

The Student of Scripture.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"In thee shall all nations be blessed."

"Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all nations."

"An house of prayer for all nations."

"All nations shall flow unto it."

Galatians 3, 8, Matthew 28, 19, Mark 11, 17, Isaiah 2, 2.

A Word of Introduction.

NOT only for Israel did the Lord Jesus Christ die (John 11, 52.): believers from all nations share in the promise (Rev. 5, 9, Eph. 3, 6). It is our joy to be among them. The word of Christ is not national, nor even international, but super-national, bringing redeemed ones of every colour, class, civilization and condition into a living unity with the One Who for their sakes died and rose again. It is this glorious gospel that we delight to make known; it is of this glorious Lord and Saviour that we rejoice to write. It is imperative that He should be central. He is lifted up to draw all kinds and races of men to Himself (John 12, 32). We do not maintain a religion or its propaganda; there is no mere "Christian religion". We tell of a Person, and, by His substitutionary work, of living union with Himself. This "gospel of the grace of God", with its wondrous super-national brotherhood of believers, has never yet been realized as it should be, and so we find caricatures of His gospel, travesties of His disciples, imitations of His church, and lack of discernment of the pilgrim path for His own. But is it not possible to go back, in the power of the Holy Spirit, to His words and will, and thus to look up to Himself the same to-day (Heb. 13, 8)? Is it not possible to manifest living union with Him? Is it not PROMISED that there shall be a reviving, and the getting ready for His Coming? In humble dependence on Himself, and seeking after this joy, these pages go forth.

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The Spirit of God always exalts Christ and never exalts self.
The Holy Spirit never leads to emotional lightness.

A Father's Gift.

Joshua 15. 13-20, Judges 1. 8-15.

THIS delightful story shines like a star in a dark sky. Indeed, such a phrase may describe the Book of Judges generally, for is it not a dark record of man's corruption and base ingratitude, though relieved by many gracious gleams of Divine compassion and salvation? The sin of which it speaks is the more sad because the people whose history is there recorded were God's own redeemed. Delivered from a bondage under which they had groaned, saved from their enemies, brought through the Red Sea as on dry ground, miraculously sustained by manna, and guided through the "waste howling wilderness" for forty years, they had come into the inheritance which God had promised.

Jordan had been "clean passed over." Twelve stones taken out of the river had been set up in Gilgal. This, then, was the encampment from which they went to war against God's foes and theirs.

Symbolically, it was a place of **resurrection**, as typified by the twelve stones, a place of **redemption**, the Passover being a memorial feast thereof, a place of **refreshment**, the old corn of the land (their land), and a place of **recovery**, for the truth concerning circumcision had been restored to the children of Israel, and they had been obedient.

Surely, there in a figure are all requisites for revival; obedience to revealed truth occupying an important place. God, it is true, blesses sovereignly without waiting for complete obedience, but how much more blessing might the church and the individual saint receive if there were more loving obedience. For, example, baptism (immersion) is a command as much as was circumcision. Is it not then a reproach to the believer who neglects or rejects this—the Lord's command?

The inheritance was theirs by God's word and oath, yet Israel must fight for it, for so He decreed. Heaven and the Kingdom are ours, because of sovereign election and redeeming love, yet the appointed pathway thereto is one of tribulation; and personal enjoyment, by anticipation, of these possessions is largely according to earnestness of desire and purpose of heart and exercise of faith.

Beloved, how much apathy there is amongst the saints, and how do self-complacency and want of heart-exercise abound! Listen to these words: "And that, knowing the time, it is high time to wake out of sleep, for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand."

If we value our heavenly privileges, if it be true that, "He That hath wrought us for this selfsame thing is God, Who also hath given to us the earnest of the Spirit," should not we be "ambitious . . . to be acceptable to Him?"

Returning to the record, Caleb was that faithful man who, with Joshua, had brought a good report of the land, when ten

other "spies" discouraged the rest of Israel by their unbelief "Their carcasses fell in the wilderness" but listen to Caleb's testimony (Joshua 14. 6-15).

He drove out the three giants from Kirjath-Arba, and proceeded to Kirjath-Sepher. But to encourage others in the warfare, he promised to the man who would take that city his own daughter Achsah. Is there not, in this delightful episode, recorded in such few words, some teaching for saints in a clay of Salvation? Let us see.

First, Achsah was one **given**, a bride with an inheritance, **by her father** to one who had proved himself worthy by overcoming the enemy and dispossessing the intruder: for intruders they were.

The analogy is clear. The Lord of glory is the Son of God, the Lord Jesus. He is the King of glory . . . "the Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle," "the Lord of hosts." A glorious conquest was His, when He suffered on the tree, for there "He spoiled principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it" (Col. 2. 15). He had already overcome the world, its prince "had nothing in Him" (John 12. 38, 14. 30).

Moreover, He has triumphed over death, and to such an One has been given by the Father a chosen bride, the Church. Thus He won her by Himself, He purchased her by the pouring out of His soul unto death; and an inheritance, to be shared with her, He has also obtained. The intruder—"the god of this age" claims "the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them," but they are destined to become "the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ."

The giving of Achsah in marriage was a sovereign act on the part of a father, as also the gift of the inheritance, for both were at his own disposal. She had no voice in the matter, yet there is no reason to suppose that her own will was not: in accord with her father's purpose. So is it with Salvation and union with Christ. "Tis all of sovereign grace," of electing love and particular redemption, and we have been graciously "compelled" to come to the Saviour, our wills being renewed and brought into line with the will of God.

The Lord has not saved His people just for their pleasure and to make them happy, but for His Own glory. Achsah had a peculiar honour in being united to such an one as Othniel, her maintenance was assured as long as he lived. In him she had a status and a name in Israel, and all this was very blessed. But she had her life to live, and a deep necessity was an abounding supply of water. She was wise enough to realise this, because that which was given her was a "South land." Judging from the words of Psalm 126. 4, it would appear that "streams of the south" were for a long period in the year dry, but became torrents in the rainy season. Such was not sufficient for Achsah. She wanted a continual supply from ever-fresh springs. "Give me a blessing," was her prayer to her father, "Give me also springs of water."

Beloved, how like to these sometimes dry—sometimes torrential streams are the lives of many Christians—may be our own! Yes, as someone has remarked, the hot springs of Iceland picture the career of some who profess the Name of the Lord. Suddenly the boiling water in such a geyser rises to a great height, carrying with it stones and earth, and then as suddenly, dies down, and all is dark and silent. Oh, how few believers appear to “go on,” “from strength to strength,” but live their lives in spurts, or else settle down to a routine of meetings, and even these they will miss if it inconveniences them in any way. Such cannot possibly be a blessing to those about them! They cannot speak of Christ to others if they are not in full enjoyment of Himself. We are not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together. We ought to be regular, for the glory of God and the encouragement of our fellow-Christians. But let us beware of making these an end instead of a means. Above all, let us not fall into the habit of worshipping by proxy; they who minister need our prayers as much as we need their ministry.

Achsah asked for a blessing and a blessing was given. “He gave her the upper and the nether springs.” Observe the respect she shewed to her father. “She lighted off the ass.” She stood to prefer her request. Do we say to our Heavenly Father, “Give me a blessing?” Listen to the words of His Dear Son. “If ye, being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give good gifts—yea, the Holy Spirit—to them that ask Him?”

We need a constant supply of living water, and is not the Holy Spirit such to us? (John 4. 14, 7. 36)?

Observe there were “upper springs” and “lower springs” given for the asking, and so may it be in the believer’s life. We may enjoy fellowship with God in heavenly places, and there drink of the “upper springs.” Our souls thirst for God—the living God, and it is a joy unspeakable to be in conscious union with Him. May you and I, dear fellow believers, drink often of the upper springs, in worship, thanksgiving and praise, in the heavenly sanctuary. But there are the “lower springs” also, for there is the life which we “now live in the flesh.” It is not a life “according to the flesh,” but the new life to be expressed here in the body. Such springs are the Holy Scriptures, prayers, fellowship with saints, and united worship. How refreshing and invigorating are these! How needful to the soul! How does the soul languish, if not frequently replenished at these “lower springs.”

May God revive His people, so that they may truly and feelingly cry, “All my fresh springs are in Thee!”

E.K.

If I occupy my mind only with separate **actions** instead of with the Lord, to Whom the whole **attitude** should be devotedness, I become legalistic, and either proud of my “obedience” or remorseful at my failures. He Himself alters all this when **He** is in the midst.

BE SWEET, NOT SOUR.

I would say this to **myself**. I need the exhortation as well as you. It does not cost any more time to say a gentle word than a harsh one. A complaint takes quite as long as a word of encouragement. Words of grace were on the lips of the Lord Jesus (Ps. 45. 2). Why should we be bitter or sour? The Book of Proverbs warns us against sins of the tongue, and specially contentiousness. It is possible, easily possible, to make a **habit** of grumbling. It becomes “second nature” by use. Some in the world are never happy unless they are grumbling. Their discontent is their master. They are slaves to it, as much as the drunkard to his drink. O that we, as believers, may have our eyes on the Lord, so that we are always rejoicing in Him (Phil. 4. 4). Whatever is wrong, He is right. Do not look out for that which is a cause of grumbling, but look for all you can see of the Lord’s work, and even if there is **nothing** to encourage, encourage yourselves, as David, in the Lord your God (1 Sam. 30. 6). Look above fears, and feelings, and live above circumstances, because of what He is. Enjoy the commands of 1 Peter 3. 8, and “let your speech be always with **grace**, seasoned with salt, that it may minister grace to the hearers (Col. 4. 6). “When the people complained, it displeased the Lord” (Num. 11. 1). Remember Romans 8. 28, and “in everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you” (1 Thess. 4. 16).

UNCLEANNESS.

Scriptural teaching as to sin is very needful to-day. In one remarkable verse God speaks three times of uncleanness, and mentions three things, (a) “They **defile My tabernacle**”: (b) “Thus shall ye **separate** the children of Israel from their uncleanness, (c) That they **die not** in their uncleanness.” How deeply important to realize the aspect of defiling God’s tabernacle, and of His glory. “Holiness becometh Thine house.” Then there is the need not only for the removal of the **guilt** of sin but separation from uncleanness: water is specially mentioned in this context, and we think of God’s cleansing word, and practical holiness, the sacrifice being always the ground of acceptance. “That they die not,” “that he die not”—how often such words occur, reminding of Romans 6. 23, and of the necessity of salvation by the **blood** of Christ. But let us never forget that Israel, redeemed by the passover blood, were not to permit leaven, **else** they would be cut off. “Holiness without which no man shall see the Lord” (Heb. 12. 14). God links a **guaranteed** salvation with appointed means (Heb. 5. 9), and we dare not separate what He Himself has joined.

The first answer to the word of God in Scripture is exact, “Let there be light: and **there was light**.” In the Hebrew **exactly** the same words are used in each sentence. And the last answer to the word of Christ, “**I come**,” is “Amen, **come**,” but not of **nature**, it is the response of a redeemed soul.

Some Common Errors.

We need, as children of God, to seek grace lest we be misled. We do want "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," but how deeply important to seek love, and a wholehearted love, that we may "walk in love."

Often we have acted as if a precious precept would be less important if only once mentioned, and as if the silence of another Scripture, as to anything once included, excluded that, or at least made it "optional." Let us remember silence is not denial, silence does not modify what God has once said. May it not be He thus tests the **simplicity of our loving faith**? A lawyer uses repeated words, and long sentences, to frustrate those who wish to get **round** the appointment. But it is our delight to live **in** the words and will of God, is it not?

If anything is "not forbidden," many urge it is permissible: what is the result? They often come to omit what is appointed thereby. I have been helped by the Holy Spirit's preposition prefixed to the words "transgression," "disobedience," etc. (**para**). It suggests "to the side of," then "beyond," and **thus** "a contrariness." Men worshipped and served the creature at the side of the Creator, then more than, and thus against (Rom. 1. 25). In like manner "anti" indicates "corresponding with," "instead of" and "against" (**anti**-Christ). Language often shows the history of sin.

Our hearts do well to remember that the dispensation is not one of "Thou shalt not." We do not read "Teaching them to **omit** what I **prohibit**," but "to **do** whatsoever I **command**." Love the Lord's "positives," do not wait till He forbids or stops you. You and I have a fulness of **appointed** privileges of obedience. Why do we want to wander in other fields **till** we are told we trespass? Do we, as Israel, **wish** to be "like all the nations"? Let us never forget we are not encouraged to be "independent" till our Father says "No." How different was the attitude of the Lord Jesus, "The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do" (John 5. 19). Surely those who may say that making all things according to the pattern in Exodus 25. 40 seems to them legalism, will not hesitate as to the example of their beloved Lord. It is true liberty to enjoy His words of loving command because of **Himself**. And we call to mind, in this connexion, the deeply suggestive wording written for our instruction, "Nadab and Abihul... offered strange fire before the Lord" (not "What He forbad, but) "which He commanded them not" (Lev. 10. 1). Moses was not **forbidden** to smite the rock **twice**.

Further, let us not **invert** a sentence. I remember Ezekiel 34. 31 being transposed for universalism. "The flock of My pasture are men" was read as "Men (generally) are the flock of My pasture." A less manifestly dangerous use has been made of 1 Corinthians 14. 3, to lower the meaning of "prophecy," as if "He that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification" could indicate, "He that speaketh unto men to

edification prophesieth." But "a wolf is a wild animal" does not signify that "a wild animal is a wolf" necessarily. O that we may keep humbly to the exact words of Holy Writ, and feed upon them.

We cannot be too childlike and too devoted. We cannot be too restful in what He has said. He has given us sufficient. The words, in another context, "If it were not so, I would have told you," show us His ample provision for our need. He knew what to say, and to do, and to preserve for us. The documents of men may be faulty, and need redrafting, but there are no "omissions" in our Father's words. He has never made a mistake. Let us trust in the Lord with all our heart and lean not unto our own understandings. Then we shall in all our ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct our paths (Prov. 3. 5-6).

INDWELLING.

In Romans 7 we have a twofold mention of **sin** dwelling within (verses 17, 21), and verse 18 expresses the same solemn thought negatively. The apostle was not speaking in the past tense, nor of men generally, but of himself. How keen was his sense of sin often unnoticed, and how deep his humility.

But is that all? No, blessed be God, Romans 8 uses the same word twice for the Spirit of God dwelling within (verses 9, 11), and yet a stronger form ("indwelling in") is added,—"because of His indwelling Spirit in you." (This verb only occurs elsewhere in 2 Cor. 6. 16; Col. 3. 16; 2 Tim. 5. 14, **always** of God and His blessings.)

Never read Romans 7 without Romans 8, but do not forget Romans 7 in connexion with Romans 8. It is God glorifying to be lowly. Pride never trusts, never praises Him. It is not that we pass out of Romans 7 into Romans 8, but it is that the latter, longer and fuller chapter, is meant to be the characteristic and climax of the life of a redeemed one.

The power of indwelling sin is to be met, and laid low, by the power of the indwelling Spirit, and there are no revealed limits to the possibilities of the life of faith and victory which God lovingly sets before His trusting people. May we neither despond nor excuse, but press forward and prevail. Observe that if sin dwells within there is **no reason** why it should be manifested without. Let us never say, "I can't help my temperament." God is able to make all grace abound. How deeply important to distinguish "sin" and "sins." **They** are not the primary theme of Romans 7. Though we confess how sins spring from sin, the Holy Spirit indwells that He may help our "strengthlessness" and produce heavenly music from the imperfect instrument of our body, yielded to our Lord Jesus, and to represent Him.

"Modernism" is as ancient as Genesis 3, but grace is from everlasting to everlasting.

GRACE.

"Grace" is not earned, nor won, nor bought;
We had but guilt,—and we were nought:
But grace, undated, ne'er can fail;
Grace reigns, and will for us avail.

"By grace,"—what music is this word!
Our love is kindled, hearts are stirred.
Wrath we deserved, but grace was given,
And we are Christ's, our home is heav'n.

Who can unveil, or fathom, grace?
Who can undo, or who erase?
We rest, we joy, we trust, we praise,
Admiring all our Father's ways.

"The precious blood of Christ" makes known
The cost of grace:—His work alone.
No work of ours, but, saved, we seek
For Him to be, of Him to speak!

TRUTH WITHOUT POWER.

We may be "orthodox," old-fashioned, sound in all doctrine as to grace, the Deity of Christ, eternal punishment, and yet lack power. We may be clear as to prophetic subjects, and understand assembly arrangements, and yet lack power. We may be baptized and partake of the Lord's Supper, and yet lack power. We may abhor evil, and be separate from evil teachings, and speak definitely against compromise, and yet lack power. We may read the Scriptures through and through, year by year, and spend much time on our knees, and yet lack power. If we are not filled with love, if we are not gladly in the will of God, if we are not led by the personal Holy Spirit do we not lack power? How blessed it is to rejoice in God's salvation, and to know all have eternal life, but do we lack power? Is there a groove of obedience up to a point, and yet the absence of power? Not that we seek the appearance of power by outward success: not that power is our aim instead of the glory of God: not that mere emotion is real power, but there is the power of the Holy Spirit, there is a fervency of spirit, there is a godly determination and cleaving to the Lord, that is "costly," true, unaffected, mighty, and full of fruit.

"May I do this?" Why do I ask? What is the thought? Is it—"I think I should not, but I want to do it, and should like to persuade myself, or the words of others to quiet my conscience, that I can"? If so, there is peril.

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"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable."
2 Timothy 3. 16.

A Word of Introduction.

DO I know and acknowledge this? I do. Then do I illustrate my belief? How? By simple faith, ready obedience, and applying and enjoying the "profitable" message in my own daily life. There are no mistakes of God: every word He used was the best. The place for the word in the sentence was His sovereign wisdom. The inclusion, or omission, of this or that, was in His perfect appointment. The true realization of the full inspiration of Holy Scripture affects the whole standpoint, and attitude, and activities of the believer's yielded life. And, as the Holy Spirit makes the written words a present living power (Rev. 2. 7). with His accent, emphasis, and application, there is an unique privilege, a real freshness, and a wondrous responsibility for every child of God. Our heart's desire is that these pages may ever be used of God to impress these facts on many, and that we may alike be delivered from the UNREALITY (I might almost write, unconscious hypocrisy), of much of our honestly-meant profession that we BELIEVE "all Scripture." O to translate into practice!

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Did the Lord Jesus change the Old Testament?

MANY, especially among those who oppose in the open air, quite misunderstand Christ's words, "But I say unto you," in the Address on the Mount. And many believers, too, misunderstand Scripture in a different way, pleading for the elaborateness in music or for the judicial activities of Old Testament saints to be continued among children of God.

Yet a prayerful view of the words and context should dispel both errors. Far from making light of "the law and the prophets" it is in this very passage our Lord declares He came to fill, and fulfill (Matt. 5. 17, 18), and at once adds a reference to "**these** least commandments" (His own), and joins the verses by a "**THEREFORE.**" This is impressive. Let us honour His "but," remembering the climax in chapter 7. 24, 26 "These sayings of **Mine.**"

His "therefore" is not strange, for His personal fulfilling of law (Gal. 4. 4, Rom. 10. 4), with redemption by His death under law, brings in "the Kingdom of the heavens" and its arrangements for those in heavenly places, with a heavenly calling, citizenship and hope. Such are not working to obtain righteousness and life. but as a result of the grace that has given them both. They do not **end** with a sabbath, and its rest, but begin with **rest**, through the "finished" work of Christ, on resurrection ground "in Him."

Hence His words "But I say unto you" do not antagonize the law, which is "holy, and just, and good." but show what words of it apply to **us**, with a manifest fullness, never reached before, even to the **inner** life, (Matt. 5. 21-32), and, secondly, what parts are not for believers to carry out **now**, since they have no earthly executive, as Israel **had** (Matt. 5. 33-42). This distinction is perfectly simple, and set forth in wondrous order. The oath not now permitted to saints is not a vain or light oath, but an executive oath, or judicial one, even as "the eye for an eye" is not a personal hitting out or quarrelling, but a judicial exaction, and it is this which is outside **our** province.

The Lord Jesus does not say an oath is wrong (see Ps. 15. 4, 5, Heb. 6. 17, 18). He does not rescind the law of retribution (Ps. 110. 1, Rev. 22. 12). The clearly emphasized words are "But I say **unto you.**" He does not entrust these prerogatives to us His servants in the "kingdom of the heavens," though these are what we should normally expect in an earthly "kingdom." In like manner the law **never** approved personal vengeance on an enemy (Ex. 23. 4, 5, Num. 35. 21-23, Prov. 20. 22, 25. 21, 22). And this explains the contrast **NOW** with the **execution** of law in Matthew 5. 43-48. If only those who oppose could realize that even in an earthly business a command to an accountant may be the **reverse** of one to a storekeeper, and that in the members of the body to tell the eye to do what the hand does would be quite **unfitting**. There are different Divine economies, and different persons, and herein lies the key to the precious words, "**But I say unto you,**"—emphasizing, moreover, the Diety and glory of the Lord Jesus when we remember He was "meek and lowly in heart." No one but God manifest in the flesh could have made such claim

Thus we see His glory and His dispensational appointments together, and everything harmonizes. How many mistakes are made by taking words out of their context, and generalizing what the Lord particularizes, or applying that which belongs to the Day of the Lord in "man's day" (1 Cor. 4. 3). The Address on the Mount is **not** for nations, nor is it with respect to a Jewish kingdom, nor is it a basis of socialism, or communism, but is simply, what the Lord Himself declares in the opening verse, His will as to "the Kingdom of the heavens." If the Holy Spirit's gracious ministry applying truth is recognized we shall not be confused.

RUTS.

Let us beware of ruts, which may become ours, before we are aware. The rut of outward obedience is a peril, when we do a right action because we have done it, but without the fresh experience of the Lord's love and will. The Scripture lays stress on "running" or "living water." O that our obedience may always be "kept fresh," even as in the Scripture itself the Holy Spirit ever "saith" that which is written.

Again, there is the rut of "separation" without vitality. We become used to being "outside" much, and lack the enthusiasm of being inside God's presence. We cannot go to certain meetings, and so get up later: we cannot find the Lord's Supper according to His pattern, and so settle down to the non-observance. "The time is not come." Let us go up to the mountains, and bring wood (Hag. 1. 1-14). Satisfaction in a negative can never please God, and often it leads to self-complacency, instead of the beauty of the true humiliation.

Moreover, there is the rut of physical weakness, in which we forget God's power. We should be **surprised** to be enabled beyond measure, or healed. We comfort ourselves we cannot do this and that, and so may become exaggerating and increasing our deficiency, instead of rejoicing in the words, "My strength is made perfect in weakness," "out of weakness were made strong," and "to their power, yea, and beyond their power."

Nor can we omit the rut of what **others** do. It is well to imitate godly brethren as they imitate Christ (1 Cor. 11. 1), and to follow their faith (Heb. 13. 7), yet God calls us to some **personal** privilege in the body of Christ,—**not** "originality," it is true, but the holy ingeniousness of love to use and develop the faith **He** has placed within us, for ability grows with use and diminishes with non-use. O that God may impress on us the possibilities of faith, and of walking in the Spirit.

The Fall of Man illustrated by Language.

HOW many languages there are in the world! The cat "mews," the dog "barks," the same in every land where found, but the tongues of men are diverse. The words of Genesis 11 give God's key: the human race is scattered because of sin, and to restrain its **immediate climax** of iniquity in the days of Nimrod and Babel, the longsuffering of God shines out (Rom. 2. 4).

Languages afford a deeply solemn study. Their complex character, and the harmonized modification of words by prefixes, suffixes, etc., to express varied relations, are more than interesting. How is it that a semi-civilized or uncivilized race possesses such a beautiful structure in its language? Is it "evolved"? No, by no means. Rather have we evidence of degradation, and, beyond all, we see as in nature, the overruling wisdom of a Personal Designer. God is. And the way in which languages and **dialects** have **increased** may well illustrate the **power** of contact. When any were separated from one another different modification came in. Have we not a spiritual lesson thereby? Is there not a need for children of God to keep in touch with one another?

With fresh inventions, and ideas, new words have been introduced, and he who knows the language best knows less than a little of the words of a civilized race. But civilization is not spiritual, and many of the words are **necessary** because of sin, and to describe things which were better unknown. History is a sad commentary on the fact "There is none that seeketh after God," "The world by its wisdom knew not God."

But many languages lack the words we want when translating Holy Scripture. Why? Often we are made conscious that the law is not merely of names for animals, etc., which are indigenous, but of terms for right and spiritual attributes and actions. May we not see the fallen condition of man thereby? How often do words like "grace" and "forgiveness" fail of a suitable parallel. There may be even the need to "coin a word." Thanks be to God for the heavenly gold, and His gift of precious thoughts in His own precious words, explained by His appointed contexts.

The history of words is often significant. Few improve in meaning, many deteriorate. Those which go "up" have a reason behind, e.g., the Greek word "love" in the Holy Spirit's own use of this word in the New Testament, and "humility" **because** of a Christian emphasis on a low(li)ness that would be naturally despised among natural men.

Let us illustrate deterioration. Words that suggested "immediateness," as "presently" (Prov. 12. 16), now signify the opposite of the **present**. "By and by" had the same force of old (Matt. 13. 21, Luke 21. 9). Why? Have we not a **double** suggestiveness? First, the tendency to procrastinate, secondly, the habit of making a promise lightly, and breaking it.

Other words are on the same path. "I am coming in half a minute." You call someone, and he answers, "Immediately," and you know he means "**Intermediately**," i.e. something else first. O that we may not delay to keep the Lord's commandments (Ps. 119. 60), nor rashly make promises, without thinking what we say. Why does the word "prevent" now signify "hinder"? It used to imply "anticipate"—pre, before, vent, come (Ps. 119. 148, 1 Thess. 4. 15). Does the usual accompaniment of **rivalry** when one comes before, and the hindering of **others**, find an example in this change? Are we always loving our neighbour as ourselves?

And what shall we say as to such words as "knave"? There was no thought of "knavery" of old. A **boy** was thus described, but then came sin, and sin showed itself, and the word became evil. So is it with "villain," originally "a farm servant." And many other words are changed, as "cunning" which of old signified "knowing" (1 Chron. 22. 15, 2 Chron. 2. 7, cf. "subtle" Prov. 1. 4). Is there not often a saddening thought of evil in the following, "sharp," "smart," "to best"?—

("A **sharp** practice," "rather **smart**," "he **bested** them.")

Hence we do not need to refer to "bad language," nor swearing and filthiness, to find examples of man's evil. We do not need to introduce words which had, and have, a right meaning, as the verb "to damn" in its unveiling of judgement, but which are now much more commonly perverted. We do not need to instance the expletives, of all kinds, which are so contrasted with the simple "Yea, yea" (Matt. 5. 37) of the obedient believer.* The whole circle of language gives us illustrations of the tendency of **man**, and thus shows the vital necessity for the new birth. And how deeply important that those who are saved by the grace of God or claim a new creation in Christ Jesus should have their **speech** always with grace, seasoned with salt, that they may adorn His doctrine and glorify His Name. May this be our privilege and joy!

Again such words as "believe" have a striking history. They signify certainty, but come to indicate the reverse. "I believed, therefore have I spoken" (Ps. 116. 10) is the real steadfastness of the verb. "I believe God" said Paul (Acts 27. 25). "Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established" was the exhortation of Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. 20. 25), but now we hear such expressions as, "**I only believe** so." And what is the result? Men say to us, "you **only** believe, you do not know." We reply, "**I think** when I do not **know**, but I should not say, I believe, unless there is a sure ground of certainty." For the sake of the gospel and the true emphasis on facts, let

*May a suggestion be given against such semi-oaths as "upon my word," "truth and honour," and against exclamations as "my goodness," and also against the employment of adverbs as "beastly," "frightfully," "awfully," "dreadfully," in a quite inappropriate way? O that we may glorify God with our tongues.

us ~~maintain~~ the right meaning of "faith" and "believing." The Holy Spirit's word in Hebrew is from the root "Amen" and "truth," and the Greek implies a response, and being persuaded: fidelity is from the same origin. Faith is fixed, faith is sure, faith is founded, faith is firm. "We have known and "believed," said the apostle who records his Lord's love so simply (1 John 4. 16, cf. 2 Tim. 1. 12). The like danger is seen in the present day, "I trust" and "I hope"—without any **definiteness**. But we have in Christ a hope which is an anchor of the soul (Heb. 6. 19). "**Doubtless**" may now imply a doubt, and "**surely**" may be uttered with a ring of uncertainty, as if many would persuade themselves with wishful thinking, but there is an abiding reality, there is a restful assurance, in all that the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ has brought, and brings, and will bring to those who, in mercy, have been brought to childlike faith in Himself, and in His words, and in His work!

"THIS DO IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME."

Luke 22. 19.

How precious are the Commandments of the Lord to all the people of the Lord, when they are in a right attitude toward Him. And how appropriate is each command to those to whom it is addressed, and how appropriate its context. "This do, and thou shalt live" (Luke 10. 28) sets forth the principle of law as to justification. Thanks be unto God, we are not in this relation. We **have been** justified freely by His grace. "Live, and thou shalt do this" expresses our privilege and joy, "in Christ Jesus." Fitting, indeed, is the "This do" for redeemed ones. The "remembrance" of the One Who has saved us is to be our delight. How impressive is this.

Moreover, when we hear children of God saying that this, or that, is "not forbidden," and urging that there is no command "not to do" certain actions, we would almost tremble. How hateful is the whole attitude into which we all fall when pleading for that which is by human arrangement, appointment, or alteration. We remember the words to Israel, "Ye shall **not do this thing**" (2 Kings 17. 12). The "law" was then revealed with many a "not." Nine of the ten commandments have a "not." But we have been caused to experience sonship, and the desire for "nots" or the excusing of alterations of the Lord's simple words, or hints, because He has **not** given us a "not," is quite out of harmony with the blessed liberty of the sons of God. O that we may be kept from that idea of "legalism" which imagines there must be a "not" if "sons" are to be restrained from variation of the will of their beloved Lord. David's **wish** for the water of Bethlehem's well was sufficient for the mighty men who **loved him**!

"NOW IS THE JUDGMENT OF THIS WORLD: NOW SHALL THE PRINCE OF THIS WORLD BE CAST OUT. AND I, IF I BE LIFTED UP FROM THE EARTH, WILL DRAW ALL UNTO ME." John 12. 31, 32.

THESE words are well known, but their meaning is far fuller and richer than we realize. The setting aside of the world by Christ's death is ever before us. When Noah built an ark, it was for the saving of **his house**, and he condemned **the world** (Heb. 11. 7). The Lord Jesus emphasized to His disciples, "**I have chosen** you out of the **world**" (John 15. 19). And the contrast of the world with Himself is seen in John 8 and 12 and 17 alike, "Ye are of this world; I am not of this world," "I am come a Light into the world," "They are not of the **world**, even as I am not of the world."

The world is **now** judged, there is no hope that it will right itself. When Adam betrayed his trust, Satan usurped world-rule, but the work of Christ has cast him out—already **de jure**—and his time is short (Rev. 12). The Lord Jesus Christ will soon rule the world (Rev. 11. 15). Lifted up on the cross, He is the One lifted up on the throne. He "draws" and not drives, or drags,—draws to Himself to-day. His finished work causes a new life and experience, and sinners of every kindred and tongue and people and nation (Rev. 5. 9) are drawn to Himself by the magnet of His love. The centre now is not a city as Rome, or even Jerusalem: not a religion, not a church, but **Himself**. He draws none elsewhere: **all drawn are drawn to Himself**. Is this our experience?—Yours?—Mine? To-day, as well as in the past?

Appropriately in this context we have **Greeks**, not only Jews (John 12. 20-22). We are not told the Lord Jesus met **them** then. The Corn of Wheat was to have the much fruit of "**all nations**," through His **death**. But there are still those who believe not. He verily draws all nations and classes, but all individuals are not attracted to Him. There are those who reject Him and receive not His words (verse 48): for them, judgment is ahead. But day by day there are those brought out of the judgment of this world, to renounce its ways, to leave its plans, and politics, and pattern—to find in the Lord their All in all, and **THUS** to be a blessing and witnesses in, and to, the world, living for Himself, and turning many to righteousness (Dan. 12. 3). Is He Himself your Centre, and mine? Is He the Centre of our gatherings (Heb. 2. 12), the Foundation and the Headstone, our All in all (Col. 3. 11)?

He who loves money cannot please the Lord (1 Tim. 6. 9, 10). We need not be Achans or Balaams, nor as Judas, to fall into the snare. Let us beware of the beginnings of sin.

Philippians 2. 14, 15.

No murm'ring word, and no dispute
 A child of God should know:
 A "blameless" life will oft refute,
 A meek and quiet spirit, mute,
 Christ's mighty power can show.

With grace we need to speak **always**,
 Whatever others do!
 That all our acts, and all we say,
 Our tone and manner all display
 That we to Him are true.

The world is crooked, sinful, dark:
 We are not of the world.
 Then let us to our Saviour hark,
 His will embrace, His pattern mark,
 His banner keep unfurled.

OUR "ALL"

"Ye are not your own," "Ye are bought with a price" (1 Cor. 6. 20; 7. 23). **Twice** the Holy Spirit emphasizes this in adjoining chapters, and in connexion with worship and devotedness first—the positive, toward God—and then in connexion with separation—the negative, in the midst of men. Nothing that we are or have is to be viewed as "self's." Nothing is exempted. Our possession by the Lord is a privilege. Exemption of any part would be a tremendous loss. It is our safety, our honour, our blessedness to belong to Him. In baptism we set this forth, in daily life may we live it out. Thus the Holy Spirit leads us, that in all things Christ may have the pre-eminence. We do not obey an earthly employer because of wages, or a merely human contract, but as unto the Lord (Col. 3. 24). In like manner our relationship to all human law is **within** the law of Christ (Rom. 13. 5). This gives a new meaning to **all** that we can conscientiously do. Here is love's touchstone as to "what" we can do, and "how" we should do. Matter and manner are alike decided, and transformed, by the privilege of belonging to the Lord Jesus.

The Holy Spirit never leads to pride, but always to praise, which is an antidote for **self**-consciousness.

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The Student of Scripture.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"Who is a God like unto Thee, That BEARETH iniquity? . . .
 He will subdue our iniquities" Micah 7, 18, 19.

A Word of Introduction.

HOW often has this verse been before us when speaking with Israel. It refers to Exodus 34. 7 where the word "forgiving" is the same and literally signifies "bearing". Nor is this unimportant. We are concerned when the word "reconciliation" is put for "atonement" (Heb. 2. 17), lest the emphasis on the EFFECT should make us overlook the Holy Spirit's stress on the CAUSE. Is it not equally so here? But how does God BEAR sin? This Divine language sets forth the incarnation of the Lord Jesus, His Deity and His Atonement. This was in the unveiling of the Name of the Lord on Sinai in Exodus 34. Well might Micah ask "Who is a God like unto Thee?" How praiseful our hearts should be! And next we notice that God subdues iniquities. We have seen the work accomplished FOR us, and now we have God's mighty work IN us. Iniquity must be hated. The order is striking. How precious will be the application to Israel, but it is for us NOW. That God may be glorified in the appreciation of both parts of the prophecy are these earnestly sent forth. Reviving is ever united with a conscious joy in that which has been "finished" by our Lord Jesus (John 19. 30), and in the present work of the Holy Spirit within our heart and experiences.

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LET US BE HONEST.

Am I honest before God? The word (linked with "honour") is well known. We all "respectably" claim to hate dishonesty. We should refuse to steal from a shop. The thought of such a **charge** against us would be indignantly repudiated. It is not only that "honesty is the best policy," our conscience is involved. But if we deceive others, are we honest? If we

"pretend," and act a lie, or flatter? If we are less faithful in an employer's absence? If we misuse time? We should not steal a penny—but do we steal a minute? We should not rob another of his watch, but do we, by a hint, take away his character?

Are we honest with God? Do we say we are His, and yet deny Him? Do we permit things in daily business which we do not approve, through fear of man or for sake of money? Not to get rich, but to avoid losing a situation?

It is not a question of being a little "more" honest. We are honest, or we are not. Are we truthful before God? Let us be deeply concerned—the writer as well as the reader.

If we were used to suffering for Christ it would be so different, but we have become so comfortable that we often are afraid of the promised accompaniments of the believing path. O that circumstances and consequences may weigh nothing against simple love to the Lord, and delight in His will.

Responsibility.

NATURALLY we may hesitate to feel we are "involved" in what others do. But the Holy Spirit shows some links by language we might not have used. For example, "Ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, and say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets" (Matt. 23. 29-31). Yet more unexpectedly, "Truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fathers: for they indeed killed them and ye build their sepulchres" (Luke 11. 48). Evidently a disassociation in words as to some things will not suffice when there is harmony in so many other things.

Again, "Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest, for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things" (Rom. 2. 1). The context plainly emphasizes pleasure in wrong doers. While men exalt men, and the world remains the world, it is still stained with the shedding of the blood of Christ. There is no escape, except by utter self-condemnation, as baptism typifies, and Galatians 6. 14 indicates. James 4. 4 makes clear the peril of all else. These far-reaching sentences show the meaning of "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."

Another part of this subject comes before us in 2 John 10. "If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into a house, neither bid him God speed (rejoice): for he that biddeth him God speed (the usual Greek greeting) is partaker of his evil deeds" (2 John 10. 11). "This doctrine" is, as verse 9 shows, "the doctrine of the Christ"—His Person

and Glory. Yet how many make light of His Deity to-day, and yet insinuate themselves? A bidding to "rejoice," and a fraternizing may mean more than we realize in effect on ourselves, on those who are evil, and on others.

Again, 1 Timothy 5. 22 reads, "Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins. Keep thyself pure." How definitely do we heed the gracious warning against sharing sins!

I do not want us to misuse any part of truth, or to be swayed to a humanly-reasoned extreme. This seems often the enemy's attempt. Hence it is well to realize that our loving concern for souls, and wish to buy up opportunities for witness to sinners, does not mean we are "responsible" for all the sins around in daily business, etc., **unless** we rebuke them. Sometimes there is the witness of holy silence. I need hardly say we should **not seek friendship** in doubtful surroundings: and a smile, or even listening attentively, will be a partnership in evil speaking or in slander, etc. In like manner, though believers are members one of another, and feel a real share in one another, it would not be right to assume responsibility for all the failures of one another if we pray together, or scripturally break bread together. The Holy Spirit shows there **should be** Christian fellowship, but **not** with those denying "the doctrine of the Christ" with anti-Christian evil, as the context shows. All truth is one, but error in prophetic teaching is **not** to be classed with the evil doctrine mentioned. We must lovingly bear with "disciples" who may mistake truth, though **NEVER** do anything we realize to be wrong, because others do it, for fear of offending them. Our own sins keep from pride, but do not justify excusing anything that grieves the Holy Spirit.

THE RIGHT USE OF WORDS.

IF I say "I believe so" when I am uncertain, I am degrading the word "believe," and hindering others in their understanding when it is used of spiritual faith. If I imply any word with a special meaning of **my** own, or impute to others an inference from **their** use, which they do not make, may I not be hindering and misleading? Let us pray for grace to use words aright to God's glory. This will **not** mean an anxious care, **but** a holy dependence. It will not **bind** us, but encourage us to holy frankness with one another.

If I have a "favourite" word, I may remember that the Holy Spirit approved of different inspired writers employing different language, and let me not try and copy another, **nor** to compel others to my idioms. Moreover, do I not need grace to be prayerful lest I should blame any for **an English** word which they honestly adopt to bring out the Holy Spirit's Hebrew and Greek? If I harshly say, "That term is not in Scripture," may I not be insinuating more than I say? On the other hand, let me myself be careful of **abstract** words as "Theology"; and

even "Trinity," if I can enter into the Holy Spirit's **mode** of expression, e.g. the unveiling of our Triune God in the word "Elohim." This personal aspect is to hinder a "philosophy" of salvation, and a "system" of "divinity." There is such a beautiful simplicity and homeliness in God's truth. He brings me to Himself and not to a verbal "creed." But let me not pride myself on accuracy of wording, and be occupied with it, rather than with the Lord. Let there be love, (and not criticism) poured over my lips. But if truth is denied, by any, and yet its language adopted, there must be no compromise. To speak of the **divinity** of Christ while rejecting His **Deity**, to refer to the **inspiration** of scripture while doubting its full **truth**, to emphasize **atonement** as if it were only **at-one-ment** without the satisfying **ground** of the outpoured blood of Christ, would be sinful compromise. In such case we must contend earnestly for the faith.

As in all else, we need prayer for guidance, and God is ever willing to guide. In normal conversation we use our mother-tongue flowingly and correctly because it is "living" and we feel and experience its power. If we **live** in communion with God and ever feed on His words, we shall be blest in ministry to one another, by the lips that **feed**. This **should** be. This **can** be. May this be our joy, in the present power of the Holy Spirit.

"THE LETTER KILLETH."

DOES this mean the words which the Holy Spirit has graciously inspired **kill**? Does the message "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" **kill**? Do the exceeding great and precious promises **kill**? Does the tender word "If ye love Me, keep My commandments," or "This do in remembrance of Me," **kill**? Is this the Divine meaning? The very sentence before speaks of "the new covenant," **contrasting** this with the law that kills. The sentence immediately after begins "But if the ministration of death in letters" (the same word), and adds "engraved in stones." Plainly the reference is to **God's law**, which "worketh wrath" (Rom. 4. 15).

So the reference is not to the "letter" of Scripture paragraphs, nor is there the thought that a **literal interpretation** of the words which the Holy Spirit teacheth should be changed to what is miscalled a "spiritual meaning." 2 Timothy 3. 16 shows the words are Spirit-breathed, and in John 6 the Lord Jesus says "The words that I speak unto you they are spirit and they are life" (John 6. 63). There is no suggestion to leave the perfect wording of the truth. The message is clearly against trusting to the law, and showing the glory of the gospel of grace.

Is it possible however, to go further, and see the importance of law as written on the heart (Heb. 8. 10)? Yes, for if I take the gospel mentally, and obey the Lord's commands mechanically, I am making the words **dead**, even if they are not the killing and judging law. How important therefore to emphasize the Word and Spirit of God together as in Haggai 2. 5 (see Isa. 40. 7, 8), and in the precious blending of Revelation 2. 1 and 7 ("These things write"—once in the past), "What the Spirit saith" constantly, in the present. "**Quicken** me in Thy way!"

"UNDERSTANDING ONE ANOTHER."

DO we understand? Partly, not altogether. There are several contributory causes. We may be too impatient. We may be irritated, and hurriedly read the character of a fellow believer in the light of our annoyance. If our mind is once made up, other things will seem to fit in, and confirm.

And, not only so, very few have a **regular** "temperament." They are variable. Some seem to have **two** temperaments, or at least, certain characteristics which are quite out of harmony with their general standpoint. Have we not found this even in ourselves? Man is not a mere machine. We cannot explain by fixed rules. Is it surprising then if we fail to understand others, when we are so limited in understanding ourselves?

What then? Let us rejoice that there is One Who fully understands us all, Who has searched us and known us and understands our thoughts afar off (Ps. 139. 1-3, 23, 24). Let us also seek to be "slow to **speak**, slow to wrath," and very willing to correct our somewhat severe judgments as to a fellow-saint, and even to go as far as to acknowledge **our** mistake. Let us realize, too, that the dear believer we have criticized may have grown in grace and improved in temperament through the trial. Let us thus expect encouragement in "one another," and show the love we wish to receive, and give the "benefit of a doubt," and help to remove the blemishes rather than enlarge and perpetuate them. We often say, "I told you so," when we find what we "expect," but fail to see how our expecting may have been the very thing to crystallize it. Then are we not sharers in the failure instead of those who enjoy the blessing? "Let us, therefore, follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another" (Rom. 14. 19).

"THE DAY IS AT HAND."

(Romans 13. 12).

BELIEVERS are again and again reminded of "the Day." They themselves are described as "Sons of light and sons of day" (1 Thess. 5. 5). At the beginning of Genesis we have God's **own** first mention of light, naming it as "day" (Gen. 1. 3, 5), and, though sin is ever linked with darkness, we rejoice that "the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day" (Isa. 2. 11). We are reminded of "the day of Christ" (Phil. 1. 6) as the great prospect of the saints. Are we sufficiently intense with the anticipation? For example: we expect our gathering together unto Him we love (2 Thess. 2. 1), but are we forsaking the assembling of ourselves now, though we see the Day approaching (Heb. 10. 25)? It is easy to settle down, to become in a groove, and to "give up" in discouragement, to be disappointed. I have felt the force of Hebrews 6. 10 "In that ye have **ministered** to His saints and **do** minister." Are we doing all we once did? I do not mean that the aged saint is to be burdened over real weakness of body. In this relation it is precious to remind one another, "It is not what we **do** before men, but what we **are** to Him." The Lord accepts the heart-willingness. But if we are among those to whom it may be said, "Thou hast left thy first love," or "Ye were running well: who hindered you?" (Rev. 2. 4, Gal. 5. 7) there is need for heart-exercise. "Let us run with patience," and "press toward the mark," and have the attitude of the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day (Prov. 4. 18). Why should it not be so? God has not held out false hopes. Nay, the prospect is bright, and "the day is at hand."

Let us not be disconsolate, and discouraged, if we do not see results. The husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth (James 5. 7). Do you say, "I **used** to give away tracts, but I found some were not read." "I **used** to go to more meetings," "I **used** to rise for prayer in the morning," and so forth? Is "a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep" imperceptibly hindering your enjoyment and your reward? You and I would not, as Esau, for one morsel of meat **sell** our birthright, but we **are** losing reward, we **are** failing, we **are** grieving and dishonouring the Lord. O why should we thus fail? Why should we not awake and have respect unto the recompense of the reward? The men who have accomplished much as Abraham, Moses, and Paul, kept their eyes heavenward. May we lift up our heads for our redemption draweth nigh (Luke 21. 28)!

The more dear that Christ is to us, the more near will He seem to us, I feel. Here is my need, and is it not yours? Can we not pray for one another accordingly?

"WHICH THE MAN WILL DO AND LIVE IN THEM,
I AM THE LORD."

Leviticus 18. 5.

AT first it may seem strange to suggest that this is clearly a Messianic prophecy. The Authorized Version is so fixed in our minds that we must remember that, in the Original,

(a) There is NO "IF"

and (b) "A man" omits the Hebrew DEFINITE ARTICLE.

Though unintentional, the ADDED "IF" and OMITTED "THE" alter the whole meaning, generalizing a specific reference, and leaving out, the writer feels, a UNIQUE PROPHECY OF OUR BELOVED LORD.

It may be said that the context hardly looks like this. But let us remember, for example, the gospel use of Hosea 11. 1 and Habakkuk 2. 4, which we should have possibly overlooked. Our Lord is more central than we realise!

Moreover, let us recollect the Holy Spirit quotes Leviticus 18. 5 twice, and avoids the "if" of our translators. But it may be asked, "Does He not use the words to show the failure of men, and of the law as given to them?" Yes, but is that all? Let us prayerfully see.

Romans 10. 5 is, very literally, "THE MAN HAVING DONE (THEM) SHALL LIVE IN IT" ("righteousness"), and Galatians 3. 12 "THE ONE HAVING DONE THEM SHALL LIVE IN THEM."

Both agree in (a) the definite article, (b) the emphasis on a completeness "having done," (c) followed by a future "shall live." Neither suggests men generally, nor only "living," while doing. In Romans the Holy Spirit explains with a reference to living in the sphere of **righteousness** ("it" agrees with this grammatically*), and in Galatians we have "in them," i.e. the things "done," which are thus viewed as abiding, accepted before God.

But (it is urged) the New Testament rather uses to show the impossibility of justification except by faith. Undoubtedly regarding sinners, this is the glorious theme. But is not this entwined with the very aspect before us? Let us take two inseparable standpoints. First, Galatians impresses that our beloved Lord was made a Curse for us, in other words that He was the One Complete Substitutionary Sacrifice. But **this** involves the condition that He was the absolutely **Righteous** One, and the quotation shows why and how One Who became the Obedient One could be the real Sacrifice. All "types" fail in this very point. Bulls and goats represented sinners, and typically left the guilty one in the goal of DEATH, nothing more. The last we see of each is IN DEATH. Why? These sacrifices lacked **righteousness** and therefore lacked **resurrection**. The Lord Jesus is the Contrast.

*If the other reading is preferred the emphasis will be as in Galatians.

Secondly, let us approach the subject according to Romans 10, "Moses describeth the righteousness of the law." Does he describe a fiction? No. Did the Lord Jesus become "under the law" (Gal. 4. 4)? Yes. Did He then do aught else but OBEY PERFECTLY? Impossible! Could He then fail to possess its righteousness and promise? No, otherwise there would be falsity and injustice. Then His "shall live," in resurrection, as the Perfect Man, must be here set forth, or there is untruth.*

This gracious unveiling of the glory of Christ is yet more emphasized when we realize that the arrangement of the law could only be to glorify a Substitute. Does any one ask, Why? (a) Law could not justify an unrighteous one, and (b) In the light of Romans 6. 23, 7. 2, since an **obedient** one without sin could not die, he would remain "doing, doing, doing," never "having done," always under the law, and never able to reach its end, into righteousness (Rom. 10. 4). The Only Key then, is the Righteous One, **dying because of others**, and then raised because of His obedience, that is, the Lord Jesus.

It may yet be urged that the threefold quotation of Ezekiel 20 does not seem to enforce this (verses 11, 13, 21). Such an objection would somewhat overlook the fact that all Divinely recorded failure (e.g. of the sacrifices, and of man in Ecclesiastes), is to shut us up to the need of the Lord Jesus Christ. But probably most are unconsciously affected by the translation "if (*italics*) a man." When we forget **this**, and remember the broken sabbath is linked with Adam's sin, and the broken sabbath year with Israel's captivity (2 Chron. 36. 21 with Lev. 26. 34, 35, 43), and the sabbatic rest (Heb. 4. 9) associated with our Lord's perfect work, Ezekiel 20 beautifully illustrates Psalm 95 and Hebrews and His bringing of His redeemed into rest, blessing, and glory, in "the Day of the Lord."

The Lord Jesus, the Last Adam, the Second Man, the true Israel (Isa. 49. 3) will gather together the prophecies in His perfect fulfilment. All blessing is headed up in Him, and only by the outpouring of His precious blood, consummating His one perfect work, is there salvation, and can there be the prophesied blessing to Israel, and the kingdom of God upon this sin-stained earth.

*We have all forgotten how full the books of Moses are of resurrection. Our beloved Lord showed this in Matthew 21. 31, 32, where we should not have seen it. Further, the objection that "no one" is justified is linked to Galatians 3. 10, where all are viewed as "continuing NOT." Our Lord is always *excepted* (e.g. Rom. 3. 10, 11, 19, 20: His mouth was not stopped). The law could not *make* alive (Gal. 3. 21), but it could *not* deny the Righteous One (Rom. 2. 13).

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The Student of Scripture.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"The Great, the Mighty God, the Lord of hosts is His name, Great in counsel, and Mighty in work."
Jeremiah 32. 18, 19

A Word of Introduction.

GOD'S greatness and glory are ever before us, and we would REALIZE His majesty and sovereignty more and more. Nature, history, personal experience, (and beyond these, Holy Scripture) make manifest His unchanging glory. The holy awe, and reverential love, and simple confidence, and triumphant expectation which should be united in the humble believing life, must bring about an all-round Christian character. The gracious work of the Holy Spirit exalting the Lord Jesus, ever leads to this standpoint, as we increasingly feel the wondrousness of grace in view of the majesty of God, and the height and fulness and fixity of the blessedness of redeemed ones. May every page in this magazine be used to deepen our consciousness of what God is.

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"I am as thou art."

(1 Kings 22. 4, 2 Kings 3. 7).

AM I—if I am a child of God—the same as I was before? Can I really use such language as Jehoshaphat to Ahab or not? "O you think yourself superior," is the retort. Not in the least. But if I **am** a child of God, I **cannot** be as I **was**. I have died to my old life before God, and cannot remain in the "family" where I was. Physically I am still in the family of Adam, spiritually I am not. Delivered from "the brotherhood of man" into a **new** brotherhood on redemption ground, do I, on that account, look down on others? Nay, I should have love **more than** natural brotherliness, without its fickleness, and its

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entwining self-seeking—"the kindness of God" (2 Sam. 9. 3). "But," says one, "I thought that the brotherhood of man was the finest ideal." Far otherwise: if we were not a fallen and sinful race it would be a high standard, but brotherliness "in Adam" is too hampered, too weak to get anywhere, with lasting peace. It lacks a dynamic. The love of **God** must precede the love of **man**, and a **new** relation to Him, and a right dealing with man's sins and sinful nature are fundamental for all true happiness.

It is here that **all** human schemes fail. The gospel does not fail. Christ brings in a new creation. We have peace **with God**, and that transforms our whole attitude, and there is to be a God-glorifying **contrast** with **self-seeking**, and only thereby can there be lasting peace among men. Hence permanent blessing is always through the Lord Jesus. His coming the first time was to **die** and **make peace** for the sinner with God: His coming the second time is to create **peace** on earth. If we leave Him out of **either**, we have a **temporary reform**, nothing beyond, nothing effective. Water cannot rise above its own level, nor can the human heart. But God's grace lifts us up. Then there must be a **contrast** for a child of God in daily life. And it is not in pride, but in true love, the believer cannot say, "I am as thou art," **But** "By the grace of God I am what I am." I want "you" to share the blessing "in Christ Jesus." Strangely Jehoshaphat **TWICE** fell into the same language: Though warned, we, too, have failed. Worldliness is the Christians peril still. We need to realize the **dividing** line by the cross of Christ (Gal. 6. 14) we cannot be **as** we were, and **as** others are who do not recognize the Lord Jesus as Supreme Lord and Saviour. We should delight in the **ONLY TRUE DICTATOR**. He is to be our All in all. No one can take this standpoint till he, or she really knows the Lord Jesus, and the glory of His character. His "service is **perfect** freedom." The whole attitude of a believer should be **quite different** if the Lord Jesus is everything to him or her. It is impossible to put Him second: it is impossible for others to put Him first. The truest **kindness** is unworldly separation to the Lord, and all else is an unkind lowering of the only display of mercy, by actions which speak louder than words, and rob the gospel of its transcendent message and its transcendent "power." Nay, its power remains, but our **testimony** is gone. O that we may not misrepresent our Lord Jesus, and His mighty grace to lift others up, misrepresent by saying, either in word or deed, "I am **as thou art**." Let the magnet of grace and Christlikeness draw others to the **NEW FOUNDATION—infinitely higher**.

The privilege of praise is great; not only do we fulfil a command (most repeated), but are thus lifted out of dullness and depression. That which is God's revealed will is the best for our spiritual, and mental, and physical health.

God's Handiwork.

WE see in nature a wondrous harmony of multitudinous parts. Who can count the varieties of plant life? Who can number the stars? The mountains, with their remarkable structure, the ocean bed with its foraminifera,—all contribute to reveal the Creator. And even one grain of wheat has a hidden complex cellular order. Our own bodies are "fearfully and wonderfully made" (Ps. 139. 14). Who can explain the blood with its corpuscles? How intricate is the structure of the brain and nerves! The entwinings are beyond human **realization** in full degree. And "life" remains above the scientist's research. Light has properties that exceed and baffle men's description of them. And electricity has its marvels, which they can, in measure, harness for their activities, yet there is always a limit both to their knowledge and their skill.

To leave God out is madness. To be "lost in wonder, love and praise" is fitting. It is true there are tremendous gaps, cataclysmic faults, disintegrations, **something wrong has entered**. Yet this has not blotted out, but only blurred, the evidence of design and control, unveiling a Designer and Controller, Who has maintained all in spite of the disturbing factors. Hidden order and structure constantly surprise, and men are still children in knowledge. "O Lord, how manifold are Thy works! In wisdom hast Thou made them all: the earth is full of Thy riches." Things that we once viewed as simple, or composed of two or three elements, are now found to contain "vitamins" and varied Divine appointments for human benefit. Parts of the body once thought to be "useless" are **now** seen to perform unrecognized functions. Everything is wonderful.

And let us remember that characteristics are not **inherently** necessary. **Why** should electricity be (a) unseen, (b) rendered visible by **contact** (c) with that which is sensitive (d) which is thereby transformed, (e) and affects all around—with a union of possibly (f) warmth, (g) light and (h) power? And why should (a) our unseen Lord communicate grace and (b) (c) (d) be seen in the transformed lives of those who are caused to be sensitive, and brought into **faith's** contact, so that (e) they bear a witness with (f) love where there was coldness and (g) holy knowledge of Himself where there was ignorance, and (h) mighty Divine power, in daily life? Here we see **neither** chance, **nor** necessity, but the will and work of God.

Redeemed by the blood of Christ, we praise, and, finding in all nature a parable, by His will, we cannot be too praiseful, nor too conscious of the hidden beauties which are in Scripture as well as ocean dust, only awaiting revelation. And how we rejoice in the spiritual diet He has given us, with its more than finite variety, and its heavenly "vitamins" for our spiritual sustenance and strength. Let us never neglect the fulness of His provision: we need not be poor, we need not be invalids, all should possess our possessions in the might of the Holy Spirit.

The "Second" Best and the Fulness of God.

"**A**S for God, His way is perfect" (Ps. 18. 30), and it is unchangeably true that all things work together for good to them that love Him (Rom. 8. 28). His power, sovereignty, wisdom, love—all are in perfection and combined in harmonious co-operation. There is no parallel with the absolute and illimitable glory of God. It is indeed a privilege to know His ways, as Moses (Ps. 103. 7), though, in their fulness, "past finding out" (Rom. 11. 33). We would "remember" and "consider" all the way He has led and chastened us (Deut. 8. 3, 5), seeking to have the fruit in our yielded lives.

We are thankfully conscious that **none** can stay His hand (Dan. 4. 35), and that He does exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think (Eph. 3. 20), so that what is thought in evil is overruled for good (Gen. 50. 20) and whatever comes to the redeemed should awaken praise (1 Thess. 5. 18).

But the Scriptures also reveal our responsibility and remind us how Moses failed to enter the land. This is entirely different from the experience of an Esau (Heb. 12. 16, 17), but it does bring before us an overruled loss of blessing through our failure and the words of Rev. 3. 11 speak to our heart, "Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." Nor can we forget the message of Jeremiah, "The vessel that he made of clay was marred, in the hand of the potter; so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it." We are not told **he** marred it. The grace of God restrains and restricts us from much, and limits our wandering, but He does not always prevent our self-wishes (note Ps. 106. 15). His humbling thereby may bring forth fruit (2 Chron. 32. 24, 25), but we lose present blessings, and future reward to His glory. Suffering loss is a **reality** (1 Cor. 3. 15). As soon as human reasoning philosophizes regarding God's sovereignty and our "personal" initiative, there is peril. The line cannot be drawn by logic. There is a constant entwining, the more manifestly as both wishes and actions are **never** isolated, but are related to innumerable previous desires and deeds, both of ourselves and others, and each of these has been affected by Divine sovereignty, and amid all there is the "unknown factor," the "x" of personality, appointed by, known to, yet mercifully limited by our all-wise God and Father. The theme is not one for theorizing, but for worship and for practical godliness. I may "**please** God" (Heb. 11. 5, 13. 20, 21), or I may "grieve the Holy Spirit of God" (Eph. 4. 30). I may experience the opened eyes of Ephesians 1. 18 or may, alas, sleep, and remain awhile **among** the dead (Eph. 5. 14), though not dead, and thus lose light and blessing and joy. The extreme of being delivered to Satan or of falling asleep because of sin (1 Cor. 5. 5, 11. 30) may not be mine, but I lose the best. God gives me the blessing I can bear (John 13. 12), but I hinder much through little faith (Matt. 17. 20). I sow "sparingly," and reap accordingly both now and

in the future (2 Cor. 9. 6).

This cannot be viewed as the **best**, but there is our Father's perfect decision, to give the best for which I am **ready** at the present time. It is a "second" best, or a "third," or whatever less it may be, while a richer blessing awaits the entirely yielded life (Mal. 3. 10), and the constancy of contact and obedience would mean "much fruit," and a hundredfold instead of the "sixty" of the "second" and the "thirty" of the "third."

Am I willing for the "second best"? Often it seems as if we were. We see that rest is good (Gen. 49. 15). We would like to be used by God more, but we hesitate. This does not mean we are miserable. Our Father lovingly welcomes all and does not reject little faith, though He rejoices when it grows exceedingly, and the Holy Spirit indwells to make this possible. We seek John the Baptist's usefulness without the wilderness at first and the prison at last. We should like Paul's influence and Christ-like life, but we draw back from the surrender of Philipians 3. 8. We think of glory, but not of the cup and baptism of sufferings (Matt. 20. 23). We esteem blessings, but rather should we know devotedness to Him Who blesses, and a spontaneous love that is not occupied with its reward, but which cannot hold back from delighting to delight Himself. Some believers are full of one aspect or part of truth, and some of another. Some emphasize the crisis of "surrender," and may undervalue the quietness of "abiding," others have more experience of the abiding, yet underestimate the sudden crisis which may be more needful once and again for another temperament to reach the very same place of abiding. We judge others by ourselves, and wish their experience to duplicate ours, or we almost doubt their full reality. The Person of Christ exalted is the answer to all these defects. As He is increasingly central we have less of criticism of others' motives, and less of the "**second best**." Barriers of personal idiosyncrasy and of denominationalism alike cannot stand in His presence. Darkness is not removed by a dissertation about light, but by light. Doctrine is precious, but it must be in relation to Himself. "In Thy light shall we see light" (Ps. 36. 9). Practice too must be in relation to our Lord. It is thus that we reach His fuller experiences for His own, and if we are thus privileged let us remember the higher we mount the more easy it is to slip, and the more will Satan seek to tempt toward the **pride of blessing**.

Life is eternal, but communion depends on constant contact we can be truly alive, and yet without the fullest health. With a view to our Lord's joy, let us desire and be more gladly willing for a life growing up into Him in all things (Eph. 4. 15). We may have many blessings, joys, privileges, and yet much more may be possible. We are not now contrasting a wandering life with one more devoted to the Lord. The happy thought before us is that a truly bright Christian experience may become yet brighter, richer and fuller, as the Lord Himself is realized to be all in all.

JUDGES 13-18.

WE must not imagine merely detached incidents. God has a perfect **plan**. Samson was of Dan, and likewise those who invaded Micah's man-arranged centre of worship. Ch. 13 has "between Zorah and Eshtaol," and the sad death and burial, after accomplishing so little, bring up exactly the same places (16. 31): thence came the 600 of 18. 11. If only there had been a **revival** work, humbly before God, in those places, this distressing narrative would not have been written. The root goes back further (18. 1 with Jos. 18. 3, Jud. 3. 1-4). Dan's portion included Ekron (Jos. 19. 43): but "the Philistines had dominion" (Jud. 14. 4). "The days" were **theirs** (see Ps. 72. 7).

The variation of sins is impressive. Samson would have drawn back, we feel, from evil worship, and possibly Micah from Samson's sins (but note Deut. 7. 3, 4). The enemy has temptations and baits for each—for you and for me. The deep trouble was, and is, "Every man did that which was right in **his own eyes**" (17. 6). Are **we** walking in the light (cf. Ps. 32. 8), are we responsive or "original"? Full dependence on God for all is **beautiful**. Only One has shown it (John 5. 19).

The link is again seen in "the house" linked with "our god" (16. 23) and "a house of God" (professedly, 17. 5) leading on to "all the time that **the house of God** was in Shiloh" (18. 31). Nothing could be more painful than this, the background for the golden calf at Dan (1 Kings 12. 29), Satan clings to the same places, as Babylon (Gen. 10, Rev. 18). Sin leads to sin (Isa. 30. 1).

The root trouble is often in home life, despite the contrast of Judges 13. 1-7 with Genesis 3. Manoah's wife acted with him, and there were godly desires. God forewarned of the danger there (Jud. 13. 13). Yet, despite blessing, Samson, like Dinah, "saw" (Jud. 14. 1 with Gen. 34. 1). Pray, pray, pray, more about the home training. Micah's **mother** favoured a mixture in worship (Jud. 17. 3), and the failure in 18. 31 was in the home. Yet the son of Gershom—"the son of Moses" (Hebrew, it seems) was not true to his father's name (Ex. 2. 22). The home is often the Thermopylæ. Oh for more devotedness **there!**

Even numbers may suggest the Holy Spirit's instruction in linked histories. Each Philistine lord offered 1,100 pieces of silver (Jud. 16. 5) and it was this amount that both Micah and his mother **TWICE** misused (devoted to wrong worship AND stolen again the link of sins). Thus the **gracious** warning is given, and our hearts would receive. It is continued in the apparently distinct story of ch. 19* for there too we have "a Levite from Bethlehem-Judah" (17. 9 with 19. 3), and the failure begins in **home**-confusion (19. 1, 2), and the **background** of failure to take the land is seen in ch. 10. 10-12. May our opened hearts respond, and seek to please the Lord.

* Notice, too, the 600 men of 18. 11, and those of 20. 47.

The Person and Work of the Lord Jesus inseparable.

This theme has much impressed my heart. In no other case is there found the same absolute inseparability. What I can do **you** possibly do even better: we all have a **likeness**. But the Lord Jesus stands alone. No created being could perform His work, and the Father and the Holy Spirit are not **incarnate**, and therefore we reverently realize they could not work out redemption, nor bear our guilt. This uniqueness emphasizes the wondrous unveiling of the **death** of the Lord Jesus, as the centre of history, and the pivot of all blessings. Truly God the Father delights to lay stress on **His Beloved Son** and the Holy Spirit ever glorifies **Him**.

Further, the Person and the work are entwined because His whole fulness was concentrated and expressed in His work. I may do a thing heartily, but I **could** do it **still better**. His whole being was perfectly united—heart and mind and strength—in the work of salvation. Hence, even as we read, "I am a **prayer**" (Ps. 109. 4, not only "one praying"), and as Simeon said, "Mine eyes have seen Thy **salvation**," and we read, "That Thou shouldest be My salvation (not only the Saviour) unto the ends of the earth," so He was not only the One Who **made** the way of life, He **is** the Way and the Truth and the Life. His actions were one whole, expressing the whole of Himself.

Thirdly, I can love you dearly, yet all the while refuse something you say, and grieve over something you do, and it may be rightly the same on your part toward me. But since Christ is God and Man, I cannot believe in His person without acknowledging all His work, nor can I truly confess His work without adoring His person. Thanks be unto God for the living faith which realizes this. Modernism and Judaism and other religions all fail in this respect. The Lord Jesus, God over all, blessed for ever, yet manifested in the flesh, is **the only key** to Scripture and the solution of every need of mine. He meets every requirement graciously, righteously, holily.

If He were a created being, His love would rival the Creator's, and idolatry would be encouraged. In His Deity and Humility, and Atonement everything harmonises.

Prophecy is to edification, exhortation and comfort (1 Cor. 14. 3), but this is not the only thing that so serves. Hence we cannot invert and say that ministry is to edification, exhortation and comfort and thus is prophecy, any more than since a poultice is to remove inflammation everything with this result is a poultice. Such "reasoning" would identify a poultice and lancing, yet many use it in referring to Scripture. A wolf is a wild animal, but a wild animal is not necessarily a wolf. Thank God, we can "Edify one another" though we be not prophets. "Let your speech be **ALWAY** with grace."

"Thy Faithfulness."

Psalm 89

"With my mouth will I make known Thy faithfulness to all generations" (1).

"Thy faithfulness shalt Thou establish in the very heavens" (2).

"The heavens shall praise . . . Thy faithfulness also in the congregation of the saints" (5).

"O Lord God of hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto Thee?" (8).

"My faithfulness and My mercy shall be with him" (24).

"I will not . . . suffer My faithfulness to fail" (33).

Fruitful Exchange.

The bee does not only gather honey: the fertilizing power conveyed benefits the plant. So it is spiritually. If I (exchange) expect from you or you from me, to God's glory, both will be blessed. As we minister to "one-another," in prayer for "one-another," and in words that feed "one-another," we are blessed in our own lives. Selfishness is non-productive. Love is fruitful. He that watereth shall be watered also himself (Prov. 11. 25). Processes of nature are an appointed parable of grace, and here we see God's own principle of blessing and the importance of gathering together. Neglected meetings mean lost blessings, for all concerned. As we have godly concern for one-another so all are spiritually prospered, and the assembly in its building up of each will be unitedly prospered. This is fitting. We see it in the human body, the blessing of one member is the blessing of all. What, dear fellow believer, are you bringing to the Lord and "His people"? Do not say "I can do nothing." Publicity and great things are not the only requisites, it is what we are before (Him) the Lord that counts, and feeble members are necessary, the Holy Spirit says so. Some have spoken of non-productive parts of a community, and have with erroneous theories, often limited productiveness to certain forms of activity, and yet have themselves fostered parasite members of a community, which sap the physical strength by evil occupations.

He who abets drunkenness and pleasures of sin is thus guilty. But in the spiritual sphere let us be deeply concerned "not to remain non-productive," not to hinder, but to help, not to reduce the temperature of a meeting, but to bring spiritual warmth. O for a holy sense of responsibility to one-another.

Joy in the Lord is joined with godly impression and godly expression: it is not mere froth, and it is not an ejaculatory excitement, without obedient devotedness of the yielded life.

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The Student of Scripture.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

*"Thou art Mine."**"They shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts."*

Isaiah 43. 1, Malachi 3. 17.

A Word of Introduction.

HOW wondrous is the love of God to sinners—to us. How real and far-reaching are the effects. We are altogether changed. We are called—saints. The enjoyment of that which would be bondage to one outside Christ, shows the transforming work of grace within, and the living fruit is to be evident without. We can never realize God's grace too much, nor love Him too much, nor become too Christlike, nor bear too abundant fruit. There is no thought of limiting the output. We belong to our Saviour, and our all is His, and to be for Him. It is with a desire that this may be known and felt and manifested, individually and collectively, that these pages go forth. "Thou art Mine" is a reminder of "Ye are not your own: ye are bought with a price," and our hearts would leap with joy that our beloved Lord gave HIMSELF (nothing less) for us, and that He has love's right to His full purchase, and that He will never give us up, nor have regret as to His earthly purchase. He delights in His redeemed. May we delight in Him! Here is our object!

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God's Gracious Response to Obedience.

It is a blessed thing to realize that God loved us when we were dead in sins (Eph. 2. 4, 5) and "we love Him, because He first loved us" (1 John 4. 19). Then, redeemed by grace, we are called to bear the fruit which manifests His inworking, and adorns His doctrine, and His loving acknowledgement of this is revealed again and again (cf. Matt. 6. 4, 6, Heb. 6. 10), and not only in the future, even now He becomes a Rewarder of them that diligently seek Him (Heb. 11. 6). Hence a number of verses set forth His response. Shall we meditate on a few? "Draw nigh to God and He will draw nigh to you" (James 4.

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8). "He that loveth Me shall be loved by My Father" (John 14. 21, 23). "The Father Himself loveth you, because ye have loved Me" (John 16. 27). "Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation" (Rev. 3. 10). It is in accord with this, and by no means on the ground of legalism, that we find the words of childlike confidence "Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us" (Luke 11. 4). We are not in a **condition** to enjoy God's fatherly forgiveness unless we forgive. It would be the reverse of beneficial to us. There is no thought of natural merit, but of a spiritual attitude whereby we become ready to receive what our Father is waiting to bestow. He Who resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble (James 4. 6) cannot, in love, encourage us in pride by refreshing our hearts when we are excusing this sin. That would not be for our profit, but would be feeding the disease to make us more ill with spiritual sickness. Thus there is mercy, not penalty, in His wise governmental dealings with His children. The sphere of the "home" is one of true governing, for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not (Heb. 12. 7)? When we realize this we learn the meaning of the words "Return unto Me, and I will return unto you" (Mal. 3. 7) which Israel's remnant will yet learn (Hos. 14. 1). Thus prayer does not change God, or change His perfect purpose, but brings us to a **new** position to receive anew from Him correspondingly, that which is waiting there. We find also a governmental parallel in His control of history. "If that nation turn from evil, I will repent of the evil" (Jer. 18. 8). Hence we behold His holiness and righteousness, His consistent principles. O that we may worship and live to His glory.

Trusting God.

"Neither shall any man desire thy land when thou shalt go up to appear before the Lord thy God thrice in the year."

Exodus 34. 24.

"If thou wilt assuredly go forth unto the King of Babylon's princes, then thy soul shall live, and this city shall not be burned . . . but if thou wilt not go forth . . . then shall this city be given into the hand of the Chaldeans . . . I am afraid . . . But Jeremiah said . . . Obey, I beseech thee, the voice of the Lord . . . so it shall be well unto thee."

Jeremiah 38. 17-20.

"If ye say, We will not dwell in this land . . . saying, No . . . Then it shall come to pass, that the sword which ye feared, shall overtake you there in the land of Egypt."

Jeremiah 42. 13-16.

Each member of the natural body would be cold, and stiff, and useless in itself. Is it not so, in great measure, spiritually?

What a Church of God should be.

DO not let us **expect** failures, but rather claim God's own mighty work. If we become "used" to present circumstances we dishonour Him. An individual saint should be saintly, and a true church of God should be fittingly His dwelling place. It is not a question of an earthly building: spiritual stones are needed, an assembly is composed of born again believers. But as heaps of stones, however many, do not make a house, so believers do not become a church unless they are in godly order, as local miniatures of the body of Christ, with a welcome for all who conform to His will. Loving care should fulfil His words in assembly actions, without adding human rules, and without subtracting or substituting with regard to **His words and will**. Baptism and the breaking of bread are not to be set aside because they are external actions. They can, and should be, spiritually obeyed, with the **appointed** types, and these alone. A church of God is to be "a pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Timothy 3. 15), and the same context emphasizes holy care (verse 5) in nurture and discipline. Man-made ministerialism and oversight by those who lack appointed qualifications are as unbefitting as the evil doctrine mentioned immediately (ch. 4. 1-3).

Further, an assembly should be, in **condition**, healthy and holy. Those indwelt by the Holy Spirit should not walk in the flesh. Self-seeking, friction, pride, slander, how out of place are such in "a house of God." There should be love because of His love, joy in His will, an atmosphere of peace and harmony, a tenderness toward the weak, and expectation of **reviving**, a concern for the lost, a realization of prayer and praise, a missionary zeal, a blending of the characteristics of the wisdom that is from above, and the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

Is this possible? It is! Just as a far higher and fuller experience of the Lord is possible personally, so is it with an assembly. The Lord's hand is not shortened, nor His Spirit straitened. A "live" assembly is not to be "an ideal." O that it may be an expected reality. God is able, His word clear, His Spirit present, His power continual, His response to believing prayer certain. If we limit Him to our knowledge of history, by our fears, or our laziness, we sin. Rather let us say, "Where is the hindrance? Is it in me?"

Three important questions: (a) "How can I (understand) except some man (or Some One, John 16. 13) should guide me?" (b) "Of **Whom** speaketh the prophet?" (c) "What doth hinder me to be baptized?" (Acts 8. 31, 34, 36). Behold (a) the Scriptures, (b) the Lord Jesus, and (c) obedience. The Scriptures lead to Him, and the one led, by grace, is to follow Himself, and His will. The **order** here is precious. The **Holy Spirit** uses **men**, but He is the Guide. And where are you, dear reader, in connexion with the above questions?

Some Meditations on Revelation 4 and 5.

A NEW section ("after these things" as 7. 1, 9. 18. 1, 19. 1;—15. 5 somewhat different). John's **personal experience*** is parallel with ch. 1. 10, 11 (in the "Spirit," "a trumpet"), but there we have the lampstands and Christ in the midst, and the "angels of the churches," here we have the "living ones" and the throne, and Christ centrally in the midst, with myriads of heavenly angels. It is well and delightful to see His glory in all.

Observe how chapters 4 and 5 (together one section), in heaven, precede 6 and 7 on earth. So it is throughout, chapter 8. 2-6 is before the work on earth, and chapter 15 precedes chapter 16. "For ever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in heaven." How comforting to realize "times and seasons" are in God's own authority and working out a heavenly purpose, nothing is haphazard or uncertain. This is deeply solemn as to the awful climax of man. But He will intervene at the right moment. Such **absolute** control by God comforts every humble believing saint.

"Behold, a throne" (4. 2). This has much impressed me and the "throne" is before us 11 times in this chapter and 5 in the next, 16 in all. Everything is from the standpoint of the throne, and One is **sitting** upon it, as in Ezekiel 1. And there are "thrones" around ("Seats" 4. 4), in contrast with ch. 13. 2. The throne is central, as in Daniel 7. God is exalted! "The Most High ruleth." The whole book illustrates this. It begins with "the kingdom and patience" (1. 9) and then the sovereignty of this world is manifestly taken (11. 15, 17): The Lord Jesus is "King of kings and Lord of lords" (17. 14. 19. 16). Adam lost his delegated rule (Gen. 1. 28), even as fallen angels (Jude 6 margin) and Israel likewise (Dan. 1. 2), but the Lord Jesus will truly fulfil Psalm 72 on earth. Observe authority (a) in heaven and (b) in earth (Matt. 28. 18). Man's kingdom began with Babel (Gen. 10. 10) and ends there (Rev. 18). The first Ruler of "the times of the Gentiles" was with the **beasts** and had a **beast's** heart (Dan. 4. 14-16): the last is **the wild beast** (Rev. 13. 2), but "the **Son of Man** shall have the kingdom (Heb. 2. 6, 7), observe a striking and holy answer to evolutionary theories!

"Behold a throne" Oh let us have more reverence, fuller adoration. The heavenly beings fall to worship (4. 10, 5. 8, 14, 7. 11, 11. 16, 19. 4). How different the "fall" of 14. 8, 17. 10. Man seeks worship (13. 4): the angel of God rejects it rightly, and gives the emphasis there on worship to God alone (19. 10, 22. 9). Thus one of the last commands is "worship." We

* 1. Not typifying the rapture of the saints any more than in ch. 17. 1. When we are caught up we shall not be weeping, nor ignorant (ch. 5. 4, 5; 7. 14), John does not join in the praise, we shall!

2. Would a running commentary on the Book of Revelation help many believing readers?

must be glad "servants" (1. 1), if we would understand this closing Book of Scripture: further we need to be **worshippers**, and not only "students of prophecy." A holy attitude of **worship** is deeply important, yet often lacking, at least in some measure.

It is well to see that though at the **beginning** of the seals and trumpets there is no reference to a multitude of saints being present, only at the end (7. 9; 10. 7; 11. 1) whereas they **are** seen at the beginning of the (subsequently fulfilled) seven vials (15. 2-4), there **is** the encouraging pledge, as it were, that they will be in God's presence. How is this given? The "living ones," (quite a different word from the "beast" of ch. 13), are evidently parallel with the cherubim (Ezek. 10. 20), and are first seen in Genesis 3. 24, and next we find two cherubim of one piece with the mercy seat in Exodus 25. 19 (margin), suggestively picturing the living and resurrection union with Christ of God's beloved children now. It is a joy that they are thus, it seems typified in the glory before they reach there personally, and beyond all, their arrival is guaranteed by the Lamb in the midst of the throne, for our life is hid **with Christ** in God, and He will not fail to see of the travail of **His** soul (Isa. 53. 11). There is no doubt in redemption. A disappointed covenant Saviour is not possible.

The "**fulness**" of the vials of praise (5. 8) as of contrasted vials in ch. 15. 1 must impress us. We cannot but remember the incense of Exodus 30, like to which there must be none other. The fourfold emphasis on salvation, "out of every kindred and tongue, and people, and nation" calls to mind Matthew 28. 19, and the link of "a kingdom" and "priests" speaks to us of Exodus 19. 5, 6 in type, and the glorious fulfilment in the finished work of our Lord Jesus (1 Peter 2. 5, 9). How can we be praiseful enough! The threefold ascription of praise in Revelation 5. 9, 12, 13 is impressive; first by those **typifying** saints, then by angels, and lastly by all animate creation, and in this appropriate order. May our devoted hearts be praiseful now, yea, full of praise, with a holy freshness of experience and spontaneousness in the Holy Spirit.

Thus will to-day and every day be an anticipation of "that Day," as our hearts cry, "Even so, Come Lord Jesus."

Praise.

Throughout the Scripture there is a holy stress on praise: its longest book is the book of praises. David the sweet psalmist of Israel delighted in praise, and one of the names of God is "He is thy Praise" (Deut. 10. 21). Yes, He is "Glorious in holiness, fearful in praises" (Ex. 15. 11), and condescends to inhabit the praises of His redeemed (Ps. 22. 3). Praise for all is ever emphasized (Ps. 71. 6-8), and praise more and more (Ps. 71. 14). The Lord Jesus leads the praise of saints (Ps. 22. 25, Heb. 2. 12). Heaven without praise would not be heaven.

The book of Revelation illustrates this. Praise is the reverse of wilderness murmuring and tempting. "Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house: they will be still praising Thee" (Ps. 84. 4). "The living, the living, he shall praise Thee" (Isa. 38. 19). Well may the longest Psalm encourage us by the words, "I will praise Thee with uprightness of heart and with my whole heart." A meeting without praise is cold, formal, and fruitless. A day without praise is worse than lost. Praise was used to open the Philippian jail, and praise is still God's appointed key for many locks that cause a fearful saint anxiety to-day.

A Difference.

WHAT is the difference between any of us and a respectable man of the world? Let us humbly and earnestly recognize the deep importance of such a question, if we are born from above, and truly indwelt by the Holy Spirit Himself. There should be a tremendous difference. I do not mean an obtrusive display. Far otherwise. The background life of the Lord Jesus, before He was manifested to Israel, shows the reverse of this. But the difference must be real, pervading all, and permanent, "Ye were once darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord," emphasizes a **contrast** with our own past, a contrast with "that which is born of the flesh." We do not speak of the profligate and openly evil. A **moral** man is contrasted with such. But there is to be an entire difference from a religious, yet **unsaved**, man who shows the "goodliness" of the flesh as an attractive "flower of the field" (Isa. 40. 6), if you and I have "the fruit of the Spirit" Gal. 5. 22, 23). The new birth implies a new life (John 5. 24). Saintship, not profession, is to characterize a saint. If distinction is only one of creed, and knowledge, it is not a **living** difference. If it is only seen on one day of the week, and limited to certain activities, it is not by any means evident that it is **essentially** a difference at all. May it not be a habit, a normal divergence as that which exists between individual temperaments, in accord with varied upbringing, and personal bent of mind? Is the difference **vital** and **fundamental**, or only partial, natural and temporary? Of essentials, or only of degree? Are you and I really born from above? This question is all-important and a call to holiness to-day, yea, to such Christlikeness every day. A believer believes, a saint is to be saintly, the sheep hear the Shepherd's voice, "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Rom. 8. 14).

Unbelief says, "It can't be" as to a promise that looks unlikely, and "I can't" as to a precept that is against personal wishes. But faith looks to God for both precept and promise, to work in us and for us.

The Appointed Relation of Baptism to the Breaking of the Bread.

IT will be helpful to enquire prayerfully regarding this, for, in a dispensation of few types, the emphasis seems yet more manifest to our expectant hearts.

In **appointment** we find baptism was set forth first, in the preparatory witness of John (Mark 1. 4, 5), and then of the Lord Jesus Himself (John 3. 23, 4. 1).

Next we notice that the **fulfilment** is always (in Scripture) in the same order. Those who were present when the Lord Jesus ordained the breaking of the bread were not such as rejected the counsel of God against themselves (Luke 7. 30). And in Acts 2. 41, 42, those who welcomed the word "were baptised . . . and they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and the fellowship, the breaking of bread and the prayers." So 1 Corinthians, which describes the Lord's Supper (ch. 11), intimates that all should be rightly baptized first (1. 13). Matthew 28. 19, 20 gives the same message. And the parallel types of circumcision and the passover were invariably in this order (Ex. 12. 48, Jos. 5. 2-11), nor is there any suggestion anywhere of anything else, or of any exceptions. In the arrangements of the Lord, innovation is sin.

The **meaning**, the deep spiritual meaning harmonizes with and emphasizes this. Baptism is pictorial of death and judgment, and rising to newness of life (Rom. 6. 4). To start thus over again would be unbecfitting. Hence, appropriately, baptism is the Lord's supper is

- | | |
|---------------|--------------------------------|
| (a) but once, | (a) repeated, |
| (b) personal. | (b) collective, by the church. |

In the latter we show **His** death, but **our** sustenance. Life begins but once, but we need physical food continually. And thus is life maintained and strengthened. How graciously is all set forth, and the parallels between the physical and spiritual—both in our Father's appointment—are helpful.

Both bring before us

- the Lord Jesus Himself, and none other in our salvation.
- His death in our place, taking the judgment we deserved.
- the bright Hope of that Day, and His coming.

Baptism takes us, as it were, into the wilderness, and the Lord's Supper speaks of sustaining there that we may meet every need in the strength of the Lord.

May we not see another parallel in this, even Israel's passing through the Red Sea followed by the Manna, and the refreshment from the Rock? Evidently this is intended, and observe the Holy Spirit thus gives the same unchanged order in 1 Cor. 10. 2, 3.*

* Those appointed to priesthood and the cleansed lepers were bathed before the partaking of the peace offerings.

May we not only hold fast to our Lord's loving appointment and the due order (1 Chron. 15. 13), but seek to enjoy our privileges with the symbols He Himself gave, as to both of which alteration is so "easy" and has, alas, been so often illustrated. Dear believing reader, have you been Scripturally baptised, or not? Were you immersed **after** you were "alive" in Christ Jesus? And are you now keeping the Lord's Supper according to His own words? True, the type is **not** the Antitype, and our feeding on Him within is vital in the power of the Holy Spirit, but this does not imply indifference to His words, or a wish to plough a lonely furrow, but a yearning to be with believers (even if it means a change of residence) to willingly fulfil unitedly the will of their Lord and Saviour, and yours.

"Christ . . . gave **Himself** . . . for her"

"The Son of God . . . gave **Himself** for me."

The word "Substitution" has been used in English to emphasize that our beloved Lord really took the place of those for whom He answered, in full covenant obligation, and became "Sin" (the same word denotes "sin offering," there is NO THOUGHT of moral change in His absolute perfection), and a "curse" (Gal. 3. 13), "instead of" them. It is wondrous to see how this Divine appointment gave them a threefold deliverance, namely, from deserved wrath, which He bore; from Satan's authority, over which He triumphed; and from **themselves** in bringing the self-tyranny to a legal end. Transcendent, indeed, was the Divine wisdom to combine all three, and, not only so, substitution involves such a complete work that there must be a life eternal instead of judgment, and that life in vital union with the adorable Substitute: Himself. Could anything be more glorious? And the wonders are not exhausted, for this changes the character and disposition of the redeemed, and brings in sanctification and Christ-likeness, so that holiness is secured as well as justification, and resurrection and eternal glory guaranteed. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His Holy Name."

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ" finishes the New Testament, and it is appropriate, for creation (that begins Genesis) does not save a sinner, and the fulfilment of prophecy (that commences Matthew) would not redeem, although leading up to the work of redemption. We need grace to meet our sin and our need, a personal Saviour and an inflow of continual enabling for the constant "wear and tear" of daily life to please Him.

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The Student of Scripture.

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"Mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands."
Isaiah 65, 22.

A Word of Introduction.

DISAPPOINTMENT is written over human history. Expectations are broken, hopes are dashed to the ground. "Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity." And the history of often-persecuted Israel illustrates this.

But God's words abide, "Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit." Our eyes are on the near coming of the Lord Jesus. We would obey the startling command of Isaiah 62. 6, 7, "Ye that are the Lord's remembrancers, keep not silence, and give Him no silence, till He establish, and till He make JERUSALEM A PRAISE IN THE EARTH." We believe the words of Scripture implicitly. We pray accordingly.

And the PRINCIPLE of the promise applies to us also. Election is by grace. It leads to godly works. And thus shall be established fruit and joy. God desires His possession to possess their possessions. He delights in the delights of His redeemed. Let us look upward, and live with holy restful intensity, ever "looking for that blessed Hope," and knowing the present anticipations in gracious ministry of the Holy Spirit. With this desire these pages go forth.

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"Conscience, I say, not thine own, but of the other."

(1 Cor. 10. 29)

And Related Subjects.

SELFISHNESS is not limited to stealing, greed, and place-seeking. Nor is it only found in outward actions that are plainly evil: it may be concealed in the heart, in under-currents, and in activities which seem, or are, right in **themselves**, but as to which the motives, or the occasions, are not well-pleasing

in the Lord's sight. 'This subject will present many thoughts to the prayerful and humble believer who desires to grow up "into Christ" in **all** things.

Just now may we ponder giving up what may appear to us fully permissible—for the sake of others? The apostle felt deeply the importance of this. His emphasis upon it at quite different times, and in quite different contexts, in Romans 14 and 1 Cor. 10 alike, will manifest this. It is deeply important not to cause others to stumble, nor to wound their consciences because of having "our own way." What will be **the effect** of our example? Possibly it may be a matter similar to that of which the apostle definitely speaks. Or it may be something allowed in the home or clothing that will be copied by others? Or something in our use of time, and in our reading? It is well to be very sensitive in these things. If we are quick to say, "I am satisfied myself," we cut ourselves off from the unity which our loving Lord has appointed. The hasty retort, "You ought not to stumble," "They should not misapply," are quite unbefitting saintship. We are more responsible than we realize for the direct results of our actions. Many are imitating us—unconsciously, it may be.

Even in our desire to please the Lord we may, through lack of discernment, and through our "own idea" of pleasing, occasion a real hindrance. For example, the privilege of "home meetings" is a great one, but if the effect of homeliness ever becomes "lightness," or if each home copies the other in a measure of elaborate preparation or contrast with simplicity, or if the happy wish to show hospitality is over-manifested, and makes some feel they must vie with others in providing equally, there may be even generated a pride and rivalry, and a taking of the mind off the spiritual things of the meeting. And this will be through that which was intended primarily in love.

How careful and prayerful we need to be. How subtle is the enemy to introduce that which would spoil the tender grapes and take away the spiritual refreshment and power and fruit which the Lord desires, and which we, too, desire in the Spirit. The more earnest we are, the more earnest we need to remain, for the corruption of the best is often the worst, as the old proverb said. The maggot would penetrate into the best fruit. O that we may live and walk in the Holy Spirit, with a holy sensitiveness, and perception of what all-round growth in likeness to Christ really means.

"He hath shortened the days" (Mark 13. 20): not "made shorter" (as English may suggest), but "made short," i.e., in His original purpose. Unto this appointed short period He will keep exactly. Christ will not come one day late, and His redeemed ones will be sustained till the end. There is no temptation too **heavy** (1 Cor. 10. 13), and the tribulation will not be too **long**. Our loving Heavenly Father tempers all and causes all things to **work together** for good to them that love Him.

A Concordance to Psalm 119.

How intimate was the Lord's servant with the Lord, yet ever reverently. Is it so with us, by grace?

We long that the use of this Concordance may further endear the Holy Scriptures to many believing readers. O, that there may be in us all the desire to "hear what the Spirit **saith**" (present tense, Rev. 2. 7, etc.), in accord with our beloved Lord's own attitude in Matthew 4. 4:—"The Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Love obeys: love pleases God.

The longest psalm is full of praise to God for His own words. It is suggested for learning by heart—being an eightfold acrostic in the original: the first 8 verses beginning with the first Hebrew letter, and so throughout the alphabet (22 letters). How few embrace the privilege of learning. I have never heard those who have done so regret it, but have learnt of blessing and sustained delight.

How precious, too, is the mosaic of different, and ever appropriate, words for God's truth: commandments, judgments, law, precepts, statutes, testimonies, words (two terms). All are used perfectly and frequently.

How real is the emphasis on personal joy, for example, "my delights," "my songs," "I have loved," "I rejoice." There is nothing forced. This personal note is uppermost. As throughout the Psalms, there is deep experience, and thus this book has come into the experience of saints ever since. The suffix for "my" and "me" occurs about 150 times in the Hebrew. But, even more frequently, we find the word "Thy." We can hardly find a verse without. "God" is only thus **named** once (115): there is a constant speaking to **Him**—fellowship. This suffix "Thy" or "Thee" appears over 220 times.

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* Suggestions as to any omissions,
errors or improvements, will be wel-
comed to the glory of God. May I
here, with filial gratitude, recall and
record my beloved father's intense
interest in, and prayerful study of, this
Psalm, and its fruit in many—as well
as myself?

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Nothing before God's time: nothing behind.

The Lord Jesus was appointed to partake of food, He **shall** be acknowledged in the temple at Jerusalem, He **shall** reign over all the world:—in each case in Matthew 4 the tempter urged acting before the time—independently. The very tense used implies "Do it now." But the Lord Jesus, the Perfect One, illustrated John 5. 19 perfectly. We see the sad contrast in Saul (1 Sam. 13. 12), and in the Corinthians (1 Cor. 4. 5, 8). But we behold a willingness to wait God's time of deliverance in Abraham (Gen. 22. 10-13) and in David (1 Sam. 26. 10; note 25. 33, 39; also see 2 Sam. 5. 23, 24). How deeply important that **we** should wait on the Lord (Prov. 20. 22).

It is true that the enemy will sometimes seek to retard us: he ever has exactly **contrasted** temptations, to bring the exactly opposite mode of attack, when we are **off our guard**. It is important, therefore, not to put off and delay (Hag. 1. 2). We must not through laziness excuse inaction, nor through self-diffidence be ensnared to lack confidence in God (Ex. 4. 10). How blessed it is to respond to His will, and to be in His way, and to harmonize with His time, and to enter into His purposes, in love's devotedness and holiness of motive.

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