

The Student of Scripture.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"If ye have faith . . ."

Matthew 17 20.

A Word of Introduction.

AGAIN the march of time leads to another messenger, or rather God enables to use the gift of time to send forth a witness for Him. What is the purpose of a magazine? Is it simply issued because a new month has arrived? If that is all, how vain is the effort. There may be no commercialism, and no publishing because of a subscription, and yet there may be little or nothing of SPIRITUAL STEWARDSHIP! But our desire is this holy privilege,—yes, a stewardship from, and for, the Lord. We long that each page may exalt Him and no one else, that each article may attract to Him, and to none other. Systems, denominations, theories, individual, mentally grasped principles—what are they? Truth fossilized may be more dangerous than error. What we need is a living testimony in the living power of the Holy Spirit, an anointing with fresh oil, the provision of meat in due season, that the whole work may be in the will of God, not as a mere effort but as a fruit of His gracious inworking, and in its turn, fruitful to His glory, in the unity and unworldliness of His own.

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"The First Day" in the Old Testament.

OUR hearts value "all Scripture," and we remember that the Bible our Beloved Lord used, and which was the joy of the church at the beginning, was what is commonly called "The Old Testament." There, in all the Scriptures, are "the things concerning Himself." Moses wrote of Him, and all the prophets testified the suffering of Christ and the glories that should follow (Luke 24. 27, 44, 1 Pet. 1. 11). David in the Psalms plainly

speaks concerning **Him**, and calls Him "Lord." All truth harmonizes. How often have we rejoiced in this. It is not surprising therefore to find in the Hebrew Scriptures many striking thoughts as to the "First Day." Shall we go back to the earliest chapter in Genesis? A week is designedly before us. The first recorded word of God, emphasized very definitely in Hebrews 11. 3 and 2 Corinthians 4. 6, with its allusion to the grace that causes light to shine in our heart, was uttered on the **first** day of the week. "Let there be light" is, indeed, a gospel message. The earlier sentence, "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters," seems associated with the same day, and thus we have **life** and **light**, as in John 1. 4. We remember how the **Spirit** of God is associated with resurrection life in Romans 1. 4.

We are not told of all the **second** week in Genesis 3, but the apparent interpretation of chapter 3. 8. would tend to confirm the Jewish application of Psalm 50 that Adam sinned on the very first sabbath. There is no suggestion that he maintained intercourse with God after the rest God had thereon. "The cool of the day" would imply the introduction of the first day. If so, this is the **only** day of the second week described, and the first promise of the "Seed" was given then. And the "Seed" tells of death and resurrection (John 12. 24). There is no indication of a new day in verse 21: and waiting would not seem to fit the context. May not the first sacrificial type, and the clothing given, have been appropriately on the very same day? If the reader feels this added thought is unproved, it will not affect the earlier evidence: all that can be said is that the record gives no hint of a break, and this would seem to suggest the Holy Spirit's association of all these things with the deep meaning of "the first day."

When God is silent, we too would be. He gives us definite days of the **month** regarding the Flood, and these have instruction for our hearts. But though God's arrangement of seven days seems implied in Genesis 8. 10, 12, there is no emphasis on any day of the week. Nor can we find this, as far as I know, again in Genesis. But when we reach Exodus and the deliverance, God definitely marks the **first day** to which He calls attention in this connexion as a **first day of the week**. He could have selected the second, the fourth, the seventh. He chose the first, and His choice was connected with the gift of manna (Ex. 16), a wondrous type of our Lord Jesus. This is important, but it becomes more impressive when we find that "the hidden manna" laid up in the ark, and a yet fuller type of Christ and His resurrection, is immediately **after** "the people rested on the sabbath day" (Ex. 16. 30-36). In God's instruction this **looks like** a new first day, the **eighth** from the beginning of this gracious supply. I cannot say this is proved, but it would make a remarkable parallel with the eighth day, (the first of the week) in the Genesis week of chapters 2 and 3. If the reader hesitates

he still has the unquestioned first gift of manna. Even the **minimum** of references to the first day must impress.

But we go further, for remarkably the Holy Spirit indicates that the promise of this heavenly food was on the 15th of the 2nd month, when Hezekiah afterwards kept the passover (Ex. 16. 1). Hence, as its 16th was a 1st day of the week, and it seems probable that Israel's first month had thirty days, the 18th of the passover month (in Ex. 12) would have been a first day. What occurred then? Numbers 33 will help:—

- 15th. Leaving Rameses (3)
- 16th. Pitching in Succoth (5)
- 17th. " Etham (6)
- 18th. " Migdol (7)

Israel then had "the evening and the morning," therefore the passing "through the midst of the sea" in verse 8 was the day-time of the 18th, and this type of baptism (1 Cor. 10. 2) with its view of **death and resurrection** was thus associated with the 1st day of the week in passover. The **same** day was afterwards marked out by God for the sheaf of corn waved before the Lord (Lev. 23. 11), picturing our Lord's resurrection, and that glorious event exactly synchronized. Is all this an accident, or bare coincidence? Why should this type of baptism be associated with the first day of the week in the deliverance of a redeemed people? Have we not the baptism of 3000 on the **first** day in Acts 2? And was not the partial parallel of circumcision (Col. 2. 11), on an **eighth** day, not as to the week, but as to the personal life? Is this all without Divine intention.*

The next evidence of God's early emphasis on the first day of the week is yet more striking. There is one chapter that goes through the whole of Israel's year: that chapter is Leviticus 23. In it we have the general emphasis on the time in the month, but **two** days, and only two, are remarkably excepted from this. Hence they are the two days having a fixed position in the **week**, which **none** others possess in that prophetic chapter. Are they Sabbaths? No: the weekly Sabbath is emphasized **BEFORE** the description of the year: it was a sign of God's covenant with Israel and ever deeply important (Ex. 31. 16, 17). Were then these two special days **different** days in the week? No. What

*The Holy Spirit's time-marks must be important: Exodus 19. 1 is apparently the beginning of the month, then the third day (verse 16), and next a week (24. 16) leading to the tenth. The 40 days of ch. 24. 18 would bring to the twentieth of the fourth month. This stress on 50 days from ch. 19. 1 reminds not only of Pentecost in general but affords in ch. 32. 28 an impressive contrast with the three thousand of Acts 2. 41. Grace is wonderful. If Israel's year were lunar, as now, the second month would probably have had 29 days, and the calf was *apparently* prepared the day before Moses descended, and thus on a *Sabbath*, reminding that Adam's transgression is in Scripture associated with the same seventh day. This would emphasize the parallel sin, and also make a background for the first day. But the fulness of blessing was not then, though we dare not overlook Exodus 32. 14, and God's revealed longsuffering.

then were they? There should be no doubt, for the Holy Spirit emphasizes one expression, "the morrow after the Sabbath" (verses 11, 15, 16).[†] They are therefore counted from the Sabbath as **past**, and nothing is mentioned as occurring on that day, but evidently we reach something beyond. Thus the only two special days of the week brought before us in this remarkable context are alike its **first** day. None other. This becomes the more impressive when we notice that the earlier one was the very day **our Lord Jesus was raised** and exalted, and the other, that on which **the Holy Spirit descended**. Thus we see that **both** in type and fulfilment God has laid unique stress on this day, and on none other, as to the present dispensation. Yet more. In the second part of Israel's year, associated with the earth-rooted trees and their fruit, special Sabbath-keeping is mentioned four times, the first of the seventh month, the Day of Atonement, and two days of convocation in Tabernacles (24, 32, 39). But although there are convocation days in the first half-year (linked with the corn harvest, and thus a scorching sun and **detachment** from earth), these are not called by the Holy Spirit "sabbaths." Traditions may insist on applying this name to them, but **God keeps it out**. Whom shall we follow? Tradition would first add the word "sabbath" in verse 8, and thereby make "the morrow after the sabbath" a fixed day of the month, **excluding** that which has become the Lord's Day. This attack on God's words and on the types, however unintentional, is serious. But **it cannot stand**. The waving of the sheaf of corn, picturing resurrection, is NEVER connected with a special day of the month, nor is Pentecost,—the one feast of Israel thus distinguished, the one feast that could never have a sabbath. "The first day of the week" has thereby a double unique emphasis, and as we have seen, it has become prophetic. Evidently there is a deep spiritual meaning appointing that it should be **none other day** when our Lord Jesus Christ Himself was raised, and **none other day** when the Holy Spirit Himself came down. Are we learning and receiving the lesson in our opened hearts? Do we begin to realize the great characteristic of the present dispensation is not rest **after** work, but **resurrection life in our Lord Jesus**, that our whole working week may be unto Him? The comprehensive **claim** of grace that His atoning death makes clear, and that believers' baptism testifies, is here set forth. The Lord Jesus has a right to everything in you and me. O that we may render unto Him, and withhold NOTHING.

Nor must we overlook the Book of Psalms. In the second

[†]I refer to the fact that without any evidence many have said that "the sabbath" here is *not* the only sabbath so far mentioned in the chapter, i.e., the weekly. Such tradition, whether Jewish or nominally Christian, would put everything of exact fulfilment in the New Testament, and of orderly prophetic instruction, into confusion, (as the added lines will show), and needs a prayerfully firm rejection.

we read, "Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten Thee" (verse 7). Is this any special day? The Holy Spirit helps us in Acts 13. 33-37. The emphasis on the resurrection is clear in that passage. May we not reverently say that this is the **Birthday** of our Lord Jesus with regard to our relationship to Him? His redemptive work was then accomplished. The Seed of Corn no longer abode alone. Thus the Holy Scripture calls attention to the very **day** in the Book of Psalms. Has He not a reason for this? Other days are definitely set aside. We remember how God emphasized His refusal of the tabernacle of Joseph, and Shiloh, and His choice of Jerusalem, in Psalm 78. 67, 68. Must we not recognise His wisdom? Is there any other day, apart from the Sabbath of covenant with Israel, that we can find in those hymns of praise? There is not. Psalm 118 may also be noticed. It may be that verse 24 refers to the millennial day of 1,000 years, but the reference to "the Stone Which the builders refused" and "the Headstone of the corner" is Divinely applied to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. Why then should we exclude a specific reference to "the day which the Lord hath **made**" and thus appointed? Certainly it was on the first day of the week He caused His disciples joy in their gathering, and no special **assembly gathering** seems mentioned **by day** except on this one. O that we may "rejoice and be glad in it," for we are made members of Himself if saved by His precious blood!

(1) *the Lord will, to be continued*

"THE DOCTRINE WHICH IS ACCORDING TO GODLINESS."

"THE TRUTH WHICH IS ACCORDING TO GODLINESS."

1 Timothy 6. 3, Titus 1. 1.

These related words have impressed my heart. We can never separate belief and daily life: the "fruit" shows what is **within**. Head-knowledge alone is vain. The Holy Spirit works throughout our whole being. Moreover, we see that there is a beautiful harmony between doctrine and practice. May we illustrate this! The unveiling of Christ and the church, in Ephesians 5, is **in accord with** the happy Christian home, and the right relation of husband and wife. Thus as we live more obediently we can understand the truth of God better, and, further, as we realize that truth more, we are helped to carry out godly principles of His doctrine in our daily walk. The golden bell and the pomegranate alternate, and thus glory is brought to our Father,

In man's religion how different is the standpoint. One can be "religious," and yet quite unspiritual. Indeed, the **doctrines** of mythology are often immoral, but God's truth bears its own hall-mark in its perfect self-consistency.

A Striking Collection of Passages from Job.

"**S**HALL mortal man be more just than God? shall a man be more pure than his Maker?" (4. 17, Eliphaz).

"Doth God pervert judgment? or doth the Almighty pervert justice?" (8. 3, Bildad).

"If thou wert pure, and upright; surely now He would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous" (8. 6, Bildad).

"I know it is so of a truth, but how should man be just with God?" (9. 2, Job).

"Though I were righteous, would I not answer, I would make supplication to my Judge" (9. 15, Job).

"If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me" (9. 20, Job).

"I will say unto God, Do not condemn me" (10. 2, Job).

"Should a man full of talk be justified?" (11. 2, Zophar).

"Dost Thou open Thine eyes on such an one, and bring me into judgment with Thee?" (14. 3, Job).

"What is man, that he should be clean? and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?" (15. 14, Eliphaz).

"On my eyelids is the shadow of death; not for any injustice in my hands; also my prayer is pure" (16. 16, 17, Job).

"The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger" (17. 9, Job).

"I cry aloud, but there is no judgment" (19. 7, Job).

"Is it any pleasure to the Almighty, that thou art righteous?" (22. 3, Eliphaz).

"The righteous see it and are glad: and the innocent laugh them to scorn" (22. 19, Eliphaz).

"O that I knew where I might find Him . . . There the righteous might dispute with him." (23. 3, 7, Job).

"How then can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean that is born of a woman?" (25. 4, Bildad).

"As God liveth, Who hath taken away my judgment . . . Far be it that I should justify you: till I die I will not remove mine integrity from me: my righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go" (27. 2, 5, 6, Job).

"I put on righteousness, and it clothed me" (29. 14, Job).

"Let me be weighed in an even balance, that God may know mine integrity" (31. 6, Job).

"Behold my desire is that the Almighty would answer me, and that mine adversary had written a book" (31. 35, Job).

"So these three men ceased to answer Job, because he was righteous in his own eyes. Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu . . . because he justified himself rather than God" (32. 1, 2).

"I have heard the voice of thy words, I am clean without transgression" (33. 8, 9, Elihu).

"Behold, in this thou art not just: I will answer thee that God is greater than man" (33. 12, Elihu).

"He shall pray unto God, and He will be favourable unto him: and he shall see His face with joy: for He will render unto man His (? his) righteousness" (33. 26, Elihu).

"Job hath said, I am righteous; and God hath taken away my judgment" (34. 5, Elihu).

"Wilt thou condemn Him That is Most Just?" (34. 17, Elihu).

"Thinkest thou this to be right, that thou saidst, My righteousness is more than God's?" (35. 2, Elihu).

"If thou be righteous, what givest thou Him?" (35. 7, Elihu).

"I will fetch my knowledge from afar, and will ascribe righteousness to my Maker" (36. 3, Elihu).

"Touching the Almighty, we cannot find Him out: Excellent in power, and in judgment, and in plenty of justice: He will not afflict" (37. 23, Elihu).

"Wilt thou also disannul My judgment? wilt thou condemn Me that thou mayest be righteous?" (40. 8, The Lord speaks).

"I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth Thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes" (42. 5, 6, Job).

The thoughtful reader will see a sequence. We are reminded of Job 1. 22, "In all this Job sinned not," followed by 2. 10, "In all this did not Job sin **with his lips**," and then, "After this **opened Job his mouth** and cursed his day" (3. 1). Thus he began by lamenting his state, yet emphasized, "I have sinned" (7. 20), and asked, "How should man be just with God?" (9. 2), until his friends' repeated stress on the covering up of sin led to more self-justification, which Elihu pointed out. We note the words, "He (God) looketh upon man, and if any say, I have sinned" (33. 27), and recognize that God's servant had failed, though feeling his own failures, to take more fully the place of humiliation. The statement, "I would declare unto Him the number of my steps; as a prince would I go near unto Him" (31. 37) was among Job's final words. How different the humble silence of 40. 3-5, followed by the deep and yet completer confession of 42. 1-6, in which there is **no** complaint, **no** self-defence, and still more strikingly, **no** reference to his physical condition. Before he referred to this so much, but now the "dust and ashes," in remarkable contrast with 30. 19, speak of his spiritual brokenness (42. 6). Thus God works, and leads a holy man to a deeper holiness. To many this would seem a strange deepening of the spiritual life, but there is a need for lowliness more than any of us have yet experienced. How blessed was Job when "the end of the Lord" was thus reached (Jas. 5. 11).

Let us remember, too, Isaiah 6, and expect a deeper feeling as to God's holiness. Truth is not only to be read and acknowledged, but experienced. Do not our hearts desire that the Holy Spirit may thus apply these meditations on Scripture to each one of us?

"As much as lieth in you."

Romans 12. 18.

HOW often have these words been misused, as if they implied, "Do your best: but you may not always be able to act thus." Thereby the words of the Holy Spirit are neutralized. The preceding condition, "if it be possible," has been taken with the English "as much as," and "if" has been emphasized in this connexion by the mind, though not with the mouth.

But the Holy Spirit's message is clear if we are simple. It is true we cannot always expect others to act peacefully towards us, but the first point is that we are to seek this far more than we have done. We are to be gentle to all. Zeal for truth is not to make us provocative. How helpfully such a verse deals with our unwise manner. The thought of being hated for Christ's sake is not to cause us to seek this. We should not goad others to persecute or speak evil of believers by a controverting and irritating attitude, and then admire our own faithfulness. Grace never compromises, but it does not ruffle others ruggedly. This is a needful Scriptural message for us all.

Now we reach the words "as much as lieth in you." They look at first like a limitation of degree, but are rather a limitation of person. "As to that which is out from YOU" is a very literal rendering. This may sound inartistic from a literary standpoint, but the plainness will help us to learn God's instruction. 'Tis not simply "as much as," but "that" (the whole of it)—"that which is from you" is to be invariably peaceable, though that which is rendered to you may sometimes be the reverse. Hence the words "if it be possible" mean that you cannot enforce the peaceable attitude of others, but there is no implied impossibility or limitation as to that which is from you. You are always to be gracious. If there is one "sword," as in Matthew 10. 34-36, it is to be against you, not yours: you may have foes, but you are never to be a foe.

This prevents the modification of truth which seems the purpose of the enemy, and which may be felt in the modifying translation, "not easily provoked" in 1 Corinthians 13. 5, where "is not provoked" would be more literal, and would refute the thought that love cannot be expected to "stand too much," and the wrong idea that it is permissible to be provoked if not "easily." How we need to grow up into Christ in all things!

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"Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His Name." Malachi 3 16.

A Word of Introduction.

BY the GRACE of God we are what we are. How thankful we should be. And what possibilities there are for a child of God, indwelt by the Spirit of God. This is not a mere matter of doctrinal knowledge. Far otherwise, a believer has a new LIFE. Then how different from his old experience should his present one be, and contrasted with the attitude of those who are not children of God, and who have not passed from death unto LIFE. The fellowship of believers should be "natural," since they possess the same spiritual LIFE, and have the same spiritual prospect. The divisions and dissensions among believers are through lack of believing. We may word it thus, — Among children of God because they lack childlikeness. If we all acted in the Spirit, and the Spirit of God in "ME" met the work of the Spirit of God in "YOU," and vice versa, there would be harmony, growth, power. But if the flesh in "me" meets the flesh in "you," there is discord, stunting, weakness. The characteristics of which Malachi 3. 16 speaks should be ours to-day: O that these pages may minister to this end, and God's glory.

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Why the Genealogy of Joseph in Matthew 1?

HOW different a Bible would many believers have expected. Many, who are spiritually minded, do not yet realize how even a genealogy, and prayerful study of such things, can be full of fruit, and rightly used to God's glory. We are all so limited, and it is natural for us all to have a bias: hence so many misunderstandings among God's true children.

We all agree that a genealogy was important for Messiah, the son of David, showing the fulfilment of God's promise. But is not that seen in Luke 3, where the word "begat" is **not** found, and the words rendered "as was supposed" are given to make clear that the genealogy there is Mary's, quite in keeping with the stress in that gospel on God's work through women? Thus Heli (Luke 3. 23) did **not** beget Joseph, but evidently Mary: Jacob was his father's name (Matt. 1. 16). The virgin birth of Christ fulfilled Isaiah 7. 14, and it was essential that Mary should be in David's line. Fittingly this was not through Solomon, but through another son, Nathan: Messiah is never called the son of Solomon. Why then the genealogy in Matthew at all? It expressly indicates that it was **not** Mary's (verse 16, "of whom—feminine—was born Jesus Who is called Christ"). The inclusion of Jechonias, in verse 12, **childless** as to the kingdom and the "writing" (Jer. 22. 30), would confirm the thought that this could not be Messiah's physical descent.

Observe the words "the **husband** of Mary." But it may be said, "This describes his position after." What then shall we say of Matthew 1. 20, "Take unto thee Mary, **thy wife**"? From the **Divine** standpoint "espousal" involved this. Deuteronomy 22. 23, 24 is quite clear on this point, where a betrothed virgin is called "his neighbour's **wife**." Scripture is perfectly consistent. This incidentally shows how much more seriously "engagement" should be viewed among children of God, and recognized in Scriptural assemblies. Moreover, it emphasizes unvarying devotedness, and simplicity, that should mark the church's relation to Christ to-day (2 Cor. 11. 1-3).

Hence Joseph was responsible, and the Child born (Isa. 9. 6) had a definitely appointed relation, in God's law, to him. If he had not been of the tribe of Judah and of the family of David, Messiah would have been taken out of that tribe (the case of the daughters of Zelophehad in Numbers 36 illustrate this). So we realize more fully God's wisdom in all. Hence this genealogy is absolutely necessary.

Possibly we still wonder why this was needed? Could not the appointed mother of Messiah have been without this espousal, and indeed remained ever a virgin? How, in the latter case, would Psalm 69. 8 have been fulfilled? Human glorification of Mary was foreknown: God guards against all that leads to idolatry. One of the most remarkable things in Scripture is the way in which Messiah grew up, and the events of Luke 2 did not prevent a simplicity of childhood and early manhood, so that He was largely unknown till the "manifestation" to Israel. May not Joseph's **immediate** action in Matthew 1. 24, 25 have been one of God's means of preventing the publicity of emphasis on Isaiah 7. 14, together with the awful strain which would have been Mary's had she remained unmarried, amid the cruel surmises of those who knew not the prophecy? God does all things well.

"The First Day"—In the New Testament.

(Continued.)

And now we reach "the New Testament." The earthly ministry of the Lord Jesus before His death and resurrection is never, so far as I know, marked out as on the first day of the week. There is silence as to the day of His birth in Bethlehem, though men would override this. His miracles are often undated, but when a day is given it is normally sabbath (Matt. 12. 10-13, Luke 13. 16, John 5. 10, 9. 14). The Jewish theory that the Lord Jesus had **broken** the sabbath was as incorrect as that He "made" Himself equal with God (John 5. 18). He no more broke it than the priests in fulfilling God's sacrificial appointments. The idea that He set aside the sabbath in His earthly life is not only groundless, it would destroy the completion of His appointed work as the Obedient One under law (Gal. 4. 4). But He **never** emphasized the seventh day as that which was to be observed by **His disciples afterwards**. Throughout we see His perfection: His silence is part thereof.

Suddenly the aspect is changed. Before His death and resurrection no gospel record mentions the first day: afterwards, not one of the four omits, but each one emphasizes it: whereas all four omit mention of the sabbath altogether, subsequent to our Lord's resurrection. Moreover each gospel becomes silent as to any dating of any event **except** those of the first day. This four-fold testimony is thus uniquely complete. To deny it would be untrue, to ignore it would be sinful. Remarkably Luke tells us that the women "rested the sabbath day according to **the commandment**," as if to tell us where the new reckoning begins. This is the Holy Spirit's background for "the first day of the week" (Luke 23. 56, 24. 1). We notice, furthermore, a remarkable mode of writing. For example, Mark 16. 1, 2, reminds us that the Sabbath had gone through, before mentioning the first day, and verse 9 gives **another** stress. So in Luke 24. 13 we read "that same day" referring back to verse 1 (note also "to-day is the **third** day," verse 21). And John is similar, "the same day at evening," with a repetition, "being the first day of the week" (20. 19). This obviously cannot be accidental or merely tautological: it is God's instruction for our opened hearts. This is the more remarkable because the miraculous draught of fishes in John 21 is quite undated, even as Luke 24 gives no time marks after the long record of the first day.

Do we find a continuance of the same guidance from God in Acts, or does it cease as suddenly as it began? The Holy Spirit descended after a time of prayerful waiting. What day was Divinely chosen? It was the first of the week **after** seven sabbaths were complete (Lev. 23. 15, 16). We have seen that this was the one feast of Israel's year that was **without** a sabbath, and it was the birthday of the church. Scripture is definite, "the day of Pentecost was being fulfilled completely," not only

"fully came" (literally). This is a compound form of the word used for **fulfilling Scripture**, and types are definite prophecies, as Hebrews 9. 8 reminds us. God gave Leviticus 23 with a view to Acts 2, and the work of the Holy Spirit was as definitely foreshadowed as the work of "Christ our Passover" in the earlier feast. No other day could be permitted: there was a definite arrangement in perfect wisdom. The sabbath **must** be past, the other days of the week, though all "unto the Lord" were not chosen for this manifestation of Christ's glory. The dedication of the temple built by Solomon is appropriately emphasized as in the feast of the **seventh** month (1 Kings 8. 2), but the spiritual temple was associated with the first day, and thus with resurrection ground in Christ Jesus. "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses." And the result was the **baptism** of 3,000, with its striking type of death and resurrection, and then "they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2. 42). None other day is mentioned there, only this one.

Are any of the words just quoted specially linked with united assembly action? Yes,—“the breaking of bread.” Where else is it mentioned? In Acts 20. 7. Are any time-suggestions there? Yes, and they are unusually complete. Why do we need to be told this was “**after** the days of unleavened bread”? Are there not those who mistakenly urge the Lord's Supper only once a year at “passover time”? Why do we need the statement “we abode seven days”? Would not **any less** period indicate that breaking of bread might have taken place on other days, and any longer period that this privilege would be rarer than each week? Why are we specially told of “many lights” in the room? Have we not another indication of the Lord's **Supper**, and the latter part of the day, for the added reference to “midnight” hinders the suggestion that it might have been in the dark morning hour? Thus God has a purpose in each word, and this is the more evident when we find that so many other things in Acts are not dated at all as to the day, and that such an assembly action is not specifically linked with any other day, but that the emphasis on the sabbath in this book is always as to **witness** (to Jews), and **not** as to the **worship** of believers. How many have overlooked this? Frequency of reference to the Sabbath proves nothing as to assemblies, when it is specifically for another appointed purpose.

We pass on to the epistles. The Old Testament references to the seventh day sabbath are plainly not here. Only once does the word occur. Is it in a command, or in a context in which the arrangements God appointed in the earlier era are dispensationally set aside awhile? The prayerful reading of Colossians 2. 16, 17 would seem to decide this question. So evident is this that some have suggested the “sabbaths” here mentioned are not usual sabbaths but only the special “feast days.” But the Holy Spirit does **not** indicate this limitation. Does the wording allow

of it, without His warrant? Would not this imply a **repetition** of the reference to “an holy day,” whereas if we see God's order, the **yearly** holy day and then the monthly and weekly appointments, there is a fitting order and a perfect harmony with the threefold description in 1 Chronicles 23. 31, 2 Chronicles 2. 4, 8. 13, 31. 3? It seems hardly right for any to propose an unusual meaning of the word in view of all this.

But what is the appropriate inference? The other nine commands in the “ten words” of Exodus 20 are expressly included in “the law of Christ” for believers to-day, the fourth is **never** so included. Is there then no “type,” no “day” in the present time? That there are types we must confess, even baptism and the Lord's Supper. Granted that the omission or alteration of appointed symbols is not dealt with by the assembly as by Israel of old, when physical punishment was inflicted by the judges. It is true that the setting aside of believers' baptism keeps an individual outside a Scriptural gathering, and that sin as to the breaking of bread may cause **Divine** chastening, even as to the body (1 Cor. 11. 30). But how different is the language of instruction from that of the law. Our relationship to God as His children is to be realized, and a home has not the aspect of a state with its legalism and its penalties. Our Father is dealing with His willing children to whom a hint is “law,” for love is in their hearts, and His will is to be theirs. The unveiling of grace reminds us that we are not our own, and **every** day we are to realize this. Eating and drinking and daily labour can be in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and spiritual. Many rejoicing in this, and fearing formalism, have not apprehended baptism aright, and in reaction from form have inferred that any stress on types must be formal. But is this so? We have seen in Acts that though the typical sabbath day is not linked with worship, the **new** type is joined with another day, the first. Is there any parallel in the epistles?

These do not indicate one day for any actions, except in 1 Corinthians 16. 1, 2. Why this remarkable exception? Here is an appointment marked out for Galatia and Corinth **alike**, and in an epistle which emphasizes the thought “As I teach everywhere in every church,” “So ordain I in all churches” (ch. 4. 17, 7. 17). There must be a reason. Moreover, it would clearly seem to be a repeated action for **each** first day. This is then the same kind of thought as in Acts 20. 7. But what is here mentioned? The laying by of gifts unto the Lord. No other day is contemplated: any irregularity or “special” collection on the apostles' arrival is lovingly forbidden. A close parallel is in Romans 15. 26, and there the word “contribution” is the very word “fellowship” of Acts 2. 42. Though we would not limit the meaning of the expression there to this act of fellowship, yet it seems clear that **two** actions in Acts 2. 42 which do have definite days in Scripture are **each** associated with the first day, the first in the **one** passage in the Acts, referring thereto, and the

other in the **one** passage in the epistles.

Why the reference to God's prospering? Evidently there is a holy calculating **after** the work. Thus the seventh day seems incidentally viewed as a working day. But is the first day thus viewed? In the earlier Scriptures, to which the Holy Spirit so often alludes, the "giving" was connected with appearing and eating before God in the appointed feasts (Ex. 23. 14-17, Deut. 16. 16, 17: observe this last verse). We have no yearly celebrations now: the one day for typical **eating** is apostolically appointed for **giving**, and, as we shall see, it is "the Lord's Day." Let us not withhold from Him that which it is our privilege to render devotedly. There is no Scripture to suggest a working week for the human frame of seven days. The Divine setting aside of the seventh day, without any provision, would involve strain, deprivation, and the moral effect on the unsaved too, observing this attitude, would be grievous and ruinous. God has prevented such a calamity, but He has not used language which would have burdened early "slave-believers." Rather He has written for His willing and responsive children who are quick, with the faith of the Syrophœnician woman, to perceive and act upon His hints and suggestions. Believers who undermine the first day, and with human "logic" urge that there should be no distinction, will bring in daily business, and a seven day week with its commercializing accompaniments. They little realize the effects upon their families, and among others, for they, however unwittingly, are attacking God's principle. The fact that we should ever "be" a "prayer" (Ps. 109. 4 margin) does not hinder seasons of special waiting on God. So is it with regard to the first day.

(If the Lord will, to be continued)

"This Year Also."

Luke 13. 8.

THE immediate Scriptural application seems clear: Israel received further gentle tending by the Lord Jesus before their house was left desolate; and, in wondrous love, after His death, although the nation had been thus set aside, the message of the Gospel was "beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24. 47). "Unto you first, God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities" (Acts 3. 26).

But the words have many illustrations. God's long suffering, which waited in the days of Noah, has waited on many occasions as to individuals. We remember the words, "I gave her space to repent, and she is not willing to repent" (Rev. 2. 21). Naturally we think of unbelievers, but may it not be that God waits for His people to repent? Does not 2 Peter 3. 9 imply this? And what about ourselves personally? Have we not often failed to bring forth the fruit that should have

been prolific? Have not parts of God's truth had but little, if any, result in our life? May it not be that in some cases the words of 1 Corinthians 11. 30 nearly had a fulfilment in us—"For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep"? Have not we in our service to the Lord failed to render again for the benefit, and yet we have not been set aside? Is it because of a "This year also"? But should we presume on such tenderness? Have we misunderstood, and felt we deserved the love which brooded over us? We remember how the glory of the Lord in Ezekiel was so slow to leave the temple, and the character of God is seen thereby. If we are, in mercy, blest in any parallel with the teaching of Luke 13. 8, O that our hearts may be concerned that there may be a year of fruitfulness, yea, that there may be a response at once to the daily grace received, that we may no longer cumber the ground.

"Thou shalt be gathered to thy grave in peace."

"The archers shot at king Josiah; and the king said to his servants, Have me away; for I am sore wounded."

2 Chronicles 34. 28, 35. 23.

THE seeming "contra-diction" has a spiritual message for our humbled hearts. The book of Kings also emphasizes it (2 Kings 22. 19, 20, 23. 29, 30). One is deeply thankful that the two passages occur in the same book, and almost on the same page: how much would the critic have said, had they been found **far apart**. Thus God arranges all.

The practical lessons are real. Even a Jewish commentator observed: "The peace God promised Josiah is plainly stated, 'thine eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring upon this place.'" 2 Chronicles 35. 21 makes this clear, "What have I to do with thee, thou king of Judah, I come not against thee this day," and his burial and a three months' reign all took place before the attack on Jerusalem, which his action seems to have caused. But this leads us to realize the intense importance of reading Scripture carefully, and likewise the danger of **enlarging and generalizing a promise**, and thus failing to seek God in all. Josiah had been so dependent on God for everything in his younger life: did he misuse God's promise in 2 Kings 22. 19, 20? Have we ever misused God's gracious words, for example, in John 6. 37, 10. 28? We little realize how much we can **lose**, although God fulfils His gracious declarations in the **context** in which He sets them. Never let faith be counterfeited. The Devil sought to lead our beloved Lord thus in Matthew 4. 6. But He kept the promise to its right sphere, and would never presume. **Presumption** is a forgery of faith, and Satan longs to lure "believers" thereto, when, by grace, they hate **doubting**. Look up, be at the feet of your Lord, realize the guiding of the Holy Spirit, honour "all Scripture," and thus will the heart be held back from two contrasted, but closely related, sins.

Some Parallels in Spiritual and Natural Experiences.

BY the grace of God, we desire to love Him more and more, and to trust Him more and more fully, and to use everything to His glory. Everything in our earthly life may be a message to our hearts. For example, we break that which is quite whole; at other times we possess that which gradually deteriorates, and then the end arrives suddenly. It is so with the physical frame. Some are cut off in the prime of life: others gradually wear out, though they have a measure of strength to the end. And thus may it be in connexion with sin. A believer who has been running well is, at times, surprisingly led astray. There is a sudden catastrophe, through lack of communion with God. We learn thereby that we cannot trust to yesterday's spiritual health: we need the Lord to-day, and every day. More usually, there is the gradual neglect of "this" or "that," and the more manifest sin, though not expected by others, follows the continued day by day loss in the inner life. O that we may be concerned about the beginnings of these experiences that lead on to doctrinal or practical declension. For every sin is a serious matter, and we do need to beware of its smallest bud. The chain that gradually wears down in one link may appear all right till the last moment, and the previous weakening may indeed be quicker than that which is final, yet quite undetected. How we need God's grace to discern, and to see the first grey hair (Hos. 7. 9). Moreover, we observe a difference as to a broken piece of earthenware and a worn garment. Not only is the breakage sudden in the former case, but the effect is immediate. In the second it is otherwise. Yet our hearts would not forget the Sovereignty of God, and the possibility of another vessel as it seemed good to the Potter (Jer. 18. 4). Nor would we seek the mere patching up of our failures, as of clothing. It is blessed to look to our gracious God for a wonderful restoration. But how we need to be humbled. What is the message here to be impressed on your heart and mine? It is surely one of our own utter dependence, and our danger unless we are preserved in daily fellowship with the Lord, and also kept in lowly reverent faith that we may not be suddenly tripped up. In human warfare there are sudden onslaughts, and also tactics of tiring out, and the great enemy tries both with God's people. In this continual warfare how we need the sleeplessness of faith, and the realization of the Holy Spirit's control and leadership. Our wisdom and our enterprise, however well-intentioned, will surely fail.

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The Student of Scripture.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in Him." Psalm 34. 8.

A Word of Introduction.

TIME goes by, but our times are in God's hand. This is our relief, our comfort, our joy. A month is not simply a measure of weeks, nor a day a measure of hours: they are alike passing opportunities for pleasing God and glorifying Him. This magazine is not only paper and ink, it is a message to YOUR heart, in God's gracious use, or we have missed our steadfast purpose. First we desire that the pages should speak to OUR OWN heart, and that God should draw us to His will. If we write the articles, and you read them, and still remain removed, if there is no spiritual humbling and quickening in both of our lives, what is the profit? The great need is not mere grammar in the head but grace operating in the heart, not information for the brain, but inclination of the inner life to God's purpose, not bare organisation, but the realization of a living organism of united believers, indwelt by the Holy Spirit. How much is possible as we take God's standpoint, and expect His inworking, followed by His outworking.

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"The First Day"—In the New Testament. (Continued.)

We now approach a subject of the greatest importance. Is the remaining portion of the New Testament, the Revelation, a further corroborating witness in this matter, or is it silent? True, there is nothing said about the seventh day; and "the thousand years," following man's six days of evil since the fall, is the "Sabbath" therein described. Seventh Dayism fails to explain

why, when "the commandments of God" are mentioned in the book, there is not the slightest reference to the day they emphasize as **the** great point in such a verse as ch. 14. 12. Nor indeed is it once appointed throughout the New Testament after our Lord's resurrection. But what is "the Lord's Day" of ch. 1. 9, 10? We can well understand there will be errors as to this: that which we are convinced is the **final name**, in the **final book** of the Holy Spirit, will not pass unchallenged. The suggestion that this is the seventh day would surely seem impossible after the warning of Colossians 2. 16, 17. The interpretation of some that "the day of the Lord" is meant, appears to be without any basis, for

(1) The Holy Spirit has elsewhere used **that** expression: here He uses language **never** employed for that glorious period: hence we may well ask "Why?"**

(2) Verse 9 speaks of "tribulation and the kingdom and **patience** in Jesus": this does **not** belong to "the Day of the Lord."

(3) The immediate command was to send to **existing** churches: "the Day of the Lord" is not associated with suffering assemblies.

(4) Verse 9 indicates the literal place, and verse 10 would appropriately give the time. There is no thought that the writer was transferred to see the future time, till ch. 4.

(5) The expression "man's day" (1 Cor. 4. 3, marg.) is explained by its context as figurative. There is nothing parallel in Revelation 1.

Does the reader feel with us that the only unforced interpretation is as follows?—

(1) We expect allusion to an ordinary day, unless the Holy Spirit Himself shows otherwise.

(2) There is one Day marked out through the New Testament as well as the types and prophecies of the Psalms, linked with the resurrection, and thus the Lordship of Christ (Rom. 14. 9).

(3) That day, the first day of the week, is marked out for the first recorded fellowship of our Lord Jesus, in resurrection, with His own: is it strange it should be entwined with the **last** recorded fellowship?

(4) That day was the one on which the Spirit of God first spoke in **this** dispensation (cf. too Gen. 1. 3), should it be thought strange that His climax book should be given the same day?

(5) The emphasis on **assembly** gathering and activities is elsewhere related to the Lord's Day, and here assemblies are mentioned at the very outset.

(6) The **only** other occurrence of the word rendered "Lord's" is regarding "the Lord's Supper" (1 Cor. 11. 20), which, as we have seen, was on the waited-for **first** day, and is **not** mentioned

as to any other day in the present dispensation.

(7) The Lord's Supper anticipates the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, as the first Day looks forward to the Day of the Lord, with its resurrection and fellowship. There is a parallel.

(8) "His Day" (Job 3. 1) seems to refer to a **birthday** (cf. Job 1. 4), and the first day is even thus the Lord's Day (Ps. 2. 7).

(9) It has been remarked that the word—"Lord's"—in constitutional law meant **imperial**. We know how Cæsar was viewed as "Lord" (Acts 25. 26), and "appeal" to him has the very verb "calling upon" (Rom. 10. 13). In the light of 1 Cor. 16. 1, 2 the name "the Lord's Day" has a further fitting reference.

(10) No **other** day, or interpretation, would seem to meet the passage, nor does there appear to be anything in any Scripture against seeing the first day in this connexion. Everything is confirmatory and nothing contradictory. § Personally we feel that the evidence is cumulative and is conclusive, and the Scriptural language is in harmony with the dispensation which views us as willing disciples, welcoming our Father's will, and our Lord's hints, and not as those who need the language of legalism to keep us from disobedience. Nor can we be unmindful of God's grace in mode of appointment during transition periods, and when there were believing slaves for whom there would be peculiar problems in this connexion. But if we humbly believe that the first day is called the Lord's, this no more takes away other days from Him than "the Lord's Supper" makes us eat and drink to ourselves at other times (1 Cor. 10. 31). But it does imply a peculiar relation in each case, and just as we desire to be in an attitude of prayer always, yet to have prayer seasons, we find no hindrance in this standpoint. Just as Abraham gave tithes before the law of Moses, is there not an aspect relating to "time" as well as "money" which suggests clearly God's approval of proportion, and godly order at all times? It is remarkable, too, how God has blest the lands where believers have emphasized the Lord's Day, and we are convinced that any tendency now to view things otherwise will not be a protest against formalism, (whatever its intention is), but a real spiritual loss, because setting aside His own emphasis on this day throughout. The reader may have observed that the New Testament divides up into the Gospels, the Acts, the Epistles and the Revelation.

§ We promised to refer to the Divine instruction in employing a "further" name: 1 Corinthians 11. 20 is helpful: the stress on "the Lord" in that chapter is noteworthy, and context in Revelation 1, showing Christ's *authority* harmonizes. At the beginning "the first day" emphasizes resurrection, and looks to His finished work (1 Cor. 16. 2 is after ch. 15): at the end "the Lord's Day" lays stress on His glory and looks forward to His return. Many in the early church only gradually realized separation from Judaism, including circumcision. Colossians 2 was not written just after Pentecost. Hence the fitting time was chosen to claim more fully "the Lord's Day." And as it is "the first," the whole is claimed for Him.

**We recognize that we shall be *rightly* asked "Why?" as to a further name for the "first day," and hope to answer this Scripturally, with fruit in our lives.

And we have found a witness of striking importance in **each** part of the sacred volume, and each witness is distinct, though all are fitting together and complementary to one another. Affectionately, and earnestly, we would ask children of God to weigh these matters, longing that God may be glorified in all oneness of heart and judgment.

Many things are helpful though not cited as **proof** to any who may not yet be convinced. For example, the stress on the **day** of Adam's sin affords another of the remarkable antitheses with Revelation, where the Last Adam, the Lord Jesus, is seen in a glorious white robe on the Lord's Day. In both books there is a reference, moreover, to a day of 1,000 years, but how striking the contrast. All fell short in Genesis 5: "They lived . . . and they died." "They lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years" shines out.

If the last dated act of the Old Testament is on a sabbath (Neh. 13. 19-21), it is surely not without significance that the last dated event of the New Testament should be on "the Lord's Day."

We know, moreover, the stress on believers being gathered on the first day, whether in John 20 or Acts 2 or Acts 20, and thus the exaltation of the Lord in the midst, and the ministry of the Holy Spirit. How fitting an encouragement, then, was granted to one isolated for his Lord's sake on that very day. The **reading** of the New Testament Scriptures, further, is associated with the assembling of all the saints (Col. 4. 16, 1 Thess. 5. 27): is it without significance that in the last inspired book this day was chosen for the communication to John, and that the message begins with, "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear"—a primary allusion to the meeting of believers, though fitting to all who not only read with their eyes but "hear" in their heart "what the Spirit saith"? Changed circumstances cannot change our Father's love: the work of the Lord Jesus remains, the Holy Spirit abides. We praise and trust. And the last prayer in Revelation 22 looks to the Coming of the "**Lord**," Who will soon bring that **Day** of which the Lord's Day is a joyous anticipation.

If the Lord will, to be continued (appendices).

Judges 16. 19, 20: God will not permit the Philistines to shave us, but He will permit them to put out our eyes if we first allow a Delilah to shave us. And Samson was shaved when he was asleep. If only he had been on HIS knees in prayer, as Daniel (6. 10)!

It is often easier to preach than to pray, and to speak at a meeting than to glorify God at a meal-time. O that our conversation may be always with grace, and that our ordinary, background life, before those whom we **always** meet, may be deeply spiritual.

"ONE,"

In Connexion with Israel's Future.

"I will give them **one** heart, and **one** way, that they may fear Me for ever, for the good of them and of their children after them." Jeremiah 32. 39.

"Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his fellows, and will **one** stick and they shall be **one** in Mine hand. . . . And I will make them **one** nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and **one** king shall be king to them all." Ezekiel 37. 19-22.

"Then shalt the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves **One** Head." Hosea 1. 11.

"It shall be **one** day which shall be known to the Lord." Zechariah 14. 7.

"In that day shall there be **One** Lord and His name **one**." Zechariah 14. 9.

How glorious is the future for the remnant that shall return to the mighty God. Well may believers enjoy the prayers of Isaiah 60. 21, 22.

EXTRACTS

From a letter (answering one that suggested cessation of correspondence because the writer did not take further steps which we believe would glorify God).—"Thank you in His Name, for prayer, for letter, too, I would thank you, for I want you ever to feel "free" to write; but, beloved, your present standing (I use your words, "where I stand") doesn't hinder our loving concern to "love one another," does it? The first aspect of standing is "in Christ," C— (where the brother met) and 61, Upton Lane, cannot change **that**. If I felt you were determined against what was seen to be God's will it would be quite different. But I realize that your heart and conscience, dear brother, do **not** feel what I feel as to altering the symbols. You are **not** saying, 'I will go against the light.' **No**: you want to please the Lord, as I also Hence how can I do anything else but love, and correspond concerning Him, remembering the principle of the Holy Spirit in Phil. 3. 15? I **cannot** go against what I regard as **His Own command** to me: I want to love Him more than any 'these' (John 21. 15). But any love I can show without compromising His words is my privilege and my responsibility, and I want to show it by correspondence, etc., till we all come into the unity of the faith, etc. (Eph. 4. 13). So I would not, I could not, break off, beloved."

AN ECHO OF YESTERDAY.

I dread **stale** manna, and am afraid of trusting to yesterday's blessing. This is easier than I have realized. Is my praise an "echo" of that of days gone by, when I felt it, and have I the memory of the words rather than the reality of the experience? It is so "natural" to glide into this. Truth is precious, but if I know it only because I knew it, my very accuracy may deceive me, and lull me to sleep. I need Him,—Himself to-day. Fossilized spirituality is not spirituality, any more than a fossilized living creature is living. The flowing waters of yesterday may be the same waters but frozen, and there is no power. But that which is fossilized is hopeless; the ice can be **melted**. It is deeply important that we should have to-day's food for our soul to-day, as well as for our body. We cannot live on the past. The air I breathed an hour ago was precious and needful but it will not suffice me now. The fact that I had enough and to spare, even five minutes ago will not keep me alive in a vacuum a moment after. I **must** have a fresh supply, a present supply to meet my ever present need. The physical condition portrays the spiritual, and reminds me of the urgency of a continual receiving from the Lord. There is no failure, no slackness on His part. But how concerned and urgent should I be that I may not be misled by the possession of past truth, and past experiences, and reminiscences of past blessings! An echo is like a shadow, it speaks of reality, yet it is not reality itself. The echo is because of what **was**, not what **is**. But I need that which is, I depend on Him Who is. The peace sacrifice eaten a day later than appointed was not imputed to the one who brought it, but was an abomination, and a stale experience is an abomination. I need to be anointed with **fresh** oil (Ps. 92. 10). I am not writing for you, but for myself first. The knowledge of these facts is not enough. If I think because the danger is perceived that it is thereby escaped, it is not so. Far, far from it. Discernment of a peril often lulls one to sleep. But the theory of revival is never revival. O that God may graciously save us from deceiving ourselves. I would repeat it, an echo tells of what was, and what has gone. It is the result of circumstances continuing the "noise" of that which was the fruit of our lips. That will never please God. We need fruit constantly, much fruit, more fruit, fruit to abide, and the Holy Spirit is so graciously indwelling to cause this. May there be **reality** and **freshness** in your daily experience, and mine.

The faith of God's elect is a living faith, a mighty faith, an active faith, a conquering faith. But, blessed be God, unlike love, it is **not**, in one sense, to abide for ever, for it shall change to sight and receive the fulfilment. Yet in the meaning of confidence in God and responsiveness to Him it will remain unchanged and unchanging.

"Mourn not, nor weep; for all the people wept."

"Neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the Lord is your strength."

"Neither be ye grieved."

Nehemiah 8. 9-11.

A MOURNING people are told not to mourn, whereas some need to hear the words "Render your heart" (Joel 2. 12, 13). The Lord God of hosts called "to weeping . . . and behold joy and gladness" (Isa. 22. 12, 13). But a weeping people were in a condition to receive comfort. Is there not a precious message for us here? "To comfort **all that mourn**" is the prophetic statement of Isaiah (Isa. 61. 2). How can the Lord **bind up** unless they are **broken in heart**? He that is wounded by the law can be healed by grace (Deut. 32. 30), and a weeping Josiah hears the welcome words, "Because thine heart was tender, and thou didst humble thyself before thy God, when thou heardest His words against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, and didst rend thy clothes, and weep before Me; I have even heard thee also, saith the Lord" (2 Chron. 34. 27). Hence those who were conscious of sin, and troubled, as Josiah, that they had not done what God had commanded, could be rightly encouraged, and the **second** "for" aptly follows the first. The reason for the true joy, that succeeds real weeping, is that thereby the Lord gives strength to do His will with purpose of heart from the **present** time "and upward" (Hag. 2. 15, 18). "**Be strong** and work" is the Lord's message (Hag. 2. 4). If I **only** weep over yesterday, I lack strength for to-day. Peter's weeping bitterly was followed by the blessed activity of the Day of Pentecost. The greatest sin is often a slight sense of sin, for that is a condition of unhumiliated indifference. No act of sin should be excused, but the state of unmoved self-satisfaction is most deadly, even though there may be a general avoidance of specially manifest sins. How ready were the people for God's own refreshment when they were bowed before God. Is not the danger to-day that there is so little sorrow, so little consciousness of unworthiness and failure? The man of the world is ashamed to be humble, and the natural and temperamental and Western contrast with Eastern experiences and weeping, has an effect on many of us. O that we may be tender, and know a depth of feeling. God's promise of blessing in Ezekiel 9 was for those who sighed and cried over sin. Such shall ever be comforted. And the address on the mount gives us a similar precious thought, "Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted" (Matt. 5. 4).

"That Blessed Hope" is blessed indeed. We **expect** the Lord Jesus, we have no doubt as to His Coming, nor can circumstances make Him one day late. That **would** be impossible. Our Father knows every day's happenings before they come, and nothing can surprise Him. How refreshing is this for His redeemed people. He will not fail to do as He has said.

"As many as touched Him were made whole."
 "He touched his tongue."

Mark 6. 56, 7. 33.

IT is impressive to see how the Lord Jesus healed various ones who came or were brought to Him, or whom He sought out, or to whom deliverance was sent.* We notice a command or a touch, or both, or the speaking of a word to the one asking on behalf of another (e.g., Matt. 8. 13, 15. 28, John 4. 50). This diversity of operation had a meaning. Our Lord would draw the believing heart away from confidence in the means used, that there might be simple confidence in Himself, the Person. And do not we, too, ever need this lesson? It is easy, easier than we think, to be occupied with the blessing and the way it reaches us, and almost to limit Him to this, so that we fail to enjoy the fuller dependence on, and expectation from, **Himself**.

But amid various appointments we note the stress on **His mouth** or **His hand**, and, in connexion with the hand, we must not forget the two aspects: He touched the needy, and the needy touched Him. There is a beautiful spiritual parallel. It is the Lord's mercy that lays hold of us, but there is the response of faith that lays hold of Himself and His precious gospel. When another helps us up a steep bank, his hand grasps and secures, but naturally we grasp back. In a far fuller way when the Lord lovingly lays hold of us we respond to Him. And He does more than "help": He causes the faith that can joyfully reply.

The word "touch" emphasizes contact. In the physical miracle there was either the word, or the touch. In the spiritual miracle is there not a combination of these two? Does He not speak in life-giving power, but must there not also be the living contact with Himself? And must not this be maintained as the abiding in the Vine indicates? We know the failure whenever there is loose contact in electricity, and our hearts would realize the close and full contact of living faith, ever continued, which must characterize the bright Christian life. May this be ours indeed, in the power of the Holy Spirit.

*These different aspects, too, are helpful as to the spiritual parallel. How graciously He seeks some in a sovereign way that is unexpected, but others He lovingly permits us to bring to Himself for blessing.

How many know Psalm 23 and Psalm 46 and Psalm 103, and yet are unmindful of other portions of Scripture. There is a real danger of choosing instead of valuing all the precious words that our God and Father has given us. Do not be afraid of the godly habit of reading all Scripture, through and through.

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The Student of Scripture.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"Thy God, Whom thou servest continually, He will deliver thee."
 "My God hath sent His angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths."
 Daniel 6. 16, 22.

A Word of Introduction.

DO we serve God continually? Are we a testimony that even those who know not the Lord may see, and respect in some cases, though opposed and persecuted in others? But even the persecutors had to witness "we shall not find any occasion against this Daniel except . . ." (Dan. 6. 5). These pages are not only sent forth to help Bible study. What is our "practical" experience, our daily home and business life? Can men find nothing against us? Let the one exception be that we will not, for anyone's sake, nor for earthly advantage, put our Father and His will second. O that there may be, not only in profession, but in the warp and woof of our whole life, such a harmony with God's revealed will, that the faith of Daniel may be ours. And God is to be trusted to protect, or to overrule suffering to magnify Himself (Phil. 1. 20). This is the stand, the standard, the standpoint, that one would ever humbly, and yet boldly, maintain.

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Grace and Strain.

How we need grace never to be irritated. If we are insulted, why should we be annoyed? Does not God permit, with a view to our sanctification? If others misrepresent, why should we be angry? They misrepresented our Lord, the Perfect One. And we are not perfect. May it not be that something in our life or language has given occasion to a misunderstanding, and hence the misrepresentation? May it not be that our Father draws us thereby to more humility and more godly care? Should we not thank Him? And a physical strain is not to irritate us. It might

be worse. A Father's hand is never withdrawn: He allows all with a purpose. "**Things** go wrong." But **they** are not independent of **His** wise permission. Again, there **is**, there **must be**, "**a purpose**." And **what** is it? If instead of being irritated we seek His face, to know His message, we shall be blessed, as Paul with the thorn. We may not be "irritable," and yet may be "irritated" within, and thoughts of complaint or annoyance may rise, and, instead of grieving that we do not "in everything give thanks," we may even feel complacent that we keep the irritation **under**. But it is **there**, and hinders communion. O for a walk with God that affects our feelings, our whole attitude, our thoughts at the very bud!

The Eighth Day.

(Appendix 1 to "The First Day of the Week.")

IN meditating on the first day and its stress on peace and acceptability before God, leading to fruitful obedience, we are made conscious that the Holy Spirit's references to the eighth day, even though having no reference to a week, confirm the thought, since seven is a Scripture cycle, and eight a new beginning. The "first day" when our Lord was raised was necessarily an eighth day from **His last week**, which is more minutely described than any other, and on the evening of its sixth day He finished doing all His work under law (Ps. 104. 23, see Ex. 20. 9).

Obviously the first day suggested by Genesis 3 would be an eighth, and the omer of hidden manna may be associated with such a day.

But apart from this we have other definite references of the Holy Spirit to this number. Circumcision with its covenant type was to be on the eighth day (Phil. 3. 5), and the sacrifice was not acceptable till then (Ex. 22. 30), i.e. the cycle of "seven" must be complete. The cleansed leper (Lev. 14. 10) as well as the high priest of Israel (Lev. 9. 1) had special sacrifices linked with the eighth day, and **then** was there the drawing near to God. Nor can we forget the Nazarite in Numbers 6. 10. Leviticus 23. 36 makes an eighth day the climax of Israel's year, and accordingly we find this very emphasis at the dedication of the temple (2 Chron. 5. 3, 7. 9). Nehemiah 8. 18, too, refers to it, in the same feast, and remarkably when God granted **revival** in the days of Hezekiah, in quite another month, the eighth, and sixteenth days were both days of peculiar blessing (2 Chron. 29. 17). On that occasion may we not say that God granted after Ahaz' evil reign, a foretaste of Israel's "life from the dead" (Rom. 11. 15)? Here we seem to find a continual Divine emphasis on that which is typified by "seven." Surely our mind goes to John 7. 37-39 and the symbol there of receiving from the Lord Jesus, the power of the Holy Spirit. The Jews

were wont to say that one who had not seen the rejoicing in Jerusalem on that eighth day did not know what rejoicing meant. May it be ours to experience the spiritual "much more," as our beloved Lord set forth, as He thereby encouraged the true, and permanent joy of His own.

In the light of "**after** three days" and "**the third day**," in Hebrew and Greek idiom, Matthew 27. 63, 64 illustrates Esther 4. 16 and 5. 1, when English readers might at first think of the fourth day. This helps to explain John 20. 26 which would thus seem to be the following first day, confirming the stress on this day alone, in each gospel, after our Lord's resurrection. There is no mention, we repeat, of His gathering, after resurrection, on any other day in a house with His redeemed. Both the record and the silence are inspired.

Moreover, the Day of Pentecost was not only a first day, it was linked with the preceding weeks, and thus was an eighth day (Lev. 23. 16), and the Holy Spirit's coming then is fittingly joined with John 7. 37-39. We remember, too, that He is called the "Earnest" (Eph. 1. 14) with regard to His dispensational work, and the future inheritance, and that He graciously enabled "the powers of the age to come." Pentecost thus pointed forward to the Feast of Tabernacles, and was it not in this month that God arranged the other "fiftieth," namely the year of jubilee (Lev. 25. 9, 10), which thus has the same stress on resurrection?

Luke 9. 28 is a somewhat unusual passage with this number, when we compare Matthew 17. 1. Not that there is any contradiction, but in one gospel evidently the exclusive reckoning is found, and in the other that which **includes** the day **from** which and **to** which all is counted. Thus we think of a finished work ("six days shalt thou labour"), and of resurrection, and again a view of the resurrection of the Lord's redeemed and of the kingdom is typically before us.

May all these meditations not only show the harmony of Scripture, and God's emphasis on the resurrection day, but also His loving call to us, that we may experience the power of Christ's resurrection, without which the knowledge of the Lord's Day, and its meaning, will lack the precious fruit that exalts Him.

God never **excuses** lack of **faith** or lack of **love**, but He draws His children through a gracious mingling of encouragement and chastisement, in perfect proportion, and through His use of Scripture, believing friends, ordinary circumstances and trials, to Himself, and thus to a fuller growth in the faith that worketh by love.

It is easier to "do" much than to wait on God for His gracious training in quicker, yea, spontaneous willingness for His will. How such thoughts search us, whether we write or read them.

"Could Acts 20. 7 refer to our Saturday evening?"

(Appendix 2).

SOMETIMES an earnest believer asks this question, and we do well to ponder. The bearing on the Lord's Supper also is evident, and the answer may affect the hours of daily WORK.

Surely God will graciously guide us (Ps. 25. 9). But we would be willing to wait and meditate. The first thought of most in asking the question would be "Do we not read in Genesis 1, 'The evening and the morning were the first day'?"

But is this EVER found in the New Testament? Do we find any case there of the preceding evening emphasized as part of the following day? Moreover, is it not remarkable that John 19. 14 shows (in the light of Mark 15. 25) a change to Gentile time starting at midnight, and is not this fitting, in "the times of the Gentiles"?

Again, is there any prominence of "Saturday evening" in connection with the background for the present dispensation in the appearances of our Lord Jesus in resurrection? AFTER seeing the women in the morning, it was in the afternoon that He revealed Himself on the road to Emmaus. And "the same day at evening," when they had walked miles back, (Luke 24. 13, although the day had already declined before they entered the room at Emmaus)—yes, "the same day at evening, being the FIRST day of the week" (John 20. 19), He was first manifested in a gathering of His disciples. This cannot be linked with "Saturday," and plainly emphasizes the evening as the END, not beginning, of the day in question. Hence it does not encourage the application of "the EVENING and the morning" to Acts 20. Nor does Acts 2 give any particulars of the Day of Pentecost (another first day) till the MORNING (verse 15), and the baptizing of 3,000 and other blessings evidently went on to the AFTER part of that initial day of this dispensation.

And Acts 20 itself shows no suggestion of anything different. It is not only we expect it would harmonize with the other passages which never emphasise the "Saturday" and always "the Lord's Day" evening, but the Scripture definitely speaks as though the following morning was viewed as to-morrow, NOT as to-day. And the breaking of the bread apparently delayed by preaching leads to a striking interruption at midnight. No time is given till this. No hour is Divinely mentioned without a purpose.* Was not the interruption then indicative of a reason for choosing that hour, specially as death in connection with the Lord's Supper seems to be a definite message from God (1 Cor. 11. 30)?§

* Leaflet gladly sent.

§ The Lord's Day and the Lord's Supper seem linked: and do not we need to be careful lest our ministry postpones worship? Possibly you would like to see a leaflet, with suggestions concerning this. This is not meant to criticize saints at Troas, but to exercise our own hearts.

"In Hebrew and Greek and Latin."

John 19. 20.

HOW definite is God's record of this fact, and we have brought before us the precious work of the Lord Jesus Christ for sinners of all nations. The wondrous words of Matthew 28. 18-20 come to mind. Moreover, we may have help as to the Holy Spirit's four records. Possibly the varied wordings refer to the different languages. In any case, it is remarkable that the Old Testament is in Hebrew, the NEW in Greek, but that God has **not** used Latin. He foresaw the attitude of Rome and Romanism. How definitely would it have been emphasised if part of the Scripture had been in Rome's language. But everything is divinely arranged as a witness.

The Hebrew language reminds of God's own work at the beginning and of His holy law; Greek and Latin of the confusion of tongues at Babel and His intervention in a ruined world. Greek reminds of wisdom, Latin suggests the power of the Roman empire. Thus we have the blessedness of the gospel for those in every condition, and our hearts rejoice in "Christ the Power of God and the Wisdom of God" (1 Cor. 1. 24).

The First and Last Recorded Appearances of the Lord Jesus After the Resurrection.

To Mary in Mark 16. 9 (see John 20. 11-17).

To John in Revelation 1. 12-20.

What a contrast, and yet how many parallels! We behold grace to a woman and grace to a man, to one who had been indwelt by seven demons, and to another who, it would appear, had been an earnest disciple of John the Baptist. Each had been brought to the Lord Jesus. In both unveilings we have the need to "turn" ("She turned herself back," "I turned to see the voice"). How often are we turned, in measure, away (contrast 2 Cor. 3. 18): thus we fail to realize Him. In both we have the context emphasis on the LIVING One (Luke 24. 5, Rev. 1. 18). Mary must not touch the Lord just then, but He put His hand on John at His feet (afterwards the women could hold Him by the feet, and worship, Matt. 28. 9).

O that we may realize Him as the Living One to-day, "Living" to guarantee our life, to intercede, and "Living" to meet our every need. He said, "I am," and His word is our joy. A present-tense Saviour is His people's confidence: He is the opposite of those who are dead. Mary had thought to carry His body away, but He, the Living One, sent her on a message as to His ascension,—the reverse of burial. And John beheld Him carrying His own, as it were, for the stars were in His hand. Both appearances were on the same day of the week, the first day, the Lord's Day!

LOVE AND COMPROMISE.

O that my feelings and my reasoning and my temperament may not draw me, but the Lord's will. O that we may all be "kept" from severity of the flesh, regarding it as love to others, in view of their spiritual profit, and likewise be "kept" from any weakly excusing lest we "offend," which may be unconsciously selfish, making our own path easier. The enemy would always mislead, the Holy Spirit always leads aright. The true Christian life is a "growing up into Christ in all things." There is ever a holy balance and a gracious proportion. Thus the Lord is honoured. Love is never proud, but that which is uncompromising may be stiffly and unlovingly proud. In other words, though love does not compromise, all that which does not compromise is not love. It is so easy to have our idea of love instead of God's own description in 1 Corinthians 13, to have that which is theoretical, rather than that which is a living outflow of His own gracious work in us. We must not be uncompromising for our own sake, nor because of our consistency to logical principles which may be "held," not with a lack of love for those concerned, but for His sake, and with His love to those involved.

A REMARKABLE CONTRAST.

"The Lord put a word in Balaam's mouth" (Num. 23. 5, 16, cf. 22. 38).

"The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is the word of faith, which we preach" (Rom. 10. 8, cf. Deut. 30. 14).

We can soon learn much of truth in the head, but what avails this unless we experience the power of truth in the heart? A Balaam could be used in God's overruling, but a believer is blessed with God's implanted word. This is altogether different, and this is blessed indeed. Where is the truth, dear reader, in your experience and mine? In the mouth alone, or in the mouth because in the heart? Then it is the living fruit of the lips (Heb. 13. 15), and then we know the meaning of the words blessedly "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Matt. 12. 34).

"As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth (Ps. 103. 15).

"As for God, His way is perfect: the word of the Lord is tried" (Ps. 18. 30).

"As for me, I shall behold Thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I awake, with Thy likeness" (Ps. 17. 15).

A Wondrous Union.

God has graciously brought us into the "holy nation" that we may serve faithfully in "the kingdom of the heavens"; but, not only so, we are brought into the family of His redeemed that we may enjoy sonship, and also the privileges of the royal priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices. Yet further is our relationship explained, for in the bride we have the undistracted hope of the Bridegroom's near coming. And our intimacy is again set forth, with another aspect of our great privileges, for we are branches in "the True Vine," to bring forth abiding FRUIT for Him. And, wonder of wonders, we are truly described as members of the body of Christ, that His life may be manifested in us, and our eternal blessedness is inseparable from His. Could anything of this be from man's thought? Nay! Here we see the "way" of God, and the precious purchase of the blood of our Lord Jesus, and we adore!

When Hezekiah sought to buy off Sennacherib, and put the Lord's possessions second, he utterly failed (2 Kings 18. 14-16): when the people were "full of stirs," and everything was organized without God (Isa. 22. 2), they too failed: when there was humbling before Him (Isa. 22. 12 with 2 Kings 19. 1), there was signal blessing and protection (2 Kings 19. 34, 35). The great thing is never "circumstances" but recognition of God,—of God first, of God last, of God in everything.

With the four all's in Matthew 28. 18-20 we may compare the four of 2 Timothy 3. 11-17:—

- (a) Deliverance out of all persecutions (11)
- (b) All that are godly suffer (12)
- (c) All Scripture given by God's inspiration (16)
- (d) All good works are the holy fruit (17).

O that the message in each case may have the Lord's free course in our life.

Faith is a simple, childlike confidence in our God, in His words and His work. It is living, and growing, and thus it is powerful. Faith is not a natural effort, but the expression of a supernatural life.

Faith is not a mere dream, an imagination, and a shadow: it is a reality, a substance. It is never self-evolved, but Divinely caused and Divinely established. Faith is the true response to God's personality, to His promises, and to that which He has appointed. Faith says "Yes" to God, and "No" to all that is against God.

The death of Christ was not only a display of love in the abstract, it was a covenant work of righteous redemption for an elect people; and He shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied.

"They loved the praise of men more than the praise of God."

John 12. 43.

A SAD declaration! But must there not be many of whom the Holy Spirit has said this? And are we ever looking to men, and thinking of men, and what they will say, more than we realize? Two other searching verses come to mind, "The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe" (Prov. 29. 25), and "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of Me and of My words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when He cometh in the glory of His Father with the holy angels" (Mark 8. 38). It is so easy to fear others (Gal. 2. 12). They may be close relatives, or those who are employed in the same office or workshop. Peter never meant to deny his Lord. But when we fail to judge ourselves, and fail to "watch and pray," there are soon further steps downwards. How definite was the choice before believing Moses. On the one hand, "the treasures of Egypt," on the other "the reproach of Christ." He had no hesitation. He chose the latter. Should we do the same, humbly, in the enabling power of the Holy Spirit, or not?

What does it matter if men despise us? Who are they? They despised our Lord Jesus. His "Well done" is incomparably blessed. The praise of man is a poor, temporary, changeable bubble. Do we "love" this? Do we seek the approval of those who do not approve Him? Do we desire a place in the world where there was no room for Him at birth, and a cross outside the gate at death? We remember the words of Romans 2. 29, "He is a Jew which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." Paul was counted as the off-scouring of all things (1 Cor. 4. 13). We have not yet suffered rejection like to this. Our affliction is far lighter than his "light affliction" (2 Cor. 4. 17). If only we weighed all in the balances of the sanctuary, should we not realize the preciousness of our Lord's words, "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake" (Matt. 5. 11), and again, "If ye be reproached for the Name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory, and of God resteth upon you" (1 Pet. 4. 14). "The servant is not greater than his Lord" (John 15. 20), and if we have temporary respite let us be concerned that it is not because of our unlikeness to Him Whose Name we bear, and into Whose death we have been baptized.

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The Student of Scripture.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"Power with God and with men." Genesis 32. 28.

"I prayed to the God of heaven and I said unto the king." Nehemiah 2. 4, 5.

"Nevertheless we made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch." Nehemiah 4. 9.

A Word of Introduction.

OUR relationship to men should ever be affected, and controlled, by our relationship to God. He must be first, even as the Lord Jesus said; the first commandment concerned love to HIM, and the second was like unto it, regarding the neighbour, - so is it in all. "This commandment have we from Him, That he who loveth God love his brother also" (1 John 4. 21). "He that in these things (righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit) serveth Christ is acceptable to GOD and approved of MEN" (Rom. 14. 18). Jeremiah was called to emphasize this, "If they had stood in MY counsel" precedes "and had caused MY PEOPLE to hear My words" (Jer. 23. 22). With the desire that God may be glorified in this attitude are these pages sent forth. We are conscious that in all our lives there is a need for true and holy approach unto our Father before everything. If we seek to serve, and THEN ask God to bless, the order is wrong. We are often too much occupied with "our arrangements" (which may be active, and hearty, and with "good motives"), so that we fail to wait on Him, and have too little time, in blessed dependence like Mary, at His feet.

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Hormah and Achor

OR

Defeat Changed to Victory.

(Numbers 14. 45, 21. 3, Joshua 7. 26)

IT is a joy to see God's hand in turning trouble to triumph. We are again and again reminded in Scripture of the depth of His wisdom, and this we see unmistakably when sin abounded and grace did much more abound. How striking is the statement in Hosea 1. 10, "In the place where it was said of them, Ye

are not My people, it shall be said unto them, The sons of the Living God." In the city which is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt shall the Lord Jesus yet reign gloriously. In Numbers 14 Israel first doubted, then presumed. It is an easy step from one such sin to the other, for both are contrasted with FAITH, and its obedience. Thus to Israel there was soon discomfiture, defeat, death, destruction. But, (wondrous is God's mercy), in chapter 21 He gave them victory even **there**, and quickly in the wilderness itself, **not** only later. Yet for all that they sinned still, and next we read of a discouraged people complaining of the very manna. Those who are dependent on circumstances and blessings, soon fail and falter,—those who depend on the One Who blesses can go from strength to strength—God is!

A far different fulness of blessing will be seen in the future, when God will pardon those whom He **reserves**, and they will become the whole nation, and "**all Israel shall be saved.**" The valley of Achor was of old associated with Achan and his coveting, with stoning and with judgment (Jos. 7. 25). The troubler of Israel (note 1 Kings 18. 17, 18) was troubled (cf. 1 Cor. 3. 17, 2 Thess. 1. 6, 7), and one family was cast out of Judah, and we remember how Rahab the Gentile was brought into the same tribe and David's family in infinite grace. "In that Day" the Lord will make the valley of Achor itself a place for the herds, for His people that have sought Him (Isa. 65. 20) for He Himself will cause in the valley of Achor "a door of hope" (Hos. 2. 15). "How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out." Then He will change everything, and glorify His Name.

But even now, may we too not know His mercy in our own experience? We may. Grace abounded to Levi, scattered in words of prophetic judgment (Gen. 49. 7). After Exodus 32 we find this very tribe signally blessed, and sown among the other tribes in blessing (Deut. 32. 8-11). And if we, too, confess sins, our God of all grace will appoint beauty for ashes, and cause us to rejoice in His blessing where we have failed. If only we are turned to Him, He Who changed Israel's Purim-destruction to deliverance will not prove less glorious for us. He Who has turned, and will turn, the captivity of a nation, can and will enable individual believers, who are humbled before Himself. Let us not despond, nor look to our past, but confess sin and look to His "present," or rather to HIMSELF in the present tense, and to His omnipresent grace. Peter was mightily used of God in the very city where he had, alas, denied his Lord, and John Mark was "profitable" to the very servant of God whom he had disappointed (2 Tim. 4. 11). "Yesterday" is not the end, the Lord is not less than the potter, and He can make a vessel for His own pleasure even when there has been marring (Jer. 18. 4). Excused sin will bring failure again, but unexcused and confessed sin shall not be the ruin of those who look to the mighty God (1 John 1. 9). How precious is the power of the blood of Christ for us, and the work of the Spirit of God in us!

Matthew 28. 1.

THIS has been rightly viewed as a somewhat difficult passage in connection with the other inspired records of the resurrection. Nor is this difficulty absent from **any** interpretation: hence the reader's patience and expectation of blessing are deeply important. It seems to place the journey of the women **before** the other gospels. The critic's solution, imputing contradiction, has so often been found the devil's way of hiding one's eyes to special spiritual help. We ever need prayer, and avoidance of any modifying, or mistranslating, to "suit" **our** pre-conceived explanation. It is a joy to know all Scriptures DO harmonize, and that the gospel records are supplementary,* and often (as Matt. 27. 51-53 illustrates) very concise, passing over intervening hours, unrecorded.

We are conscious that when our Lord died the sepulchre was "nigh at hand," and "the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city," so there were opportunities for repeated journeys. Yet the words of Matthew 28. 1 hardly seem to denote a Saturday evening journey **only to see the sepulchre** in view of verse 5, though this might be parallel with the **passing over** of times observed in ch. 27. 52, 53, and would illustrate their interest in "**seeing**" (e.g. Mark 15. 47). If, however, the journey is the same as that of Mark 16. 1, when did it take place? Some translate "**after the sabbath,**" but there does not seem New Testament evidence for this thrice-recurring rendering of the word "late," though it may be related to the word *ὀψίω* ("after Me" in Matt. 3. 11, etc.).

The Holy Spirit's wording in Mark 16. 2, 9, "early on the first day" is plainly the balanced contrast with His language for lateness in Mark 1. 32, 4. 35, 15. 42, etc., and Matthew 28. 1 is very similar to the latter.

It would seem strange, in view of the consistent passing over of the Sabbath in connection with the resurrection and the constant mention of the **first day** in each gospel, if, after all, our beloved Lord was raised "late on the sabbath," as some have urged. Not only would this cause difficulty as to the type of His body resting the Sabbath, which followed His perfect work under the law, but absolutely as to the three days and nights, for an **extra day** cannot, we would earnestly suggest, be easily brought into any of the narratives,§ Moreover, the journey of the women in other gospels would appear out of harmony. There must be a key. Can we find it? We would submit the following for prayerful thought. "Chapter breaks" are not in the original, nor Divinely indicated. And so it is with sentences.¶ **Where then**

* E.g. We have one preparation of spices before the sabbath in Luke 23. 56, and *additional* purchases of spices Saturday evening in Mark 16. 1, before bringing all.

§ Leaflet gladly sent.

¶ Cf. "In love" in Ephesians 1. 4, 5: either "Before Him in love" or "In love having predestinated us:" so 2 Peter 1. 19, 20, "Take heed . . . in your hearts," or "In your hearts knowing this first."

does the narrative of the chief priests and Pharisees terminate and that of the women begin? There are two descriptions of time in our ch. 28. 1,

(a) "late in (of) the sabbath"

(b) "as it began to dawn toward the first of the week"—must they refer to the same event? They are not grammatically related. One is adverbial, the other a feminine dative participle. Nor is there any **linking** description as in John 20. 19. There is much of deep significance in the narrative of Matthew 27. 62-66. The rulers were punctilious about some things on sabbath, but not regarding evil (Mark 3. 4, 6, cf. John 18. 28). Even the **strange** description of the sabbath (Mark 15. 42) in Matt. 27. 62 may refer to their virtual ignoring of it. Their concern would be when the day was reaching an end, for "after three days" is said by Christ to mean "the **third** day," not the fourth, i.e. any time after the **beginning** of the third day. "Late on the sabbath," would be **just before** the first possible fulfilment of the prophecy. Is it surprising that their urgency should be manifested then, and recorded thus—"So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone and setting a watch, but late on the sabbath"? (Some Mss. omit "but," yet we do not feel the evidence strong enough to depend on this).

Then the new "chapter" would commence, "As it began to dawn toward the first day of the week came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary." The word rendered "dawn" denotes lighting up. From a **Jewish** standpoint on the sabbath even this might mean the material lighting up, as we still see in Jewish homes, but in this context the stress on the sun in other gospels would appear impressive, and denote the exact time of the journey of the women recorded there. Such full harmony is not unimportant. The stress on "light" in connection with the One Who is the Light must encourage our hearts, and the Divine arrangement whereby "the evening and the morning" order is not brought into the present dispensation, has a deep importance. The Lord's Day does not, it appears, in these times of the Gentiles, start till **midnight**.

Returning to chapter 27, we see the hurried action, and the emphasis on its lateness, and then a reminder that it was "Sabbath," though the chief priests and Pharisees had violated it, and treated it only as the "next day." This would be a message and a rebuke. Some have seen how much depends on a right "chapter break" in Revelation 8. 1 where the whole of that verse belongs to ch. 7. 17, and 8. 2 **begins the new parallel (not subsequent) section**, for the trumpets are not **after** but lead up to "the Day of the Lord" which is the **sixth unsealing**.*

May we not have a similar importance here? The reader can carefully ponder. The suggestion may seem unusual, especially at first, but it does not violate grammar, and it fits with all other narratives, and also with the "contrasts" of the period

* Leaflet gladly sent.

before us, contrasts between Israel's leaders and the disciples, and between the sabbath and the first day. These are not small matters. The rulers "kept" to the "sabbath," yet broke it. Believers are **never** associated with the sabbath in connexion with their resurrection relation to the Lord Jesus, **except often in witness to Israel**. The contrasts are continued in Matthew 28 between unbeliever and believer:

"For fear" (4). "Fear not ye" (5).
 "They departed to tell His disciples" (8). "Some of the watch . . . shewed unto the chief priests" (11).
 "Say ye" (13). "Go ye" (19).
 "They did as they were taught" (15). "Teaching them to observe all" (20).
 "Until this day" (15). "Unto the end of the age" (20).

Thus we behold the **darkness** of men, and the blessed lighting up that is associated with the whole narrative of our adorable Lord. O that we may enjoy, in the Holy Spirit, its spiritual significance, and walk in the light, recognizing the meaning of the new "day," and that we too are the Lord's.

REDEMPTION.

Redeemed, we own the priceless cost,
 And know Christ's work will ne'er be lost
 But those redeemed respond to grace,
 Their Lord exalt, and self abase.

Redemption means that His are we,
 No more our own, His own to be,
 Our life, our body, and our all,
 His right to use, and at His call.

Redemption! Vast the purchase price:
 Save Christ's shed blood nought could suffice!
 Redemption is our joyful song,
 Our boast that we to Him belong.

Redemption is our message still
 The burdened sinner's heart to thrill:
 We speak of Him Who died that we
 Might dwell with Him eternally.

"Who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord? Who can shew forth all His praise?" (Ps. 106. 2). Thus we read in Nehemiah 9. 5 that His Glorious Name is "exalted above all blessing and praise." But we would bless and praise Him, uniting all that is within us, while we have our being (Ps. 103. 1, 146. 2).

The Survival of the Fittest

OR

The Re-Vival of the Unfittest.

“**E**VO^{LUTION}!” the word has a deadly meaning to-day. And what is evolution? A theory without a beginning or foundation, without one “proof,” and without a heart. It knows nothing of sympathy, nothing of real love, and knows nothing of sin, and nothing of grace to deal with sinners. Evolution has no room for Genesis 1 and no room for the gospel. The death of Christ denies evolution, and evolution explains away the death of Christ. Our adorable Lord really bore the wrath of God because there was a real fall, and men are fallen, not evolved and evolving.

What is the bitter fruit of evolutionary theories? The doctrinal fruit is, as we have seen, the denial of Scripture, and finally the ousting of God Himself. The practical fruit is the setting aside of all permanent morals as well as of God’s holy law! These two are indissolubly linked. The fruit of the gospel is holiness: the fruit of evolution is sin, and yet the denial that it is essentially sin. Everything is viewed as a struggle upwards, without acknowledging the awful fact of man’s real guilt, man’s criminal self-will, man’s essential disregard of God and of His will. The first and second commandments are, as the Lord Jesus Christ said, alike (Matt. 22. 38, 39). And He is the Truth. The theory that attacks the first command, belittles, and invalidates the second, and asks defiantly, “Who is my neighbour?” A “believer” in evolution may be kindly, despite his evil theory, but the relentless tendency and logic of the thing is force, war, and cruel repression. Thus there is caused a hateful blend of self exaltation with a denial of the individual conscience of another, and the blessing of others. Thus, too, organized fascism and communism alike, shutting God out, under the veneer of state unity, and its exaltation, become, in essence, more and more the expression of the disguised “I,” leading up to the Antichrist, the Man of Sin, the Lawless One, the King who will do according to his “will.” Such is the program of the devil, the program of man, and of the goal of his evolutionary lies. Herein we see the exact opposite of the gospel, and of the wondrous unveiling there of His life, and condescension to men with its wonderful climax, in His substitutionary death, in the fullness of His love for poor, guilty sinners.

Praise God for a powerful gospel (Rom. 1. 16), an unchanging gospel, the only gospel. “The gospel of the grace of God” deals with the “unfittest,”—the lost, the condemned, Nor does it merely deal with them by offering a dole, or affording a reprieve. There is a real justification as well as full pardon, and grace reigns through righteousness. There is life from the dead, the works of the devil are undone (1 John 3. 8), and the saved soul is made fit for the inheritance of the saints in light

(Col. 1. 12), and the one who has become “a new creation” finds in Christ and His work that which fully satisfies his conscience, mind, affections and his whole being, and the same work has fully satisfied the holy claims of God. “Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable Gift” (2 Cor. 9. 15).

“TOGETHER.”

Some Thoughts on Fellowship.

THE subject is vast, precious and practical. The real oneness of believers is dear, indeed, to our Lord, and to us, if His interests have been ours. But I am not writing now specifically with regard to the wondrous unveiling of the “body” of Christ, and what that word means, as to union with Him and “one another.” There are so many aspects of the Divinely caused and Divinely encouraged unity of believers that we may well view different parts of the one theme, as if visiting a great palace, seeking the gracious ministry of the Holy Spirit that there may be that which is beyond all mental study and information, even that holy enjoyment and application which pleases our Lord Jesus.

The Epistles are full of the word “in”—“in Christ,” “in the Lord,” “in Him,” “in Whom.” Nothing of eternal blessing can be outside HIM. They are also full of the word “with,”—“with Christ,” “so shall we ever be with the Lord,” not omitting “crucified with Christ,” “quickened together with Christ.” The last passage illustrates how many compound words are used by the Holy Spirit, having a prefix “sun,” reproduced by the English “syn” (e.g. synthesis, synagogue), and also to be compared with the usual “co” or “con,” found in “co-partner,” “co-operate,” “conform,” “contact,” etc.*

A concordance soon shows over 40 such words in the epistles, two or three prohibiting fellowship with the world, and a few specially referring to our wondrous relation to the Lord Jesus, as having died **together**, being planted **together** in the likeness of His death, being raised **together**, and made to sit **together**, and looking forward to reigning **together**. But the majority refer primarily to the appointed harmony of those who have been made members of the one family and the one body.

Some passages have a repeated emphasis. For example Ephesians 3. 6 itself contains three such words “heirs **together**,” “bodied **together**,” “partakers **together**,” and in the context we find “citizens **together**” in 2. 19, “fitly framed **together**” in 2. 21, and “being built **together**” in 2. 22. Likewise in the affectionate pleading for agreement between Euodias and Syntyche (whose very name contains the fellowship prefix), we notice “one yoked **together**,” and the command “help **together**,” with the precious reference to the fact that these very sisters

*As well as in many other things, “col,” “cor,” etc., through assimilation.

had striven **together** with God's servant in the strain and stress of prayer and service, followed by a further exhortation to the remaining "workers **together**." How tender and gentle, yet how full of feeling and force.

All this is so helpful, whether in a doctrinal or a practical context,—if we **should** indeed use such words, for all God's doctrine is practical, and all godly practice is because of the right inward knowledge of His grace, His counsel, and His will.

The prayerful searcher will also be rewarded by the emphasis on believers as "bands **together**" (Col. 2. 19, see, too, Heb. 13. 3), and will enjoy the word "elect **together**" (1 Peter 5. 13), noticing the "being gathered **together**" of Hebrews 10. 25, leading up to the glorious future of 2 Thessalonians 2. 1. And is there not a blessing in the "suffering **together**" and "rejoicing **together**" of 1 Cor. 12. 26, and the "feeling **together**" or real sympathy of Hebrews 10. 34, and 1 Peter 3. 8?

The descriptions of brethren in the Lord remind of this harmony. We have noticed "co-workers," and we find "co-servant" in Colossians 1. 7, 4. 7, "co-traveller in 2 Corinthians 8. 19, "co-soldier" in Philipians 2. 25, and "co-prisoner" in Colossians 4. 10, and Philemon 23. We are not surprised that the prefix comes in with the words in Ephesians 4. 16 ("fitly joined **together**" and "compact"), and then in Philipians we have the counterpart outworking once again—"striving **together**" in 1. 27, with the "**together**-soul" of 2. 2, where the context also emphasizes the "**same**" thing and the "**one**" thing exactly as ch. 3. 13 and 16. Thus we are ever brought face to face with our privileges and our responsibilities, and does not the Holy Spirit lead us to pray and work for their manifestation to-day? Surely our concern is not only to delight in what God will do, but to seek to fulfil that which He will enable through us in the midst of a weary and warring world.

The Holy Spirit alone, Who caused the writing of Scripture, can cause the "hearing" of its message in living power in the willing heart.

The Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to die, secured our salvation: His Coming again in glory brings the completion of its application.

The Lord is willing to deal with His people's tears and fears: He is faithful. And may we not seek from Him grace to meet restfully the world's sneers and jeers? O to be searched in heart lest we have in any way caused them, and to learn to love, as never before, any who oppose us unkindly!

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The Student of Scripture.

Edited by Percy W Heward.

"Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."
Matthew 6.13.

A Word of Introduction.

HOW definitely the Lord Jesus leads us to realize our weakness, that we may appropriate His strength. The disciples' prayer begins with "Hallowed be THY Name." The "Our" petitions rightly come SECOND, and they deal with our bodily (and soul) needs, failures and dangers. And failures are sins, and dangers remind us of sin in our lives that needs to be conquered by the mighty Spirit of God. Our Lord Jesus could be LED of the Spirit into the wilderness to be TEMPTED of the devil, the evil one. He NEVER failed. Let us, even when studying prayerfully the holy words of truth, realize our need of constant grace not to be tempted aside. OUR own ideas may come in, or pride of KNOWING the truth. "Study" is vain if it is only study: we need the food and medicine of God's graciously given words. We would read not with the thought of head-knowledge, but of PLEASING Him. O that He may deign to use all these pages always to lead to Himself, and to a right attitude toward all Scripture in humility, love and obedience.

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"The Disciples were called Christians."

Acts 11. 26.

A BEAUTIFUL name, reminding of Him, telling of relation to Him, showing dependence on Him, expressing our responsibility to Him, and encouraging likeness to Him. They were disciples, i.e., learners, contrasted with those mentioned in 2 Timothy 3. 7. They had, by grace, come to Him (Matthew 11. 28), and were now learning of Him (verse 29). "Learning Christ" (Eph. 4. 20) leads to reflecting Him.

God delights to honour His beloved Son, and His worthy Name is called upon those redeemed (Jas. 2. 7). Yes, for the word "called" is not the ordinary one. It is never used of human calling in the New Testament, but emphasizes God's own

warning in Matthew 2. 12, 22, and Hebrews 11. 7, 12. 25, and His enlightenment in Luke 2. 26, Acts 10. 22, and Hebrews 8. 5 (see also Rom. 7. 3: the noun occurs in Rom. 11. 4, "the answer of God"). Herein we see God's delight in His beloved Son, and His purpose for His redeemed. We have referred to every use of the word, and the evidence is most impressive. O that we may not only have a merely mental view of it, but one that is deeply spiritual, and obediently responsive in the Holy Spirit. God's gracious purpose is clear:—we are to remember our beloved Lord Jesus ever, and simply to show what He is. Have we not believed into His Name and been baptised into His Name, and are we not gathered into His Name, and encouraged to bear His Name (cf. Acts 9. 15), and to pray and do all in His Name (John 16. 24, Col. 3. 17)? Is it not fitting, therefore, that we should be called "Christians"? But, alas, many have misused the word, and applied it to all, and nationalized it. Alas, the Lord Jesus Christ is forgotten when His Name is retained. O that we may feel this and be concerned, and exercised in heart and soul, and, laying aside human names, and denominational and dividing names, may use and plead, and enjoy, and illustrate His holy Name in the power of the Holy Spirit Who always takes of the things of Christ and glorifies Him (John 16. 14, 15).

FRUITS, YET FRUIT.

We have often noticed "the fruit of the Spirit" in Galatians 5. 22, 23 contrasted with "the works (plural) of the flesh" (verse 19). The wondrous harmony of the manifestations of the new life must impress our hearts, and the way in which all the fruit is one because love fills all, and we should expect all in the same believer. The fulfilment of Revelation 22. 2 is our hope: God will not fail. And it is interesting to see in that verse "fruits" and "fruit"—both plural and singular. Probably the emphasis is on the fruit of *that month*, for everything will be in its season. We think of the Hebrew idiom, "the matter of the day in his day" (Jer. 52. 34, etc). God is never late.

Have we not the need for a spiritual parallel to-day? Should we not be concerned for a variety of illustrations of grace in our daily life, and for that which is suited to the present emergency whatever it may be? Boldness when we should be bold, quietness when we should be quiet, and so forth, befit the child of God. What is your need this month, *this day*? God will enable it, and enable it as fruit. The friends of Job excelled, alas, in misapplying truth: may we, by God's grace, and through the tender, yet mighty, leading of the Holy Spirit, have an entire contrast.

We read God's words. We would heed them, our souls need them, our hearts must feed on them, in our prayers we plead them.

Characteristics of the Present Dispensation.

"GOD, Who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son" (Heb. 1. 1, 2). Such precious words remind us that "the fulness of the time" came (Gal. 4. 4), and the Lord Jesus fulfilled the Scriptures and "finished" the work given to Him (John 17. 4, 19. 30), so that He became "the Firstfruits," and "the First Begotten from the dead." This tremendous, central fact of all history, affecting everything, has, indeed, been manifested in all Divine arrangements in the present time. We are not surprised, therefore, to find a contrast with the dispensation that preceded, which was full of types, and "having a shadow of good things to come" (Heb. 10. 1).

If asked to suggest a few words that the Holy Spirit has specially used to explain to us the change, we should say,

- (a) The name "Father," so fully "declared" by the Lord Jesus (John 17. 26),
- (b) "Worship in spirit and in truth" (John 4. 24),
- (c) "One baptism" (Eph. 4. 5), and "in One Spirit were ye all baptized into one body" (1 Cor. 12. 13),
- (d) "Every man heard them speak in his own language" (Acts 2. 6),
- (d) "The mystery . . . that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ by the gospel" (Eph. 3. 4-6).

These words are not by any means intended to exhaust the "new vocabulary," or list of words with a new fulness since Christ came. We remember the unveiling of grace in such a simple term as "one another," a most remarkable "inseparable compound," fittingly in the new commandment, John 13. 34. But the thankful believer will realize again, what he, or she, has already felt many, many times, the wondrous privilege in looking back to the now accomplished sacrifice of Christ, and upward to Himself raised and exalted, and soon to come again. It is true that we have not received all the fulness, having "the earnest" of the Spirit (Eph. 1. 13, 14), and still looking forward to the day of redemption for the body also (Rom. 8. 23, Eph. 4. 30). But the present blessings "in Christ Jesus" are so real, and full, and the glory is in measure unveiled, hence we can understand the Divine emphasis on our unspeakable privileges (1 Pet. 1. 8).

The effect of this glorious fulfilment, and this gracious unveiling must be very great. For example, if the old time saints had the standpoint of servitude, and were all their lifetime subject to this (Heb. 2. 15), how different should our attitude be now that we cry "Abba, Father," continually, in the Spirit. It is amazing to be brought thus into the claiming of this living relationship to God, and how definitely we should, by

grace, live up to our privilege. The present dispensation is one of **certainty**, and one of unveiling (2 Cor. 3. 18). If the Holy Spirit **has** come, in a very definite way, (and He has) to cause a sense of **sonship**, a **unity**, and **power in witness**,—should we not expect the consciousness and the manifestation of this more and more? Children of God are now to be marked by a rejection of “uncertainty,” and to act as **sons**. The recognition of God as “Father” is to affect our “confidence” when we draw near in prayer, and also to permeate all our relationships with our fellow believers, who, wherever born, are our “brethren.” This brings in that which is contrasted with Israel’s nationalism. Here is a far closer unity. It is not “international,” as human schemes of “brotherhood” which lack both a redemption basis and spiritual power. It extends to those who are quickened, and the love of the brotherhood (1 Pet. 2. 17) is meant to regulate all our actions in this passing evil age.

Again, the character of the present “Kingdom of the heavens” not only brings a disciple out of politics, and out from all blending of state and church, but causes a clear view of God’s will as to accepted worship. The generally received thought of “public worship” may imply that all men are in a condition for this. Israel had an elaborate national ritual, with a building of earthly glory in a chosen place as its centre. This was all in accord with a “worldly sanctuary” (Heb. 9. 1), but **now** the costly stones, priests, vestments, musical instruments, linked in the Old Testament with the sacrifices of animals, are superseded by living stones, a royal priesthood, the robe of righteousness, and the sacrifice of praise, the fruit of the lips, giving thanks to the name of our God (Heb. 13. 15). Some dear children of God would quite reject vestments and an earthly priesthood, but they retain other things which seem clearly to belong to another dispensation. And not only is this the case, not a few of us appear to limit our experience to another dispensation. We have spoken of “servitude,” and how many act rather as **servants** than **sons** (Gal. 4. 7). To the man of the world the heavenly calling is quite visionary, since it has so much that is invisible: to faith it is a “substance.” The things that appeal to the senses undoubtedly help natural emotion, and even Saul was much moved by David’s music. But his history shows there was nothing **spiritual**. Are we to add to the appointments of our Lord in worship that which moves the multitude, or are we rather to keep to His will, even if it only appeals to those born from above? Is this an earthly dispensation to incorporate the masses by human methods, or do we realize “the kingdom of the heavens,” that believers may be added to the Lord, because it is the Spirit That quickens? Do not let us be misunderstood. The evil thought that electing grace makes a believer less earnest in witness because God **will** work, may have a “parallel” sin here. Some may almost think dullness and studied **lack** of enthusiasm—begotten of laziness, or the willing-

ness for a “rut”—are spirituality. **They are not.** We plead for earnest and true **emotion**,—personally and collectively. The Scriptures are full of this. Our meetings for worship should have a deep feeling of the Lord’s love, and O that we may enjoy the Holy Spirit’s present work. But the addition of humanly arranged “helps,” such as instrumental music and choirs, are an appeal to the natural man. Not that singing is excluded. The Holy Spirit has graciously decided as to this (Eph. 5. 19, Col. 3. 16), and we will sing praisefully and heartily. Spiritual worship is not cold, nor formal, nor dull!

The reader will see what is on our heart. We seek a contrast with mere contending and “stickling” for “principles” in the abstract. We desire for ourselves, and others, not to reach the arrangements of a Scriptural assembly by a bare logic, cutting off this thing or that thing, but by a wholehearted appreciation of the **heavenly calling**, looking to our Father for the fuller and fuller enjoyment and manifestation of this. In harmony with our appointed intimacy, Christ is not called “our King,” but “our Lord,” yet hymnology fails as to this. And an index to hymns will show “Our Father” is not so frequent as we should have expected. Let us come back to this precious name—“Father.” Has not the strength of some believers’ character, and exemplary life, been their humble, unfaltering confidence in God as **Father**? A child worries if its father is away, or ill, or cannot help: but worry is unreasonable in his presence. Do we realize this spiritually? We think of an orphan home, and an empty pantry, and George Muller in peace! Why? The work was not his, it was God’s. If it had been **his** independently, there **would** have been cause for alarm. But who was the servant having care of the work? Simply a **child** of God. Be in God’s **appointed** place, and anxiety is out of place, it cannot fit.

Let us not seek to be “men of the world” trying to look at things spiritually. Let us be children of God, acting naturally, and responsively, in our new and heavenly relationship. The Holy Spirit truly indwells believers. He has come to make Christ real to us, and to claim, use and fill the body which we owned in baptism we could not use. Has He come to do this and do we doubt His ability or His willingness? The emphasis on the Holy Spirit as the One Who has caused and causes unity (Eph. 4. 3), and enables worship (John 4. 24), and equips in ministry one to another, must have a continual effect if in the consciousness of the heart.

An assembly is not a religious workshop, it is not like a “factory,” nor is it a parallel with a large business house. Rather it has the aspect of the home, and there should be the realization of the heavenly calling in **all** its details. This will not make us slovenly, or **unenergetic**, but it will draw away from making arrangements for this “society” and that “club,”

or this "attraction" and that "advantage," to get hold of the masses. or to "retain," by human schemes, the interest of this one or that one. Thanks be to God for all the "gold" with which, alas, dross of human methods has been entwined! Thanks be to God for all the love to Him, even when somewhat obscured by unconscious "humanizing" of His work, through the influence of surroundings and Christendom! And let us also remember that the keeping out of worldly methods is not IN ITSELF spirituality: it may be only the result of lack of initiative, and energy. To plead for a rut and sleepiness would not be pleasing to God. The way of His will is never unmindful of the intense importance of each day unto Him, but the arrangements of His work are not to be copied from commercialism, they are to be the fruit of living union with Christ, and "in the Holy Spirit."

A word in closing, The present time was graciously brought in by a wondrous emphasis on "all nations" and all languages. The Constantine broadening of the "church," to nationalize it, shows the tendency of Satan's plan. The merely nominal Christianizing of lands was the apparent going forward of the gospel, but actually the modifying and the adulterating of it, and the exact opposite to taking the gospel to all nations that a heavenly people might be brought out for our Lord Jesus. Separated believers sent into the world, as He was, to witness (John 17. 18) are His will. May we be such. The characteristic of this dispensation combines with spiritual worship that which is intensely missionary.

"The Christian Sabbath." We cannot find this name in Scripture, directly, nor inferentially. Hence we would not use it. There are many parallels between the Sabbath and the Lord's Day, in connexion with devotion to the Lord, and gathering. Isa. 58. 13 illustrates the principle underlying both, but there are also dispensational contrasts, for the sabbath is a cessation, the first day a beginning, ("after the sabbath"). It was not "made for man," in an earthly relationship, but rather for redeemed ones, on resurrection ground, in "Christ Jesus." Every word of Scripture is used perfectly.

"Sunday." This description of the Lord's Day comes from Constantine, and the broadening of the 4th century. Surely we should avoid it when speaking or writing among believers; and often, in dealing with the unsaved, we have an opening for witness by mentioning "the Lord's Day." The other days are named from heathendom: we should not have chosen these (though the bare utterance of the word is not wrong, cf. Acts 28. 11), but when the Holy Spirit has given two names for a day, and the worldly name is linked with the spirit of compromise, and Satan's special plan in the present age, should we not rather grieve over it, and emphasize the wording of the Holy Spirit?

Balaam, and Peter.

HAVE you ever thought of the great contrast between the two which seems indicated by the Holy Spirit? The parallel between Balaam and Judas, both of whom preached the truth, and both of whom were used by Satan, and manifested covetousness, deepens the impressiveness. Satan desired Peter even as he laid hold of Balaam. And we see the stepping downward. God speaks in Numbers 22. 9, 12, warning as to temptation. But Balaam wanted to be tempted, he desired the treasures of Moab, and the test came again. He dallied with sin in verse 19. God spake to him the second time, and allowed to him his own way. How awful and solemn is this. We recall the words, "He gave them their request, but sent leanness into their soul" (Ps. 106. 15). Then the third utterance of the angel of the Lord, confirming the awful permission in verse 35 is preceded by a three-fold warning through the ass (verses 23, 25, 26), to all of which Balaam, in his madness, was blind. On arrival, he sought Balak's building of altars, and three times was this done (Num. 23. 1, 14, 29). It is plain that his heart was set on riches. This threefold warning cannot but remind us of the threefold prayer of the Lord Jesus in the garden, and Peter's threefold failure to pray, followed by his threefold denial. Yet Peter's heart did not wish to go against his Lord. "The spirit truly is willing but the flesh is weak" gives the sad key. If only there had been the consciousness of this instead of the words "I am ready," and thus the Lord's strength made perfect in weakness. How often we rob ourselves by trusting ourselves. Is it not so?

Balaam was thus exactly as Judas, into whom Satan entered, and not as Peter. But we feel how easily a wandering believer becomes like an unsaved soul, and needs to be "converted." Peter failed, and failed sadly, but repented, and repented truly, Balaam never turned from his evil way, but "rose up, and went and returned to his place" (Num. 24. 25, see Acts 1. 25), and next we find his planning against Israel (Num. 25. 1, with Rev. 2. 14), regarding which Peter witnessed so definitely (2 Pet. 2. 13-15). O how great is the mercy of restoration to a faltering believer. Well may we continue our "contrasts" Christ shines out, whereas Balaam's prophecies were only by Divine compelling sovereignty. And the attitude as to money was entirely opposed: "Silver and gold have I none," said the apostle gladly (Acts 3. 6), but Balaam "loved the reward of unrighteousness" (2 Pet. 2. 15). And in death how great was the difference: of one we read, "Balaam also the son of Beor they slew with the sword" (Num. 31. 8), of the other the Lord Jesus spoke "signifying by what death he should glorify God" (John 21. 19).

Failings and fallings dishonour the Lord: O that we may trust One Who is Trustworthy, more and more and yet more.

"And go unto thy tents:

Deuteronomy 16. 7.

Every word of Scripture is God's message to our hearts, and full of help. Deuteronomy was given with a view to the land, and yet we find here the word "tents." How easily might a so-called "Higher Critic" have misused such an expression if in another context. How definitely we learn we are not to decide "how" God should have written. Many dear children of God have drawn "inferences" erroneously from the "silence" of Scripture, or from a certain word used through unconscious dependence on their own logic.

But there are always spiritual lessons of deep meaning. Israel were still to regard themselves as strangers and sojourners in the land (1 Chron. 29. 15). It was God's will, and is, to keep from settling down in a ruined world.

May it not be too that we learn how the Holy Spirit describes new things in terms of the old, and may not this sometimes explain expressions used prophetically as to warfare? That which has a like purpose may be called by the name of that which it follows in use. But in so saying, let us ever keep our hearts quiet before the Lord, and dependent, lest we hurriedly infer what He will do or not do, will permit or not permit. We are not prophets because we have received the words of prophecy written in Scripture, and that which was not of its own unfolding is not of its own interpretation (2 Pet. 1. 20, 21): how we need the Holy Spirit, and sometimes a willingness to wait (Dan. 12. 9, 13).

Grace the cause, that grace we have,
Grace the root, yet from above,
Grace the first, and grace the last,
Grace that never will be past,
Grace abiding with the strain,
Grace to make the pathway plain.

The child of God need not be worried, for he has an all-wise and all-loving Father. The man of the world has a reason to worry however rich, and clever, and comfortable he may seem to be.

The Lord's will is not simply a word we employ, but a precious fact, not simply a theory but a glorious reality. He has His own good and acceptable and perfect will, and we desire to will His will, and respond to Him ever.

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The Student of Scripture.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"The city was large and great: but the people were few therein, and the houses were not builded." Nehemiah 7. 4.

"The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few." Matthew 9. 37.

A Word of Introduction.

THE great contrast between the spiritual need and the means of meeting it, or between the height of blessing we should all rejoice to see among God's dear children and the present conditions,—to what does it bring us? To despair? No! To discouragement? To delay? Nay, the question is wrong. Not "to what," but to WHOM does this bring us? To Himself! In Him is all fulness. If we only realize failures, we are indeed unwise. If we are only occupied with that which is falling short, we are not glorifying God. In so far as the sin is our own, let us confess it, nor would we forget the confession of Daniel included those with whom he was linked, as all are linked who are "in Christ" to day. But let us not stop there. Let us look to the God of all grace, "our Father." Let us build in His way, lay hold of His promises, and expect His work. With this object to His praise, these pages go forth.

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Christ's Dealing with the Rich Young Ruler.

SCRIPTURE is unique. Nor is this strange. It is God's own book. He speaks to His people thereby. It is not only a compendium of doctrine. Much instruction is given us in narrative and history, and our Lord's dealings with individuals, as Nicodemus and the Woman of Samaria, afford food for much thought, and precious examples to us in our service. So is it with His attitude to the young man who came "running." The three records are all needed: the repetitions of Scripture "supplement" one another. And the gentle touches of graciousness

affect us, "Jesus beholding him loved him" (Mark 10. 21). There was not a condition of hypocrisy, nor a wish to "tempt" as we so frequently find,—even in Luke 10. 25. The nearest parallel, possibly, is Mark 12. 34, "When Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, He said unto him, Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God,"—the more delightful because the lawyer there had begun with tempting (Matt. 22. 35), but the grace that caused the one thief, who with the other had cast mockery in the teeth of the Lord (Matt. 27. 44), to repent suddenly (Luke 23. 40), was not without a like miracle among the Pharisees. God's Grace is not confined, nor does it need a work of years, it is sovereign and mighty. We return to the young man who thought he knew, but did not really know, his own coming short. Nor is this strange. Job who prayed so fervently for his sons in chapter 1, was a long while ere God Himself appointed his praying for others (Ch. 42. 8, 10), **when he had abhorred himself**. We all over-value ourselves, and when there is an "honesty" of purpose, and no consciousness of treachery, this is, in some ways, the more natural and easy. But how tenderly the Lord dealt with this one. "Life" was his object as he came running. He had no doubt he **could** obtain it, but "**what**" should he do? He felt there was a goodness in "man," and that he could do good to earn good. But the Lord's answer, with one stroke, cast out the thought of **man's** merit, and contrastedly implied His Own Deity. Thus atonement was involved as absolutely necessary, and all the theories of Judaism, Mohammedanism, and Modernism, to bridge the distance between a natural man and the Lord Jesus, and to cause salvation by character, attainment, and development, were swept away. The utter need of a sinner, and the Deity of Christ are bedrock facts.

Yet the Lord Jesus would cause the young man to **realize** the need deep down in his own experience, and the "commandments" are mentioned. To tell a person a bare fact, and to give him a mental knowledge of ruin, will ever be vain. There must be a work **within**. If "life" is to be by obedience, there is the **law**; but the law cannot give life to the dead (Gal. 3. 21): how we thank God for "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8. 2)! "**Which?**" is the eager question (Matt. 19. 18), and the word implies "What kind of commandments?" The Lord at once emphasizes those regulating relation to **man**. And why? It is so easy to persuade oneself that one is loving God heartily. The "tests" are less quickly manifest. In the **twofold** work of Mark 2 it was easier to say "Thy sins be forgiven thee," because, whereas the evidences of, "Take up thy bed" were visible, (or the claim was immediately discredited), the forgiveness was invisible. In like manner, the self-restfulness, "I love God with all my heart" cannot be so easily dislodged, as the "I love my neighbour as myself" **proved** incorrect. And, further, the very **order** is striking. The Lord Jesus put the negatives before the positive—"Honour," which, in this

positive aspect, was the first Commandment with **promise**. And again, the searching, spiritual message "Thou shalt not **DE-SIRE**" (the tenth, see Rom. 7. 7) is omitted. "**Defraud not**" in Mark 10. 19 expressly manifests only a part of its **humbling fulness**. The young man was thus led on step by step: he was not ready for all. The Lord Jesus ever acted thus, "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now" (John 16. 12). How often we fail in this, and cause confusion by our hurrying. And finally the words that are implied in the negative, but not realized, and which include every holy negative (Rom. 13. 9, 10) are given, "Thou shalt **love thy neighbour as thyself**." They are to be made the acid test, the basis of a gracious home-thrust to show **the enquirer himself as a sinner**. The heart was still unconscious of the deep need. "All these have I observed from my youth." How slow we are to **see ourselves**. There was a vague feeling of lack, but "What?" (Matt. 19. 20). Whereas **everything** was lacking, there was the "hopeful" feeling, "I can fill the gap." And now there comes the piercing command, not to wound, yet it **does** wound,—necessary that the questioner may have God's searchlight on his whole inner being, and we also—"Go, sell . . . give . . . come, follow Me." He must "**go**" before he can "**come**." His neighbour is not so "**loved**" as himself after all. Is he willing to give up, or are the "**things**," he thinks he holds so loosely, actually **holding him**? He thinks, he feels, he sorrows, but, awhile at least, he goes away. Yet the added words of the Lord Jesus encourage beyond measure. The **miracle** of God's salvation is set forth not only for this one, but for others, and for **our** joy to-day. We did not "**come**" because of self (John 6. 45, 65). Things would have kept us back, for flesh is flesh and self is self, but God in mercy quickened us because our Lord Jesus died, before we were born, that we, the undeserving, might have a new life, and thus a new affection, and a new standpoint. Glory be to God for **sovereign grace**! O that the fruit may be our loving obedience, rendering all, as He pleases, to Him Who, at infinite price, bought us as His own (1 Cor. 6. 20).

'Tis well, mid all the strain and toil,
To know that nought God's plan can spoil:
All things together work for good
To those who love Him, and we would
In quiet peace our souls possess,—
God blessed, and blesses, and will bless.

We cannot now to-morrow see,
But we can rest, our God, in Thee,
To-morrow is to Thee as plain
As yesterday, and yet again
Thy care we'll prove as "**HITHERTO**,"
Thou art, and must and wilt be **TRUE**!

Two Cities of Scripture.

FROM the very outset we learn much through God's utterances concerning cities. The very first was linked with Cain's line, and we find the ominous words, "He called the name of the city, after the name of his son, Enoch" (Gen. 4. 17, cf. Ps. 49. 11), the first definite exaltation of man's name. The continuance after the flood, has the same saddening indication—Nimrod was the defiant city-builder (Gen. 10. 9-11), and we hear the words, "Let us make us a name" (Gen. 11. 4).

It is not surprising that Satan clings to his set plan, throughout Scripture: **Babylon** is in front of us from Genesis 10 and 11 to Revelation 18. Thanks be unto God, **He** keeps to His purpose and this is associated with **Jerusalem** from Genesis 14 to Revelation 20 and 21. And the contrasted meanings of the names ("Confusion" and Possession of "peace") must impress our hearts. The victory of Abraham over the King of Shinar is immediately followed by the record of Melchizedek, King of Salem, who met him. Is this without significance? Yet again, still more impressively, we may call to mind how this man of faith was brought from **Ur of the Chaldees** to the Lord's land around **Jerusalem**. Thus Daniel 1. 1, 2 becomes an utter, and painful, contrast when Israel persisted in their sin. But grace abounded, and the reverse journey is found when Ezra came from **Babylon to Jerusalem**, "according to the good hand of his God upon him" (Ez. 7. 9).

Nor can we forget Acts 2. 9 and the primary emphasis on those at Jerusalem from that very district. As the "sowing" of Levi among the tribes (Deut. 33. 10) was significantly distinguished, in God's gracious overruling, from the first thought of Genesis 49. 7, so the tongues given in Acts 2 were a designed missionary contrast with Genesis 11, and the whole narrative shows the widening spheres of gospel service, but at that time Rome rather than Babylon, was the centre, (the Babylonian Pontifex Maximus was there),* and thus that missionary book begins in Jerusalem and ends in ch. 28 with the gospel in Rome, "no man forbidding." Praise God for this! And in Revelation we reach the appointed climax—Babylon is thrown down, and found no more at all (Rev. 18. 21), and those who, like Abraham, have no continuing city here, but seek one to come (Heb. 11. 10, 13, 14) are unitedly to rejoice in the holy Jerusalem descending out of heaven from God having the glory of God (Rev. 21. 10, 11). Thanks be unto God for His gracious purpose, and its fulfilment!

* Leaflet gladly sent.

"My strength is made perfect in weakness" is one aspect (2 Cor. 12. 9), and the other is seen in the words "Out of weakness were made strong" (Heb. 11. 34): may we be willing for Him to choose for us.

Believers Together:—Should there be one Assembly in a Town?

THE unity of children of God is ever emphasized in Scripture, and is so dear to our beloved Lord, as John 17 shows, that we do well to pray earnestly for this to be more and more manifested and that the holy attitude of "endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of the peace" (Eph. 4. 3), may lead more and more to the encouragement of growth, "till we all come into the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God" (Eph. 4. 13 marg.). How glorious and certain are the words, "There shall be one flock and one Shepherd" (John 10. 16), for our Lord Jesus **shall** see of the travail of His soul and **shall** be satisfied. It is, indeed, a grievous thing, before God and our Father, to "sow discord" among **brethren** (Prov. 6. 19), and it is deeply important to search ourselves, for the bitterest things may be said even while speaking of love, and others may be unkindly treated, while complaining of **their** narrowness. It is so much easier to see the faults of others than our own, unless, by grace, we are walking **with** God. We need to be prayerfully concerned lest we unconsciously become unbalanced and disproportionate. The **inward** unity must be sought as well as the **outward**. Not only should there be a godly determination to do nothing in **action** that will hinder, but a spiritual gentleness of manner that we may walk in the **Spirit**, and serve the Lord in a simple and loving attitude. "He giveth more grace." And never must we surrender any "**trusteeship**" of truth, nor make part of God's will unnecessary or secondary. We may give up **our** privileges, but never **His** words. How much grace we need to distinguish "things that differ."

When we refer to the Holy Spirit's own use of the word "church" we find it employed for **all** believers in the wondrous unity "in Christ," and likewise for the believers in a city, e.g., the Church of God in Corinth. But we **never** find the word employed for a material building, nor for the church of a land, nor for a "denomination," nor for a certain section of persons who have official positions, though we know unsaved ones speak of "going into the Church" as a profession. All the misuse of Divine language sadly illustrates the purpose of Satan in this age to leaven the fine meal of God's unchanging truth.

It is deeply interesting to see that in the early days all the believers in a town were "together." Thank God, there were no human arrangements, nor denominations, nor societies of man's appointment! "Ah," says a child of God, "would that it might be so again!" But what are you and I doing, by prayer, and by omitting to "add" to Scripture, and by simplicity of obedience, to get back to the Will of the Lord? Shall we say, "It is impossible"?

Surely not. God is the Same, and each step of faith will bring blessing.

It is remarkable that we read of the church in Antioch, of

the church "according to" the house of this brother or that, of the church of the Thessalonians, of the seven churches in Asia, and of the churches of the Gentiles, and every word is used perfectly and without contradiction. But, (we refer to the earnest enquiries of believers), one may rightly ponder, "What is the Scripture parallel now as to a town?" It may be asked, "How could children of God in a large city as Liverpool act together, as one?" If there were a return to the will of the Lord there might be found far fewer who are really "in Christ Jesus," but the Scriptural thought of "a city" is nevertheless important, that there may be knowledge of His will and nothing to hinder the harmony and fulness, and yet homeliness that please God our Father in His family.

The Holy Spirit has graciously given us whatever we need in Scripture, and we do not expect we shall find a failure in His guidance here. If He keeps us waiting it is with a wise purpose (cf. Ezra. 2. 63). When we remember a little of the measurements of some ancient cities, and the multitude in besieged Jerusalem in the days of Titus, we cannot view all as quite contrasted with arrangements to-day, though such places as London and New York may be unique. However names like "Sepharvaim" (dual) seem to prove there were double cities, and we recollect the different "parts" of Jerusalem and even the division of government expressed by "the ruler of the half part of Keilah" (Neh. 3. 15, 17) and yet the city was viewed as one whole. Moreover, we see how in the time of fullest unity there were actually thousands together, the males alone being about five thousand (Acts 5. 4), and yet the church was one, and its discipline one, and all were acting together (Acts 2. 42). Hence we shall never be surprised at God's gracious work in unity and power. And the Divine plan expressed by "along the houses" (Acts 8. 3, 20. 20), and the church "according to the house" of Aquila and Priscilla (Rom. 16. 5), while others gathered in other houses, shows how the Holy Spirit maintained the unity and the "homelikeness" and personal interest as well, the Passover feast affording a background in this also. However, I would suggest for the prayerful pondering of believers that if the fuller spiritual interests were thus more fully maintained, might it not be in accord with the will of God in "the times of the Gentiles" to ponder, (whenever God grants many believers ready to act in the simplicity of His will), if the thought of "boroughs" as adjoining "towns" may not be possible, inasmuch as He has not "defined" a town? Would the interpretation of a town, or of a borough when very large, alike fit His graciously revealed plan as to "one" church in a "city," or not? We shall rejoice to know the result of any prayerful thought, for surely the desire of His own should, and must, be increasingly a happy conformity to all His will. All the human substitutes, and organisations however well meant, can never satisfy the hearts that would return humbly to the Lord's "pattern." "The meek will He guide in judgment: and the meek will He teach His way" (Ps. 25. 9).

"Purge me with hyssop."

Psalm 51. 7.

When David thus feelingly prayed, did not the Holy Spirit appoint at least a three-fold reference to the mighty work of the Lord Jesus? The King did not speak of hyssop as cleansing in and by itself, but rather as that which **applied** the cleansing blood and water. It may well be that the little plant reminds of the humility of Christ in the days of His flesh (1 Kings 4. 33), but the sprinkling is the message of salvation by His **death**. If you ask what are the three references, the answer is simple. A concordance, which affords more help to a humble Christian than any compilation, directs our hearts to (a) the passover (Ex. 12. 22), (b) the cleansing of the leper (Lev. 14. 4, 6), and (c) the red heifer (Num. 19. 6, 18). To the first the royal mourner alluded pointedly, contrasting himself with the passover sacrifice, "That the bones which Thou hast **broken** may rejoice" (Ps. 51. 8, see Ex. 12. 46, Ps. 34. 20, John 19. 33, 36). **Leprosy** was associated with the utter **separation** from God which he felt, and we think of another **king** thus smitten (2 Chron. 26. 19-21). The allusion to the **flesh** is fitting, and to the lips (see Lev. 13. 45). Furthermore, the red heifer brings before us particularly the sin of a **believer**, and the permanent power of the work of Christ, for, unlike other Levitical sacrifices, it was not said to be repeated. True, there was a contrast, for the provision in Numbers 19 was rather for **contact** with death, and not for so sadly deliberate an action as David had perpetrated. The antitype tells of overflowing mercy. Thus the three-fold reference must emphasize the blessedness of salvation from **death** and from severance—outside God's dwelling place,—and must bring before us the two-fold need for blood and water, dealing with the guilt and the uncleanness of sin alike. O that we may realize and enjoy the fulness of spiritual meaning, to God's glory in our humbled lives.

"Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten Thee"

"Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek"

"Thou art the Same and Thy years shall have no end."

Psalms 2. 7, 110. 4, 102. 27.

THE Holy Spirit shows us (Hebrews 1) that in Psalm 102 we have, as it were, a wondrous conversation of dialogue, and the language of verse 24 would seem to indicate that it is between the Father and the Son. This affords a parallel with the other passages quoted above. These precious dialogues emphasize one aspect of meditation when reading the Psalms, and reveal the Lord Jesus in fellowship with the Father in all His wondrous work and its fruit. How blessed it is to enjoy the resurrection in Psalm 2, and to behold that birth day of the First Begotten, from the dead, with which we are so wondrously associated. Then again we hear the words "Sit Thou" (Ps. 110) and see our ascended Lord welcomed, but the words of Psalm 102, though less

realized in this connexion,—and we have put them last,—seem plainly to be uttered before, applying to the wondrous lifetime of our beloved Lord, ere His life was taken away from the earth (Acts 8. 33, with Isa. 53. 8), in almost the midst of the three score and ten of Psalm 90. 10. We are thus made conscious once more, with a standpoint different from that of John 5. 19, 20, how intimate was the fellowship and delight with the Father when our adorable Lord took upon Him the form of a Servant (John 8. 29). How grateful we should and would be for everything that helps us to realize more of His beauty, and the Father's joy in Him. And should not we too delight in Him more, for are not we begotten to a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead (1 Pet. 1. 3) and is not His priesthood in Hebrews 6 20 associated with our entry ("the Forerunner" see Heb. 10. 19, 20), and does not the last chapter of that epistle emphasize again the priceless wording, "The Same," for our comfort and refreshment in the pilgrim path in which He sustains and will never leave us (13. 8)?

REVELATION 21. 20, 21.

Is it a mere coincidence that the twelfth and last stone is amethyst? Everything is Divinely arranged to enlarge on the contrast with Babylon,—both mystical and literal. The stone most nearly associated with the **walking** of those who by grace enter, signifies "not drunken," and thus we are reminded of "the wine of her fornication." Nor can we forget another contrast of blessed fulness. Those who go in will never drink of "the wine of the wrath of God" (ch. 14. 10). All Scripture is deep in its meaning. I have no doubt that in all the twelve stones there is not only the suggestion of the high priest's breastplate, and the acceptance of the redeemed before God, but that all are in the **right** order, though the signification of much may not be known till that Day, and indeed our primary thought now is ever **feeding** on Scripture, and practical godliness. The contrast with the harlot, however, which is so marked throughout the book, is seen, for she had precious stones, and **gold** (two of the stones here refer to gold, "chryso-", apart from the reference to the street of the city). And what shall we say of the gates of **pearl**? They again present a holy opposition to Revelation 17. 4, which pictures that which is so hateful in the light of Matthew 7. 6. Moreover the pearl is associated, in its formation, with the response to pain. Thus it becomes a reminder of that precious work of Christ whereby the church is formed. Fittingly then may the gates be of pearl, and not only **decorated** thus, for the fulness and glorious **unity** of His work are emphasized at every entrance. All Scripture exalts our Lord Jesus Christ.

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The Student of Scripture.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple."
Psalm 19. 7.

A Word of Introduction.

BY God's grace we can continue. He has not only saved, but lives to keep His own, in the EXPERIENCE of His salvation. The Holy Spirit has been sent into the hearts of redeemed ones to make sonship a blessed and present reality. A slavish and irksome condition is NOT God's loving will. And the Scriptures are given that there may be ever fuller knowledge of His will, and thereby a holy delight therein. The psalmist adds, "The statutes of the Lord are right, REJOICING the heart" (Ps. 19. 8), and we thus call to mind Psalm 119. 54, "Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage;" and the words of God's servant Jeremiah, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart" (15. 16). Nor can we forget the CLAIMING quotation of the Lord Jesus from Deuteronomy 8. 3, "The Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt. 4. 4). May our rejoicing be similar, and may all these pages ever tend, and attract, in that direction!

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How is "God's Truth Revealed"?

SCRIPTURE is not written in the form of a system of divinity. Has not this a deep meaning for us? The subject of the ruin of man, and a theme of redemption, are alike found **throughout** its pages, an unfolding **here**, a sidelight **there**, and so with all other parts of sound doctrine. This seems to be a Divine witness against merely mental interest and verbal knowledge. The letters of God's servants have a deeply **practical** bearing, and if the humiliation of Christ is before us, as in Philippians 2, there is

no "Kenosis theory" but a beautiful encouragement to the true "imitation of Christ." "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus," "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed" (verses 5 and 12). In like manner, the "mystery" of "Christ and the Church" is set forth in closest connexion with a godly home (Eph. 5. 32), and the answer to the disciples' questions as to "When" and "What?" in Mark 13, begins with "Take heed" and ends with "I say unto all, Watch" (verses 5, 37). Eternal salvation is set forth in a context which equally declares "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me" (John 10. 27, 28), for our beloved Lord is "the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him" (Heb. 5. 9), and "the immutability of His counsel" is to impress on us "fleeing" first, and "running" after (Heb. 6. 18, 20). The unveiling of our Triune God is in connexion with our confession in baptism that we have buried self in type and altogether belong to Him (Matt. 28. 19), and in association with our access in prayer (Eph. 2. 18), and our enjoyment of grace and fellowship in daily life (2 Cor. 13. 14). The appointments of a godly assembly have been linked with the care for the home (1 Tim. 3. 5). The emphasis on the Lord's Supper is to check all selfishness (1 Cor. 11. 21, 22). No part of truth is isolated: the plural "truths" is not found in the New Testament, though commonly in human phraseology. O that all the setting of God's gospel and His will may be used to cause our "growing up" into Christ. Growth is living, and goes onward, not by external addition, but by inward appropriation. Thus there is true vitality: thus there is precious fruit: thus there is "sound doctrine," with sound practice (1 Tim. 1. 10, 2 Tim. 1. 13, Tit. 1. 9, 13, 2. 1, 2).

"To keep himself unspotted from the world" (James 1. 27).
 "Hating even the garment spotted by the flesh" (Jude 23).
 "Spots and blemishes" (2 Peter 2. 13).
 "Redeemed . . . with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1. 18, 19).
 "According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blemish (same word) before Him in love" (Ephesians 1. 4).
 "That He might present it to Himself, a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing" (Ephesians 5. 27).
 "They are without blemish" (Revelation 14. 5, lit).
 "Be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless" (2 Peter 3. 14).
 Salvation is not a kill-joy, but sin is.

"I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me" (Gen. 32. 26) reminds us of a far fuller blessing, "We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him" (John 14. 23). Infinite grace!

The Red Heifer of Numbers 19.

I HESITATED before this subject in a Bible Reading, realizing its difficulty, but God graciously granted a far fuller realization of His teaching than I expected. Thanks be unto Him for grace. O for an ever deepening knowledge of our beloved Lord, through all the types that speak to our hearts of Him.

This sacrifice stands alone: it is not found in Exodus or Leviticus with the others: does not the Holy Spirit indicate a special provision for the wilderness and a uniqueness? Have not we as a pilgrim people, a living expectation that He has some special message for us, as to **our daily walk**? One of the first thoughts that impresses is that the Holy Spirit particularly selects **this** in Hebrews 9. 13, 14, "For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the **blood of Christ**, Who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" There it is **particularly** joined with the Day of Atonement ("bulls and goats"), which is a primary subject of Hebrews 9 and 10, and, most remarkably the verb "sanctifieth," with a double subject, is in the **singular**. Evidently there is something in this appointment that closely entwines it as supplementary to the unveiling of Christ in Leviticus 16. We have no doubt as to the stress on **the conscience** here (cf. Heb. 10. 1, 2), and the repeated emphasis on His contrast with bulls and goats (Heb. 9. 13, 10. 4) and with the offering "year by year continually." Our beloved Lord has offered Himself **once** for all, and we, His redeemed, are sanctified and perfected for **ever** (Heb. 10. 10, 14). At once we begin to see how the ashes of the heifer **complete the one picture**. Our conscience has been once purged: we do not need another purging, as if we were unsaved sinners again. We call to mind, "He that hath been bathed needeth not save to wash his feet" (John 13. 10 lit.). Now we notice that the **ashes** and **living water** are sprinkled, **not** the blood, as with the legal purification at the first, and in Hebrews 9. 19-22. Thus the type is quite clear. It sets forth the precious application to a believer of the **abiding results** of the one accomplished work of our Lord Jesus (hence "ashes" to remind of the wrath He bore, and "living water" the cleansing power of His word in the light of His one perfect sacrifice for sins for ever). Now we begin to understand the **singular** verb. Believers do not lose the standing of which ch. 10. 10 speaks, but, though the "conscience" does not become unpurged, our consciousness may become indefinite and cloudy in enjoyment of His work, through failure, and contact with "death." But God has provided for this, to keep us in the ever fresh realization of our beloved Lord's abiding work here portrayed. Blessed be God, He implies by the singular verb that those who have the first cleansing **shall** enjoy this continued provision.

A deeper impression still must be made when we see that the

Holy Spirit says in this verse "bulls and goats" though the blood of only one of each was taken within, on the day of atonement, and yet does not add "the ashes of heifers." Why not? Why only "an heifer"? Is it not remarkable that this is the unique sacrifice which is not said to be repeated in the law? **The ashes were kept.*** There was a remarkable foreview of Christ's one complete offering. Everything now is to emphasize this upon us. We notice how the Lord Jesus chose the bread and cup **after** the passover meal for the Lord's Supper, and even though He alluded to the cup **before**, He did NOT appoint this (Luke 22. 17), He definitely omitted making the "remembrance" precede the lamb. Hence that which was slain and **sacrificial** is expressly excluded from "repetition" in the present dispensation. The Lord's Supper starts **after** this, and is NOT a sacrifice. Ritualism is Divinely answered.

We return to Numbers 19. The heifer was "red": it has been pointed out that in 2 Kings 3. 22 and Isaiah 63. 2 this colour suggests "blood," so was it with the rams' skins dyed red, and Rahab's scarlet cord. The Lord Jesus came expressly to die. And why a heifer—or young cow? At times the feminine aspect may suggest some weakness in our personal apprehension of truth (Lev. 4. 28), but this sacrifice was for the **whole** people.† Nor is there the thought of any lack of strength on the part of the Antitype. The stress on "without spot, and wherein is no blemish" is as definite as in 1 Peter 1. 18, 19. May it not rather be that inasmuch as this concerns our walk we are reminded of Christ's perfection when He took a weak body? This is strikingly set before us in Hebrews also (ch. 2. 18, 4. 15). Never, never did He fail.

Furthermore, "without spot" is rather to be rendered "complete," not only a **negative** description, but positive, dealing with the whole character. The message of Leviticus 21. 18 has been suggested: there was nothing deficient, disproportionate, nor lacking in any way in our adorable Lord. And the added words, "upon which never came yoke" have been helpfully pointed out as indicating that our Lord was **alone** (Heb. 7. 26): none could "share" with Him. John 12. 24 is helpful. The ark pictured His life alone, and the mercy seat revealed Himself in resurrection, and **His people of "one piece" with Him**: so, through His death, He has now "much fruit," and we have part with Him (John 13. 8). He lovingly says, "Take My 'yoke' upon you" (Matt. 11. 29). I was impressed by the remark of a brother that the added words of Deuteronomy 21. 3 "which hath not been wrought with" are not here. Christ

* Israel themselves notice this permanence in part. They are said to enumerate *six* heifers from Numbers 19 to the destruction of the second temple. The fact that this is the **LAST** commanded sacrifice in the five books of Moses, standing, as we have observed, apart from all others, confirms this uniqueness.

† It is true we *all* fail in full perception of His *one* work, but the type has, I think, another message.

had wrought and finished the work given Him to do (John 17. 4)—had wrought **ALONE!** **ALL** the glory is His! The slaying was in full view of the tabernacle, and the sprinkling of the blood was **seven** times, reminding forcibly of Leviticus 16. 14, 19. The Godward aspect must come first. **Then** there is the emphasis on burning, not, as in the burnt offering from the standpoint of "incense" and "fragrance"—the **other** word (saraph) is here used. Further, there is no participation in the food, as in the peace offering. The thought of judgment and wrath is before our hearts, and the permanent value of Christ's death under the curse, is to be ever remembered with a humbling sense of what we deserved, whenever we are defiled, if "only" by contact, along our pilgrim path as God's children. Salvation never leads us to excuse sin. Every type falls far short. As the high priest on the day of atonement not only needed a sacrifice "for himself" but a cloud of incense between him and God's glory even when drawing near with the blood of atonement, so the priest here, and those who assisted, were themselves "unclean until the even" (Num. 19. 7, 8, 10). "The iniquity of the holy things" (Ex. 28. 38), in our failure in perception and presentation, may also be hinted, even as it was with the priests **after every** attendance at the altar, or entering the holy place: they **ever** needed the laver (Ex. 30. 20). Thanks be unto God, we need not now remain "unclean until the even," but a deeper sense of the purity of God, and less lightness as to needed cleansing may well be felt by our awakened hearts. We have all treated sin too indifferently, and have failed to realize what it cost our beloved Lord to redeem us? The Holy Spirit's double stress on this has been pointed out: "defileth the **tabernacle** (dwelling place) of the Lord" (verse 13), and "he hath defiled the **sanctuary** (holy place) of the Lord" (verse 20). God's honour must ever be dearer to us. The camp of Israel was to be holy because of God walking in the midst (Deut. 23. 14, cf. Rev. 2. 1.). Sin has an effect on us, on our character and our experiences, it has an effect upon others, it brings painful consequences in its train, but beyond all these thoughts is the pre-eminent reminder,—it is against God (Ps. 51. 4).

Oh let me think of what my sin once meant
To Him Who took the curse—and thus repent:
Own how my sin affects God's holy place,
Nor e'er excuse, when conscious of **His grace**.
(If the Lord will, to be concluded).

I find the thought helpful that the commands of the Lord Jesus to His own are not only commands but invitations and opportunities. They tell of pathways to rich blessing as well as responsibilities and duties. I like to think of baptism, and His appointments, as **imperative privileges** for disciples. Is it not blessed so to view them?

"He is like —."

LUKE 6. 46-49 must mean much to a thoughtful believer. Though I have been enabled to write on these verses,* I realize, on looking at the passage again, there is more that I should share with other disciples. Yes, there is always "more," as out of His fulness we receive. Our minds are finite, God's riches are infinite, and His words are a mine that can never become exhausted. How grateful we should be for Scripture.

The climax of the address in the plain, as of the address on the mount, appropriately concerns hearing and doing (Jas. 1. 23). It is so easy to read and enjoy. But how important it is that we should **do**, and not be hearers **only**. And we observe first that the one who hears is one who has "come" (verse 47). The unwise builder is **not** said to have come (John 5. 40). The beginning of blessing is ever a relationship to the personal Lord Jesus. We hear **wrongly** at a distance. Thus the passage is another illustration of the link between Himself and His words (cf. Mark 8. 38, John 14. 23). O that we may never forget this. Emphasis on the **Person** of Christ without His words is not spiritual. How indeed can it be? And stress on His words without His person soon brings to a legalism and hardness of manner. Nor did He say, "My words and Me," but "Me and My words." How precious is the **order** of Scripture, as ever.

It is remarkable that our Lord does not detail the **materials** of the building. We should have spoken much of these. But He emphasizes the Foundation. How clearly does this indicate the **power** of a right attitude to Himself. The "materials" are ever controlled by a true love to Him and recognition of Him. Some will plead for "Deeds, not creeds," but His teaching is definite that if there is not a living faith in Himself, there cannot be living works. Activities which are not grounded **on Him**, and not **unto Him**, must lack the true motive, however kindly, and useful, and earnest, they may seem. They cannot go beyond "the goodness of the flesh." Do we realize this as we should?

But the builder who is blest is not only distinguished as to his "coming," and the true "Foundation," on "the Rock," he is yet further marked in a fourth contrast by his **depth**. "He digged and deepened." A definiteness, a holy energy, and a contrast with that which is superficial are before us. That which is only on surface-work **never** reaches the Lord. The unjust steward said "I cannot **dig**." Salvation is free, but the resultant service is strenuous, in the power of the Holy Spirit. Have we a digging and deepening? Are we concerned to have mere information by our Lord's words, or to apply them at once, to put them into a building, and therefore to remove everything that stands in between us and the Lord Jesus? Do we feel how much is in the way? Are we willing to keep on earnestly till everything we do is in association with Him? We repeat that there

* See booklet No. 7 on the Parables.

should be nothing between. We cannot rightly have the building up till there is the building down (cf. Isa. 37. 31). The unwise builder knows nothing of this. He is **not** said to build that which is outwardly evil or corrupt. We do not even read of hay and stubble here. There may be much that appears commendable, but the Lord Jesus is not the Foundation, there is not the simple doing of what **He** says. Ah, dear reader, does not this speak to us? It may not be that there is any deliberate antagonism to His words: it is enough to spoil all if we **avoid doing them**. Possibly we are not those who relegate the address on the Mount, and its parallels here, to another dispensation, but are we putting in practice His commands in their searching force? And His commands elsewhere (Matt. 28. 19, 20)?

What is the result of obedience? **A house**. Actions are not merely isolated: the Christian life is one. There is a wondrous harmony in all that does the will of God. And a house implies godly order, and a place of rest and food. Thus we have here as in Matthew 11. 28, 29, the two-fold unveiling, "**Come unto Me**" is first, with the rest of heart for a sinner saved. This **followed** by "**Take My yoke** upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall **find rest** unto your souls." Here is the second rest, parallel with the "house." But the house is never the Foundation: the Foundation can stand without the house, but not the house apart from the Foundation. The test of "that Day" cannot affect the Foundation: it beats upon the house. The Lord Jesus has already gone through judgment for us, once and for ever. Do we not also see here the test of present trials, when judgment begins with the house of God? That which is built on Christ will abide. That which is obedience to His words will stand. But all else will fall. There are two descriptions, and only two. The Judgment Seat of Christ will not deal with our energy, but examine our consistent harmony with the words of our Lord Jesus. A house is to be entered (note Gal. 6. 4, 1 Thess. 2. 19), and may we not also see God's own approval as a **temple**?

As to the personal building by our Lord Jesus Himself, all His own are one, and they will not fall (Matt. 16. 18), but, as to their obedience, each one is different, and personally responsible, even as one star differeth from another in glory. The house will be larger if we receive His words more, and thus obey more and more fully. Again, let us remember that it is not our **thinking** what will please, it is not our **sentiment**, that counts. John 14. 15 shows us how that which is not done with love to Him is not really obedience—hence the realization of Himself must bear fruit in the **manner** as well as in all the **material**. Yes, the house is "well built" in **every** way (as this passage has been translated), when the Lord Jesus has His rightful place. The Holy Spirit never gives Him anything short of this. But has He the right place, and the pre-eminence, in your life, and mine to-day?

"Planning."

DO not let me plan for myself, and then say I am simply trusting the Lord. If one is professedly (and intentionally) living "by faith," yet in a way that specially lets others well know his needs, **they** may be kind and help him, and he may think it is **the Lord's** approval when there has been a measure of semi-conscious inviting, if not asking, of assistance. And so is it in your life, and my life, as to **everything**, dear reader. We may (semi-consciously, I repeat) plan after we have besought the Lord Himself to guide, and thus **we really** rest on a Hushai's help (2 Sam. 15. 32-37) in a way that we limit (and more than limit) the first trusting **entirely** to God (2 Sam. 15. 31). It is easy even to **think** "Hushai" is an answer to prayer, instead of waiting for God's counsel. As a ship was **going** when Jonah sought it, so may we find things fitting in that are a temptation from the enemy, and not the Lord's opening. "Why," you say, "when we have asked our Father, is this permitted?" Dear fellow believer, if our Father sees that our confidence in Him is not yet with a single eye and not fully willing to wait His time, if it is not implicit and childlike, can we expect the removal of these testings? The immediate answer to our prayer, in such circumstances, would **NOT** necessarily strengthen our faith, but might increase our "confidence" in our "mixture" of self with faith, and from this our Father would lovingly draw us, by letting us see "**ourselves**." It may be I **want** "something," and though I really **do** desire to see God's hand in providing this, I am so full of "it" that "it" hinders me from other parts of God's appointed will for me. I think of "it" when I should be leaving "it" to Him, and doing something else to which **He** is calling. I am so concerned and occupied whether He will supply "it," and how, and feel inclined to mention to **others**, who may be the "**means**" of offering "it." Am I not looking to them? May I illustrate? I carry a thermometer on my journeys. It is helpful to me. I broke it, and I was troubled. It was a very little thing, a simple thing, but I do not like to feel I have lost or destroyed anything. Replacing seems waste. It would be easy to mention to some who would gladly replace, possibly they have one to spare, but I should seek to see God's hand and to learn how easily a "little thing" recurs to the mind, and the very wish **NOT** to waste the Lord's money soon wastes the Lord's time. O how needful to **feel** God's teaching in all and to thank Him. Love to Him has more to do with little things than any of us realize. Thanks be unto God for the simplicity to which He lovingly invites His own.

Faith never looks down, but always up.

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The Student of Scripture.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"This is life eternal that they might know Thee. ." John 17. 3.

A Word of Introduction.

"**LIFE**," not mere religion. "Life," not bare head-knowledge. The Lord Jesus ever spoke of "Life." And life is quite different from existence. "Eternal life" is a wondrous blessing, and it includes the knowledge of God. Deeply solemn is the contrast, "They know not Him That sent Me" (John 15. 21), Earlier in the gospel the Lord Jesus had said to the scribes and Pharisees "Ye neither know Me nor My Father" (John 8. 19), and again "My Father . . . of Whom ye say, that He is your God: yet ye have not known Him" (John 8. 54, 55). It is with the desire that God may be exalted in the definite knowledge of Himself, and that there may be a setting aside of all lip-profession, and veneer, in our own lives also, that these pages go forth. All accuracy and activity are vain, unless we **KNOW GOD**.

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•The Red Heifer of Numbers 19.

(Concluded.)

The ashes were to be "kept," (O that this word might be in the largest type before the eyes of our heart), "in a clean place," yet that was "without the camp" for all is suggestive of our separate walk through this sinful world (Heb. 13. 12-14). Abiding grace meets our abiding need. And for what specifically was this gracious provision made? The emphasis here is **NOT** on direct acts of sin, as in Leviticus 4 and 5; nor for one who had any disease similar to leprosy. The word "touch" is found in the very first verse to describe the use, and again in the last verses (Num. 19. 11, 21, 22). "Contact" is more resultful in evil than we realize. Five cases are enumerated, but the first stress on "**the dead body**" is preserved throughout. The one who **needs** cleansing is viewed as **LIVING**, but he has been among those who are **DEAD**. This again helps to show that a **believer** is portrayed, not a soul brought to Christ for the first

time. And the statement "unclean seven days" implies that the defect through contact **remains**, in measure, till the climax is reached. The number "seven" tells of completeness, and seven days (as in the feast of unleavened bread), may depict this dispensation. Yet the **third** day purifying was **necessary**, as verse 12 indicates, and the realization and reckoning of resurrection union with Christ (Rom. 6. 11, Phil. 3. 10, Col. 3. 1) must never be forgotten, even though we are conscious of groaning while in this tabernacle, and looking forward to the undefiled and unchanged perfection when we shall awake with His likeness in that Day. Nor would we forget the blessedness of the Antitype beyond the type. The legal uncleanness remained of old, but we are "clean every whit" by the finished sacrifice of Christ. How real is the call to praise, and to a life in the realization of grace. The deliverance from the dead (note "from **dead** works" and "the **living** God" in Heb. 9. 14, even as these two words are in Num. 19) must lead us to heed the exhortation of Ephesians 5. 14.

The five cases divide into two parts: in the tent, it has been well said, death was not expected, and there, even without contact, one was at once involved. Here we seem to behold an **assembly**, and our home also, the word "tent" speaking of the pilgrim. But in "the open fields" of the **world** death was expected around, and one was not responsible in the same way, yet "contact" there **at once** brought about a defilement, which could not be removed except in God's **appointed way**. The four cases there were not only comprehensive for Israel literally: they set forth varied spiritual dangers which we still meet to-day. The one "**slain**" may be viewed as one under judgment, "the dead body" gives a general aspect, the "**bone**" reminds us of any small "**relic**" of death, that which was brought in through sin, and "the grave" (contrasted with the tent) is the place of death. It has been rightly emphasized we should be spiritually in a "tent," we should **not** be in a "grave." The words of the Lord Jesus as to sudden contact in our daily walk, are impressive (Matt. 23. 27, 28): may we constantly be on our guard! Let us not imagine that "little things" do not matter: even a "**bone**" could contaminate, and the dead body might not be **seen** in the grave, yet the contact was definitely made. When Adam sinned he "**died**," and the emphasis on death here reminds of everything connected morally with the first Adam, even as the ashes and the living water draw our hearts to the Last Adam, His death and resurrection, and to all blessings in Him as **raised** from the dead (cf. Ex. 17. 6, Num. 20. 10, 11).

We have thought how though our beloved Lord took blood and flesh, even as His redeemed, He Himself was **never** defiled. He did NOT say, "Ye ought to wash My feet." And His righteous obedience seen in the cedar wood and His humility in the little hyssop, whether in verse 6 or verse 18, must refresh our thankful hearts. If contact with evil is so resultful, may we not

be blest through more contact with Him? We remember how Moses's face shone when he talked with Him, and does not the Holy Spirit say that, "Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same image" (2 Cor. 3. 18)? I like to think of the Lord Jesus as the closed "vessel" with the covering bound upon it (Num. 19. 15). The word "vessel" is used for the body, and He was blind and deaf to all evil around. May not we become increasingly like to Him? Are we "open" to God, and "closed" to the things that would defile? Everything that exalts Him encourages us regarding our complete salvation, and humbles us as to our need, and attracts us to expect a sanctifying likeness to Himself, in the gracious ministry of the Holy Spirit.

The application of the result of the "sin offering," (for that is the very word rendered "purification for sin" in Numbers 19. 9 and 17 alike*), was Divinely arranged. A **clean** person was used of God. This speaks to each heart: it has a deep **relative** meaning, though we have owned the other lesson that we all fall short till "that Day." By means of the hyssop, that spoke of humility, the ashes and "living water" (see margin) were to be applied, and applied **together**. **Not** the ashes without the water, **nor** the water without the ashes, **nor** the mention of water first. Is not God's instruction profound and precious? As the altar preceded the laver (cf. Heb. 10. 22), so the consciousness of the holy wrath of God fully satisfied, through the finished work of Christ, leads ever up to a stress on resurrection. The "**living**" water tells of Himself the Living One, and the living power of His words to those who are now alive from the dead in Him, and whose desire is ever to "walk in newness of life." Head-knowledge of Scripture is not our need, but this holy application of living truth. Again and again, as in the sanctification of the priests and the bringing near of the cleansed leper, we have the **water** as well as the **blood**. There is constantly this two-foldness in our Lord's gracious dealings with His own. Are we ever blending "the power of His resurrection" with the glad gratefulness for "the precious blood of Christ"? Much is rightly expected from those who have been so dearly bought. It was not to be expected that one of Israel would be willing to remain defiled, or indifferent to his condition. No, there was to be prompt realization, and confession, and the earnest removal in which there was the fellowship of at least one other, as in the washing of "one another's feet" (cf. Matt. 18. 15). Thus the Holy Spirit has impressed upon us the deep concern we should have for our own need, and the true love for one another, unto the glory of God in everything that concerns our daily walk. The fact is clear to each one that we cannot separate ourself from Him, nor

* The prayerful reader will soon see the importance of this simple and literal translation. Here we have Christ made a curse for **us** (Gal. 3. 13), made to be sin or a sin offering for us (2 Cor. 5. 21), and thus we see that no **unsaved** soul can understand the cleansing of the **water**. Such an one **must** come to Christ crucified **FIRST**.

our interests from Him, nor His honour, in front of men, from our daily testimony. The Root—Christ—is known by the branches; the Head is judged, among men, by the members. We have a solemn trusteeship, and in bearing the Name of the Lord, as chosen vessels, we dare not overlook the effect our whole life has on the manifestation of His glory in the earth.

To conclude,—let us be more grateful for His provision, and never ignore the need. Let us seek at once the application of “the water of separation,” the “living” water lest we be separated from Him. Let us ponder the twofold thought, “purify himself” (Num. 19. 20) as well as “the clean person shall sprinkle”—the loving ministry of a brother in Christ. Let us be more exercised that our home, and the assembly where we are gathered, may be cleansed from defilement by “death.” We may be startled by such a thought. Can this be said of the large organizations and denominations of to-day? If then the cleansing of the “tent” is not permitted, should we remain there? Have we not a deep meaning in the principle underlying the words of Jeremiah 51. 9, “We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed: forsake her.” It is our joy, as we have seen, to possess now the antitype of the sprinkling on the third day, and the consciousness of resurrection-union with our Lord Jesus Christ, but let us never forget what we have already learned, the Hope of 1 Thessalonians 5. 23 when our Lord soon returns. “Till He come” we remain humbly conscious of our need: we dare not boast. We would, like Job in chapter 42, and like Paul in Romans 7 and 8, be truly lowly. The one who was sprinkled the third day had a ground of present blessing and joy, but he confessed how some effects of contact remained, and looked forward. The leavened bread in Leviticus 23. 17, picturing the Lord’s redeemed, and never brought forward thus as a type of Himself, may have a somewhat similar reminder. The waiting till the third day may seem strange, but it not only emphasizes the infinitely quicker application of the fruits of the work of Christ, it brings home to our hearts the need for a deep sense of the reality of any uncleanness before God, lest we should hurriedly view the effect of any sin in ourselves, or in others, or in any way make light of its character before our God and Father, in His perfect holiness and purity. May the further meditation on this type bring refreshment to the heart of many a reader as it has brought to myself, for there is ever a richer fulness than any of us have yet apprehended, in the precious Scriptures, as to which our Lord Himself says that Moses wrote of Him (John 5. 46).*

* For example, a brother has called attention to the immediate subsequent context, with the exalted Rock, not to be smitten again, but to be addressed (“Speak to the Rock”), that the “living” water may flow forth from that which pictures Him, Who “being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him. For in that He died, He died unto sin once; but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God” (Rom. 6. 9, 10). The practical bearing of this is seen in the added words, “Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

“COME” (Matt. 22. 4).

THE gospel extends a welcome: it is a message of marvellous mercy, it has an invitation of surpassing preciousness. Though we are forbidden to give the pearl-like promises to those who will misuse them, the invitation is expressly announced to those who “will” not come. The condition of man’s “will” is sadly before us (Matt. 22. 3, John 5. 40), but this does not relieve us from urgent declaration of this “command.” “Come” is the testimony of Matthew 11. 27, to the heavy laden, and there we find a promise to such. But it is the word of authority in Matthew 22. 4 and Luke 14. 17, as well. “Depart” is not yet the Divine declaration, though it will be (Matt. 25. 41). Hence our present attitude and manner as well as our preaching, must emphasize God’s message, “Come.” We are not to compromise, but we dare not repel with selfishness, indifference and hardness of self. We are to seek to “win” souls. “Come” is to be our winsome word, and our wish, and the expression of our heart’s readiness to show what we have received, that others may share, to their joy and ours. A gospel without “Come” is not a gospel at all. What if we are slighted, and if there is indifference? We are still to continue, until the Lord hinders us (Matt. 22. 9). Our aim is not to obtain followers for ourselves, nor adherents for a movement, but souls for our Lord Jesus. The marriage is for Him, the believing is into Him, the adding is unto Him; the glory belongs to Him. We go to men, but though the gospel thus reaches the lost where they are, it does not leave them there. “Come” implies a change of place, and inasmuch as it draws to one centre, and that the personal Lord Jesus, it destroys, at the very root, the idea of self-exaltation, of nationalism, of denominationalism, and condemns diversity among real children of God. Coming to Christ we come to one house, one feast, one meal, and to “one another.” Such is the precious testimony of the gospel of the grace of God. May it be our experience increasingly in the gracious power of the one Holy Spirit.

Faith does not make, but it does take what God has graciously given, and daily gives, and ever expects He will give.

God will not change in Himself, nor will He change His words. Why should a believer doubt? His truth is fully worthy of our trust.

Eternal life is quite different from external existence, and the present enjoyment of eternal life is quite different from the mere existence of those who do not know the Lord Jesus Christ.

“The grace of God” never leads us to misuse grace: it teaches us to deny ungodliness (Tit. 2. 12): if there is anything opposed to sound (or healthy) doctrine, it is through a violent turning of the grace of God into lasciviousness which God hates (Jude 4).

"Then believed they His words; they sang His Praise."

Psalm 106. 12

BELIEVING leads to singing, and, when the faith is spiritual, the believer **continues** to sing unto the Lord "a new song." When we look off unto the Lord Jesus, the Author and Finisher of the faith, we understand the **joy** set before Him and before us (Heb. 12. 2), but when we look off Him, and look at the waves and wind, (as Peter), we never go on singing. Unbelief kills praise and has no music. The complaints of grumbling do not harmonize with a song. "The Lord is . . . my Song" will never be our heart-expression when we are murmuring. Paul and Silas felt no bitterness, nor anger against the jailer, and so they could sing at midnight, and the Lord gave them the soul of the jailer. A dirge would have brought no such blessing. We rob ourselves when we doubt Him. How many times Israel murmured in the wilderness. Why? "They believed not His word" (Ps. 106. 24). This calls to mind Hebrews 3. 19 "So we see they could not enter in **because of unbelief.**" We read much more about their complaining than their singing. How sad it all was. The Lord never forgot the manna: but "they **soon forgot** His works" (Ps. 106. 13), and then, as sin is linked with sin, (Isa. 30. 1), "they waited not for His counsel." This **negative** led to another sin,—a linked positive, "They lusted a lust" (margin). And so we have the steps further and further away from Him. But faith would never have begun to go aside thus. O that **we** may experience the wondrous fruit and results of simple, childlike, abiding, spiritual faith, and its blessed companionship with genuine love and heavenly hope.

"The FAITH of God's elect, and acknowledging of the TRUTH which is after (according to) GODLINESS."

Titus 1. 1.

IT is blessed to realize God's harmonizing of all. Faith never makes obedience unnecessary. There is, indeed, "the **obedience of faith**" (Rom. 16. 26). The true emphasis on faith never hinders works of godliness, for "faith worketh by love." And it is well to see God's own gracious ministry as to election: that never draws us back from the thought of true zeal and faithfulness. As this verse indicates, the **elect** of God acknowledge the truth that is **in accord with godliness.** Thus a perfect harmony comes before us to the praise of the glory of His grace, and we would seek not only to have this as a theme in a magazine but as a constant experience in our lives. All the objections that men raise, e.g., "If you are saved by the blood of Christ you can live as you like," "If there is eternal salvation, there will be carelessness," "If any are elect, they will be saved, and missionary earnestness is unnecessary," are based on ignorance of grace,

and its fruit in the life. If salvation were only done **for** us, and not **in** us, there would be force in what is said. But when God changes one from a child of wrath to His child, there are **new** wishes. The natural man judges in accord with the logic that would affect an **unsaved** soul, and only shows **the need for the new birth.** A similar mistake is made when one says "If I came to Christ, I should not be able to stand." That mighty Saviour grants a **new** power. It is indeed true one cannot "try" to live a Christian life. For the natural man it is impossible, but if any one is in Christ there is a new creation. Thus we rejoice in what our God has done, and is doing and will do. And while we say to those who draw inferences from an **unsaved** standpoint as to a **saved** man, "You have left out the mainspring," we do desire to manifest more and more and more what Christ is,—in the power of the Holy Spirit.

"He Was a Faithful Man and Feared God Above Many."

Nehemiah 7. 2.

NEHEMIAH sought to find godly character. It is important to be discerning, yet not critical. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," and those who fear the Lord are marked by godliness in daily life (Mal. 3. 16). It is a good thing when love to God affects influence in an assembly and not position in this life, or mental ability. God may use the mind, but if head knowledge is the deciding factor or something else that is natural, everything goes wrong. And so was it in the work of God among Israel, in the days of return from the captivity. One is impressed, too, by the suggestion "my brother" and Hananiah, with the immediate reference to faithfulness. It is required in stewards that a man be found faithful (1 Cor. 4. 2), and those who repaired the house in 2 Kings 12. 15, and 22. 7, were faithful. Nehemiah did not choose because of relationship physically. This again is important. Everything in the Scripture has a message for us to lead to holiness, in our walk day by day.

From a fig tree—Adam and misused leaves (Gen. 3. 7).

Under a fig tree—Nathanael contrasted with Adam (no guile, Ps. 32. 1, 2), John 1. 48.

In a sycamore—fig tree (same root)—grace to a sinner Zacchæus (Luke 19. 4).

To a fig tree—nothing but leaves for the Lord Jesus (Matt. 21. 19).

Trials may alter circumstances, but they cannot change God's love. The fountain of His supply is within, not without. Believers are not dependent on things, but on Him. He may, and does, use "things," but **they** are all subject to Him, and therefore, whatever they be, faith leads to thanksgiving unto Him. A grumbling, fearing faith is an impossibility. The Holy Spirit never leads to a divided heart.

Taken—and Lost.

WHAT does it mean to you and to me when we read, "The children of Judah had fought against Jerusalem, and had taken it, and smitten it with the edge of the sword, and set the city on fire," and then, afterwards, in the same chapter, "The children of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites that inhabited Jerusalem; but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem unto this day" (Jud. i. 8, 21)? And yet again "Judah took Gaza with the coast thereof and Askelon with the coast thereof, and Ekron with the coast thereof" (Jud. i. 18), but subsequently, "The Philistines brought him (Samson) down to Gaza and bound him" (Jud. 16. 21), with 1 Samuel 6. 17, 18, and these very cities having "the lords of the Philistines? Have we sometimes gained a victory spiritually, and then LOST GROUND? O that there may be no half measures, no up and down of victory and defeat, no compromise, but a going on from strength to strength, in the Holy Spirit. Israel sinned, and were thus kept forty years in the wilderness. In the land too they sinned, and were kept back from really possessing Jerusalem, till the days of God's chosen king, and it became "the city of God." Do we not often see delay in our life, when there should be making haste and delaying not (Ps. 119. 60)? Are we not often slack to go in to possess? And do we not sometimes lose the ground once gained and (we thought) for ever? This, which is so bitter to an earthly army, should be yet more bitter to those engaged in the conflict with the world, the flesh, and the devil! Yet defeat is not the ground for despondency but for confession, and renewed consecration. The rights of the Lord Jesus, and His glory, are involved, and we would indeed press forward now that we may not give ground, but "stand" and "withstand" (Eph. 6. 13, 14). God is Faithful. Let not yesterday's blessing be to-day's defeat, through pride, through self-confidence, through idleness, through loss of continuance, through lack of prayer.

"The path of the just is as a shining light" (Prov. 4. 18). God is deeply concerned about His people's walk. Our daily life means far more than any of us realize. Our whole character affects each part, and each part affects the whole. We cannot do great things unless we do "little things" to His glory. The interrelation of every part of our manner of life is more intimate than words can express. We cannot talk aright unless we walk aright. The tree is known by its fruit.

"Who am I?" said David, and may we not ask a like question when we think of God's infinite grace? . . . We deserved nothing: we receive everything,—everything in Christ.

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The Student of Scripture.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"Grace be unto you and peace."

"Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong."
1 Corinthians i. 3; 16. 13.

A Word of Introduction.

[It is delightful to see the Holy Spirit's repetitions in Scripture. He never tires of telling of grace. The epistles usually begin with telling of God as our Father, and of grace. It is interesting to notice a number of short commands in brief sentences nearer the end. Romans 12 and 1 Thessalonians 5 well illustrate (cf. 1 Pet. 3. 8). We need stirring up. Provoking to love and good works is a precious example of exhorting one another daily. The crisp, short appointments have an AROUSING effect. They are meant to act as holy goads, and to stir and awaken us. So in these pages our desire is to lead believers to the Lord Himself, not to any man or system or movement, and to encourage them as they realize grace, to a definiteness and a warmth. We need to be stimulated. Arm-chair study is not God's will. The Scriptures are His provision for the daily walk, and fright and flight are not for us, but a godly fighting of the good fight of the faith.]

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"BE NOT ANXIOUS."

Why should you fear? Your Heavenly Father knoweth;
The ploughman plougheth, and the sower soweth,
The sleeper rises, and the seedling groweth—
'Tis God the increase gives.

Why should you fear? Your every hair is numbered,
Your Heavenly Father never once hath slumbered:
Why should you then, His child, with fear be cumbered?
He knows your every need!

Why should you fear? To-day is not to-morrow,
 Why plan and scheme, and seek its stress to borrow?
 God is the Same, to balance joy and sorrow,—
 To bless—and sanctify.

The Lord's Supper.

1. "Why," the question may be asked, "should there be so great an emphasis on the Lord's Supper? The present is not a dispensation of types and shadows." But surely the **believer** regards everything as important which the Lord has said, and if "types" are **fewer** now, those included become more uniquely emphasized. Is not baptism put **first** by the Lord Jesus Himself as an expression of living faith, and can all the alterations and misunderstandings of ritualists, and others, change **His** own stress upon this command? So is it with the Lord's Supper which has a peculiarly significant appointment, as His gracious and tender word, revealed "on the night in which He was betrayed," just before His death, and associated with the affecting words "**In remembrance of Me.**" Can we overlook this, without serious spiritual loss, dear fellow believer?

2. Nor is it strange that the enemy has made a special attack on **this** commandment of the Lord. Let us call to mind some striking reasons for such a constant evil activity:—

In Eden Satan did **not** urge an act of outward wickedness. He came, deceivingly, **just to alter a type.** "The tree of the knowledge of good and evil," being a real and material tree, had its moral power in connexion with the **typical** teaching God marked out. It was therefore an attack on a symbol with which Satan began his deadly warfare.

Thus he still seeks to take us off our guard. The Holy Spirit sums this up in striking words, "The serpent beguiled Eve through his **subtlety**," and what if the **application** is to us, regarding any type, "So your minds should be corrupted from the **simplicity** that is in Christ"? What if we too have been thus led astray from simplicity, to sprinkling instead of immersion, or to **any** unrealized change in the Lord's Supper? Let us not assume the error will always be manifest. For in this same chapter we read, "Satan himself is transformed into an angel of **light**" (2 Cor. 11. 14), and "light" appears positively **good**, to "appeal" to those who are children of God. Do not expect all sin to be labelled sin: it will claim to be holy again and again.

3. May we continue our meditations? Is it not true that varied dispensations **begin** with God's declaration concerning "food," and a "covenant" is thus set before us. It was so with Adam in Genesis 1. 29, and with Noah also in Genesis 9. 1-7, and again with Israel in Exodus 12. Is there not therefore a parallel when we find our Lord's arrangement for the bread and fruit of the vine? This is just as definite and central as Israel's passover, and in connexion with the cup He Himself

mentions the **new covenant.** We can hardly expect this will escape Satan's direct attack. But are we prepared for it? We repeat that to Israel the Passover was central, and it was at this time, and in this connexion, the Lord ordained the suspension of that **sacrifice**, and showed that which was to take its place for the church without any limitation to once a year (cf. Acts 20). Can we view this as a minor matter? We have no more authority to vary than Israel had, or have, to modify the Passover. The fact that we are not threatened with punishment never makes a loving heart careless. Nor can we overlook the fact that in the **one** incident in which Melchisedec's priesthood is before us, there is a parallel foreshadowing of the Lord's Supper, and Abraham is blessed by the "greater." God had a deep purpose in this. It suggests the importance of the Lord's Supper, in preparation for our meeting the world, of which the King of Sodom in Genesis 14 affords a picture.

4. The **time** of Christ's appointment was just after Satan entered into Judas (John 13. 27), and just before he, the prince of this world, came and had nothing in our Lord (John 14. 30). Would not this awaken the enemy's bitterness? Impressive indeed was the moment chosen for the institution. Let us not view anything as a mere chance, the date and circumstances were a Divine choice. Nothing is purposeless. It was then that He not only said, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another" but also, "If ye love Me, keep My commandments"—a significant plural,—with the linked words, "He that loveth Me not keepeth not My sayings" (John 14. 15, 24). O that we may heed all His words, with childlike simplicity. Let us not forget the mode of attack on the Lord Himself in the wilderness. It was in connexion with (a) appointed food, (b) the exact words of God, and (c) the wrong time for an action, quite as much as (d) the wicked desire of worship. Was this accidental? The tactics of Satan are often the same. Moreover, he quoted part of Scripture, but left out part. O that we may not thus act with the commandments of the Lord!

5. With some beloved children of God, rightly feeling the deep meaning of inward devotion, there may still remain the underlying thought, "But is it not after all a **little** thing? A physical action is small, and a type is nothing **in itself**?" Should we not rather say, "The **size** of the action is not primary, but the glory of the **Person** commanding," and "the smaller the action the fuller may be the test for simple discipleship"? It does not need spirituality to see the wrong of a great crime. The beauty of a **type** is that, being nothing in itself, the claim on obedience is only the will of the Lord. It may seem at first to have no reason, **except** love to Him. But that is reason enough for one who altogether **belongs to Him**, and it appeals to no one else.

(If the Lord will, to be concluded).

Discourage discouragement, and encourage the discouraged one!

SOME SEEMING PARADOXES.

"The 'weakness' of God is stronger than men" (1 Cor. 1. 25).

"The meekness and gentleness of Christ . . . the weapons of our warfare . . . are mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds" (2 Cor. 10. 1-4).

"Follow after . . . patience, meekness: fight the good fight of faith" (1 Tim. 6. 11, 12).

"Avenge not yourselves . . . overcome" (Rom. 12. 19-21).

"Forasmuch as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind" (1 Pet. 4. 1).

"Let us run with patience (remaining under) the race that is set before us" (Heb. 12. 1).

"Having, therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus . . . let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach" (Heb. 10. 19, 13. 13).

"As unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things" (2 Cor. 6. 9, 10). O that it may be ours to enjoy this two fold experience to the praise of the glory of God's grace.

"UNTO SALVATION."

"Unto" (or "into") salvation. These precious words, looking forward to the glorious climax of that Day, occur, though variously translated, in the following verses:—

Acts 13. 47. "That Thou shouldest be **unto salvation** to the ends of the earth."

Romans 1. 16, "The power of God **unto salvation**."

Romans 10. 10, "Confession is made **unto salvation**."

2 Corinthians 7. 10, "Repentance **unto salvation**."

2 Timothy 3. 15, "Able to make wise **unto salvation**."

Hebrews 9. 28, "To appear . . . **unto salvation**."

1 Peter 1. 5, "Kept . . . **unto salvation**."

1 Peter 2. 2, "That ye may grow **unto salvation**."

(Also used of the typical salvation in Hebrews 11. 7). O that we may experience the power of these precious verses in the Holy Spirit.

If we trust to ourselves, we shall fail: but if we give up this confidence the remedy is not in a negative; that would only be depression. It must indeed be living faith in the Lord that drives self confidence out, else the mere absence of one sin only makes room for another.

Act on the line of your prayers, "Withal **prepare** me also a lodging: for I trust that through your **prayers** I shall be given unto you" (Phm. 22).

Four Modes of Travelling.

Philip **went down** to the city of Samaria. . . . The angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert, and **he arose and went**" (Acts 8. 5, 26, 27). Quite ordinary, but it was in God's will. That was the important matter.

"And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read Esaias the prophet" (Acts 8. 30). The Holy Spirit did not carry him to the chariot.

"He desired Philip that he would come up and sit with Him" (Acts 8. 31). A little more comfortable, but it **DID NOT COME FIRST**.

"The Spirit of the Lord **caught away** Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more" (Acts 8. 39). The Lord had His chariot, as it were, but He did not employ this till the servant had proved willingness to "go" from an attractive field of labour to the desert, and to "run," possibly at midday (Acts 8. 26 with 22. 6, Greek), to the Ethiopian. Let God appoint all, even the mode of travelling.

"He led captivity captive."

Does this refer to the transferring of Old Testament saints from Hades to Paradise (Heb. 2. 15, "spirits of just men brought to the goal," Heb. 12. 23), or to the despoiling of principalities and powers (Col. 2. 15)? Both blessings are associated with the victorious death of Christ, both parts of God's revelation are precious to our hearts. The question is "To which does leading captivity captive refer?" if indeed it refers to one of these. Judges 5. 12 would seem to imply that the Hebrew expression (Ps. 68. 18) speaks of bringing some **into** captivity that they would wish to avoid, and displaying a triumph over them. Hence the second interpretation would appear to be the one before us, according with the added words in the parallel Colossians 2. 15, "triumphing over them in it." Thanks be unto God, Satan is a defeated foe, and our conflict in Ephesians 6. 12 is with the consciousness that our Lord has already laid low many like to the ones who oppose us, and will not fail to lay low the rest (Isa. 24. 21). Never let us forget the practical bearing of this, and every passage, on our present life for the Lord.

"The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts" (Rom. 5. 5): More literally "**has been poured out**," showing the gracious work of Another, even of the Holy Spirit. Further, the pouring out presents a blessed contrast with that which is frozen and that which is stiff: there is a wondrous "filling" of nook and crevice, as it were, and God's love melts or removes the iciness of self-seeking. O that this may be your experience and mine at all times.

"If the Spirit of Him That raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you. He That raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies because of His Spirit That dwelleth in you" (Romans 8. 11).

THE Holy Spirit's emphasis in this context on "indwelling" is deeply important. In Romans 7. 18, 20 we see sin indwelling, but **that**, thank God, is not the whole. There is the glorious contrast, to subdue indwelling sin, the Holy Spirit Himself indwells. This is the real characteristic of a child of God, and should be always and increasingly manifest. We know something of those who "dwell" in a house by the way in which it is kept. The nature of the Holy Spirit is to be seen in all our life. The primary thought now is not to be that "I" dwell in the "earthly house of this tabernacle." That is true, but it is not primary. The Holy Spirit is the all-important Resident. He does not only visit, nor does He only come upon a believer at times. **He indwells.** The child of God's body is to be His resting place. Unclean spirits manifested where they dwelt, again and again, when those possessed by such were before the Lord Jesus. And should not we be so possessed by the Holy Spirit that there is a manifestation, in everything, of His indwelling? The unclean spirit seeking a house, in Matthew 12. 42-44, wished for rest, and an opportunity to use the "members" of the one indwelt, and to exercise his will over the body. Shall this control be withheld by us from the Holy Spirit? God's temple of old was the place of His rest (Ps. 132. 14) where He showed His will. We are made a temple of God, and the Holy Spirit—clearly a Person and clearly God—indwells. O let not the repetition of this thought be viewed as unnecessary. It is deeply precious, and vital. It means so much in our daily life.

The two names of our beloved Lord in Romans 8. 11 are used with a purpose. Is it not probably to bring before us first enabling grace in our present life of **strain**, as the emphasis on the name "Jesus" in 2 Corinthians 4 equally indicates? The work of God does not imply that we shall have an easy life. Though we are to know the **power** of our Lord's resurrection (Phil. 3. 10) we may also be called to bear in our body "the dying of Jesus" (2 Cor. 4. 10). The earthen vessel remains earthen, and we are conscious of a daily "supply of grace" "sufficient," not a physical transformation. The body is dead (Rom. 8. 10) note 4. 19: it is not "glorified." The outward man is **perishing**: "the adoption, to wit the redemption of the body," is not now, but to come. The trial is one of "faith," by which we walk, and the Lord's grace is ever "sufficient," and His strength made perfect in weakness. Our very need casts us more on the Lord.

Paul's thorn, and Timothy's frequent infirmities were to be sanctified. We can never go through one day without the Lord.

But there is a glorious future. The tense changes. The name, too, is altered. The Father raised up the One Who had

endured the strain of life, and the cross, raised Him up as the **Anointed and Glorified One** (Acts 2. 36). He shall quicken, or make alive, your mortal bodies. They are "mortal," i.e., subject to death, now: they are not yet changed: but they shall be changed (1 Cor. 15. 51, 52, Phil. 3. 20, 21). Glory be to God! Some have taken this to mean a present quickening, and have rather applied it to the present sustaining. **That** upholding (Isa. 41. 10) is very precious, and the parallel with Abraham receiving strength (Rom. 4. 19, 20) through faith, is very real. We are enabled day by day for that which is the will of God, and Isaiah 40. 28-31, affects the physical body also (cf. again 2 Cor. 12. 9, Heb. 11. 34). But when the Lord's strength is thus made perfect in weakness, the excellency of the power is **of Him and not of ourselves** (2 Cor. 4. 7), and that is the lesson we need to learn.

It is more "enjoyable" to have a glorified body, but that is not God's will now. Some have mistaken the special point of this verse because the word "**through** His Spirit" seems to them the gradual inworking of power in the body. But **that** is not "quickening" the mortal body, and, the true rendering is "**because of** His Spirit That dwelleth in you." The Holy Spirit's presence is the pledge of the future. A somewhat similar thought is found in 2 Corinthians 1. 22 "the earnest of the Spirit," and "the firstfruits of the Spirit" (Rom. 8. 23) will help. Ephesians 1. 14 tells of the **coming** inheritance, and our house from heaven, but the beauty of God's grace is seen in His present use of our feeble members. The change of these is not now, but "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye."

Ah dear fellow believer, your meaning is probably right when you speak of God's quickening of the body now, you want His enabling, as with the barrel of meal and cruse of oil, day by day, keeping you low at His feet, and ever dependent. You want to walk by faith, and to know He helps, and can heal the body, and will sustain amid your limitations all the time. You rejoice if a physical infirmity is relieved that you may serve a little more outwardly, with love to Him. But do not be discouraged when the weakness is felt, the Lord can still use you. And do not forget that while the present enabling is blessed, the future quickening to which Roman 8 directs your mind, to encourage (cf. 6. 5), will be complete, permanent, eternal. So labour on now, **live** by faith, patiently, and rejoice that the Holy Spirit dwells in and designs to work through your **mortal** body. What wondrous condescension!

If we believe wrongly, our actions will be affected. We see this even when Saul of Tarsus "sincerely" felt he ought to do many things against the Lord Jesus. That which is called sincerity is not sufficient. The heart of all is wrong.

The believer believes, an unbelieving believer is an anomaly. Why complain? Why doubt? Why distrust? Is God unworthy of simple, childlike faith?

Sovereign Grace.

WHAT drew Saul of Tarsus to the Lord Jesus Christ? The persecutor was transformed into a preacher of the faith he had tried to destroy! The Grace of God made all the difference (1 Cor. 15. 10). The Lord Himself met him on the road to Damascus. John the Baptist is marked out quite distinctly: "He shall be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb" (Luke 1. 15). Surely the experiences of these two much-used servants of God were quite contrasted, but it was the same grace that saved them. Listen to that dying thief, who has just been blaspheming: now he cries "Lord, remember me," Does "grace" require many hours? A disease may be some period in incubation, and natural birth may have its appointed times, but who can stop the sovereign grace of God in suddenly saving a sinner? Hear the words of the jailer who had but a brief season before beaten the saints of God, as he pleads in anguish of soul, "What must I do to be saved?" And he is saved. No prison doors can hinder God, no midnight hour find Him sleeping. One is brought to Christ through trials, as it is written, "In their affliction they will seek Me early" (Hos. 5. 15). Another is claimed in early life by Him Who said, "All authority is given unto Me in heaven and on earth. Go ye, therefore" (Matt. 28. 18). Verily that which has been bound in the covenant of grace shall, in this sense, be effectually bound on earth, and the one loosed above shall in the fullness of time be loosed here from his fetters of sin. The Lord of Glory did not say in vain, "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me" (John 6. 37). Scythian and Barbarian must yield to Him. The Samaritan woman is claimed by Him Who "must needs go through Samaria," and the Ethiopian eunuch must have a message from one sent to run to his chariot. There will be no empty seat at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. "Compel to come in" conquers the hedges, and all the self-will of a wayward sinner. I know how Saul of Tarsus was snatched as a brand from the burning, I do not know how Barnabas was quickened from above. But it matters not. A striking manifest crisis may be the history of one, and the Lord's blessing on loving parental prayer and devoted service in early life the quieter experience of another, but there is the same mighty and sovereign grace, the same glorious and eternal salvation through the same precious blood of Christ. We are not dealing with a human philosophy: "it is the Spirit That quickens." We may not understand "when" or "how" or "why," but we rejoice in the Lamb's Book of Life, and in the blood of the new covenant poured out for many, and in the fact that our beloved Lord shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied. And, therefore, we will praise, and therefore we will trust, and therefore we will preach.

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Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"Ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."
John 15. 14.

A Word of Introduction.

THE Lord Jesus did not here say, "Ye are My sheep," nor "Ye are My servants." It is blessed to be His sheep, it is blessed to be His servant. But a sheep may be wandering, a servant may know little of his master's will. There are those who are redeemed, and they are precious to the Shepherd as His sheep, but they are not acting as His "friends." He is seeking "friends." We remember the gracious words, "Abraham, My friend" (Isa. 41. 8). There are many Old Testament characters to whom these words could not be suitably applied, although they were belonging to God. We should be surprised if SOME were thus characterized. We should be astonished if the words used of Enoch were used of all who are mentioned as God's people. It is a wondrous privilege to be brought into intimacy (Ps. 103. 7). We see our beloved Lord's WISH when He said "Could ye not watch with Me?"—and again when we read, "But Jesus did not commit Himself unto them." Can He commit Himself to us? "The SECRET of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and He will shew them His covenant." "God WILLED to make known," says Colossians 1. 27. Our heart's desire is that these pages may lead many to be described as Abraham, to be those of whom their Lord can rejoice to say "Ye are MY FRIENDS."

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"God had Mercy on Him."

Philippians 2. 27.

THESE words impress me the more because they come in Philippians. We can understand the precious added statement, "On me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow," for we "need" (Phil. 1. 24), and value "one another." But "mercy on him" occurs so soon after the words of triumphant

peace, "To depart and to be with Christ, **which is far better**" (Phil. 1. 23). Why is this? There is no contradiction. From the standpoint of rest and personal comfort and joy, there is a blessedness in being with Christ now. But it is **MERCY** to give us a longer time of trial and testing, merely because we cannot serve the Lord **amid difficulties except here**. We shall not have **this** privilege in the glory, nor can we have it if we fall asleep, while waiting for the coming of our Lord. It is in this body of **humiliation** that we have the opportunity for such a labour of love, unto Him Who loved us and gave Himself for us. It is this that will glorify Him (1 Pet. 1. 7); it is this that will bring reward which we can lay at His feet. How such a thought gives us a new consciousness of the value of our present days of opportunity, and how it prevents our "wishes," taking the place of His will. It is well, indeed, that He Himself chooses our inheritance for us, and gives us hours and moments to serve Him, for we have often failed to do all we could. A John the Baptist had a filled life very early, likewise a Stephen soon accomplished much for his Lord. But we receive "mercy," that "to-day" we may be more faithful than "yesterday," and this year may please God more than last, lest there should be only thirty fold when there is a possibility of sixty fold, and even an hundred fold, to His praise and joy.

"Mercy," too, is found in a measure of physical enabling, though all things work together for good to them that love God. Surely we cannot but see mercy in everything, and our hearts would thankfully rest in the consciousness that if our Father spares our life it is not a general action in His providence, but a special display of His love to give us the great blessing of doing more for Him Who has done everything for us. Each day is a day of grace. May we be unlike God's servant of old when he rendered **NOT AGAIN** according to the benefit, but may **all our life** be praise!

"**Then** shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father" (Matt. 13. 43). "As the sun," a type and name of Christ (Mal. 4. 2). There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon (1 Cor. 15. 41). The latter is to rule the night, and the Church is to witness for, and reflect, the Lord Jesus here and now. But "in that Day," the redeemed will be with their Lord (Col. 3. 1-4) and will shine with His glory. How wondrous will be the putting aside of some aspects of glory and privilege, not to lose their preciousness, but because of the transcending glory! "We shall be **like Him**." "I shall be satisfied (when I awake) with **Thy likeness**." How blessed are the "then's" and "there's" to which faith looks forward, and all is by infinite grace. How does this affect us in home, workshop, market-place, factory,—the whole of the daily path?

If we have a self-consciousness it will damage us, but a Christ-consciousness can only be a blessing.

The Lord's Supper.

(Concluded.)

6. And, further, are we not right in saying that the Lord's Supper is the **only** type portraying the Lord Jesus Himself, in the present dispensation? Baptism, indeed, pictures His death, and His burial, but not Himself. The attack of Satan is always on Christ and His glory as the name antichrist and the travesties in Revelation indicate. Are we then surprised at an attempt to counterfeit here? And may there not be introduced that which would be "**like**" the revealed will of the Lord in many particulars? The tares were awhile "**like**" to wheat. The leavening of the fine flour is not a sudden drastic alteration (Matt. 13. 33). The adoption of the **language** of the Lord, and yet a gradual change, would be in harmony with the purpose of deceiving the **elect**. O that we may not be ignorant of Satan's devices, against which we are thus Divinely protected. Let us not be off our guard, because there may be a proportion right: let us follow the Lord in all.

7. And with regard to an assembly. Although the unity which pleases the Lord should always be felt and manifested, is it not true that the participation of the Lord's Supper is the **one** and only repeated act in which **all essentially** share, and that **omission** ought to be quite out of the question? Nothing must be allowed to shut out one who is obedient. Baptism is personal. In prayer and praise, one brother leads, and others should delight in the "**Amen**." But if one prayer is, alas, out of harmony with the will of the Lord, there are many others to which all can say this precious word,—a name of the Lord Jesus. So is it with singing: if one line is not clearly Scriptural to my heart, I can be silent for that alone and there are many lines which I can sing. But there is **nothing** to take the place of the Lord's Supper, if I am debarred a share in that, through any departure from the Lord's will being permitted. Moreover, in this case the appointment is His own, in each particular, which cannot be said for each verse of a hymn or sentence in prayer.

8. Hence if anything here is changed, however slight, there will be the cleverest and **most far-reaching** attack on the manifested unity of believers, in a local expression of the one body of Christ. "**Division**" will be secured. Hence we should not be surprised at a systematic attempt to change here. And we find it. Romanism, with its gorgeous "**mass**," and "**priestly**" ritual, shows the extreme, the climax of the enemy. But some, thank God, are quite undeceived by this glaring sin. Hence there are **graded** departures:—For example, in one case there is nothing elaborate, but merely the ordinance is "**administered**" and the bread used is "**cut**"; in another there are "**individual communion cups**," and so we find quite a variety of variations, associated with a much closer return to the appointed pattern in some cases than others, because of the love of the Lord's redeemed who would instinctively refuse the more open alterations. Yet is it not possible **something** remains that has not yet been

realized, but that is not exactly in accord with that which our beloved Lord took, and of which alone He spoke? Do not our hearts say, "If there is such a mistake in my action, O that I may know, that I may not unconsciously be misled, or hinder others, for I want, indeed, to do my Lord's will in all." Thanks be unto God for this attitude of love. If we are willing, He will teach. Are we expecting this? Let us wait on Him. We do desire to be unlike David who condemned evil in others, till the words came, "Thou art the man."

9. The slighter and less evident the change, the more generally will it be unnoticed. And the longer it has remained the more it has become natural, and it will be done with a desire to please God. And if, apparently, a good reason can be given for it, the more definitely will true and earnest believers hesitate to "change back" to their Lord's own usage and appointment. The possible misunderstanding of a "change back," and the thought of division will be added "reasons" for retaining the variation, but we must not do even a little evil that good may come. It is in such a context that each of our hearts needs to be searched, and to **feel** the words "as an angel of **light**," and then the loving question, "Lovest thou Me more than these?"

What if the apparently good reason is that it is quite incredible so many godly believers have erred? We **should** honour them, and rejoice in all that is of their Lord in their lives, but must we not confess differences among such, in many other things? Do we deny their godliness? Surely not, but we must see thereby that Only One was perfect, and such verses as 2 Chronicles 35. 18 and Nehemiah 8. 17 remind us how many holy men omitted commandments of the Lord even in times of reviving. How few of the honoured Reformers and devoted Puritans were immersed as believers! Or the good reason may be a fear lest that which is symbolized should be partly forgotten through emphasis on the symbol itself, or lest there become a tincture of Judaism or ritual. The fear is right. Yet the remedy is not making our Lord's own appointment secondary, either in baptism or in the Lord's Supper, but rather a simple obedience, just as He said. and that obedience **in the power of the Holy Spirit**. He causes a right proportion. Can it be wrong to do what He did, and therefore about which He spoke? Is it **necessarily** unspiritual to keep to this? And as to **time** of happy observance, the "good reason" for the mornings may be a right and precious emphasis "on putting the Lord first," but, as we remember He said "Me and My words," our hearts must feel that we should put Him **first** in **every** meeting, and when alone also, and long, long before eleven or twelve o'clock, but that this does not mean the early saints failed when they had "the Lord's Supper" in the evening. The thought for all our hearts is His revealed will for all.

Humbly and earnestly, in the light of our beloved Lord's "This is My body" (describing the type only by the "this" He used), and "This do in remembrance of Me," we leave it

now for believers themselves to search and see, and say if there has been, and is, any unappointed change, in symbols, or in time, departing from His language, or that of the Holy Spirit. And may we not also leave it with such, whose opened hearts are willing for His will at all costs, to find if any of us are perpetuating the change, or not. It is not my will, nor your will, but His will. "If I am wrong show me, in view of the Judgment Seat of Christ" should be my attitude and yours, in true love. The Lord Himself grant that these meditations may embitter none. but help to the enjoyment of Psalm 133.

If two believers differ, that which they alike acknowledge as unquestionably within their Lord's will must be followed, not that which only **one** feels to be within that will. And, in like manner, that which is **certainly** approved by the wording of the Holy Spirit must take precedence over that which seems to some "probably" or "possibly" permitted thereby. And let all be with love, lest we wound those for whom Christ died.

"No more a servant, but a Son."

Galatians 4. 7.

"Henceforth I call you not servants . . . but I have called you friends."

John 15. 15.

No more as servants, but as sons,

We would Thy service do:

The servant oft the irksome shuns,

And we have faltered too.

Father, we leave with Thee to choose,

Would ne'er henceforth Thy will refuse.

No more as servants, but as friends,

We would Thy purpose know;

The loved one time with loved one spends,

Enjoying love to show:

That which would burden loveless hearts

Where love entwines delight imparts.

'Tis easy thus the words to write.

And wishes vague to feel;

But deign Thy purchased to unite,

And deign our prayer to seal:

Cause us, our God, to live alway

As we have ventured now to pray.

Truth with deadness, may be less perceived than error entwined with truth, and therefore the first condition may become the more deadly. O that believers may enjoy a living fervency in the Holy Spirit.

It is easy to say words that blame oneself, but if another says them of us we are sometimes offended.

“Zealous of the law.”

“Thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law.”

Acts 21. 20, 24.

The Holy Spirit does not hide Abraham's failure in Egypt, nor Moses' unadvised speaking, nor Job's darkening of counsel, nor Peter's separating himself at Antioch. Only One was perfect. But whatsoever things were written were written for our learning, that we may not fail in the same way (Rom. 15. 4, 1 Cor. 10. 11).

Acts 21 shows us the danger of **numbers**: “How many thousands of Jews there are which believe.” Success is often a peril. It shows likewise the risk when we go anywhere at the wrong time. Earlier we read, “Finding disciples, we tarried there seven days: who said to Paul through the Spirit, that he should **not** go up to Jerusalem” (Acts 21. 4). The best motives cannot sanctify a wrong action, or a right action at an unappointed time. Many Jews seem to have come up for the feast (Acts 20. 16). There is no warrant for believers in the present dispensation to emphasize **anniversaries**.

The conversation is recorded without any **reference** to seeking God's guidance as in chapter 13. The “**root**” of approved difference between Jewish and Gentile believers in ch. 15. 19, 20 seems to have borne fruit here (ch. 21. 25). “Do this” (Acts 21. 23) is not the Lord's “This do” (1 Cor. 11. 24), and the two “therefores” of Acts 21. 22, 23 are searchingly impressive. A “**vow**” was linked with an oath (Num. 30), and thus does not belong to the present dispensation (Matt. 5. 34). The **Nazarite** vow (Acts 21. 26 with Num. 6. 18) cut one off from the Lord's Supper, for it extended to every “**liquor of grapes**.”

“Then Paul **took** the men” seems to remind of Joshua 9. 14. The “**offering**” was linked (a) with sacrifices no longer appointed (Heb. 9. 1-10, Col. 2. 16, 17), and (b) with a house left “**desolate**” (Matt. 23. 38).

The object appears to have been “**outward agreement**.” But surely that was compromise, and meant dissimulation (Gal. 2. 13). Paul was **not** “**keeping the law**” in the way they said. Let us realize that even if we have witnessed boldly against dissimulation yesterday, we may fall into it to-morrow, unless we are kept every “**to-day**.” The advice of others may be a danger as in 1 Kings 13. Fear of offending often takes us off our guard. “**Lovest thou Me more than these?**”

The desired “**peace**” was not attained (Acts 21. 27-31). “The Jews which were of Asia” knew Paul better than he knew himself. They realized his concern for the “**temple**” **never** desolate, into which, blessed be God, Trophimus **had been brought** (Eph. 2. 19-22, with Acts 21. 28, 29). The simple lesson is clear:—Stand to the will and word of God, and leave results to Him. The precious inspired message is always needed, “If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ” (Gal. 1.

10). May we, by grace, receive the instruction which our Father intends by the simple insertion of this impressive narrative.

Where do you live?

THIS thought came before me when reading 2 Chronicles 11. “The priests and Levites that were in all Israel” departed from the northern kingdom, and “their suburbs and their possession, and came to Judah and Jerusalem” (verses 13, 14). This was the result of Jeroboam's evil attack on God's assembly arrangements then. As usual, we see the devil's opposition to right worship, and his travesty. We behold this in “the way of Cain,” and likewise in “the gainsaying of Core,” and both are mentioned together in Jude 11. But, it may be said, “The Levites were out of work, and therefore went to Jerusalem.” They were “**out of God-appointed work**,” and would not accept **other** employment. Happy is the man who brings all his business appointments to God and has a holy conscience and conscientiousness therein.

But we must read on, “And after them out of all the tribes of Israel such as **set their hearts to seek** the Lord God of Israel came to Jerusalem, to sacrifice unto the Lord God of their fathers” (verse 16). These did not come, so far as the record goes, for “**work**.” They gave up their homes, and employment, if need be, that they might worship God aright, and not be cut off from His centre. Is there not an important parallel to-day? The true meaning of life is pleasing God. To live near a meeting where you can worship God, and have Christian fellowship, is often more needful than to live near daily employment. It is a blessing if both can be arranged in one locality, but do not let daily business cut off spiritual advantages. God will open the door for everything needful, if you and I trust Him (Matt. 6. 33). We are not here to eat and drink and sleep and work:—these things are only to be the means of sustaining our bodies for Him. Many children of God have been engrossed in business, and have not found time for the Lord. They have been enslaved by overtime, and have “**lost**” much spiritually. We are all inclined to say, “It can't be helped in these times.” But God is able, He must be first, if we would live in the light of the Judgment Seat of Christ. It is wonderful how He will undertake if He is really trusted. We are not the children of this age. There must be a holy contrast.

Scripture without the present work of the Spirit of God will be misused, so that there will be a dead orthodoxy or a proud arguing. The Holy Spirit, on the other hand, never works in a way that ignores the Scripture, so that all claim to His leading which sets aside their authority, meaning and power, is both false and dangerous. May we experience, with the precious harmony of lowly gratitude, the Holy Spirit and the Scriptures which He has caused to be written.

"I THOUGHT," OR HIS WORD?

"I thought" that it was best
 For me this thing to do:
 Did I not judge and test?
 Surely "experience" knew,
 I asked the Lord to bless **MY** plan,
 But yet it failed: it was of **man**.

"I thought":—the wish was right,
 My heart desired **His** will:
 Would we not e'er delight,
 His purpose to fulfil?
 But yet I failed **HIM FIRST** to seek,
 I knew not I was **more than** "weak."

His word should be my rule,
 To Him I **first** should come:
 His is a blessed school,
 With other voices dumb:
 Will He not guide when open hearts
 Just seek what He Himself imparts?

God is our living God,
 The Scripture living is,
 The path of **faith** is trod,
 The Holy Spirit 'tis
 Who causes truth to be applied
 That we may in God's will abide.

Think not that now I think
 I cannot have mistake:
 How soon my heart can sink,
 I too can error make:
 But let us **both** henceforth expect
 God will for **humbled** ones select.

Observe the wondrous difference between the words "that it might depart from me" and "My grace is sufficient for thee." Both sentences deal with the same person ("me," "thee," but in the first there is no other person only the thorn is before us; whereas in the second **there is another Person** ("My") and the thorn ("it") is not even mentioned. The Lord did not on this occasion remove "it" but granted **His** grace which more than balanced all else, yea which **sanctifies** every permitted trial, so that **His** "grace" rather than "it" may become victorious in blessing, as with God's servant Paul.

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The Student of Scripture.

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"The Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me."
 Galatians 2, 20.

A Word of Introduction.

AGAIN an issue in the Lord's Name, but the gospel is the undying message of life and peace, and we may well speak continually of Christ. What other theme can compare? And the gospel includes the AUTHORITY of our adorable Lord, that we may emphasize the path of pleasing Him. These pages are not merely to explain Scriptural verses, they are meant to direct our eyes toward Christ, that there may be a fuller reflecting of His glory, and a growing likeness to Him (2 Cor. 3. 18). A writer is not different from a reader; both need reviving, both need their Lord day by day, none can boast. It is not that "I" write for "you" as if I were different. There is ONE Who is exalted, but ALL believers are brethren, and "learners," and without the Lord Jesus THEY CAN DO NOTHING. We need one another's prayers, we need one another's sympathy, we need one another's love. The realization of family intimacy, and of the indwelling Holy Spirit, working in the "Members," in living harmony, is all-important. Revival is blessedly linked with humility and prayer.

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The Glory of the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

"THANKS be unto God for His unspeakable Gift": the climax of 2 Corinthians 9, concerning the gifts of His own unto Him, may well be the beginning of our united praise, as we meditate once more on the miracle and message of our Lord's Resurrection.

He died, but He is not dead! "He is risen from the dead": the majestic words of Matthew 28. 6, 7, sound forth in holy witness against the evil fear of the priests and Pharisees, "Lest His disciples . . . say unto the people, He is risen from the dead" (Matt. 27. 64). The same words are used, but what a contrast with "stealing" by night was His coming forth on

that "first day of the week." Sinful men dreaded the resurrection then, but they could not hinder it. Yet many would still seek to deny its reality. Judaism continues stubbornly to maintain that the Lord Jesus died, and did not rise. Moham-medanism daringly declares that He was taken to heaven without dying. Thus both oppose the resurrection to the eternal peril of their followers.

But the fact remains and Christ is living. We hear His words yet once more, "I am He That liveth, and became dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore" (Rev. 1. 18). And are we surprised that this triumphant display of His glory was a theme of the Old Testament? Let us ponder the **Resurrection in prophecy**. We are drawn first to the passages the Holy Spirit led the apostles to quote in their ministry. Psalm 16 is found in Acts 2 and Acts 13 alike: "Thou wilt not leave My soul in Hades, **neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption.**" The second sentence is to make very definite the resurrection of the body. "David, . . . being a prophet . . . seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, **neither His flesh did see corruption.**" With Psalm 16 Psalm 2. 7 is united, "Thou art My Son, **this day** have I begotten Thee" (Acts 13. 33), the context suggesting that the wondrous first day, which Scripture so uniquely emphasizes, was our beloved Lord's **birthday** to be remembered, His birthday as the First born from the dead (Col. 1. 18), not His birthday as a Babe, which is Divinely hidden,—certainly not December 25th, the anniversary first of a heathen feast, and then of Christendom's compromise. The words addressed to Him by the Father in Psalm 2 link with those found in Psalm 110. 1, and thus are we reminded of the **many allusions** to resurrection in the prophecies of "the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow." Does not Psalm 22 follow the record of His anguish with the triumphant utterance, "I will declare Thy Name unto My brethren" (verse 22), and with the declaration, "a seed shall serve Him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation" (verse 30), and Isaiah takes up this theme, "When Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, **He shall prolong His days**, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand" (Isa. 53. 10). This reference to the pleasure of the Lord in His hand reminds of the government upon His shoulder (Isa. 9. 6), and thus joins with Jeremiah 23. 5, 6 and many such passages, where He is seen as the One to Whom shall be given the throne of David (Luke 1. 32), and this gives peculiar emphasis to His bodily resurrection for it is as the **Son of David** He is the rightful King, and will reign at Jerusalem. Every passage impressing this tells of His Coming in a real body, and of His authority as the Son of Man too, over the whole earth as well as the land of Israel. Hence the appropriateness of Isaiah 55. 3 in Acts 13. 34. Indeed, in the light of Matthew 22. 31, 32, we begin to realize how many of the Old Testament prophecies find their fulfilment in, and after, the resurrection of the

bodies of the saints. Nor is this strange, for, when we speak of "man," a disembodied spirit is unclothed (2 Cor. 5. 4), and thus, as we shall see further, incomplete.

Nor would we forget our beloved Lord's own **prophecies** of His resurrection, e.g., "From that time forth began Jesus to show unto His disciples, how that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day" (Matt. 16. 21, 17. 23, 20. 19, John 2. 19-21, etc.). His emphasis on this was very definite (John 16. 17), and, though the disciples misunderstood, the chief priests did not forget (Matt. 27. 64).

Further, the language in 1 Corinthians 15. 3, 4 that "He rose again **the third day according to the Scriptures,**" would seem to refer definitely to the **Old Testament types** of resurrection, and we should therefore include these as **prophecies**, remembering the words in such a case, "The Holy Ghost this signifying" (Heb. 9. 8). We go back to the very beginning, and observe how un-fallen Adam was caused to sleep, and a rib was "built" to be one meet for him, and presented to him (Gen. 2. 21-24). It seems impossible, in the light of Ephesians 5, not to behold a picture of "Christ and the church," and thus of His death and resurrection. Blended types are very remarkable, for though the **ram** of Genesis 22 afterwards pictures the Lord Jesus dying for Israel, in the earlier part of that chapter when they went both of them "together," and Isaac was the willing and beloved son who was bound, and under the knife of his father, we cannot but see an unveiling of Christ, and thus the type of His resurrection was granted for Abraham's joy and ours (Heb. 11. 19). Again we find the thought of rejection, and a "sentence of death," both with Joseph and Moses, so that their exaltation was linked with that which typified the resurrection. With Joseph it is the more remarkable because, as in the case of Pharaoh's dream, it was doubled. He was first condemned by his Jewish brethren, and a picture of death was enacted, and then in Egypt again condemned by a representative of Gentile power, and brought to the dungeon where the two officials afford a striking type of those saved and those lost, exactly as the two robbers crucified with the Lord Jesus. The contrasts (e.g. the chief butler's failure to remember the third day which was Pharaoh's birth day," so that the "third year rather comes in view" (Gen. 40. 20, 41. 1), emphasize still more by contrast the One Who **never** forgot, and **never** forgets His own, and Who has said to His willing people, "This do in remembrance of Me."

There is no doubt that nature itself is meant to teach us much concerning the resurrection of the body (1 Cor. 15. 36, 37), and particularly is everything with a view to Christ, the Corn of Wheat (John 12. 24). And we see this pre-eminently in the sheaf of "the Firstfruits" exalted before God "the morrow **after** the Sabbath" in passover week (Lev. 23. 11), the foreknown day of Christ's resurrection, "the first day of the week." This unveiling, so many years before the fulness of time when He came,

is deeply instructive. There are no after-thoughts with God. His purpose stands, and "all Scripture" is seen in its full inspiration, and, as we have seen, everything points to the Lord Jesus Christ. In the tabernacle of the congregation there are different views of our Lord, in His life and death and resurrection. Wood covered with gold pictures His humility as well as His glory, and thus portrays His earthly life, as in the ark, keeping the unbroken law in its entirety. Silver reveals His redemptive work, and the upright boards stood firmly on this. But the gold when alone pictures exaltation with humiliation no more, and we see this in the **mercy-seat** above the ark, and in the **lampstand**. It is remarkable that in these two cases alone the Lord's people are not viewed as "resting upon," but **unseparably united**, absolutely harmonizing with the words that He Who remained "alone" in His earthly life (John 12. 24) has His beloved ones as members of Himself in resurrection. Praise God for such grace. The cherubim wore of **one piece with the mercy-seat** (Ex. 25. 19): it would not have been complete without them (cf. Eph. 1. 23). So it is with the lampstand of pure gold, **the centre shaft**, and the whole, being alike called by the same name, and the stress on oneness is seen in the one talent of Exodus 25. 39. Thus all Scripture unites in one message. Blessed be God for indissoluble union with Christ; the fruit of His finished work, never to be undone, never to fade. Sacrifices are ever before us in the books of Moses, and almost all things in the law are purged with **blood**. Yet the falling short of the types is seen, and in nothing more manifestly than in the **end** of these sacrifices. They were **left** in death. Bullocks, goats and sheep had no obedient life, and they knew no resurrection. But this contrast only exalts our Lord Jesus the more. However it pleased God to grant an unusual twofoldness in one case, in the cleansing of the leper (Lev. 14). The clean living bird flew upward from the blood of the one that died, and completed the view, giving a fuller manifestation of Him Who was "**delivered**" because of our offences and **raised** because of our justification."

Nor can we forget the other pictures. For example, the Rock in Exodus 17 is smitten, and then in Numbers 20 the word is changed to the "exalted Rock," which should have been addressed, not smitten again (Rom. 6. 9). Moses failed to keep to the **appointed type**. It is also observable that in Exodus 17 the miracle is followed by the record of an intercessor on the mount, with uplifted hands, and the rod that speaks of judgment satisfied. Ah, the intercessor there failed, but our beloved Lord, raised from the dead and on high, lives to intercede for His redeemed ones below in their conflict (Heb. 7. 25).

Aaron's rod that budded, an appointed "token" (Numbers 17) is one of the fullest types, for it had been a living branch, and then there was death with restoration of a life, to picture a bodily resurrection, with wondrous fruitfulness. Thus everything in the ark was suggestive of our Lord Jesus, though He transcends all.

(If the Lord will, to be concluded).

Derelict Land.

Is there any such land in our lives? Are any among us producing very, very little? Is some of our land "lying fallow?" The words of an official impressed me—"I am astonished at what fertilisers and modern machinery can do to land derelict for 20, 50 and 100 years." Ah, dear fellow believer, if you or I have any of our faculties or of those things entrusted to us, lying waste, though there has been fruitlessness, for many years, cannot that **grace** which is more than fertilisers and more than machines, still cause fruitfulness, if we are now humbly yielded to our Lord? Let us not say, "There is no hope." Let us not look to the disappointments of the past, but to the God of the present. With Him all things are possible! How sad it is to find much that is "derelict," and not in use. There are many believers to-day, who have powers—physical and mental—and it may be opportunities through the possession of certain money or goods, and these are all lying fallow, or, (may we not say?) derelict, when there might be so much for Him Who is soon coming, and for Whom we would be prepared.

"He FIRST Loved."

I came **because** God drew,
Because He loved I love,
My knowledge is since He foreknew,
My name was writ above.

Christ died for me unborn,
My sins ere done were laid
On Him, ere I the sins did mourn:
My ransom price was paid.

I called since He did call,
I found because He found,—
I give to Him the praise for all,
Grace did and doth abound!

If we look at circumstances as though they decided things we shall become slaves, and victims of circumstances in our experience: if we look at everything from the standpoint of our conquering Lord, it will be very different.

The problems of yesterday did not hinder our Lord from saving us, and those of to-day will not hinder Him from keeping us, nor those of to-morrow hinder Him from bringing us to glory. He has begun, and He will finish.

Verbal assent to truth is not living faith, any more than the mere taking of food within our hands. The **partaking** of food, so that it is assimilated and becomes part of ourselves, is quite different.

The Advantages of a Godly Home.

WE cannot easily over-estimate these. There is a loving Christian care, with a tender helpfulness in the adolescent life, a shielding from many dangers, guidance in problems and blessings too numerous to reckon, many of them unseen, and many more only in small part realized at the time, and more fully after. We cannot but think of Zacharias and Elisabeth, and the Lord's use of John the Baptist. How we should pray for godly homes, remembering the Holy Spirit's testimony that those who had oversight must be tested there, and calling to mind that the attack of Satan from the beginning was on the home.

Yes, dear fellow believers, those of us who have had this privilege, let us praise God for it, and honour the memory of our beloved Christian parents, and realize how much is expected from those to whom much has been given from childhood years and onward.

And let those who are younger believers, now enjoying this privilege, count it no small matter. Let every tendency to feel "I should like to have a little more of my own way" be judged. It is so easy, even for young **believers**, to drift into something of worldliness, and to look down on some of the restrictions of beloved parents, as a little old-fashioned, and to chafe under them. O how concerned we should be that the rising generation of children of God should be more devoted, not less. The trend of the times is towards settling down in many amenities of civilization, and even the perilous times now manifested do not eliminate this attraction toward some world likeness. O that Christ may become truly the centre of all our lives.

With the inestimable privileges of a godly home there are two or three perils that may be mentioned to help **prayer** against them.

1. It is so easy for those brought up in "protected" environment, and thus not knowing the depths and miseries of sin, to lack the fullest gratitude of deliverance from its awful wretchedness. (Those conscious of being forgiven **much** love **much**). We all have been forgiven **MUCH** in reality.

2. It is likewise possible for some **curiosity** to know more about the world, and "the deep things of Satan," to come in and hinder devotedness to the Lord.

3. Further, a tendency to pride may intrude, as one sees the more open failures of those less privileged, who have confessed the Name of Christ.

4. Moreover, it may be the case that there is little tactfulness in dealing with others from quite different circumstances. Much prayer is needed for God's guidance (He will not fail), that when one has not been in many miserable ways of the world, he (or she) may, through nearness to God, have discerning wisdom to help, in the Holy Spirit.

Messianic Passages—No. 1.

"Whose Goings Forth Have Been from of Old."

Micah 5. 2.

"With a rod they shall smite upon the cheek the Judge of Israel. (And thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, a little one to become among the thousands [leaders] of Judah, out of thee TO ME shall HE go forth to become Ruler in Israel, and His goings forth [are] from of old from days linked with eternity). Therefore will He give them up, until the time one that beareth hath borne, and the remnant of His brethren shall return with (lit. upon, united with) the sons of Israel. And He shall stand and feed in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the Name of the Lord His God, and they shall abide, for NOW shall He be great unto the ends of earth. And This one shall become Peace, when the Assyrian (antichrist) shall come in our land."

Micah 5. 1-5.

MANY are the prophecies in the law, the prophets, and the psalms, concerning the Lord Jesus Christ. Far from over-stating the emphasis, our valued translation could be made even more clear and definite in showing forth His glories throughout the Hebrew Scriptures. If only more from among Israel saw this! We praise God for every one of the remnant already brought in, and long that others may be drawn to Him speedily. "The Lord's hand is not shortened."

Even the chief priests and scribes applied Micah 5. 2 to Messiah (Matt. 2. 6, cf. John 7. 42), but they failed to see the message of the context in which three or four things are very impressively before us:—

(a) The Messiah is One smitten and rejected (verse 1).

(b) He is One Who has had "goings forth," prior to His birth in Bethlehem (verse 2).

(c) Israel are to be given up (yet not for ever), because of ("therefore" looks back to verse 1) **smiting Him** (verse 3).

(d) This captivity will cease when the remnant of His brethren from Judah are associated with "the children of Israel"* unitedly, and then He shall not only rule over them, but be "great unto the ends of the earth."

The key to the "two days" of Israel's captivity (Hos. 6. 2) is thus given ("golus," as they call it), and we observe how its last stage of beginning was just forty years (a prophesied "generation"), after the rejection of the Lord of Glory. This exactness is most remarkable, "as a witness." And the blessing shall be brought when the remnant at Jerusalem look upon Him Whom they have pierced (Zech. 12. 10), and when the distant ones come equally "with weeping, and with supplications" (Jer. 31. 9). Praise God for this.

But we would notice just now the words, "**Whose goings forth are from of old, from days belonging to eternity.**" There is a reference here to the fact that Messiah is more than man, and that His birth was **not** His beginning (cf. Isa. 9. 6). The "goings forth" appear to allude to much more than His

* Mark "Judah" and "Israel" in verse 2, and cf. Jeremiah 50. 4, Ezekiel 37. 15-17.

original creative work, though that may well be remembered. The **plural** is remarkable, and we see, in the Old Testament, many revelations of Christ. Not only was the Spirit of Christ in the Prophets (1 Pet. 1. 11), but the One Who came to Moses in Exodus 34. revealed concerning "Himself," that He would be "**bearing** iniquity, and transgression and sin" (verses 6, 7 with Isa. 53. 12). And we call to mind the meaning of the word "Angel." It is "Messenger." In some places there is One quite distinct from ordinary created beings thus described. In Judges 6. 12 the One Who came is the Lord Himself, in verse 14, and the One Who appeared in Judges 13 had the name "Wonderful" (verse 18, marg. with Isa. 9. 6). We may even go back further, in Genesis 18 "**three men**" appeared, but Abraham said to One, "In Thy sight," and, when the men "went toward Sodom, Abraham stood yet before **the Lord**" (verse 22), and remarkably those who reached Sodom were "**the two angels**" (Gen. 19. 1). To Joshua "the Captain of the host of the Lord" appeared, and appointed, as the "I am" of Exodus 3 the removal of the shoe (Jos. 5. 13-15, with Ex. 3. 1-14*). Nor can we forget the Holy Spirit's comment on Isaiah 6, "These things said Esaias, when He saw **His glory**, and **spake of Him**" (John 12. 41). Such were the repeated manifestations, including many "goings forth" of Him Whose delights were with the sons of men (Prov. 8. 31).

How grievous then, and resultful, was the blindness which happened in part—in larger part—to Israel. The very words "**Unto Me**" (cf. Isa. 53. 2), and "**to be Ruler**" with the added "now" of verse 4 illustrate the fact that the nation would not receive Him the first time. We remember the rejection of Joseph at the first, and of Moses also. But there was a second time for these, and there shall be for the returning Lord, when "This One shall be Peace" (His very name, Eph. 2. 14), and the Assyrian shall be laid low (Mic. 5. 5 with Isa. 14. 25). All Scripture harmonizes, and centres around the two comings of our adorable Lord. His Person and His work are alike misunderstood by Israel now, but when the words are fulfilled, "They shall look upon **Me** Whom they pierced" (Zech. 12. 10), and they cry "Who is a **God** like unto Thee **bearing** iniquity?" (Mic. 7. 18), there will be a realization of His Deity and His Atonement together, and "life from the dead" (Rom. 11. 15). "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem" (Ps. 122. 6), and for Israel (Rom. 10. 1).

* The tense and verb of verse 14 may give a prophecy of incarnation, even as verse 2 affords a type thereof. So rich is the Scripture in its foreshadowing of the work of Christ.

The more humility we have, the more we shall realize the need for humility.

Copies from Meeting Room: 61, Upton Lane, Forest Gate, London, E.7.
Correspondence welcome. Phone: Grangewood 4196.

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