both), 45. 1 ("bubbling over," one of the best known margins, but have we this experience? John 4. 14), 47. 9 (the princes were the willing ones, Neh. 11. 2, Ps. 110. 3, Song 6. 12 marg.: the Lord does not want mere

conscripts), 48. 13 ("set your heart," the prayerful reader will observe how the original emphasizes the heart more than our English, e.g., Isa. 40. 2, Hag. 1. 5), 50. 23 ("conversation" is manner of life, so in 1 Peter six times, 1. 15, 18, 2. 12, 3. 1, 2, 16), 51. 10 ("a constant spirit," contrast 78. 8 and 2 Chron. 12. 14—the same word, also "O God, my heart is fixed." Ps. 108. 1, 112. 7, may this be our joyful experience), 60. 11 ("salvation": how impressive, man cannot "save," cf. 146. 3), 65. 3 ("words, or matters of iniquities," written against us, but "Thou shalt make an atonement as to them" is the blessed declaration: "O, the blessednesses," Ps. 32. 1, Col. 2. 14), 68. 3 ("rejoice with gladness," how often **two words** are together for joy, 33. 1, cf. Phil. 4. 4, God desires the rich fulness of His people's gladness, 92. 4), 68. 18 ("in the Man," very difficult, until we read Ephesians 4 quoting this passage and speaking of the "gifts" in the **one** body of Christ, till we come to a perfect man, the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ), 71. 3 (God is the Rock, so 18. 2, 31. 3, 73. 26, and we think of Matt. 16. 18, Christ's emphasis on His Deity: Peter was a "stone" joined to the "Rock"†). Thus we reach the end of the second of the five Books of Psalms (72. 19, 20 shows this, cf. 41. 13, 89. 52, 106. 48). May the reader continue his personal meditations on **many** "margins." We will only add a few.

In days of strain how often we turn to Psalm 91, "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall lodge (pass the night) under the shadow of the Almighty." The word "lodge" at first surprises, but when we realize the meaning that one who constantly dwells will be ready for emergency blessing "under the shade" of God's protection we reach a deeply important principle. We cannot prepare for special difficulties when they come: we need to be always with the Lord, then we shall not be taken by surprise (cf. Col. 4. 6, "always" then "answer" suddenly, so 1 Pet. 3. 15, the "sanctuary" first).

The literal rendering of Psalm 95. 11 is important in view of Hebrews 4. 3. The idiom is very emphatic. God's unfinished sentences are striking (Luke 13. 9 is another). "If" thus implies a strong negative: does "If not" in 2 Thessalonians 2. 3 contain a strong affirmative, without need for the italics? This is only a suggestion. Many know that "Praise ye the Lord" and "Hallelujah" are the same, but Psalms 105. 45, 106. 1 helpfully impress this, showing that the same word comes twice together (as "Verily, verily"), and we know it begins and ends some psalms, and is the most repeated command of Scripture. Beloved Christian readers, is our life full of praise? If not, there is something wrong.

(If the Lord will, to be continued.)

† Leaflet gladly sent.

"Ye are bought with a price"—Concluded

1 Corinthians 6. 20, 7. 23.

The Christian, the World and Its Warfare.

"Bought with a price." Sound forth the words yet again. Do they mean little? Did the Son of God give **Himself** for His own, and are they still like men of the world? Are there not two spheres to-day, or is there only one? When Noah prepared an ark to the saving of his house, he condemned the world, and 1 John 5. 19 speaks of two positions still. Far be it from us to say who are not redeemed and who are. "The Lord knoweth them that are His" (2 Tim. 2. 19). Some such may be "mixed" with the world, only He can separate His gold from dross. But His principles and precepts are for our guidance, and He divides all into two classes, and only two. Again we read the words, "I have chosen you out of the world." If you, dear reader, deny this, your contention is with the Lord Jesus Himself, not with us. If you say, "I, too, believe in Christ," affectionately we ask you, if you are "bought with a price," to accept the privileges of whole-hearted separation unto Him, and all His will. If, alas, you say "No," by lip or by life, how can we, to avoid your displeasure, deny Him the pleasure of love's obedience? It is plain that Romans 12. 19-21 and 13. 1-4 are quite different, because dealing with two different spheres. Is it difficult to say in which of the two the disciple of Christ shall now be found?

It is the same with dispensations. Many think that because God commanded war to Israel of old, in executing His judgments, this justifies His people's participation to-day. But the conditions are utterly different:

<i>Then</i> His people were in one Nation.	<i>Now</i> His people are in all nations.
--	---

<i>Then</i> He appointed His people to act in His Name in wrath.	<i>Now</i> He entrusts His people with the gospel of His grace.
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Furthermore, are the leaders of armies willing to recognise "the Captain of the Lord's host" (Jos. 5. 14, 15), and a standing still to see His salvation if He so appoints (2 Chron. 20. 17), or a reduction from 32,000, first to 10,000 and then 300, at His bidding (Jud. 7. 3, 7)? Unless His will is sought primarily on each occasion (1 Chron. 14. 10, 14), and "the battle is the Lord's," the parallel is only a fiction.* "Whatsoever ye do, do

* Nor can we forget that when God sent He normally appointed victory. But how can victory be for *both* sides? Yet His people *are* on both sides, being found in *all* nations. If any think He entrusts warfare to believers when they are born in one land, does He so if they are born in the "enemy land?" or should *each* believer decide anew on *each* occasion what he will do? How graciously God has prevented such an impossible dilemma, which would be unfair, if not traitorous, to a nation in the midst of strife, and would require knowledge that could not be attained by private individuals at the outset, when decision would be needed,—if at all. In wisdom He has prevented the "problem" by arranging for His Own "bought" ones to remain always as pilgrims, doing all they Scripturally can to be a *real* blessing in the land where God has placed and blesses them. How fitting are His appointments at all times.

it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men" (Col. 3. 23) is a principle in the context of **daily business**,—even as "if the Lord will" in James 4. 15. A Christian should put his heart into whatever he does. If he accepts the call to fight, then he must fight enthusiastically "as to the Lord" if he meets an "enemy"—believer he must wish to lay him low, he dare not shoot to the side, with ammunition which is not his own: that would be stealing and guilty untruthfulness. If he has a bomb, he must desire the maximum for "**his**" country, in its deadly use. But, after all, is not heaven his country, and is not the gospel of peace still his message? Surely he is not called to destroy evil men, but to tell them of Christ. Has not he received mercy, to be merciful? He dare not hurry men into a lost eternity, unless the One to Whom he belongs has said that this is His will. And where has He entrusted us with such service to be done "unto the Lord, and not unto men" (Col. 3. 23)?

"Bought with a price." "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier" (2 Tim. 2. 4). A "soldier" has rightly one object: other objects are entangling. He is not in mere employment: his whole being is claimed. Hence by military (contrasted with civil) law, he cannot plead "conscience" against the official commands of a superior. Is this then the place for a Christian who belongs to Christ, and is personally responsible to Him? "The good fight of faith" means that all other surrender of "ourselves" would be our "entangling." Christ possesses His people **first**, and He will not sell them, nor give up the purchase of His Own precious blood. With love's jealousy He rightly claims their all, and shall our answer be, "Lord, Thou hast indeed purchased, but it is not easy to avoid the claims of others; let me be excused"? Nay, as His redeemed, let our response to His unspeakable love be more devoted love to Himself, while we wait for His Coming, and seek His approval and joy in that day.

Why does the Holy Spirit dwell within believers? This amazing fact is a wondrous privilege. He has come because we are "sons" (Gal. 4. 6). And He is called the "Spirit of promise . . . the Earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession" (Eph. 1. 13, 14). He has come to claim, even to-day, those who are "bought with a price," that they may simply **represent their Lord Jesus here**. Shall we "grieve" Him by "bitterness and wrath" (Eph. 4. 30, 31)? Shall we say we are "bought," and yet deny the leading of Him Who indwells in order that we may not act in our own natural ignorance? Can I send a sinner to judgment in the power of the Holy Spirit Who has come that I may be a witness of Christ in His power? Can I kill one whose only hope is the Lord Jesus—kill him in the Name of the Lord Jesus? "Bought with a price" is a blessed reality: O that there may be a blessed realization with abundant fruit, in every part of daily life, unto the praise of His glory!

"When your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service?" Exodus 12. 26.

"When thy son asketh thee." Exodus 13. 14, Deuteronomy 6. 20.

"When your children ask." Joshua 4. 6.

GOD meant the children to ask, and meant the children to know His wondrous works. "That they should make them known to their children" is the message of Psalm 78. 4, 5 (cf. 34. 11). The conversation in the home is to be more and more occupied with the things of the Lord (Deut. 6. 7). Encourage the children to "ask," dear Christian parent. Don't put them off, do not be too busy to attend to this privilege of service: God meant the children to ask.

It is worthy of remark moreover, that three of the special themes before us concern **redemption**. What are they? The passover, the redeemed firstling of an ass, the way through Jordan by the blood-sprinkled mercy seat. How important is the antitype, even salvation by the blood of Christ. Do we speak enough of Him and His work in the home? Possibly the thought rises up, "The children will become tired of it." Yes, if you and I are: yes, if father and mother are "divided": yes, if there is any suggestion of a mere repetition, a mere sense of duty. We need enthusiasm, living power, and true revival, in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Possibly the claims of modern education, and homework, seem to clash. We do not wish to speak lightly of the realized difficulties of parents in deciding what is God's will regarding their children's earthly studies. We thank God for the **freedom** of parents, in the matter of conscience, in this favoured land. Though we would not be peculiar for the sake of peculiarity, we must never put seeking the kingdom of God and His righteousness into a second place (Matt. 6. 33) as to ourselves or our families. Let the Lord Jesus Christ ever be **Central**. It is possible to be more concerned that our children may "get on" than that they should know the Lord Jesus Christ, and live an out and out, fruitful life to His glory. Let them be educated to be soul-winners, rather than good-situation-winners in commercial advancement. Money is not the principal thing, devotion to Christ is infinitely more precious and important. Persecution may solve some problems which love to the Lord Jesus should have solved first.

"One of the mountains which I will tell thee of."

"Abraham rose up early . . . and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him."

"They came to the place which God had told him of."

Genesis 22. 2, 3, 9.

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The Student of Scripture.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him Who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light."
1 Peter 2. 9.

A Word of Introduction.

IN the lovingkindness of our God we can again send forth pages which are to give a testimony unto Him. We feel concerned, and rightly so, at the state of the world. There is no Christian land, no one is a "Christian" by birth, except by a new birth (John 3. 3). But many are "satisfied" that they are "all right," and many who bear the Name of Christ are listless as to spiritual certainties, and indifferent when many treat the inspiration of Scriptures lightly. The need is not an emotional awakening but a deep revival. We, too, who know that we are "in Christ Jesus," and who have the gracious witness of the Holy Spirit, and who have maintained a measure of separation unto the Lord, need stirred hearts that we may indeed become like our Lord, and shew forth His praises. We have been "called," we are in the light. What manner of persons should we be?

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The First Day of the Week.

IT is the characteristic of a Christian to be disciplelike (Acts 11. 26), and thus he lovingly perceives the will of the Lord, and His gracious hints. There is no desire to render a minimum of outward obedience when the heart walks with God. Far, far otherwise.

We do not find in the present dispensation a code of rules, nor are children of a family treated merely as subjects in a land, though their "subjection" is actually more intense. We do not find regulations in the language of lawyers, with many words,

intended to deal with those who **wish** to discover a loophole. Nor do we find penalties emphasized, as found in the witness of old to Israel. But there are chastisements, and judgments, and losses (Heb. 12. 7, 1 Cor. 3. 15, 11. 32), for God our Father is Holy.

Concerning the First Day, we readily acknowledge absence of legal arrangements as those for Israel regarding the sabbath, but shall we on that account be careless and indifferent to its special emphasis? In some respects we feel yet more the indirect emphasis which assumes our loving readiness to respond and act accordingly.

We recollect that in the Old Testament only **one** day of the week comes into peculiar prominence as such, apart from the sabbath, and various things are associated therewith, and not **with** the sabbath. In the first half of Israel's year "the day after the sabbath" comes twice into unusual privileges of deep spiritual meaning. (The omer waved before the Lord, and the further firstfruits of the two loaves, Lev. 23. 11, 16). Hence, of the three times Israel were to appear before God, the sabbath is actually omitted from one, but the first day is never omitted, and has a peculiar honour twice. Why? It is observable too that God's **first** recorded words, and likewise the gift of the manna were specially associated with the first day, and the first promise of Christ in Genesis 3 appears to have the same background. And when we come to the New Testament, what is the testimony? It is very remarkable, and the mode of instruction is impressive to a believer. Up to the death of the Lord Jesus there is **nothing** about the first day—nothing! Then suddenly, in **each** of the four gospels, it comes into a unique position. Not one other day is put before us, the sabbath is absolutely omitted, **as soon** as the resurrection is reached. This is no small point. We approach the Book of Acts, and the time of waiting has no special sabbath, and its climax is not a sabbath. The seventh sabbath is passed, quite unmentioned, and then we read how the Holy Spirit came in mighty power the first day of the week. The Day of Pentecost was then "fulfilled" (Acts 2. 1, lit.). The Lord Jesus gave the Promise, and "the Promise of the Father" (Acts 2. 33) was thus fulfilled on none other day. It was not on the sabbath. And throughout the book of Acts the sabbath is never associated with the worship of disciples, but the first day is (Acts 20. 7). And in this second passage the sabbath is again passed in **silence**, yea, **every other day** of the week, because seven days are definitely mentioned. Is this an accident? There are no accidents in Scripture. No word is included unnecessarily.

The epistles mention the sabbath just once*—and the first day once. They do not bring before us any other day. How do they mention the sabbaths? All are viewed as a shadow (Col. 2. 17), and in connexion with judgment and the dispensational

* Hebrews 4. 9 contains a word from the root, but surely looks on to the coming Day of the Lord, and its blessed sabbath-keeping after 6,000 years of "man."

setting on one side of God's typical arrangements for Israel. How do they mention the first day? With regard to giving unto the Lord (1 Cor. 16. 1, 2) which is always associated with worship and appearing before God (Ex. 23. 15). This was not merely an offering on one occasion, it was to be "**according to** the first day of the week,"—never on another day **instead**. No variation is approved. Is this not a gracious hint from God?

The Revelation is God's final book in Scripture. A unique experience comes in ch. 1. 10. Can we find its meaning? In view of Colossians 2. 16 we cannot here connect "the Lord's Day" with the sabbath. **No other** day beside the first is prominent elsewhere. But not only so, the word "Lord's" is quite unusual, and **only** occurs once elsewhere, and there of "**the Lord's Supper**" (1 Cor. 11. 20), which Acts 20. 7 has definitely associated with the first day. The expression, we submit, refers to a definite day, which is anticipatory of the Day of the Lord, when He alone shall be exalted.

This special, final claim of a day in the New Testament must affect our humble hearts, and determine our actions. We would not specify all that is to be done on the first day, and what omitted, as we read in connexion with Israel's arrangements, and, for example, the absence of lighting a fire (Ex. 35. 3). But our hearts would be responsive to the Lord, and recognize the Holy Spirit's own name for this day alone. We would be continually in a prayerful attitude, but, like Daniel and Paul, we rejoice in **special** seasons of prayer. **Every** meal should be eating and drinking to the glory of God, but there is a special significance in "**the Lord's Supper**." Every day undoubtedly belongs to Him, for we are not our own (1 Cor. 6. 19, 20), and we would please Him all the time, but there is His own peculiar stress on the Lord's Day; and are we prepared to treat it as every other day, are we willing to do our ordinary work? Are we ready to use it and receive wages for our occupation, are we unconcerned when believers enter trains and vehicles as if it were to them a common working day, are we unaffected if children have their toys, etc., as on any other day? Should not our whole attitude be influenced by a name of unusual force, and have a **parallel** with that brought before us by the Holy Spirit in Isaiah 58. 13, that we, and those in our dwellings, may be drawn, in the present dispensation, to call **the Lord's Day** a delight? In one sense the stress seems more remarkable than that of the word "Sabbath" in that the description is taken from the name of our Lord, though we recollect a helpful parallel in "A sabbath belonging unto the Lord thy God" (Ex. 20. 10, cf. Lev. 19. 3). O that the standpoint of joy in Him may be resultful and fruitful as never before, to the praise of the glory of Him, Whose death and resurrection gave the first day a new meaning, and make it possible for our grateful hearts, delivered from judgment and bondage, to say, from the depth of our hearts, "The Lord's Day."

The Margin of your Bible—*Concl'd.*

SOME MARGINAL NOTES ON THE PSALMS.

Psalm 106. 14 ("lusted a lust," cf. "feared a fear," 14. 5, 53. 5) may not contain much, but bear it in mind, it will help you in various passages.

"This is from the Lord" (Ps. 118. 23) may commence our praiseful study. "Their righteousness is from (with) Me" (Isa. 54. 17), "from Me is thy fruit found" (Hos. 14. 8), "for of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things" (Rom. 11. 36).

"Reveal Thou mine eyes" (Ps. 119. 18) would suggest the removal of a cover: we have eyes, they are not asleep, they may be open, but something of earth may come between us and the fuller knowledge of the Lord's "wondrous things." The next section of this marvellous longest psalm, so full of delight in God's commandments, § ends with "Thy testimonies also are my delight and the men of my counsel" (24). Truly in this multitude of such counsellors is safety, and we are reminded of the living power of the Scriptures whenever the Holy Spirit works thereby. "When thou awakest, it shall talk with thee" (Prov. 6. 22). May it not be well to learn this Psalm by heart? The margin of verse 98 prevents a misunderstanding. The commandments are unitedly the Lord's law, and **this** is ever with His obedient people,—not the enemies: they do not occupy the mind first. "The beginning of Thy word is truth" (160) is emphatic, especially in view of the attacks on Genesis (cf. Ps. 40. 7).

The question of Psalm 121. 1 (margin) is forcible, in view of Jeremiah 3. 23. The highest things of earth and nature cannot meet our need. We look beyond all to the Lord Himself. Do we?—I mean "Do we in our constant daily experience?" It is well to be stirred up.

How beautiful is Psalm 143. 9, "Hide me with Thee." We call to mind, "In the secret of His tabernacle shall He hide me" (Ps. 27. 5), and David's words to Abiathar, "Abide thou with me . . . with me thou shalt be in safeguard" (1 Sam. 22. 23), and yet more, "Thou shalt be with Me in Paradise," and "Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am" (Luke 23. 43, John 17. 24).

Psalm 147. 3 ("griefs") goes more deeply to our heart than the rendering "wounds," and emphasizes the Lord's love in dealing with that which is mental and spiritual, as well as with that which is visible and physical. How much this means to a bereaved believer, or to one who has, alas, had a nervous breakdown, even as the gracious, tender and mighty words of Psalm 34. 4, "I sought the Lord, and He heard me and delivered me from all my fears."

The Psalm-headings are often helpful, and the explanations (for example, 32, "Giving instruction," and 57, "Destroy not") are suggestive. Truly God's truth is "golden," and we

praise Him for its translation into the language wherein we were born, but yet more for that redemption which is ours in Christ Jesus, whereby we have a part and lot in these treasures, and for the Holy Spirit, Who takes of the things of our Lord Jesus, and shows them to us, including the wondrous unveilings of Christ in the Psalms, not only in the 16th and the 22nd and the 110th, but in all the Scriptures; and even as He Himself said, "In the Psalms, concerning Me" (Luke 24. 44).

God's Extricating Love.

WE little realize God's unseen mercies. How wondrously He sometimes unties knots which we should never have made, and brings us out of difficulties into which we have put ourselves. We think of Abraham and the heavy problems twice, through speaking of Sarah as his sister, and also the fruit in Isaac's experience (Gen. 12. 14-20, 20. 1-18, 26. 6-11). How clear it is that he might have brought Sarah into deep sin, and others too. And how sadly was the "witness" tendered among the Canaanites. But how wondrously and patiently God extricated. We think, too, of David when he "planned," and went to Gath (1 Sam. 21. 10-15), and afterwards when he allied himself with its king. He was nearly brought into warfare against Israel (1 Sam. 28. 1, 2). How mercifully the Lord overruled even the opposition (1 Sam. 29. 2-5). We would call to mind Jehoshaphat's alliance with Ahab, and his great danger in the conflict. "When the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat . . . they said, It is the king of Israel. Therefore they compassed about him to fight: but Jehoshaphat cried out, and the Lord helped him; and God moved them to depart from him" (2 Chron. 18. 31). In each case we see that God's servant was at fault, and yet God graciously dealt with the problem caused. If He only helped us when we did not falter, how many times should we be helped? It is wondrous to see the patience of the Shepherd with the sheep. But this is no excuse for our sin, and we would hate sin more and more. These things are written for our guidance and warning, written in love and grace, that we may not run into temptation, and then pray for deliverance. Moreover, we see, in the case of Saul, the contrast, and, as he said, the Lord departed from him. In that sorrowful beacon we see blighted hopes, and the failure of "the goodness of the flesh," and how much may have fair promise, but . . .! Saul trifled away his privileges. Self-will and jealousy had a fearful result. O that the twofold ministry of Scripture, in the gracious application of the Holy Spirit, may lead us to walk softly all our days in tender humility.

The Holy Spirit never despises the words of Scripture: that which makes light of Scripture can never be His teaching.

The cloud may blot out the sunshine from me, but it cannot blot out the sun.

Ephraim and Manasseh.

IT was prophesied that Ephraim would become greater than Manasseh (Gen. 48. 19), but did the words receive immediate fulfilment? By no means. In the census of Numbers 1, Ephraim numbered 40,500 and Manasseh 32,200, but in that of chapter 26 we see a sudden reverse, Manasseh being 52,700—the largest increase both proportionately and numerically of any tribe—whereas Ephraim had dwindled to 32,500. In the division of the land, Manasseh, not Ephraim, had a double portion (Jos. 17. 1, 2), and the territory was far greater. True, when the kingdom was divided, Ephraim became central, but it was a questionable supremacy, for not one ruler was good, and captivity followed. Is there any promise of the great blessing to Ephraim receiving its fulfilment in the present time? Certainly the New Testament gives no hint of it: “blindness in part has happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles become in” (Rom. 11. 25). There is no suggestion that one tribe is excepted, nor do we find individuals of Ephraim definitely blest in the New Testament. It has been pointed out the sons of Jacob divide up thus:—Reuben, Simeon, **Levi**, **Judah**: Issachar, **Zebulun**: Joseph, **Benjamin**: Dan, **Naphtali**: Gad, **Asher**. If we call to mind the priests obedient to the faith, and that the mother of the Lord Jesus was of Judah’s line, that “Zabulon and Nephthalim” were mentioned for blessing in Mattheu 4. 13, and that Paul was of Benjamin and Anna of Asher, all the **younger** ones are marked out, even as Abel, Shem, Isaac, Jacob, David, that no flesh shall glory in God’s presence. No prominence of Ephraim is yet before us. Nor is it found till the days of Isaiah 11. 13, Jeremiah 31. 9, Ezekiel 37. 16-19, Hosea 14. 8, Zechariah 9. 13, passages which are plainly millennial. “Anglo-Israel” theories are quite unscriptural.* Thus we realize that the long time of waiting is not God’s change of plan, nor forgetfulness. When Abraham inherits the land, and David is blest, in resurrection at Jerusalem, when the promises to the spared remnant of all the twelve tribes come true, will Ephraim have the special privileges which God indicated so long ago. He does not fail.

* Leaflets gladly sent.

Mary’s Attitude of Faith.

“Be it unto me according unto thy word” (Luke 1. 38, “blessed is she that believed,” verse 45).

“But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart” (Luke 2. 19).

“Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of Him.” (Luke 2. 33).

“His mother kept all these things in her heart” (Luke 2. 51).

Every cloud has two sides, and one side blots out the earth, not the sun.

The Power of Prayer.

ALL Scripture emphasizes this: may our life be in harmony, and do the same! We have all felt the preciousness of Exodus 17 in connexion with prayer, both as to the contrasted, unwearied intercession of Christ, and also our own fellowship in prayer, seen in the co-operation of Moses, Aaron and Hur. Resting on **the** Rock, with uplifted hearts and hands, remembering the rod that brought judgment on our Lord Jesus and salvation to us (Ex. 14. 16, 17. 5. 6), we have had the privilege of answers to continued prayer. The subject is very important with regard to our warfare against self, and all that Amalek may typify. We note, too, that “the whole armour of God” in Ephesians 6 is associated with “praying always” (verses 10-18).

There are always fresh thoughts, with fresh fulness, as we read and study and wait on God further. I was impressed by the word “when he let down his hand.” The meaning is “caused to rest.” A different word is in Isaiah 62. 6, 7 (“Keep not silence, and let there not be silence to Him”), but the aspect is very similar. “Rest” is beautiful, but it must be at the right time. O that we may not be sleepy in prayer, nor leave off praying (1 Thess. 5. 17).

“His hands were steady.” The word “steady” is the first occurrence of that which is rightly translated “faith” in Habakkuk 2. 4. How important and prevailing is “the prayer of faith,” and how “steady” is living faith. The root of the word is “truth.” “His hands became faith.” O that this may be our experience increasingly in the gracious and continual power of the Holy Spirit.

Our victories are often variable because there is lack of faith in prayer. We are unsteady and uncertain. Expect defeat and you will have it. How much better is “according to your faith be it unto you.” And not only may we apply this to ourselves, but to our praying for one another. Let us remember every Joshua who has a fierce conflict. His “failure” is not to be treated lightly, we are not to look down on him, but rather to see if the lack of another child of God is because **we** have let down our hands, because we have slackened our prayer for him, and for believers generally. “All saints” should be prominent in our fervent and believing prayers.

“YE MADE A DITCH . . . BUT YE HAVE NOT LOOKED UNTO THE MAKER THEREOF.”

Isaiah 22 pictures a city in excitement. The “enemy” is near, and all plans are thought out to defeat him! There was nothing of atheism, but God was left out. The natural tendency was to “scheme,” and there was enthusiastic work, BUT . . . O how solemnizing is the thought that we may have fallen into the same sin. We think of Jacob in Genesis 32: everything was well arranged, but we do not find the question, “What is God’s

will? " And then the Lord revealed Himself to Jacob, and put his thigh out of joint. Isaiah 38 is another of the searching chapters where the Lord is forgotten: **His very name is omitted.** We call to mind Abraham's failure in Genesis 12. 14-20 (cf. ch. 20). Observe, (in reference to him), a significant omission, even of the name of God, a striking contrast with Genesis 12. 1-13. How easy it is to wander, even just after a special blessing. And if Isaiah 22 (e.g., verse 9) refers to the events of 2 Chronicles 32. 1-8, we see that in verses 1-7 there was the "organization," and only at the end was the real standpoint recognized. The "Captain of the Lord's host" has been ignored many times since. We look to men in difficulties, illnesses, unexpected circumstances too readily. Do we turn at once to the Lord? We must not think there was a definite wish in this direction. The "encouragement" of one another in Isaiah 22. 14 seems to have become frivolous, in the way in which when any are burdened to-day they try to put on a "confidence," that others may not "give way." But all was the result of failure to respond to the Lord's "call" (verse 12). O that we may be kept from these sins, and do everything in communion with God, depending on Him.

ISRAEL'S PRESENT POSITION IN ROMANS 11.

1. They have stumbled (11, cf. 9. 32).
2. They have fallen (12).
3. They have been diminished (12: thank God for the hint of the "remnant" in this word, see verse 5).
4. There has been a casting away (15, Hos. 9. 17).
5. All, except believing ones, were broken off (17).
6. "Hardness (25) (in part—again the reminder of a remnant) is happened to Israel."
7. They have been shut up (imprisoned) in unbelief (32: in olden times those who were unbelieving still remained in certain privileges as Israelites).

How blessed will be the "riches" (12), "the fulness" (12), "the receiving" (15), "life from the dead" (15), the believing (23), the grafting in—"grafting"—grace (24), the salvation (26), the turning away from ungodliness (26), the obtaining of mercy (31), when those who are reserved and pardoned (Jer. 50. 20), realize the fountain opened (Zech. 13. 1), and become the righteous ones of Isaiah 60. 21, the branch of God's planting, the work of His hands, that He may be glorified. Well may we enter into the prayer of Psalm 122. 6, Isaiah 62. 6, 7, and Romans 10. 1.

Faith never looks to circumstances first and to Christ second.

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The Student of Scripture.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen."
Revelation 7. 12.

A Word of Introduction

A *UNIQUE* sevenfold ascription is before us, and it begins and ends with "Amen." How full is heaven of praise. How full should our hearts, our lives and our meetings be. "Thou art Worthy" is ever the theme of heaven. There is no murmuring in the glory. O that we may be more devoted unto our God. We can never praise Him too much. The object of this magazine is His glory, His exaltation, the fulfilment of His will. If any page or article fails to lead in this direction, it is a failure. If some side issue diverts, everything is vain. If other things choke the attitude of worship, there is sin. May the direct and indirect result be more thankfulness, and more devotedness, in humble and obedient lives led by the Holy Spirit.

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Romans 7 and Romans 8.

THE earlier chapter has perplexed many. Some have suggested it describes the unregenerate man: but though there may often be a keen wish to be "better" in the "goodliness of the flesh," there is much beyond that in the Scripture before us. Others have felt Romans 7 portrays the believer in an early "bondage-experience" from which he finds glad deliverance in the experience of a second crisis. Hence they have spoken of coming out of the seventh chapter into the eighth. At first there seems much to favour this interpretation, and God does

* Two booklets: "Crucifixion and Mortification" and "Romans 7" gladly sent.

graciously grant joyous crises in the Christian life, with real spiritual blessing, and we should seek and value these, though they can never take the place of "abiding" in Christ. But is there another chapter with so many PRESENT tenses, and the apostle's definite use of the personal "I"?

Is another key to be found? I would suggest that there is. Chapter 8 is not without its consciousness of the need for mortification (verse 13), nor without its groaning (verse 23). Is the flesh regenerated and sanctified, or judged? Humble believers, instructed by the Holy Spirit, will not hesitate to answer, "judged." Hence it is plain that "in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing," and growth in grace does not change this fact, nor eradicate the flesh in this life. Chapter 8 does not say that we **have** not the flesh, but that we are not to walk or live **after** the flesh (verse 4). Verse 13 implies that the flesh is in us, **but condemned**. This is clear in Colossians 3. 1-4, **followed** by the searching words of verse 5. Now we can understand more of the standpoint. Romans 7 designedly omits any reference to the Holy Spirit in the unique "present tense" passage of verses 14-25. It is a **background** for chapter 8. We do not go out of chapter 7 into chapter 8, but are to learn the present experience of the latter as soon as we are brought down to lowly consciousness that our only hope is in **His** work. Chapter 7 shuts us up to Him. It is so natural to seek victory in our activities, but self cannot conquer self. We must have the hollow of our thigh out of joint, as it were, that we may cling and not wrestle. "We are not sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves." We need to learn the "hardest" lesson—"no confidence in the flesh." O how much failure exists, with division among believers, because we spare the best of Amalek, the best of the flesh. We can "do" much in Bible study and Christian service, and there is much gold as well as much shining dross. But if only self as a whole were judged in me and in you, we should be led together by the gracious and blessed Holy Spirit of God into wondrous and felt unity. The "self" life in its "better" manifestations is the greatest hindrance. The apostle is not speaking of **outward** sins in chapter 7, but of his perception of the very root as it were, and of the **tiniest** sprouts, that there may be an utter humbling and room for the Holy Spirit. Though it is **not** "out of Romans 7 into Romans 8," it is not God's will that we should dwell in Romans 7 alone. There is only one Romans 7, the next chapter is designedly longer, and a climax. If we are in the two chapters together, chapter 8, with the stress on the personal indwelling Holy Spirit, is to be paramount and the more fully emphasized and evidenced, that we may become more and more like our beloved Lord, representing Him in holy contrast with the world. Our "characteristic" should be the leading of the Holy Spirit. Is it so?

The Leading of the Holy Spirit.

"**A**S many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Rom. 8. 14). There is, possibly, no expression more misused than, "I was led to do this." It is more commonly used in the **first** person than in any other. The thought of most is an impulse that is honestly felt to be God's guidance as to some **special** action. But very often the particular action is not in accord with the revealed will of God. It is so easy to misunderstand, and to think that our own strong feelings are God's answers to prayers. Some, indeed, do not expect the leading of the Holy Spirit **directly**: but others, when they pray, feel they have swiftly a definite guidance "Yes" or "No," or a conviction in the heart, often with words, which they regard as God's own gracious response. We dare not limit Him. Undoubtedly we should be childlike and humble, and thus enjoy the fulfilment of His promise, "The meek will He guide in judgment: and the meek will He teach His way" (Ps. 25. 9). But how "near" we need to walk that we may distinguish God's will from that which is the answer of our own wish and emotion. Are we willing to **test** each guidance by the **written words** of the Holy Spirit? If we are not willing, there is something wrong. If we find that on **some** occasions pride has come in, or that we have done that which we see afterwards to be against the Scripture, we have the greater need for humble testing and quietness. So many quickly **say**, "I was led" when they can find no Scriptural warrant for certain actions, and they readily satisfy themselves that all is well. This may be unconscious self-confidence, however honest, and may, moreover, be laziness. It is not so easy to **wait** on God, and to remember the men of our "counsel" (Ps. 119. 24, marg.) in the various Scriptures which the Holy Spirit applies. It is enjoyable to "feel led," but what if we are not led by the Lord? A wrong claim dishonours Him.

Do not misunderstand me. We dare not make a hurried generalization that whatever we do not approve is "of the devil." The gracious fact that the devil cannot touch our life, hid with Christ in God, is precious. But we must not misstate the protecting power of the Holy Spirit. He has all-power, but, if we **grieve Him**, we cannot experience the fulness of His withholding and His uplifting. It was in a letter to **believers** that the apostle was inspired to write, "Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light" (2 Cor. 11. 14). It was with regard to **believers** he said, "I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ" (2 Cor. 11. 3, cf. 2. 11, 1 Thess. 2. 5). We need a constant walk with God, lest we too become beguiled (observe 1 Chron. 21. 1).

And so we reach the important fact that Romans 8. 14 does not speak of "leading" as to **this action** or **that**, but of the continual docility of a **person**, whose **condition** is one of being led.

This means much more than expecting guidance as to occasional larger actions. It indicates a **character** of responsiveness to God's revealed will, for the Holy Spirit uses Scripture (John 14. 26), and takes of the things of Christ (John 16. 14). It is not, "I was led as to that step," when you kindly suggest there might have been an error of judgment. Rather is it the unboasted, unmentioned mark of yieldingness to the truth, so that the life is not "according to the flesh." The link ("for") with verse 13 shows this. Judgment of the self-life at all times is the evidence of "being led." This is quite different from the almost glib wording, "I was led to do this or that," or even, "I felt led." When Moses face shone, he knew it not. The attitude God seeks is love's glad abiding, not one of giving way to compulsion, but a state of being "drawn" not "dragged," that all the members may be increasingly devoted to the Lord. Then there is the evidence of sonship. Then it is clear to Whose family we belong. O that this may be our joy, and, beyond that, His joy.

"LAY NOT UP . . . BUT LAY UP."

It is not enough to speak against earthly investments, and to refuse earthly gain. There must be a positive laying up of treasure in heaven, a definiteness of heart, a purpose in life. The gospel of Matthew sets aside Judaism, and emphasizes the heavenly attitude, "the kingdom of heaven," and "treasures in heaven." Hence the double emphasis on that which is bound or loosed on earth being only that which has already been Divinely bound or loosed in heaven (Matt. 16. 19, 18. 18). It was fitting that the only one of the apostles who had been an official of one of the kingdoms of the world, should be inspired to give this witness. We see this, we rejoice in it, but do we act correspondingly? How much have you and I laid up in heaven this year, this month, this week, TO-DAY?

It is very blessed to contrast the **manner** of Joseph, as the Holy Spirit graciously records it, in the maturing of his life to God's glory. Three times he had dreams before him. On the first occasion, his own. There seems almost a youthful joy in his attitude, referring to his own honour, appointed by God, but ever to be received with humility (Gen. 37. 5-11). How often we cause, or increase, envy by un wisdom of manner. The second time, in Genesis 40, we hear the words, "Do not interpretations belong to God?" (verse 8), and on the third occasion (ch. 41. 16), "It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace." Here the testimony is even still more definite than in the prison, and reminds of John the Baptist's words concerning himself in John 1, and apparently it was a blessing to Daniel (2. 30). May the twofold, or rather threefold, example be a blessing to us!

"Because of their unbelief" (Matt 13. 58).

"Because of unbelief" (Heb. 3. 19).

"Through faith," "By faith" (Heb. 11. 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, etc.).

FAITH is a reality, and it lays hold of realities from a real God, the God of all grace. Faith **takes**, it does not **make**: it is not a conception, but a reception. Unbelief is ever the great hindrance in the Christian life. So many to-day "believe" in word; but have we not need to ask ourselves whether we show living, practical, powerful faith "in deed and in truth"? Unbelief **prevented** the Lord's mighty works. And we too are often not in a condition to use that which God our Father is waiting to bestow, **as soon as we are ready**. How precious it is to see what faith has done. When Paul said "I believe God," he was quiet and confident in a storm. When the disciples forgot the words, "Let us pass over **unto the other side**" they were agitated (Mark 4. 35-41). Faith never sleeps when there should be wakefulness (Matt. 13. 25, 25. 5, one of the first, and one of the last parables), but it can be restful amid circumstances as we have seen the Lord Jesus, and as Peter was in Acts 12. 6. The saints were awake (Acts 12. 12): this is fitting. They had one loving strain, voluntarily: but he was not burdened above what he could bear, and just then there was a fuller witness by his sleeping and **not** praying. Faith can never doubt God's words: but faith doubts all that questions Him, even as love hates evil (Heb. 1. 9, Ps. 97. 10).

When we think of Israel **not** entering in because of unbelief, we are conscious of the terrible effects of unbelief, whenever it has influence in our lives. **It can stop victory**. Ephesians 6 speaks of warfare in heavenly places, our parallel with Joshua. But unbelief **cannot** take "the shield of faith." And the fiery darts have a terrific power when there is no shield in between. "Have faith in God" is a precious command. We read that "the word preached did not profit" Israel, not being mixed with faith (Heb. 4. 2). Is everything of God mixed with faith in our lives? The food mixed with saliva and other juices is digested, and thus becomes incorporated as part of our very being; and so is it when God's words are mixed with faith. But the words in our pocket cause no such blessedness. Have we real faith that appropriates, and digests, words of God, so that they become our very being? The Holy Spirit always emphasizes this, and lovingly leads to simple, childlike, unworldly faith.

An experience of God's grace and power is very blessed, but I would not depend on it, only on Him. The electric light is only while the contact lasts: one second after there is darkness, and if I am signally blest, but lose contact with the Lord in experience, there can be fall and failure at once. "If ye **abide** in Me" is our Lord's word, and it means more than we realize.

SOME INSTANCES OF PRAYING FOR OTHERS.

"And Moses cried unto the Lord, saying, Heal her now, O God, I beseech Thee." Numbers 12. 13.

"I prayed for Aaron also the same time." Deuteronomy 9. 20.

"I will pray for you unto the Lord." 1 Samuel 7. 5, cf. 12. 19, 23.

"Pray for me, that my hand may be restored me again. And the man of God besought the Lord." 1 Kings 13. 6.

"Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, The good Lord pardon every one that prepareth his heart to seek God . . . though he be not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary." 2 Chronicles 30. 18, 19.

"My servant Job shall pray for you." Job 42. 8.

"Pray for us." Heb. 13. 18.

"Pray one for another." James 5. 16.

"The Power of His Resurrection."

The resurrection is a blessed hope: but do we sufficiently realize the **present "power" of His resurrection**? The Lord granted waking thoughts on some precious verses. I long to have these often, not rarely. Isaiah 50. 4 is humbling to me.

"That I may know Him, and the **power of His resurrection**" (Phil. 3. 10).

"If the Spirit of Him **That raised up Jesus from the dead** dwell in you . . ." (Rom. 8. 11).

"What is the exceeding greatness of His **power** to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty **power** which He wrought in Christ when He **raised Him from the dead**" (Eph. 1. 19, 20).

"Like unto His **glorious body**, according to the working whereby **He is able** even to subdue all things unto Himself" (Phil. 3. 21). (So Col. 2. 12). O for more of this present inner experience in the Holy Spirit now (2 Cor. 3. 18, Rom. 6. 11). Colossians 3. 3 is not "ye are dead," that is not the goal, but "ye died." The body is still one of humiliation: but O to know His power within more and more.

"I WILL MAKE YOU TO BECOME."

It is not only "Ye shall become"; nor is it only "I will make you." The words "I will make" set forth Divine power and authority. But this is not only external and compelling: there is a graciously inwrought "becoming" within, and thus we have the **experience** of grace. It is the same as to salvation and service. We need the glorious might of the Lord, His sovereign "making." But He does not save us, nor use us, against our will, for He graciously causes a willingness (cf. Rev. 22. 17, John 7. 17, Ps. 110.3), and thus there is a blessed harmony, fitness and fulness in all His work. May He be glorified in our humble realization of this.

Musical Instruments.

1. Are musical instruments wrong? No, we read of "musical instruments of God" (1 Chron. 16. 42, see also 2 Chron. 5. 13, 7. 6, etc.). The Old Testament is full of references to harps, cymbals, trumpets, etc., in connexion with the temple).

2. Should we not seek to do what Israel did under God's instruction? Not necessarily. He gave **them** a city (2 Chron. 6. 38), **we** have no continuing city (Heb. 13. 14), our citizenship is in heaven (Phil. 3. 20 lit.). He appointed priests for them with elaborate garments (Ex. 28, etc.): all believers now are priests, and our robes are spiritual (1 Pet. 2. 4, 9). He commanded them to bring the blood of sacrificed animals (Heb. 9. 22), we have the sacrifice of praise through the offering of the body of Christ once for all (Heb. 10. 10, 13. 15).

3. Are the musical instruments in the Old Testament found in the context of pilgrim separation, or national glory? Surely the latter, associated with an earthly position, its warfare and authority (e.g., Ps. 149).

4. Does not God refer to musical instruments in heaven? Undoubtedly (Rev. 5. 8, 14. 2, 15. 2).

5. Should we not seek to be heavenly, and therefore have these on earth? If this is the appointed parallel, have we not in the first verse "golden vials full of odours"? Would you introduce these? Would you have a golden street, and robes, etc.? Do not Revelation 14. 2 and 15. 2 **contrast** the believers' united position there with their previous lowly walk on earth?

6. But should we not render God the best? Yes, as we read, "according to all that the Lord had **commanded**" (Ex. 36. 1); but not what we think is the best (1 Sam. 15. 15, 2 Sam. 6. 3, Luke 24. 1, see Acts 7. 48-50, Col. 2. 17). This "argument" would lead to elaborate buildings, and everything of Christendom instead of "the simplicity that is in Christ" (2 Cor. 11. 3).

7. But where are musical instruments forbidden? Do we wait till anything is forbidden? Is not Scripture given to show us what we are to **DO** (Matt. 28. 19)? Is a godly home full of "forbidding" ("Thou shalt not"), or do the children realize the principles of a beloved parent, and do what he says, and what he has shown he **approves**? Why should we wish anything different in "a house of God"?

8. What are the instructions of the Lord Jesus concerning such subjects? The Lord Jesus gave appointments for the present dispensation as to worship (e.g., baptism, the Lord's Supper, note John 4. 23, Matt. 28. 19, 20), but how contrasted are His arrangements with those for Israel in the land. He never appointed instruments. He emphasized a spiritual house, and temple. Are we unwilling?

9. What is the further testimony of the Holy Spirit in the epistles? Where He refers to believers singing He makes an

entire contrast with the Old Testament and Revelation, by omitting all mention of musical instruments (1 Cor. 14. 26, Eph. 5. 19, Col. 3. 16, Jas. 5. 13), and emphasizes the heart. Yea, in 1 Corinthians 14. 7, where **uniquely** He does mention musical instruments, He calls them "things **without** life," or "soul." Is this contrast with Revelation purposeless? Is this unique and unexpected description in an **assembly** context without a meaning for disciples?

10. Have not the children of God always had such instruments? No; in simpler, humbler days did not such reject the innovation as Romish? May not "apparent need" to-day be more connected with becoming **like** the world, and with the absence of persecution, and with the attempt to "draw the people," and with failure to perceive the change of dispensation, more than our hearts have as yet realized?

"Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His Own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto Him, bearing His reproach: for here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come. By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually that is, THE FRUIT OF OUR LIPS, giving thanks to His Name" (Heb. 13. 12-15).

Reminders in Leviticus 16 of the Need and Failure of Israel's High Priest.

"The death of the two sons of Aaron."

"Speak unto Aaron, thy brother, that he come not at all times . . . that he die not."

"Thus shall Aaron come . . . with a young bullock for a sin offering."

"His bullock of the sin offering which is **for himself** and make an atonement **for himself**."

"Aaron shall bring the bullock of the sin offering, which is **for himself**, and shall make an atonement **for himself**, and shall kill the bullock of this sin offering which is **for himself**" (three times in one verse).

"He shall put the incense upon the fire so that he die not."

"Until he come out, and have made an atonement **for himself**."

"He shall wash his flesh with water, and come forth . . . and make an atonement **for himself**."

Contrast our High Priest, and the words "**Himself for**" not "**for Himself**" (e.g., Gal. 2. 20).

It is not the fulness of blessedness to be willing for the Lord's will: we would be **willing His will**.

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AUGUST, 1939. FREE.

The Student of Scripture.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come."
Matthew 24. 42.

A Word of Introduction.

[It is a mercy that can never be overestimated if we can say, "The Son of God . . . loved me and gave Himself for me." And the privilege of a believer is to walk with God, and to live looking for that blessed Hope. The new creation makes us strangers in the earth, wherever we are found. This age can never become our age: we belong to the Lord Jesus and "that Day." We cannot find a resting place in the world that crucified Him. It is a joy to do even the ordinary things of daily life so long as the Lord wishes us to be here, but the standpoint and motive are changed, and we are ever conscious that our city is above, and our mind is to be set on things above. We would live as men that wait for their Lord. Nothing can lead us to a different attitude. Opportunities for service are precious, but they can never become our goal. Right knowledge of "prophetic events" can NEVER hinder the true heart's attitude: "We look for the Saviour,"]

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Forgetfulness of the Old Testament.

OUR hearts must grieve when men speak presumptuously against God and His words. As we see the practical out-working of the evolutionary theory we realize its evil origin. It daringly assumes a human development instead of the Divine inspiration of the Hebrew Scriptures, and, in morals, (or immorals), pleads for force and the crushing out of the less equipped, and the unfit. Such is the bitter national, and international, fruit of evolutionary ideas, utterly contrasted with the gospel of Christ, for those who have nothing but unfitness.

God's choice of Abraham and Israel and Palestine and Jerusalem, is repugnant to many a proud heart, and the Old Testament is described as a Jewish book or Jewish history. But the sad iniquity and failure of Israel, never overlooked nor excused by Him, did not undo His plan. Grace will yet be manifested in the outworking of His purpose. The discrediting of the Old Testament has long been the aim of the evil one, but even archæology has contributed its withering exposure of the baselessness of subjective and imaginative criticism.

The deep importance of the Old Testament must ever be before us when we treat Scripture aright. A few summarized thoughts may help.

1. (a) The Old Testament was the Bible the Lord Jesus used and expounded: the New Testament was, as all must know, not then written. Hence all His references to Scripture, its authority and its message, are His own perfect emphasis on that which we call the Old Testament.

(b) He declared that it was full of testimony as to Himself: Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself (Luke 24. 27, 44, John 5. 46).

(c) In this connexion we observe His definite "link"—"If ye believe not his (Moses) writings, how shall ye believe My words?" The two stand or fall together. We cannot truly believe in Christ without the Old Testament. "What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder."

(d) He approved of fullest emphasis on the power of the Hebrew Scriptures, applied by the Holy Spirit; nothing could be given to displace these, or make them unnecessary (Luke 16. 31).

2. The Old Testament was the complete Bible of the early church in the bright and blessed days following Acts 2. The reading of Scripture in the assemblies must ever have been the Old Testament.

3. If we would prayerfully understand the New Testament we **must** be well acquainted with the Old, to which it alludes continually. Without this groundwork we cannot realize the precious fulfilments recorded, nor the parallels setting forth the blessedness of the children of God.

4. The quotations from the Old Testament are introduced by words of definite and **unique** recognition, and anything is recognized as proved at once, if one verse can be set forth thence asserting it. No question or doubt is regarded as conceivable.

May it be our concern to know the whole of Scripture. 2 Timothy 3. 16 refers primarily to the Old Testament. Have we felt this, and prayerfully studied accordingly? Many believers are immature because of oneness, and forgetfulness of much that God has given with a view to all-round growth. It has well been stated that no one who studies Scripture types aright

will be a so-called "Higher Critic," and that no Higher Critic is a student of the types. May we be nourished and built up by all the words of God (Matt. 4. 4).

The Peril of Money.

"**B**ALAAAM the son of Bosor who loved the wages of unrighteousness." 2 Peter 2. 15.

"When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them." Joshua 7. 21.

"But Gehazi . . . said, Behold my master hath spared Naaman this Syrian . . . but as the Lord liveth, I will run after him, and take somewhat of him." 2 Kings 5. 20.

"This he said (Judas Iscariot), not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief." John 12. 6.

"But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, and kept back part of the price." Acts 5. 1, 2.

"For the love of money is a root of all evil." 1 Timothy 6. 10.

The verses are well known to us, and we have sometimes felt their power, but we need this experience always. Balaam knew so much, yet his love of gain ruined him. Gehazi was near to Elisha, and Judas to the Lord Jesus, yet we see their sad condition, and the linked untruthfulness. So was it with Ananias and Sapphira; and Achan stole from God and "dissembled" (Jos. 7. 11). It was thus that Satan sought to wreck all at the beginning when Israel entered Canaan, and likewise at the outset of the early church. He knows how to influence, and works with devilish subtlety. And are we "proof" against such scheming? If we lightly say, "Yes," the words apply, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." The need we all have is humble dependence on God, and a lowliness before Him that we may be kept. "The things that are seen" are a strange magnet. The Galatians soon turned aside, and Nadab and Abihu sinned, and died, on the very day of peculiar blessing. Demas was with Paul in greeting the saints at Colosse, but quickly he "loved this present age" (2 Tim 4. 10). Hence the words to the little children, whose sins were forgiven for Christ's Name's sake, even to those who knew the Father, are deeply searching, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols" (1 John 5. 21). May we be preserved to God's glory, as those who lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven, and who esteem the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt. Imperceptibly we may become worldly, and the things of earth that were rejected may again take hold of us. The only place of safety is one of "abiding," and at the Lord's feet. May this be our privilege in the Holy Spirit's power.

Dates and Times in the Book of Acts.

EVERYTHING in Scripture is impressive. How strikingly the date changes in the Old Testament from the year of a king of Judah or Israel to that of a Nebuchadnezzar or a Cyrus as soon as the Times of the Gentiles began. And in the New Testament our pilgrim position is emphasized by the general absence of dates, even in the epistles or "letters," where we might have expected them. Not that all indications are omitted. In Acts we find Paul two years at Ephesus and Rome, and eighteen months at Corinth, and how helpful is the guidance for God's children still as to service. In contrast we have the brevity of the three sabbath days at Thessalonica (17. 1-4). And it is important to observe that the sabbath, though mentioned thus, and likewise repeatedly in 13. 14, 44, 16. 13, 18. 4 for earnest witness to Israel and proselytes, is NEVER associated with the worship of **believers** throughout the whole book. Seventh-dayism may well weigh this fact, the more striking because the first day, and **none other**, (apart from the daily privileges of God's children), is specially indicated, and is before us **twice**, the number of "witness" (2. 1, 20. 7). The first occasion emphasizes moreover "the 3rd hour" (2. 15), apparently indicating that the "Saturday night" part of "the Day of Pentecost" is intentionally passed over in absolute silence. And so is it in the gospel references to the Lord Jesus and His people on the resurrection day: and (may we not add?) in Acts 20. 7. To associate that assembly with Saturday night would seem quite groundless, in view of these other references, and the context as well.

The allusion to the days of unleavened bread and Passover (mistranslated "Easter," a heathen name, linked with Astarte and Ashtaroah) in 12. 3, 4, must forcibly remind us of Luke 22, and of the disciples rejected even as the Lord, although on this occasion there was granted a miraculous deliverance. The other allusion to "the days of unleavened bread" (20. 6) would not only shew that the believers did **not** continue to go to Jerusalem as Jews on Jewish ground, but also answer the error which God foresaw when any advocate the Lord's supper **annually**, inasmuch as verse 7 was just **after** this. Indeed we have **no** "anniversaries" now, but only a **weekly** memorial emphasizing one day, for we are now linked with resurrection and a new creation (the first day). It is remarkable in this connexion that 20. 16 leads up to 21. 4, and then to 21. 26. O that we may be kept conscious of the great change the death and resurrection of our beloved Lord have brought in our standpoint, attitude and experience. The entire silence of Acts with regard to "months" is another appointed contrast with Israel's earthly arrangement.

It is fitting that the feast of tabernacles, prophetic of "that Day," should be altogether unmentioned, and that "the Day of Atonement" should **not** be linked with the word "atonement" after Christ's finished work, but only called "the fast" (27. 9).

All the language of Holy Scripture is perfectly chosen, all exalts the Lord Jesus—and the negative witness honours Him and His work as well as the positive.

The **hours** of the day too are helpfully before us. Not only have we the holy continuance of 28. 23, and the **early** prayer assembling in ch. 2 to encourage early rising, and in 20. 7, 8, the gathering to break bread when lamps were burning, to lay stress on "the Lord's **Supper**,"* but certain exact hours are also given, and they are all the very hours linked with **the Lord's redemptive work**†. In this way we are again reminded that the Holy Spirit came to **continue** (see ch. 1. 1) that which was founded on His finished salvation. The Lord Jesus was crucified the 3rd hour (Mark 15. 25), and that is appropriately before us as to the Holy Spirit's coming in fulfilment of Christ's promise, and as a proof of His exaltation (Acts 2. 15, 33). The central hour of the crucifixion was associated with the darkness that spoke so definitely of wrath (Matt 27. 45), and **that** is related to special prayer and the housetop in Acts (10. 9), and the unveiling of the salvation of the unclean because of **the Sacrifice** (10. 10-18). Is not this wonderful? Nor can we forget the one **other** midday event (22. 6), and the mighty salvation of the one used of God to write about half the books of the New Testament. This is surely included in the teaching: the Lord Who was under darkness for sinners, shone forth at that very hour as the Light of Life, transcending the **sun**, reminding us that grace, not nature, is the basis of our salvation. And He claimed His purchase, the remaining one to complete the twelve apostles of the **Lamb**.

The Lord Jesus died at the ninth hour (Mark 15. 34), and that time also is mentioned, being associated with the **second** narrative and second recorded preaching of the new dispensation, as the third hour was joined to the first (Acts 3. 1). Observe the emphasis regarding the miracle on the man lame from birth as a great **type of salvation** (3. 16, 4. 9-12—"whole" is "saved"), and the second "numbering" (4. 4 after 2. 41)—for numbering always brings atonement before us (Ex. 30. 12-16 contrast 1 Chron. 21). And the spread of the gospel to the **Romans** is twice mentioned in connexion with the **same** hour (10. 3, 30)—the more remarkable because a firstfruits of Christ's prayer (Luke 23. 34) was the **other** centurion who "glorified God" at the same hour, the ninth (Luke 23. 47). These are

* Midnight (20. 7) seems given partly to shew an end of the first day. Other night scenes (ch. 12 and the prayer meeting, ch. 16 and the praise of Paul and Silas) impress us. "The same hour of the night": baptism (16. 33) may indicate midnight still (see verse 25).

† Except 23. 23. ("the third hour of the night"), which is not exactly in the narrative but in the appointment of Lysias. The object was plainly to prevent general knowledge (verse 31). I do not know fully the Holy Spirit's reason for mentioning this hour. Certainly the events are contrasted with the first rendered time ("the third hour of the day"): here a "promise" (contrasted with 2. 33) was sought in vain (verse 21), and Israel as it were, became responsible for sending away from Jerusalem the gospel messenger. This was indeed night, a stepping-stone to the destruction of the city.

not coincidences, but Divine indications that everything is founded upon the atoning death of the Lord Jesus. And our hearts are still further impressed because, although the seventh, tenth and eleventh hours are mentioned elsewhere, **none other hours** are marked out thus by the Holy Spirit in the Book of Acts. The silences of Scripture are all precious. Well may our thankful hearts realize once more that the Lord Jesus Christ and His redemption are the centre of Scripture, and of history, the foundation of our eternal blessedness and of the assembly in which he delights,—our present and eternal joy, individually and unitedly. The Holy Spirit ever glorifies Him (John 16. 14).

“Bind them in Bundles.”

Matthew 13. 30.

IT is noteworthy that the gathering of the tares is not only before the binding, but apparently “first” of all, i.e., preceding the gathering of the wheat. This corrects many errors of interpretation. But the gathering is not the final burning, nor is it **physical** death, any more than the enemy’s “sowing” gave **physical** life. It is evidently the removal of false **profession**. And there are three things—(a) gathering, (b) binding, (c) burning. The second also precedes the judgment, and may suggest a remaining on earth in a new “fellowship,” outside the Lord’s people, instead of seeking to mix therewith, as up to the present time.

This is all deeply impressive, but we would now specially call attention to man’s unities, whether the “synagogue” of Revelation 2. 9, 3. 9, of Freemasonry, or the “confederacy” of Isaiah 8. 12, or “groups” and “circles” with varying creeds, but setting aside the necessity and central importance of the precious blood of Christ.* In this connexion is it not remarkable that the Latin word “fascis,” from which Fascism is derived, denotes a “bundle.” Why is this word chosen in the days that lead up to the fulfilment of Matthew 13. 30?

There is a deeper meaning, it may be, than many children of God realize, and the clarion call to separation from all political and other societies, should awaken the loving response of those who have been espoused to the Lord Jesus (2 Cor. 11. 2), and who are, individually as well as collectively, responsible to preserve a virgin-like purity of separation, while awaiting the Bridegroom.

* It has been rightly pointed out that in the parable the angels gather, and this implies some contrast with man’s activity,—though God can allow men their own way as a judgment (Ps. 106. 15, Isa. 10. 5-15). But in the fulfilment of the parable there may even be the thought of angelic *restraining* from admixture with God’s people, and, indeed, two contemporary aspects are possible, i.e., men may be viewed as actively uniting themselves while invisibly the ministers of God’s providence are but preparing them for judgment. The angels would not be causing the activities: the bundle would be a rejected one, nearly ready for wrath.

Nature.

NATURE is beautiful and wondrous. If we gaze on the mighty mountains in their grandeur, or behold the tiny flower in its exquisite details, we realize that both are comprised in “nature.” But what is the meaning of the word **to us**? Many are the slaves of their own language, and become quite unmindful of the limitations in their knowledge. The watch does not make the watchmaker, nor even itself: the greater is not caused by the less, nor do myriads of things thrown together fortuitously reach harmony. Rather the results are normally confusion or disintegration, and the indiscriminate heaping up of many things has different results through the differing proportions and circumstances. Order is the product of a personally guided plan. Nature without a cause, a Designer, and a Controller would be self-destructive. Countless coincidences falling in line demand impossible credulity. The man who says that his god is nature shows utter ignorance of the inability of things to “arrange.” He imagines a causeless protoplasm, progressing with consistent, inexplicable development, leaping over gaps incomprehensibly, and accomplishing inerrantly that which the mind of man can neither do nor understand. And yet that defeated mind claims to be **sure** of the unseen history of the very things that baffle it. To explain the inexplicable, and that which is without example or parallel, (whereas one was not present, and possesses no evidence or proof), is the daring of “guessscience”: to call it “science” (knowledge) is false and an affront. To deny creation because of **a priori** unproved and unprovable theories, is a manifestation of the tendency of the human heart. “They did not like to retain God in their knowledge” (Rom. 1. 28).

Nor can impersonal nature satisfy a person. We are not things, and we need **One** Who can meet all our needs. “Nature” may seem, and be, far more satisfying than “gold,” but even “nature” fails to deal with our felt need for love, fellowship, and, (unless the conscience is dulled), forgiveness. Our gracious God has provided a salvation to deal with every part of our life,—the heart, the emotions, the will, the conscience, the members. Philosophy is one-sided, and all else is incomplete, but the Lord Jesus Christ and His finished work are complete.

How wonderful is God’s nature. The believer has a new standpoint. He comes with reverence, and he realizes God’s provision with gratitude. The factory is full of noise. Nature is quiet. I write in a village—Machinery’s din has been brought even into the field: and how much “forcing” there is. Come with me and hear the din of machines, and then visit an orchard. The fruit comes from within, but we “see” not its organized mass production, as when men work, yet the fruit is being produced second by second. And every apple is distinct in some way, though the life and flavour may be the same.

Why so many plants? And why so many leaves on each

tree? Why do so many beautiful flowers live and die unseen by man? I cannot say. Nature is restrained and marred, and often inter-destructive because sin has entered. The stunted growth, becoming a thorn, instead of a branch or flower, speaks to our hearts. We shall understand more fully when "the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose." God has a purpose beyond our knowledge, but death in nature has a meaning, to humble us and to cause us to hate sin. Is this the result in your life and mine?

How precious is the bounty of God. That which is not needful for food can well be in far smaller proportion. Wheat is not a mineral, and gold is not a seed to be sown. Do you and I realize what this means? And do we admire the wisdom of God when water stops contracting a little above freezing point? The reversals of natural expectation are the expression of God's providential care. There is nothing by chance.

"The Servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth."

John 15. 15.

HE may know what his Lord has done. He can see the work, and the effects. But the inner intimacy, to know what the Lord Jesus is doing now, is designed for those whom He Himself calls "His friends." He seeks such: He delights in such: He does not wish to be alone. Fellowship is blessed. It is God's wish. Enoch pleased God when he walked with Him. Have we this honour? Do we only know our Lord's "acts," or His ways also (Ps. 103. 7)? Are we only in an outer circle, as it were, or in close acquaintance with Him? The question is important, for there are great differences between the enjoyments and privileges of experience among children of God. All such are "in Christ," but not all appropriate the waiting blessings.

The Lord Jesus emphasized His love to His people as He was loved, and His sending of them as He was sent. Hence the words of John 5. 20 help: "The Father loveth the Son, and sheweth Him all things that Himself doeth." How real then should be the conscious unity between believers and their Lord (John 17. 22). How these words make the writer feel his need. How much one misses of the fulness of possibility. The willingness is on His side. Have we not just looked at the very chapter where He emphasizes what He is doing now (John 17 with Heb. 7. 25)? Did He not say that He spoke these things in the world, as if He were in glory already (John 17. 13 with 11, 12), that we might have His joy in knowing His present occupation with intercession for us? Do we, indeed, realize what He is doing? Then let our response be glad occupying in His will, till we see Him face to face.

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The Student of Scripture.

Edited by Percy W. Heward

"The immutability of His counsel."

Hebrews 6. 17.

A Word of Introduction

THANKS be unto God, we have no uncertain gospel. There is no "yea" and "nay" in the Son of God (2 Cor. 1. 19), and no doubt in the message of salvation. A poor heart-burdened sinner believes in Him, and is completely saved by His death. Without any hesitation our hearts can say, "We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5. 1). But AFTER salvation by grace, the privilege and responsibility of loving obedience cannot be easily overestimated. Every child of God should be devoted to Him. Our lives are watched. We are either glorifying God, or dishonouring Him. If we show no concern for the honour of Him Who gave His life for us, it may well be questioned if we were ever truly born from above. A new life must lead to a new living, and with the thoughts of God's glory in lives of obedient gratitude, are these pages sent forth.

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Intervention.

IT has been pointed out that the human heart oft seeks to leave God out. Thus we meet a groundless theory of evolution instead of the fact of creation, and, correspondingly a stress on improvement of what is in a man, instead of salvation by a new birth from above. The Scriptures are handled in the same way: they are regarded as a gradual "development" instead of God's inspired gift, different in kind and not only in degree, from other books.

The tendency of man is ever seen in this refusal of God's revealed intervention. Men are "willingly ignorant" about the

flood, when God undoubtedly stepped in. They dare to say that all things continue as they were (2 Pet. 3. 4, 5). But He Who has intervened before will intervene again. God is not "slack," but He waits in "longsuffering." Nevertheless judgment, long ago decreed, lingereth not, and damnation slumbereth not (2 Pet. 2. 3). To the man of this age, present circumstances must be a problem. "After civilization—what?" How will events turn? What does the future hold? But the humble and trustful child of God realizes approaching **intervention**. The Coming of the Lord is nigh. He will arise, and take His sovereignty. Things will not continue as they have been. It is blessed to know this, but it is solemn, for we see that intervention includes "the great white throne." Many quite misunderstand "eternal punishment," as if it were indiscriminate, instead of being, in every case, "according to works." Nor is there any thought of **repentant** souls being kept in blackness and darkness for ever. The sinner remains a sinner. The sinnership is unchanged: it is not that the punishment outlasts the sinfulness: they both abide, though the expression of the sin is restricted.

We return to the blessed intervention when we were stopped, as Saul of Tarsus, and drawn to the Lord Jesus. How blessed it is to know that salvation is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God That showeth mercy. Had He not intervened we should have been lost for ever. Let praise overflow.

And now also, in our believing life, it is a joy to remember that God is (Heb. 11. 6). Hence there is no "must" of circumstances: physical trials may be heavy, but God can speak, and the fever, or whatever it is, can be rebuked by Him. There is sufficient power in His hand. So our hearts can ever look up when trials come: we would not sink under them. They are not ruling God, but God is ruling them, and He can always intervene in His infinite grace, and we desire to rest patiently in His perfect will. We would never be discouraged, for the Lord is ever the Same, and, as in Genesis 22 for Abraham, and likewise for the daughter of Jairus. He can intervene at the last moment. Faith lives because God lives.

"Through the veil, this is (through) His flesh."

Hebrews 10. 20.

THUS reads the passage, and no one can misunderstand it. ("To say" is not in the original, only explanatory in the translation). Suddenly we realize, it may be, that we have a close parallel with the words of the Lord Jesus, "This is My body." Indeed "that" is the same word rendered "this." Would anyone imagine that the veil was transubstantiated into His body, or that His body became therewith consubstantiated? Surely not. The Holy Spirit has plainly given a type, a picture, an unveiling; and so is it in the precious appointment of the

Lord's Supper. There is no parallel with the Scriptural word "became," where the water **became** wine, and there was a real change of substance in John 2. 9. Likewise in Revelation 16. 6, with Exodus 7. The waters "became" blood. Where is such a word used of the Lord's Supper? No one can find it anywhere in Scripture.

If the bread had literally become the body of Christ **before** He died, He would have been offered before the offering, before the holy curse and judgment of God on our sins came, before men took Him and with wicked hands crucified and slew Him, and the sacrifice would have been partaken by men before it was presented to God on Calvary. Furthermore, if the fruit of the vine really became literal blood, would it not be sin to drink thereof (Gen. 9. 4)? Not only in connexion with Israel, but throughout Scripture is blood forbidden. That was only for God, or given in judgment. (Rev. 16. 6).

Nor can we forget that the Holy Spirit uses the word "bread" as well as "My body" in 1 Corinthians 11. 23, 24. How appropriate if it was **literally** (a) bread, and typically (b) the Lord's body. It would then have appropriately the **two** names. The type is precious: but the Antitype infinitely more so. The type is important: believers should emphasize this, and ever be characterized by holy reverence, but they cannot assert a **change** when God has not revealed anything of this character. Moreover, the theory of change is derogatory to the glory of Christ, inasmuch as the bread remains liable to corruption. If it were the glorious Antitype, this could not be!

SIN AND DEATH.

"By one man **sin** entered into the world, and death by sin." Romans 5. 12.

"The soul that **sinneth**, it shall **die**." Ezekiel 18. 4, 20.

"The sting of death is sin." 1 Corinthians 15. 56.

"Sin when it is finished bringeth forth death." James 1. 15.

"Sin hath reigned unto death." Romans 5. 21.

"Servants . . . of sin unto death." Romans 6. 16.

"The wages of sin is death." Romans 6. 23.

"Sin revived, and I died." Romans 7. 9.

"Sin, that it might appear sin, working death." Romans 7. 13.

"The law of sin and death." Romans 8. 2.

"The body is dead because of sin." Romans 8. 10.

"Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures." 1 Corinthians 15. 3.

"In that He died, He died unto sin once." Romans 6. 10.

"Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Romans 6. 11.

If the Lord Jesus instituted infant baptism—

1. Why is there no record of such a command?
2. Why did the disciples rebuke those who brought young children to the Lord Jesus (Mark 10. 13)?
3. Why do we **only** read that "He took them up in His arms, put His hands upon them, and blessed them" (Mark 10. 16).
5. Why do the Holy Spirit's words concerning baptism refer to disciples (Matt 28. 19), faith (Mark 16. 16, Acts 18. 8), repentance (Acts 2. 38), receiving the word (Acts 2. 41)? Baptism by John too, which was preparatory, emphasized **personal confession** of sins (Matt. 3. 6).
6. Why does Scripture speak of those baptised as continuing "stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2. 42)?
7. Why do we read, "When they believed . . . they were baptised, both men and women" (Acts 8. 12)? Contrast Matthew 14. 21, "Five thousand men, beside women and children."
8. Why, in the record of households baptised, is there not one case mentioning, or even suggesting, infants, but several indicating the reverse? Acts 10. 2, 47, 11. 14; Acts 16. 34 with 33; 1 Corinthians 1. 16 with 16. 15, 17: no indication in Acts 16. 14, 15.
9. Why does Romans 6. 1-6 connect baptism with a rising to walk in newness of life, and intelligent devotedness to the Lord? Note, too, Galatians 3. 27.
10. Why does 1 Peter 3. 21 speak of baptism as the manifestation of **conscience**, and an experience of which infants have not a realization.
11. Why was the arrangement so complete for Israel in the Old Testament, respecting the circumcision of infants, and nothing parallel given in the New Testament, except that which belongs to those born again (Col. 2. 11)?*
12. Why does 1 Corinthians 15. 29 imply that those who were being baptised were taking the place of the believers who had died, specially in a life of strain and persecution, which the context mentions?

If there is no precept, principle, or practice regarding "infant baptism" in the New Testament, dear child of God, will you not be baptised, if you have not yet obeyed your Lord thus, and will you not prayerfully make known His will set forth by baptism as a type, concerning a people separated unto Himself from all nations, and living in newness of life for Him?†

* Are not young believers "the infants" in a spiritual "nation," and would not "baptism" *before* this be before "birth," and thus *no* real "parallel" with Israel's ordinance?

† Further literature gladly sent to His glory.

God's Gracious Teaching.

1 Chronicles 13 and 15.

THERE was a desire to glorify God on both occasions. Moreover, the people were united each time. The thought of praise was predominant in the earlier chapter as well as in the latter (13. 8). There was no half-heartedness, no lukewarmness. Where then was the difference?

In chapter 13: (a) David consulted with every leader, and (b) said, "If it seem good to you" before mentioning "if it be of the Lord our God," and (c) arranged what was "right in the eyes of all the people," **without being sure of God's will** in all "details." But should we say "details"? A type is not a small matter. God has a purpose in everything.

These two chapters show us that even when there are godly wishes, there may be a departure from God's plan, and heavy chastisement may result. They also make clear that the chastisement is not always at the outset: He often waits. The procession started with overflowing praise, and it was only on the way that the sudden blow fell. We might have thought God would have **spoken**, but He acted, and His will is ever best. We are much more impressed and humbled thereby.

Another remarkable thing is that the ark had been twenty years in the house of Abinadab, and yet the chastisement came at the end, when there was a fervent wish to bring it to God's chosen city. Another important fact is that God had apparently blest the use of "a new cart" when bringing the ark to Israel in 1 Samuel 6. 7. How often we approve of something because God has blest others in a certain connexion, but they did not know God's truth as we should. There is no judgment as to the motive throughout. The people, David, Uzza—all had, it would seem, a good motive. But **that** cannot sanctify disobedience. The circumstances were quite different from those of Leviticus 10, but in each case there was the important reminder that God will be sanctified in those who draw near to Him. The lesson was learnt, as the opening words of David in ch. 15 show, "None ought to carry the ark of God but the Levites: for them hath the Lord chosen." Verse 1, too, may suggest a fuller preparation, because of a fuller consciousness of the majesty and holiness of God (so verse 3, "prepared"). That the thought of exact loving obedience was deeply impressed on the king is clear from his further words in verses 12 and 13: "We sought Him not after the due order." And the Holy Spirit confirms this emphasis in adding, "As Moses commanded according to the word of the Lord," and "God helped the Levites that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord" (1 Chron. 15. 15, 26). Dear reader, what is it with you and me? Do we seek to please God as **we** think, or as He has said? Are we content with what He has permitted and apparently blest on other occasions, or are we concerned to fulfil His word, even in "little things," with joyful love to Him?

- "All the earth SITTETH still, and is at rest."
 "Deliver thyself, O Zion, that dwellest (SITTEST) with the daughter of Babylon."
 "Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that SIT before thee."
 "This is a woman that SITTETH in the midst of the ephah."
 "He . . . shall SIT and rule upon His throne."

Zechariah 1. 11, 2. 7, 3. 8, 5. 7, 6. 13.

THESE passages may be helpfully read together. In the present time of evil, quietness on the earth is no evidence of harmony with God. Everything is out of joint, and men should be troubled. The sitting still of the earth is a false security. When men say, "Peace and safety," sudden destruction is ahead. In chapter 2, Israel's "sitting," in ghetto and captivity, is a sign that the nation abides in "graves" (Ezek. 37. 12): the deadness of Hosea 6. 2 is before us. What then? Shall we rejoice in the "leaves" of the Jewish fig tree (Luke 21. 29, 30)? By no means; there is **no fruit** for God. But though Zionism's result may be the restored nationalism of Isaiah 66. 1-4, which God rejects altogether, we may find, amid all, indications of His preparatory work in **some**, even **before they live** (Ezek. 37. 6-8), because of His gracious covenant plan that a remnant **shall live** (Ezek. 37. 9, Isa. 10. 21, Jer. 50. 20).

The third "sitting" is a contrasted joy. The finished work of our adorable Lord Jesus has brought His own to sit in heavenly places (Eph. 2. 5, 6), and the privilege of **resting** in God's presence, here set forth, may strikingly suggest that **no** priestly work, for the removal of sins, remains to be done (John 19. 30, Heb. 10. 11-13). How grateful our hearts would be for the peace which He Himself has brought us to possess and realize.

Then the sad unveiling of chapter 5. 7 follows appropriately. The primitive testimony was obscured. Wherever there is the true church, Satan aims at a counterfeit, and the ephah here has **no** fine flour of Christ's work, but a **woman instead**. "The mystery of iniquity" is thus portrayed, calmly "sitting," for that which is from Babylon always seeks to "sit" (Rev. 18. 7). A hidden throne **against** the Lord! The climax will be when the man of sin succeeds the woman, and the mystery **inworking**, will be changed to the manifestation **outworking**, and Antichrist will sit "in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God" (2 Thess. 2. 4: thus the "sit" word gives yet another link of Zech. 5 with this chapter).

But our Lord Jesus will come. And then He Who now sits on His Father's throne (Rev. 3. 21), will sit on His **own** (Luke 1. 32, 33), and He shall have dominion from sea to sea. Well may our praiseful hearts say, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Are we looking for Him, and living as those who look? What is the fruit in our everyday life?

Conscience or Custom?

IT is deeply important for all children of God to be very definite as to His words, but it is needful that we should all distinguish therefrom whatever has rather become part of our personal life through "habit." We cannot surrender the Lord's will, but we must be willing to give up **our** inclinations. And we need grace lest we look upon others whose "**habits**" are different from ours as necessarily infringing the will of their Lord. One realizes this in different lands. Some believers stand in prayer and some kneel: both actions are Scripturally warranted. "Sitting," however, is unusual except on a special occasion (2 Sam. 7. 18, or in giving thanks at a meal): though none would have a difficulty when the infirm and aged remain sitting. Nor could we say it must be a sin for others so to do (as in some lands), but we might gently encourage them to observe the usual emphasis of Scripture. This illustrates the thoughts now upon my heart. Likewise, some sit when they sing: this I feel to be inappropriate in a hymn of praise: "Stand up and bless the Lord" seems the **general** guidance of God. But I must be tender and not dogmatic, unless I can prove anything commanded from Scripture. Sitting down to minister God's word appears strange to many nowadays, but we would remember the Lord Jesus did this (Matt. 5. 1). To break down "customs" ruthlessly is often a hindrance: for example, folded hands in prayer **may** help reverence in many homes, and are well contrasted with hands in the pocket, in praying (or preaching). But those who never fold their hands must not be judged. To remove the closing of the eyes would, as many will acknowledge, encourage **lack** of godly concentration in believers, and help listlessness in children. It would be wrong to misuse John 17. 1: but if a child of God in intensity thus looked upward, could I for one moment judge him? If **your** meeting often begins with prayer, will you be burdened if **another** often commences with a song of praise? If **worship** is delayed, there is a failure, but either mode of praise may be helpful, and to make a fixed rule would add to Scripture.

It may be said "Some habits are traditions, and can become a bondage." This standpoint may not always be so spiritual as it appears. To impose anything "of our own" on another would be wrong for many of us, but a parent may find some arrangements help in the home, and a believer may discover that a contrary breaking down of certain barriers, (for example as to what he refrains from doing on the Lord's Day), will diminish his "purpose of heart." Traditions **against** the doctrine of God are the peril: we would be clear of these. Some actions may be the expression of a Scriptural **principle** in one land, and **not in another**. A brother's hearty **shaking of the hand** may be **here** an expression of love, (as the derivation of the word "kiss" indicates), but in a Russian village brethren still kiss one another. Should we misunderstand either action?

These are only a few jottings, but they deal with much that hinders seeking to fulfil Ephesians 4. 3. We fear a broadness, on the one hand, that also makes differences as to God's will unimportant, and on the other hand, an unconscious self-assertiveness, confusing conscience and custom. But often the godliest believer fails in this, and may become irritated if others act differently. A deep conscientiousness, when conscience is not rightly instructed, may lead to misunderstandings and bitterness, among those who are far more devoted than many others. Satan tempts along the path of our obedience. May we ever seek to keep to the words of the Lord, and never to put our habits, or wishes (however helpful in our own experience), upon the level of His gracious appointments. The Holy Spirit will give us grace to distinguish things that differ (Phil. 1. 10 marg.), and to grow up into Christ in all things, as we are teachable and disciplelike.

"THE FIRST DAY" "THE THIRD DAY."

Mark 16. 9, Luke 9.22.

The resurrection day was the **first** day, with reference to the new week, implying that all other days would follow and be dependent on this: so our working days and duties are to be in the realization of our new life in Christ Jesus. Not a single day of the week is counted apart from Him, or uninfluenced by the "first" day: this very description compels the dependence of **all** upon it. How precious is the spiritual lesson. The Holy Spirit ever exalts Christ, and exalts Him in the daily walk.

But "the first day" was also "the third day," and **this** name is, indeed, the earlier, linking not with the **following** events, but with the preceding week, and thus with the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Hence this description comes most prominently before us at the outset, to remind us that without **His** "week" we could not have **ours**. The ground of salvation precedes the fruits of salvation, and wondrous is the privilege of remembering that He has settled every claim, and united the **two** weeks. One belonged to Him "alone" (John 12. 24), except as the Faithful Witness, the second belongs to His redeemed in living union with Him, and He has united what cannot be separated. Law is established (Rom. 3. 31), yet grace reigns (Rom. 5. 21).

It is easy to say very much, and even to pray very many things: but O for a life that walks with God, a life that is a prayer.

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The Student of Scripture.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"Peter answereth and saith unto Him, Thou art the Christ."
"And Peter took Him, and began to rebuke Him."
Mark 8. 29, 32.

A Word of Introduction.

BY the continued and continual grace of God we would send forth these pages. Not that we are sufficient to think anything as of ourselves. God has graciously given eternal life, and with Christ all things—What manner of persons ought we, as believers, to be! How important it is to have a deep reverence for our beloved Lord. When Peter made the great confession of His glory, it was because of Divine inworking: flesh and blood had not revealed the Lord Jesus to him. But how needful it is to be "kept." How soon after did Peter forget the standpoint, and begin to rebuke the One Whose words he should ever have honoured. How inconsistent often are we also, and how easily turned aside, in measure. How impossible it is to say with self-confidence, "I would not do this," or to be sure as to any others because of previous expressions. Very often we fail to realize how quickly one may change. O for grace to be KEPT.

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Who are the "Elders" in Revelation?

HOW often are such questions before us. May not the first thought be, "What do we learn practically from their attitude?" The emphasis on adoration and devotedness in the last book of Scripture must ever speak to our hearts. None of the heavenly beings exalt themselves, or seek anything for themselves. God is gloriously central,

Twelve times are the elders mentioned,* five of the passages indicating their number;† every detail in Scripture is impressive. Whenever they are the subject of the sentence, so that their own united action is described (five times), we read that they fall down and worship! It is a precious thought. We remember the seraphim in Isaiah, and the living ones (translated "beasts") in Revelation 4. 8, with whom they are nine times mentioned. Worship is wondrous.

We notice that they are always seen in glory, their position is near the throne, and the number is never varied. Are they only symbols? Does the Holy Spirit give us a key? I think He does, for **twice ONE** of them speaks. Then they are **individuals**, and the exact number seems definitely given. They are **not** the church, symbolically described, but heavenly beings. In accord with this we observe their presence when saints are seen in glory, in chapter 14. And that they are not merely seen in vision would seem to be emphasized when the Lord used one to give John the **explanation**, just as angels were employed, and spoke with Zechariah of old. There is surely no difficulty in literal heavenly beings. They sit on "thrones" (in 4. 4), and have crowns. Is there anything in the Old Testament that will help? Have we 24 there? Yes, in connexion with priesthood and the kingdom, were there not 24 divisions of the priests and chief men (1 Chron. 24. 4, cf. ch. 25 for the singers)? But no priest of Israel had an appointed "seat" (Heb. 10. 11).§ Christ has now sat down (Heb. 10. 12), and His own are made to sit together (Eph. 2. 6). May not the elders then remind of God's purpose for the royal priesthood of the redeemed, even as the little believers of Matthew 18. 10 have "their angels" before the Father ere they reach glory? The redemption song (5. 9. 10) may well illustrate this.¶ How dear to God are those for whom His beloved Son gave His life. How real is the joy of all heaven in the covenant of grace, and the blood of the new covenant. Nothing but praise and worship can enter there. Nothing to hinder praise and worship should enter our redeemed lives.

- * "Upon the Thrones I saw 24 elders, sitting, clothed" (4. 4).
 "The 24 elders will fall down . . . and worship Him That liveth for ever and ever" (4. 10).
 "One of the elders saith unto me, Weep not" (5. 5).
 "In the midst of the elders" (5. 6).
 "The 24 elders fell down . . . and sing" (5. 8, 9).
 "I heard the voice . . . of the elders" (5. 11).
 "The elders fell down and worshipped" (5. 14).
 "Round about the throne and the elders" (7. 11).
 "One of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these?" (7. 13).
 "The 24 elders . . . fell upon their faces" (11. 16).
 "Before the 4 living ones and the elders" (14. 3).
 "The 24 elders . . . fell down and worshipped God" (19. 4).

† Not in 5. 14 (oldest MSS).

§ 1 Samuel 4. 13, 18 may have impressive typical teaching.

¶ We cannot say "us" is in the oldest MSS. If any speak on behalf of others, their language is affected thereby (Ps. 16. 10 with Acts 2. 31); John 10. 34, 35 may illustrate in measure. In any case their joy is in redemption, and this is deeply important.

Sins of Ignorance.

OFTEN has sin been excused, with the word "ignorance," but we need grace to take God's standpoint. This is seen in Leviticus 5. 17:—"If a soul sin, and commit any of these things which are forbidden to be done by the commandments of the Lord; **though he wist it not, yet is he guilty, and shall bear his iniquity.**" And we notice the definite statement in Numbers 35. 32, 33, that blood defiled the land, and NO satisfaction could be taken for it, even though the death was caused by the slip of an axhead (Deut. 19. 5), or a stone accidentally striking another (Num. 35. 23). Thus we realize God's holiness, and our heart at once cries out, "Cleanse Thou me from secret faults" (Ps. 19. 12).

Sin is sin. We must never approve the current misuse of the word "ignorance." But God weighs everything perfectly, and never judges unrighteously. It is probable that Acts 3. 17 includes a rebuke of Israel's sin which still sometimes expresses itself thus, "You ought to be thankful to us, since you, Gentile Christians, confess that salvation is come through our rejection." At once we answer, "When the Assyrian did not 'mean' to do God's will (Isa. 10. 7) he was judged, although God overruled his attitude to punish 'an hypocritical nation.'" But we do recognise from Scripture that there is a tremendous difference between a sin of ignorance and one of defiance. The cities of refuge illustrate this, and display God's mercy. And Numbers 15. 27-29 is very explicit. In Genesis 20. 3-6 we have a twofold view, and realize God's control of actions—"Thou art a dead man," "I also withheld thee from sinning against Me." Here we see sin and its reckoning. But must we not be careful as to every word in this connexion? God alone beholds all the conditions and circumstances. Often there is a semi-ignorance, or an ignorance that is occasioned through **neglect** to find out God's will, and, in some cases, there is more manifestly the willing ignorance of 2 Peter 3. 5, since the human heart loves darkness. We remember the words, "They did not like to retain God in their knowledge" (Rom. 1. 28). This solemn chapter, and the one following, show definitely how God takes every circumstance into consideration, yet the result is **not** that men are excusable, but **inexcusable**. Those who have sinned "without law" cannot plead that they are innocent: mark the inspired words, "Shall also **perish without law**" (Rom. 2. 12). None are declared innocent.

Men use words relatively, and especially the word "ignorance." How thankfully, conscious of our own inability to tell **how much** of wilfulness there is in each action, we own God's omniscience, and perfection in every attribute, and say, "'Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" When Paul said he obtained mercy because he had acted in **unbelief** (1 Tim. 1. 13), he does not mean that his blasphemy, persecution, injuriousness

and unbelief, (all mentioned in that verse,) were not chargeable as guilt. He is explaining his need for "grace," "love," and "mercy." God's salvation was for sinners, and he emphasizes that he, the self-righteous Pharisee, was **such**. True, he had not resisted as those who daringly said, "This is the Heir; come, let us kill Him" (Matt. 21. 38), for he verily thought with himself that he ought to do many things against the Name of Jesus of Nazareth (Acts 26. 9). But he was a sinner, and refers to his "persecution" more than once (e.g., 1 Cor. 15. 9, 10).

This shows us that sin is sin but that there is a **twofoldness** in each action—the motive, etc., within, and the external sinning which is the fruit. Even if the motive is "thinking" to do God service (John 16. 2), how can it justify the sin of killing saints of God? It **cannot**, but the **extent** of an added consciousness of guilt, and a definite shutting of one's eyes, must make a **further** sin, which is far more full of iniquity.

Hence the solemn principle, "to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask more" (Luke 12. 48). It is amazing that "Saul of Tarsus" was so ignorant of the fulfilment of prophecy: we cannot but be impressed by this in connexion with some who remain in Romanism, or in Judaism, to-day. But as soon as we begin to misuse this to minimise sin, we are in great danger. Sin is sin, and Paul emphasizes this (1 Tim. 1. 15).

Scripture does not teach us to philosophize. Its whole standpoint is different from that of many human writings. It is so easy to draw varied "inferences," till one is far from the mind of God. The practical every-day-life character of Scripture is a helpful witness against this tendency. We are not to spend our God-given time in speculation. When a believer is honestly concerned about doing the will of God, the attitude, "Lord, and what shall this man do?" is that as to which he sees the Lord's disapproval. If another does not "know," you and I cannot say how much of the ignorance is willing, or the result of previous disobedience, etc., nor are we bidden to investigate. As "the Lord knoweth them that are His," so He, the Judge of all the earth, will do right. **Imbecile** ignorance is an extreme case, and if it be complete imbecility the wording of Revelation 20. 12, with Romans 2 would seem to show very clearly that God will not bring such into His wrath. But this would not imply salvation because of innocence or ignorance, the blessing would be by the blood of Christ, even as for those dying in infancy. No infant will be in heaven because of innocence, and personal right: the fact that redemption is by the blood of Christ reminds us that sin has been accounted, but righteously put away. Thanks be unto God, for the judgment at the great white throne is plainly associated with definite personal works: no infant will be condemned there, and all judgment will be a display of exact justice. There is no difficulty in realizing God's wisdom regarding all

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Christian Communion or Worldly Communism?

THE fellowship which Acts 2 records is like the anointing oil of Exodus 30. 31, 33; there could, and can, be none like it. The Holy Spirit created a miracle of love, and the continuance in Acts 4. 31-37 refreshes our heart. It was **not** "too heavenly" to last: we can never excuse declension and departure. Believers should have maintained the witness to Christ. "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have LOVE one to another" (John 13. 35). The sad facts concerning Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5 and a murmuring in Acts 6 are not excused: they are a call to humbling. If men sleep and the enemy sows tares, or if the wolf scatters the sheep because a hireling is in charge (John 10. 12), there is no reason to assume, "This must be." Whenever we fail personally, we would humble ourselves: and so is it when believers fail collectively (cf. Lev. 4. 2, 13, 22, 27).

If there is true revival, it will affect the whole being. The lack of revival as to the pocket clogs blessing everywhere. A loveless revival is an impossibility. The Holy Spirit's figure of the "body" illustrates this. We need to train our physical members how to do their work **best**, but there exists an inherent and spontaneous care for one another. An assembly of God is not an organization, it is a living organism.

"Love not the world" (1 John 2. 15). But do we not read "God so loved the world" (John 3. 16), and should we not even love our enemies? No honest and thoughtful reader can misunderstand. Love to souls is deeply important, but there are expressions of love in friendship which are impossible while the world has a totally different standpoint. And the world, **as** the world, with worldly ways, can never be loved. If we delight in **friendship** with those who hate the Lord (2 Chron. 19. 2), we make ourselves stand as the enemies of God (Jas. 4. 4). A universal brotherhood has existed in relation to Adam, but believing Abel illustrated the severance of the Lord's people. "If ye were of the world, the world would love its own" (John 15. 19). "The cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom (and through which) the world is crucified to me, and I unto the world" (Gal. 6. 14). Hence the believer cannot Scripturally identify himself with the world, nor with the world's ways, standpoint, aspirations, politics, societies, unions. "Come out from among them, and be ye separate" (2 Cor. 6. 17). True philanthropy must be only maintained in a way that keeps believers "unspotted from the world" (Jas. 1. 27). We **are** to do good to **all men**, and not only to the household of faith (Gal. 6. 10), but we dare not identify ourselves with the world's arrangements, which include so much contrary to our Lord's will.

And children of God have a primary call to help their brethren "in Christ," and specially those who lose materially for Christ's sake, and suffer persecution. Acts 2 and 4 illustrate

this, and the principle of Romans 12. 13 is clear. James 2 is very definite. But this is not communism. There was no legal appointment, nor did every gift take place at once. Peter said to Ananias: "While it remained, was it not **thine own**? and after it was sold, was it not **in thy power**?" And the predominant tense in Acts 4. 34, 35, as in ch. 2. 44-45, is that of continuance: they kept on bringing the prices of the things sold, and kept on laying at the apostles' feet. Thus the distribution too was "as every one had need." The characteristic was "One heart and one soul" (ch. 4. 32), and this ruled out selfishness. Hence there were varied contrasts with communism: there was a living love of **believers alone**. As the address on the mount can never be nationalized, nor carried out in socialistic propaganda, but implies throughout a rejected, suffering minority rejoicing in the Lord, so the communion, not communism, of God's children in Acts 2 and 4 was on the ground of redemption, and it affords no pattern for an earthly **state**, nor a model for children of God and the world indiscriminately.

Shall we yet see a revival, with the heart-harmony, and devoted giving and giving up of the early church? The Lord's hand is not shortened. Trials and persecution may help in loosening the bonds of worldly possession, though we should not need such reminders that this is not our resting place. The appointed type of wheat, on ripening, becomes less rooted in earth, and thus is scorched:—a beautiful figure: the **golden** grain is caused thereby. But the principles of 2 Corinthians 8 and 9 are illustrative of Acts 2 and 4 at **all** times, and we have no need to wait for suffering, nor for others,—may our hearts manifest the love that holds and employs all for the Lord, Who redeemed us, even now.

Sins of Ignorance—continued from page 76.

cases, for He orders all in perfect knowledge of what is, and what **would** have been in other circumstances, yea, of all tendencies and **possibilities**. Hence in His **limitless** knowledge, and all other attributes, may well remind His own of the true restfulness which alone can glorify Him.

God willing to be concluded in the next issue.

Faith never looks at the difficulties to encourage doubt as to the Lord: rather it looks at Him to doubt difficulties. I long to be an out and out unbeliever of **self**, a complete doubter as to anything and everything that would question Him. Faith has the true scepticism: it cannot think for one moment that the Lord's words will fail, and that is the only right attitude.

We combine October and November issues. May God graciously use. He has enabled *each* month for years. To Him be glory for all!

God, and War in the Old Testament.

"**A**S for God, His way is perfect" (Ps. 18. 30), but men see "parts of His ways," and often complainingly ask "Why?" It is no evidence that there is no key to the lock, because we cannot find one at first.

War has come in through sin, even as disease and death. If God has worked thereby (and He has), this is His overruling in perfect wisdom. He thus grants many warnings in longsuffering, and foreshadowings of future judgment are given that men may fear, and be humbled, ere the day of wrath arrives, and His wrath falls. Some speak against the Old Testament because of wars. They fail to realize that

- (a) No wars of personal revenge were Divinely appointed.
- (b) War was, at times, the outworking of His holy judgment.
- (c) God overruled imperfect instruments without approving of one sin.
- (d) The **principle** of Divine severity in war is equally asserted in the New Testament, in the last book, but One Who is Perfect will be in control (Rev. 19. 15).

Others have misunderstood the Scripture in quite another direction. They have urged that believers should **now** participate, because of God's commands to an **earthly** nation with an **earthly** land under His kingship (1 Sam. 12. 12).*

The following thoughts are commended to such:—

1. Are the Lord's appointments for **some** of His people **necessarily** the commands for **others** in quite a different sphere with quite a different responsibility?
2. Is there any earthly nation now like to Israel of old, or are not rather His children to-day found, and to remain, in all nations, and said to be "not of the world"?†
3. Do nations, and their generals, wish and wait for God's instruction to-day (Ex. 17. 16, 2 Sam. 5. 19, 23); are they under "the Captain of the Lord's host" (Jos. 5. 14, 15)?
4. Is there even a remote parallel with such passages as Deuteronomy 20, Joshua 6, Judges 7? If not, is it fair to assume a parallel in other things?

Warfare then must be entirely on God's principles, and under His appointment, or there is no just application to Christians now. No nation would be willing to allow this. Hence, **while** the Lord Jesus sits (Ps. 110. 1). His redeemed ones ought not to **forestall** His action, nor to identify themselves thus with the world, out of which **He** has chosen them (John 15. 19), and into which **He** has sent them with His words (John 17. 18). We readily acknowledge God's governmental overruling there (Dan. 4. 25, Matt. 22. 7, Rom. 13. 4), but we are in Romans 12. 19.

* A booklet, "Bought with a Price," deals with this and related subjects.

† Hence warfare would involve believer against believer. Further, God is manifesting longsuffering dispensationally to "all nations," in connexion with the gospel, and thus there is no similarity with Deuteronomy 7. 1.

and would do "nothing before the time" (1 Cor. 4. 5-8).

It is impressive to turn to one's Concordance for the word "war," and after noticing the allusions in the Old Testament and Revelation, to see the only references in the epistles (1 Cor. 14. 8, 2 Cor. 10. 3, 1 Tim. 1. 18, 2 Tim. 2. 3, 4, Heb. 11. 34, Jas. 4. 1, 2, 1 Pet. 2. 11). Is there not in each case a contrast? Also the references to weapons, and the whole armour, have a spiritual bearing for us (Rom. 6. 13, 13. 12, 2 Cor. 6. 7, 10. 4, Eph. 6. 11-13, 1 Pet. 4. 1, cf. Eph. 6. 17, Heb. 4. 12). We have a real conflict with "spiritual" foes. Let us not forget the constant responsibilities of 1 Thessalonians 5. 8, in the power of the Holy Spirit.

God's hand in history, and with individuals, whether seen in the experience of Cromwell's fervent Ironsides, or in the devotion of some Christian generals, can never modify His own revealed principles for those who would be simply obedient. He can work and bless sovereignly, as He will, but we are to be guided by His revealed will. He has accepted gold in our own service, though mingled with much dross, but we should grieve if any defended imitation of our failures thereby. So we cannot but rejoice in His sovereignty, as to others who have loved Him, without altering one word or principle affecting His path for His followers to-day.

"ARISE, AND TAKE UP THY BED" (Mark 2. 11).

"TAKE UP THY BED, AND WALK" (John 5. 11).

Why did our Lord thus command? Do we not see His wondrous wisdom? First, faith must act. Often He gives us blessing and power, and we hesitate to use it. The natural tendency is to doubt and delay. Faith is called into exercise.

Secondly, He appointed a witness before others. And is not this also important in the salvation of a soul, of which the physical healing was a type? O how needful that men should see that there is an **entire** change by grace, and "now" the bed was on him: the bed did the carrying earlier, but "now" he carried the bed as one graciously healed!

Thirdly, the very action contains instructive, symbolic teaching. The sinner is lying down (the position of death): the believer walks. That on which he "rested," without true comfort, is to become his "burden": he is to control, instead of being controlled: he is to lead instead of being "passive," and his previous "circumstances," and his possessions alike, to become in his hands the **means** of the testimony of which we have already spoken. He is to "use" all to God's glory. O that we may, by grace, appreciate and illustrate the message of these miracles.

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The Student of Scripture.

Edited by Percy W. Heward

"The gospel must first be published among all nations."

Mark 13. 10.

A Word of Introduction

NO doubt exists as to the fact that there is the one gospel, a glorious gospel, the power of God unto salvation. Matthew says "the Gospel of the Kingdom," Mark only "the Gospel," for there is none other (Gal. 1. 7, 8). And the word "must" encourages our hearts, and at the same time searches us through and through. Have we a missionary-heart? Have we a missionary-activity? Is our delight in the Gospel a selfish one, or is it spiritual, and associated with a deep and true and loving concern for all nations? O that we may pray more fervently as well as labour and give (time, money, strength, all, on the lines of the Lord's will.

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A Gracious Hint regarding Substitution.

THE guilt of a murderer was, in many ways, vastly different from that of the manslayer guarded in the city of refuge, but, in view of God's holiness, and the meaning of life, and in accord with the principle of Leviticus 5. 17 ("though he wist it not, yet is he guilty"), both called for **death**. Hence the strikingly similar wording at the beginning of Numbers 35. 31 and 32. If, before re-reading the verse, we observe 33, we find the unqualified description of judgment as demanding the blood of Him that shed blood in connexion with BOTH. This was justice—retribution. The city of refuge could not provide righteousness, so that the one who had fled thither should be free. The land would have been rendered unclean thereby. The utmost blessing of the city was "forbearance" (Rom. 3. 25 marg.).

And forbearance could **not** be the **putting away** of his sin. He was ever in danger of legal death—outside the city of forbearance,—**till** there had been **death**. But that death must be his own judicially, yet was not his own personally, nor, on this occasion, of a bullock or a lamb. Why do we find remarkable language and an unusual type here? The availing death was **uniquely** in the types that of the ONE high priest.* Hence was the death of the one who, in so many respects, specially typified the Lord Jesus. And, to make this clearer, he is described in this context as “anointed with the **holy oil**,” emphasizing his typical holiness (verse 25).† The nearest description of this would possibly be Leviticus 21. 10, 11, where the appointment of the high priest’s freedom from defilement beyond all others (see verse 2 in same ch.) is emphasized. It is the **one** passage that particularly associates the type of a high priest’s personal death and the removal of sin. Christ alone was Priest and Sacrifice.

Now we observe the two men in Numbers 35:—

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| (a) The murderer. | (a) The manslayer. |
| (b) Judgment, not mercy. | (b) Mercy, not judgment. |
| (c) His own blood shed. | (c) The one who represented him before God (cf. Lev. 16) died. |

Notice again, I beseech you, the words, “by the blood of him that shed it.” Thus God indicated the need for complete judicial substitution, giving a “shadow” full of instruction. But it was no shadow-judgment, it was real **retribution** that actually came on our Lord Jesus. His blood was actually poured out for us, and in His death we died (Gal. 2. 19). O that our hearts may be melted by His love! Hence there is no longer forbearance, but **righteousness**. This inherent intensity and full legal identification of substitution shows forth the covenant security of all the redeemed, and the complete justification, and first the judicial and then blessedly **experienced** acceptance of all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. The type fell very far short: the priest did not even rise again. But the Antitype does not fall short in anything. This passage emphasizes 2 Corinthians 5. 21. All our guilt is eternally removed, and God, Who saw our Substitute, and us in Him, and none other, (we were not personally there), will never change. Surely grace reigning through righteousness (Rom. 5. 21) is too wonderful for words! Glory be to God.

* It was quite contrary to Scripture to have two, or a resignation as by Annas (Luke 3. 2). Israel perverted God’s types.

† Where, however, the priests failure is emphasized, observe the omission of this adjective in Leviticus 4. 3.

The death of the Lord Jesus is the ground of our life: our life in Him is the power to manifest death to the world.

Sins of Ignorance—concluded

But we need a deeper sense of the responsibility we have for the sins which believers usually call “sins of ignorance.” “Who can understand his errors?” is a fitting question in relation to these. How often a temporary excusing has been more complicity than we have felt at first, and the entwining of our actions and thoughts in our whole life must make to-day’s knowledge, and temperament, and sensitiveness (or non-sensitiveness) of conscience, more intimately related with “**yesterday’s**” sins than we have hitherto perceived. It is a sense of this that humbles us, and we are more deeply grateful for the precious blood of Christ. Many a sin excused as sub-conscious when there is departure from the Lord, is seen to be the fruit of **past** carelessness. Romans 7 speaks to our hearts, and though it is true that it is not necessarily wrong to see (passive) but only to **look**,—not necessarily wrong to hear (passive) but only to **listen**, yet the **awakened** heart is conscious that there has not been the spontaneous **full** hatred of sin, and thus the value of the blood of Christ is again humbly realized, and we confess our sins. Temptation, in itself, is not guilt, but can we dare to say, as our beloved Lord rightly said, “The prince of this world cometh, and hath **nothing** in Me” (John 14. 30)? Our only safety is so long as the non-conductive shield of faith is used to prevent the fiery darts reaching the combustible material, which our hearts should ever **keep under**, since they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and desires (Gal. 5. 24).

The searching, but tender, ministry of the types, understood in the light of their fulfilment, is full of help, e.g., Numbers 6. 9, and the need for sacrifice because of defilement (verses 11, 12), also Numbers 19. 16, 22,—contact and uncleanness (hence the stress on priestly washing **whenever** passing the laver, whether uncleanness was **seen** or not, and the washing of the feet in John 13). O to **feel** the Lord’s teaching for us all in this.

Yes, a sin of ignorance is sin: we are to confess it as soon as we know it, and if there are sins of which we never come to consciousness, they are not excusable, nor are they disregarded, but removed simply and solely by the blood of Christ. Thus all our sins, known and unknown, have been righteously brought into judgment, and have been atoned, by the death of Christ, and thus we are not received as partly innocent and partly righteous, but completely righteous, justified by His blood and in Him. It is most important to state again that sins of ignorance necessitated a sacrifice. A similar thought has been seen as to the manslayer in the city of refuge. The fact that there was an accident did not justify him.

The present day tendency to minimise sin is serious. Many seem to view some actions as “weaknesses,” and forget Hebrews 5. 2, 3. Often the “desires” of sin are extenuated. But James 1. 15 shows that **like produces like**: it does not mean that

the sin does not exist till it is "born" manifestly. Momentary wishes would condemn us, were it not for the blood of Christ. Claims to personal perfection are linked with ignorance of God's searching light, and a **wrong** mode of distinction between known and unknown sins. May our hearts be drawn to a deeper sense of our need of the Lord Jesus. So shall we glorify our Father, and experience a lowly walk in the Holy Spirit.

Worship in John 4. 20-24.

THE woman said "Our fathers": no, worship is not national. "This mountain": but no high place of earth could meet the need. She was occupied with history and geography: Christ led the heart to see the need for a spiritual condition. How many to-day are in the same state as the woman. And, observe, her life was unholy while she spoke of religion. God deals with the daily walk.

Listen to the message of the Lord Jesus. Not "our fathers," but worshipping "the Father"—a new spiritual family, through the work of Christ. Worship is not Samaritan, nor even Jewish (nor yet Jerusalem), but in spirit and truth. Observe how verse 22 links it with "the salvation," and with knowledge (John 17. 3). Thus our hearts realize that there are true worshippers and false, there are those sought and those unsought. How blessed to see what the Lord Jesus has set forth here regarding that which is acceptable, a heavenly relation, a heavenly place (Heb. 10. 19, 20), a heavenly and spiritual condition. May all be ours to His glory! We should have thought this instruction would have been given to the cultured and serious Nicodemus, but how momentous is the fact that the Lord gave it to a Gentile sinful woman in despised Samaria. Truly His chosen time for His perfectly chosen words must speak to our hearts.

THE PERIL OF THE EYES IN GENESIS.

"And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food . . . she took." Genesis 3. 6.

"And Lot lifted up his eyes and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere . . . Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan." Genesis 13. 10. 11.

"But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt." Genesis 19. 26.

"And Dinah, the daughter of Leah, which she bare unto Jacob, went out to see the daughters of the land." Genesis 34. 1.

"His master's wife did cast her eyes upon Joseph." Genesis 39. 7.

"Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity, and quicken Thou me in Thy way." Psalm 119. 37.

The Prayer of Moses in Exodus 34. 9.

MANY are the prayers of Moses, including Psalm 90 and the continuance in Deuteronomy 9. 25. He was not only a man of action, but of prayer: though ever occupied, he ever had time with God.

But has the brief but remarkable prayer of Exodus 34 been realized in its fulness? How extraordinary the plea, "for it is a stiffnecked people." But this is based on verse 7, and God's own revealed grace to sinners. The word "pardon," however, is not the one rendered "forgive" in 7: rather it expresses the fruit of the earlier word. To understand verse 7 we should remember Moses' **twofold** request (Ex. 32. 32): "Yet now (i) if Thou wilt BEAR THEIR SIN,* (ii) and if not, blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy book which Thou hast written." And these words are the amplification of verse 30, "Peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin."

God definitely indicated to His servant that the **second** alternative was utterly impossible: a failing man is a **sinning** man, and **cannot** be a Substitute, cannot make an atonement. But in chapter 34, the Lord graciously declared openly that He **approved** of the other alternative, for, (wonder of wonders), He revealed His own Name as "Keeping mercy for thousands, BEARING* iniquity and transgression and SIN" (verse 7). Hence this unveiling was not only an answer to the prayer of Exodus 33. 18, but likewise to that of 32. 32 also. Have we ever realized how this assurance that the One Who would **bear sin** would be **the Lord Himself**, manifested in the flesh, is the display of **His glory**, for was not that the explicit prayer, "Shew me Thy glory"? At once 2 Corinthians 4. 4 comes to mind, "The gospel of the **glory of Christ**," and such verses as John 1. 14.

Yet another thought. The prophecy regarding Levi ("I will divide in Jacob," Gen. 49. 7) was fulfilled in **overruling** grace in the blessing to the Levites, and their cities, through Israel,† and likewise the judgment of the Gibeonites (Jos. 9. 21) was fulfilled in overruling grace in the Nethinims being ministers for the house of God (Ezra 8. 17, 20). And for us, guilty sinners, who believe into Christ, the blotting out (NOT out of the book of life, we are not told which book§) is because the Lord, rejecting any human substitute as Moses, has graciously caused the blotting out of our personal judicial position, and we stand only in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. Was not the language veiled till the righteousness of God was unveiled (Rom. 3. 21)? But now we see God's wondrous plan, that He might be Just and

* Not "forgiving," but its righteous ground. The same word is in Isaiah 53. 12: "He **BARE** the sin of many."

† But can we say this for Simeon? Is there not a warning thus? No universalism.

§ The wording in Exodus 32. 32, 33 seems designedly varied. There is a fulness in Scripture silence.

yet the Justifier of believing ones, for substitution is a stupendous fact, and the kernel of the gospel. And so the very chapter (Ex. 34) which contains the unveiling of the Name, contains also the type of the ark, keeping the law unbroken within, and the golden mercy seat above, typified His resurrection without humiliation (no wood, as in the ark), because of completed atonement. The cherubim, not united at all with the ark, were in unbroken and inseparable union with the mercy seat. Well may our hearts be full of praise. Christ is the Key to all Scripture. Moses could not make an atonement: his "peradventure" could have but one answer. But the Lord Jesus has made atonement, has borne the sin of many, and believers are thus united to Him, with eternal life in Him.

"WITH." Colossians 2 and 3.

- "Buried **with** Him in baptism" (2. 12).
- "Risen **with** Him" (2. 12).
- "Quickened together **with** Him" (2. 13).
- "If ye be dead (if ye died) **with** Christ" (2. 20).
- "If ye then be risen **with** Christ" (3. 1).
- "Your life is hid **with** Christ in God" (3. 3).
- "Then shall ye also appear **with** Him in glory" (3. 4).

REPROOF.

- "He that refuseth reproof erreth."
 - "He that hateth reproof is brutish."
 - "He that hateth reproof shall die."
 - "He that regardeth reproof shall be honoured."
 - "He that regardeth reproof is prudent."
 - "The ear that heareth the reproof of life abideth among the wise."
 - "He that heareth reproof getteth understanding."
- Proverbs 10. 17, 12. 1, 15. 10, 13. 18, 15. 5, 31. 32.

Encouragements and Tenderness:—

- "Fear fell upon him. But the angel said unto him, Fear not Zacharias, **for** thy prayer is heard" (Luke 1. 12, 13).
- "She was troubled . . . and the angel said unto her, Fear not Mary: **for** thou hast found favour with God" (Luke 1. 29, 30).
- "They were sore afraid: and the angel said unto them, Fear not: **for**, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all (the) people" (Luke 2. 9, 10).

- "There was no room for them in the inn" (Luke 2. 7, contrast 10. 34).
- "Yet there is room" (Luke 14. 22).
- "I go to prepare a place for you" (same word, John 14. 2).

"Fresh Oil."

Psalm 92. 10.

IT is easy for some believers to recount their past experiences of the Lord and His wondrous blessing. This is well at times (Ps. 66. 16), but if it be repeated unduly, there may be the appearance of occupation with the past. "Jesus Christ the Same . . . to-day!" How important that we should have a fresh experience of Himself. How blessed if we are made conscious of His living and willing interest, so that there may be bright, up-to-date realization of our adorable Lord. Our consciousness of Him is not what it might and should be. If we are always speaking of what He **was** and what He **did**, is there not need for present reviving? Is it not possible that we have **not** been anointed with fresh oil? We remember that the peace offering was not in any case to be eaten the third day. God revealed that there would have been no imputation and acceptance, had this been done, but the reverse. Has not God a gracious lesson for us here? There must be fresh dependence, fresh devotion, fresh receiving. Is my knowledge of the Lord Jesus sometimes "historical," or is there the thought, "That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection" applied **this** morning—**this** evening? O that my Christian life, and yours, may not be too full of echoes of yesterday. We need gratitude for the "forty years," or less or more, of His lovingkindnesses and leading (Deut. 8. 2), but we need Him now. The electric light is not seen one instant after contact is broken. The branch cannot bear fruit of itself, nor without "abiding." We need our Lord Jesus at all times, and the gracious work of the Holy Spirit without an interval. It is deeply important that there should be more freshness and no staleness with God's beloved people. How often the world sees that there is nothing "vital" in the language used. It is an echo of last year's blessing. O that we may all have a deeper, fuller, richer consciousness of that which is ours in our personal Lord.

INSPIRATION AND REVELATION.

Many confuse these words. It has been suggested that inspiration was not needed to write down genealogies or facts of history. Revelation was not needed, but inspiration was just as necessary, to know what to include, and what to omit, in the book God has graciously given us. Apart from the fact that a genealogy may be Divinely abbreviated (as in Matt. 1) with a definite purpose, and that comments on the historical facts may be interwoven in God's gracious **revelation** of His standpoint, the bare record itself could not be entrusted to a failing man. What is more difficult than an unbiassed view and account even of to-day's events? How easily the detailed insertion of one thing and the brief reference to another, may relatively give quite

a different aspect of any person or event concerned. Absolute inspiration was absolutely necessary, or we should be misled. And may we add that inspiration, like "eternal life" and "righteousness," admits of no degrees. It is either inspiration, or nothing.

Again, the book of Ecclesiastes claims the standpoint of "investigation," and thus openly declares ignorance and inability to know. That is certainly not revelation, but the record of the king's researches is verbally inspired, giving to the exact extent God appointed for us the information, and causing each word of Solomon's meditation to be the very word to bear the needed message, and all together to set forth the need for Christ, the need for revelation, and the "vanity of vanities" of all without Him.

"Without the shedding of blood is no forgiveness of sins."

Hebrews 9. 22.

Abel's faith perceived God's way,
And by blood drew nigh:
Cain by actions would gainsay,
And his guilt deny.

Without blood none ought could gain
Once in Egypt's land:
When the paschal lamb was slain,
See God's mighty hand!

On atonement's day the blood
Spake of hope and rest:
Nought else made the way to God,
Nothing else was blest.

All these symbols were to show
Christ transcending all:
But His precious blood, we know,
Rescues from the fall.

'Twas the precious blood of Christ,
Which could save the lost:
Nothing else could have sufficed,
Nor have met the cost.

Heaven's song can ne'er forget
All is by His blood:
Free from judgment, free from debt,
We would praise our God.

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