

CHRISTIAN TREASURY VOLUME 10

by Unknown

A collection of articles and writings from Christian Treasury Volume 10, covering various biblical topics and Christian teaching.

150 Chapters

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Christian Treasury Volume 10

The Church of God

There are two great aspects of the Church of God as presented in Scripture. First of all, there is the true thing in its relation to Christ as His body—that which is united to Christ by the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven—"the assembly, which is His body" (Eph. 1:22-23 JND). Second, we see the Church in its relation to God as His dwelling place on earth, the assembly, or house of God. Of this last, two aspects come out very distinctly in Scripture: that which Christ builds, and that which man builds.

The word "church," or properly "assembly," is used of both the body of Christ and the house of God. That is, if you look into heaven, you find Christ gone up there, and the assembly is His body, as seen in Ephesians 1. If you look below, here on earth, the house (that is, those who profess Christianity) is "the assembly of the living God" (1 Tim. 3:15 JND). They are two distinct thoughts and are never confused.

Most of the confusion of Christendom at the present time has come in by the mixing up of these two things. There is also the body of Christ as in I Corinthians 12, seen on earth and composed of those who are here, and these only, maintained in power and unity by the Holy Spirit on earth. And Christians on earth were treated practically, as gathered together in any place, as "the body of Christ" in that place, as Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular" (1 Cor. 12:27).

F.G. Patterson

Editorial: The End of a Millennium

Are you ready to begin writing 1995 as the date for the present? It is surprising to many of us that time is so far advanced. In just five more years the date will be 2000. This makes us ask, When does the next millennium begin?

In order to be certain, we have to go back and start at the beginning of the first millennium A.D. It started with the year one. There was no year called zero. From there we readily ascertain that the year 1000 A.D. had to be completed before the second millennium could begin. The date of the beginning of the second millennium, then, was the year 1001 A.D. According to this easy way of calculating, the third millennium must begin with the year 2001 A.D. Are you surprised, or even disappointed with these figures?

Few people have ever lived to see a change of millenniums. It is now only six full years until this unusual event will happen.

If we take the first digit of the year as most significant, then the change to two instead of one will occur on January the first in the year 2000. This, of course, is one full year nearer and so it is only five years from now.

Commonly, we speak of the reign of our Lord Jesus Christ for 1000 years as the millennium. Of course, as to the Gregorian calendar that we now use, we cannot state when Christ's kingdom of 1000 years here on earth will begin.

The disciples asked Jesus in Matthew 24, "Tell us, when shall these things be?" Our Lord Jesus answered this in verses 32 to 36. "Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away. But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but My Father only." We conclude, then, that no man knows when shall be the coming of the Son of man to take His rightful place as King.

We do know that there will be many cleansing judgments preliminary to His manifestation as King of kings and Lord of lords. Also we do know that we believers of this present time, along with the whole Church and all the dead in Christ, shall be caught up to be with Him before the preliminary judgment falls upon the Christ-rejectors.

Surely "the coming of the Lord draweth nigh" (James 5:8). Does that not thrill your heart? Time moves relentlessly forward. The day of the gospel of the grace of God soon will close. Let us all who belong to the Lord Jesus Christ do as He said in Luke 19:13: "Occupy till I come." Ed.

Lessons of Shiloh: Part 1

C. Stanley

God had redeemed Israel from Egypt. They were delivered from the power of Pharaoh, separated from Egypt by the waters of the Red Sea. And more than that, they had seen the ark pass into the depths of Jordan; they had followed through that type of death into the land. They had been circumcised; the reproach of Egypt had been rolled away; they had kept the Passover in the land and had known some fighting, failure and victory. And now "the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together at Shiloh, and set up the tabernacle of the congregation there."

Before we examine the first lesson of Shiloh, let us ask, How far have we traveled this journey? Can we remember in the days of our wretched slavery to Satan that we had no power or means of escape? Did God, in His deep compassion for us, send His Son to redeem us by His own blood? Have we eternal redemption through His blood? Have we known real deliverance from sin and Satan? Have we been separated from the world, Satan's world, by the death of Christ, as the children of Israel were separated from Egypt? Have we had wilderness experience, and there learned that in us, that is, in our flesh, there is no good? And further, have we died to it all with Christ and in Him entered the land? If dead with Him and risen with Him, that is the end of wilderness trial of the flesh, of self under law.

Have we, as dead and risen, been circumcised? Do we own that separation unto God as a sign of that righteousness we had in Him when He called us, as ungodly, Egypt's reproach being rolled away? And have we kept our Passover, entering with boldness into His presence by the blood of the Lamb? Do we know anything of fightings, failures and victories?

Yes, Israel had now traveled as far as Shiloh. It is well to ask ourselves, Have we reached that point? Can we trace the hand of our God thus far with us? If so, let us ask, What is Shiloh? And what are its lessons to us? The first lesson we have is this: "And the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together at Shiloh, and set up the tabernacle of the congregation there."

Shiloh was the place where the Lord set up His name in the land at first (Jer. 7:12)—the tabernacle, His dwelling place in the midst of Israel. Shiloh, the place where the Lord dwelt, was the very center of all Israel. Is not Shiloh, the gathering of the whole assembly of Israel together, then, a striking type of the Church, or assembly, of God? There was one assembly of Israel and the Lord in the midst. On the day of Pentecost the one assembly of God was formed by the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven.

There are, however, many points of contrast between the type and the antitype. Israel's redemption was temporal and earthly; the redemption of the Church is heavenly—for heaven and eternal. The Lord was in the midst of Israel, but the veil shut them out of His presence. When Jesus bowed His head in death for us, the veil was rent from top to bottom and the way into God's presence was opened forever. The calling of Israel was earthly; the calling of the Church is

heavenly. How much is involved in this! A great work had been accomplished for Israel and they were now in the land; they had crossed the Jordan, and they had come to Shiloh, the place of gathering to the Lord.

What a work had been accomplished for the Church when the first great gathering together took place and the assembly was formed! In one case all Israel were together; in the other, "all that believed were together" (Acts 2:42-47). "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart" (Acts 4:32-37). With Israel "the land was subdued before them." And with the assembly, the Church, what mighty power there was in those first apostolic days! Converts then, by the power of the Holy Spirit, were numbered by thousands.

Now, though Israel had passed the Jordan and were in the very center of the land, yet it was a well-known fact that seven tribes had not yet received their inheritance. Is not this also the case with the assembly, the Church, to this day? The Church in the person of its Head is in possession of the glory, yet how many dear Christians there are who have not received the inheritance!

Have we really laid hold of this truth—that all believers are reckoned as having crossed the Jordan, dead with Christ, risen in Him, partakers with Him of the eternal inheritance, and joint-heirs with Christ? No doubt we cannot understand this or enjoy it, though in the heavenly position, and we cannot possess it unless we have reached our Shiloh—what God began to do at Pentecost.

It is important to know what point we have reached in our own souls. How many have passed through deep distress of soul as to sin and its bondage like Israel in Egypt! They have reached the blood of the Lamb, having found there is no other shelter from judgment. And, through the mercy of God, they have taken shelter, though in the dark, beneath the blood-sprinkled dwelling in Egypt.

There they remain in that house; truly they are safe, but have never known in power what deliverance from Egypt is. Redemption in full, eternal deliverance they have never yet known. Such souls can have no light in that state, as to what Shiloh or Pentecost means.

Others may have traveled a step further. They may see distinctly that they were slaves of sin and Satan, and, as such, may have learned how they found shelter by the blood of the Lamb, and more, deliverance. They have been separated from Satan's kingdom and power through the death of Christ. But they have not yet learned the surpassing grace of Ephesians 2 and Colossians 2; 3:1-4. Have you passed through Jordan with the true Ark, which is Christ?

This will introduce you to God's thoughts of His assembly now on earth, and what He expects from it. "And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, How long are ye slack to go to possess the land, which the Lord God of your fathers hath given you?" God had given them that goodly land, but they had not taken possession. He has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heaven lies in Christ. How long have we been slack to go to possess our heavenly inheritance?

Shiloh, then, was not only the true ground of worship—there Jehovah dwelt amidst the people—but it was also the center of all operations and conquests. From thence three men from each tribe were to go forth and mark out the land that remained. "And they shall divide it into seven parts." "Ye shall therefore describe the land into seven parts, and bring the description hither to me, that I may cast lots for you here before the Lord our God." They were solemnly charged to bring the description there to Shiloh before the Lord. And they did so, "and described it by cities

into seven parts in a book, and came again to Joshua to the host at Shiloh." Thus they went forth from Shiloh, and they "divided for an inheritance by lot in Shiloh before the Lord, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation" (Josh. 18:1, 8-10; 19:51).

Here, then, we have two important principles: the tabernacle being set up at Shiloh as the dwelling place of God, it becomes the center of gathering for worship, and also the center from which all operations have their source. It was so with the assembly once set up at Pentecost; it became the dwelling place of God. "In whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph. 2:19-22). All believers were gathered together and builded together, and from this center, even from the Lord by the Spirit, all service had its spring and power (Acts 13:1-4).

The land was divided at Shiloh, and all cases for judgment were brought there before the Lord. It was there the fathers of the Levites came to Joshua and unto the heads of the tribes, and there they spake unto them (Joshua 21:1-3). Was not this also in like manner in the beginning of the Church? (See Acts 4:32-37.) The Holy Spirit had come down from heaven, had formed the assembly, and united it to Christ in heaven; it had come to dwell and abide in the midst of the one Church. The new Shiloh was set up in the wilderness of this world—the Church, the dwelling place of God the Holy Spirit. Oh, if our hearts realized this, would it not be enough to settle any and every question brought before Him?

We shall now find that Shiloh was not only a striking picture of the assembly, as Shiloh was first set up in the land, after the full accomplishment of redemption, but also of its subsequent history. The words at the end of the book of Joshua are very significant: "And Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the Lord, that He had done for Israel" (Josh. 24:31). This closes the history of the Acts of the Apostles. While the apostles and the elders who had seen the works of the Holy Spirit lived, and those elders who outlived the apostles, the assembly served the Lord and waited with joyful expectation for His return.

We now turn the page to the book of Judges, and what a picture of the failures of the Church! Can those who know anything of history question the rapid increase of evil in the professing church? Let us not forget that all through the book of Judges, the tabernacle remained at Shiloh. And in like manner, all through the dark history of Christendom, the Holy Spirit has remained in it, however grieved.

When Joshua and all that generation were gathered of unto their fathers, "there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which He had done for Israel. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim: and they forsook the Lord God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that were round about" (Judges 2:10-12). Is not this a sad picture of the Church as seen in its responsibility on earth? How soon it linked itself with the idolatry of the nations of the earth. The presence of the Holy Spirit was soon practically set aside; yes, complete redemption almost forgotten. Where is it to be found in the so-called fathers of the church?

How little is said about the tabernacle at Shiloh during the days of the Judges! Yet it was surely there. It is not until chapter 18 that it is even named. "And they set them up Micah's graven image, which he made, all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh" (Judges 18:31). Have there been

no graven images set up in the so-called Church? Yet the Holy Spirit is still here.

Again we find a man going up to the house of the Lord (Judges 19:18). And what scenes of cruelty and fearful wickedness he witnessed! This aroused all Israel, and they gathered together and came unto the house of the Lord and wept, and sat there before the Lord, and fasted (Judges 20:26). What terrible destruction fell on Benjamin that day! This ended in leaving Benjamin without wives. And again Shiloh comes before us—yes, its locality needed to be accurately described. "Then they said, Behold, there is a feast of the Lord in Shiloh yearly, in a place which is on the north side of Bethel, on the east side of the highway that goeth up from Bethel to Shechem, and on the south of Lebonah" (Judges 21:19). And it was as the daughters of Shiloh came out of the city to dance, every man caught his wife, to go to the land of Benjamin.

Thus, in the book of Judges we see the sad downward failure of Israel with times of revival and deliverance from time to time as God raised up deliverers, but the very locality of the tabernacle at Shiloh had to be pointed out. Very, very little is said or known, apparently, about the presence of Jehovah, and the place where He recorded His name.

Is it not equally so in what is called church history after the first century? Failure, departure and worldliness creep in. But the true Church of God, as seen in the Acts and the epistles, is scarcely named and scarcely known; yes, the heavenly calling and principles of the Church were so effaced from men's minds that, even in this day, not a few lie in wait and steal them as the sons of Benjamin stole the daughters of Shiloh. Yes, how many steal precious truths, not to remain at Shiloh, the gathering together unto Him, but to take and trade with them in the land of Benjamin! The books of Joshua and Judges read like a prophetic sketch of the Church as seen in its history on earth.

Before we proceed to that deeply interesting and solemn warning of our subject—Shiloh—as found in 1 Samuel, let us ask, Are we not slack in every sense in possessing the land? The whole period of the history of Christendom, before its final apostasy and perhaps into it, is also divided into seven divisions of its history (Rev. 2-3). But even at this time, how many towns and villages are there where the Lord's people have not got possession of the heavenly inheritance! Are we not slack to go up to help them? Yes, souls need help all along the way from the darkness of Egypt to Shiloh. Do we not all need to arise and take possession? If we are at Shiloh, God's center, still let us remember we are in the midst of enemies far more subtle than the children of Canaan. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph. 6:12).

Lessons of Shiloh: Still the Center in Declension?

1 Samuel 1-3

In Elkanah we have an Israelite who fully recognized the place of Jehovah in Shiloh, as He says, "Go ye now unto My place which was in Shiloh, where I set My name at the first" (Jer. 7:12). This is the more cheering after all the failure and forgetfulness of their history during the period of the fudges. Was it not sad that they should so soon turn aside from the center that God had set up—His dwelling place among them—and set up their own idolatry in their high places? Is it not still more strangely sad that the Church should have so soon, and for so long, turned aside from God's center—God's gathering place—the Person of Christ, and set up churches of men's own in every land?

After all the forgetfulness and departure, Shiloh was still the only place where the name of the Lord was recorded. It was still the same. The mercy seat, cherubim, golden altar, candlestick, laver and altar of burnt offering were all there as at the first. Thither did Elkanah bring his whole house, all his sons and daughters. There they came to worship.

"This man went up out of his city yearly to worship and to sacrifice unto the Lord of hosts in Shiloh" (1 Sam. 1:3).

Is not this a refreshing sight? They came to that place where all Israel had been gathered together in the days of Joshua, as we have seen. Has there not been a little reviving in our day after the true Shiloh had been almost forgotten? Have not a few believers been gathered together to worship, even to the name of the Lord Jesus, in His presence, owning the presence of the Holy Spirit, as in the days of the apostles?

After centuries of forgetfulness, as in the days of the judges, have not souls been awakened to inquire what is and where is Shiloh, that is, the quiet, true place of the assembly of God? Shiloh means "quiet," or "peaceful"—and oh, the blessed peace of being in His presence as worshippers! Yes, the true Shiloh is wherever two or three are gathered to His name. For a time the scepter has departed from Judah, and the period of gathering together to Him has come, even as it will be in another way, and in a future day.

Happy is the Elkanah of our day who with his whole household is gathered to the true Shiloh, even unto the Lord to worship. There is one remarkable member of this household—we might say a true Philadelphian in her day. Shall we now observe closely Hannah before the Lord at Shiloh? She was a despised woman of little strength, and, to look at, of little worth, for she had no child "and her adversary also provoked her sore." She was of a grieved spirit, but she held fast the word. What earnestness of prayer! She asked for what she wished to devote to the Lord in Shiloh. She "prayed unto the Lord, and wept sore." And "she continued praying before the Lord."

"Now Hannah, she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard." She was greatly misunderstood, even by Eli the priest. There were others at Shiloh—we will notice them

soon— but how far do we answer to Hannah at Shiloh? She could say, "I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the Lord:" The Lord heard her cry, and Samuel was the gift in answer to her prayer at Shiloh.

The Lord's presence was very dear to Hannah at Shiloh, and to all Elkanah's household. And what was the inmost desire of Hannah for her precious child? Let her tell us. She says, "I will bring him, that he may appear before the Lord, and there abide forever;" and she "brought him unto the house of the Lord in Shiloh: and the child was young." She does not say, He is only a child; I will leave him at home in Ramah. No, she brings him to the house of the Lord in Shiloh.

Is there no voice in this to us? Have we fewer privileges as to our children now than Hannah had then? Then, as now, the reward was to the overcomer. Who would have thought that sorrowful Hannah was the overcomer? Read her triumphant song of faith. What a keynote: "My heart rejoiceth in the Lord." Faith soars beyond all difficulties, evils and judgments, and looks right on to Israel's—even Messiah's—glory. Here, then, is one not only on true ground at the place where the Lord had placed His name—the true gathering place and center of all Israel, but she is in the state of heart suitable to that place.

It is sometimes said we do not see that those gathered to the Lord, as at the beginning, are any better than others—evil shows itself there as elsewhere. In plain words this means, It is no matter whether we do the will of the Lord, or not. After all the evil recorded in the Book of Judges, was not Shiloh still the only place Jehovah owned as His dwelling place?

The ark was still there, and those who sought the Lord, like Elkanah, came there. There Hannah prayed and worshipped. There she brought her young child. There she rejoiced in the Lord. The more we study the case of Hannah at Shiloh, the more we must own it to be of the Lord.

Now let us look at the warning this scripture presents. There was terrible evil at Shiloh, evil that must be, and was, judged. Could we have a more striking contrast than Hannah and the sons of Eli? In one case, a worshipper filled with joy in the Lord; in the other, the most daring wickedness—yes, wickedness that refused to be restrained, and carelessness that neglected to restrain wickedness.

All this is a picture of the house of God, now become the great house of Christendom, but to the faith of Hannah or her child it was still Shiloh, the quiet place of communion with God-Jehovah. Did not the Lord speak there to Samuel? "And the Lord appeared again in Shiloh: for the Lord revealed Himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the Lord" (1 Sam. 3:21).

Shiloh was the gathering place of Israel, and however few were gathered to Him—yes, even to one— He thus reveals Himself. It is so where two or three are gathered to Him now. It is in Shiloh, so to speak, He appears again. He reveals Himself to those really gathered to Himself in a way unknown elsewhere, and this by the word of the Lord.

No one will question that there may be, in our closing day, two persons, both as to position gathered on true ground, both professedly in the dwelling place of God. The one hears the distinct voice of the Lord by the Word; the other does not hear, has no real communication of God's thoughts. How is this? Have we not the answer here at Shiloh?

There is the stout and aged Eli, the very priest of Jehovah. Age, antiquity, office and authority—all these he has, and he is in the dwelling place of God, but he does not hear a word. He had grieved the Lord by the allowance of evil. Is it so with any of us? Can we hear and understand the voice of the Lord if allowing evil? Impossible!

There was another person in the same house of the Lord. But what a contrast! It was the little child Samuel. Are we like this little child, or like the ancient, aged Eli? There were two things very striking in the case of Samuel. He had been first weaned before he was presented to the Lord in Shiloh. You see that man of importance, who fails to hear the voice of the Lord in the assembly, gathered to Him in Shiloh. He never was weaned.

Have you been weaned? Or did you take a place at Shiloh with your heart still linked with the world and like it in your ways? It was after Hannah had weaned him that she "brought him unto the house of the Lord in Shiloh: and the child was young. And they slew a bullock, and brought the child to Eli" (1 Sam. 1:24-25).

Samuel was not only weaned, but presented to the Lord through death. Have we been separated from the world, and from all human, religious efforts to improve the flesh, by the cross of Christ? Weaned, dead with Christ, and as a little child we listen to the voice of the Lord in His Word; it is not enough to be in the right place or position at Shiloh. But oh, to be a little child, to be nothing and with the ear open to hear what the Spirit speaks. Lord, search us by Thy Word! If we are walking in the steps of Eli, we cannot have communion with the Lord.

Oh, to be as a little child, weaned and presented to our God through death! And notice that it is only as such that we can be used, in communicating the Word of the Lord to others. Read again 1 Samuel 3:16-21. Whatever the Lord reveals to us in His Word we must faithfully declare to others, even to the Elis of this day. Judgment was at the very doors of Shiloh. And is not judgment at the very doors of Christendom? Surely holiness was becoming to the house of the Lord at Shiloh! And as surely holiness is becoming to the house of God. But what has it become? And what will it yet become? Soon will Ichabod (glory is departed) be written upon it. And how terrible its destruction will be may be seen in Revelation 17 and 18.

But, beloved children of God, very great are our privileges during the brief moments that remain. If we are little, we shall grow. "And Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him." Oh, to thus grow in grace, and in the blessed consciousness of the Lord's presence with us, where two or three are gathered to His name. There is no doubt that men are more determined than ever to reject the testimony of the Lord Jesus. But the Lord "let none of his words fall to the ground." May we be fully persuaded of this, that the Lord will let none of His words, at this time of rejection, fall to the ground.

Judgment must begin at the house of the Lord. In one sense it has begun—the whole Church is no longer gathered as one to the Lord. The ark has been in the hand of the Philistines, and the little Samuels have to go to Ramah. Ramah was his home. And while the ark has outwardly been a long time now with the Philistines—the world, those in Canaan, but not of it—yet the Lord has never failed to find a Ramah, a blessed home, for His twos and threes in His presence, and to them that home is their Shiloh.

How blessed, even at this day, is the home of His dear presence! Though Christendom be like ancient Shiloh, though there be not a stone in Shiloh that bears the slightest resemblance to its original form or purpose, or though there be not one thing left in Christendom that bears the slightest likeness of its original design, how blessed to any who are truly weaned and presented, through death with Christ, to God, to find Him with them in Ramah.

In conclusion, we would desire to consider carefully those words, "And the Lord appeared again in Shiloh: for the Lord revealed Himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the Lord." Let us be careful, on the one hand, not to disconnect the Word from the Person of the Lord, and so become mere intellectual students of Scripture, which gives no spiritual power to the soul. On the other hand, be equally careful lest we separate the Lord from His Word and thus become fanatical, and trust in feelings or visions or sp-called inward light. May we see and hear the Lord Himself in every scripture. Thus may the Lord reveal Himself to us by the Word of the Lord!

It will be seen in Hannah's song that the Lord is before her soul in every thought; His salvation and His Person fill her soul with joy at a time when there was everything to discourage in Israel. May it be so with us.

C. Stanley

Bible Challenger-01-January V.10

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the word identifying an attribute of God to be displayed in the ages to come that is manifested in the exceeding riches of His grace. The number in brackets indicates the number of missing words in each answer.

1. "The man is near of kin unto us, one of our next_____." [1]
2. "Yea, _____ with an everlasting love." [4]
3. "I will worship toward Thy holy temple, and praise Thy_____." [1]
4. "To whom I shall say, Let Thy pitcher." [1]
5. "Thou wentest after Me in the wilderness, in a land that was_____." [2]
6. "Thou shalt _____ at my table continually." [2]
7. "The children of men put their trust under the _____ of Thy wings." [1]
8. "Every place whither we shall come,_____, He is my brother." [3]

Answers to these questions will be found in the next issue of Christian Treasury.

R. Erisman

Bible Challenger-00-December Answers to V.09

1. Good will Luke 2:14
2. Light Rev. 21:11
3. One another Rom. 15:7
4. Rejoice in hope Rom. 5:2
5. Your part 1 Peter 4:14
6. On the right hand Acts 7:55
7. Fruits Phil. 1:11 13.
8. Glorified John 11:4 9.
9. Out of darkness 2 Cor. 4:6 10
10. Drink 1 Car. 10:31

'The heavens declare the GLORY OF GOD; and the firmament showeth His handiwork" (Psa. 19:1).

Courage to Stand in Remnant Days

"Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown" (Revelation 3:11)

It is a day of small things, and we must not be discouraged if we find people taking little interest in the truth, or even opposing it. We are just in the end of a broken-down and ruined dispensation on which the judgment of God is about to fall. We must not expect to see results such as were seen at the beginning when an un-grieved Spirit was working in great power.

I think we find much instruction in Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai and Malachi for the present day, which is somewhat analogous to the time referred to in those books. The ten tribes had been carried away by Shalmaneser and were lost. Judah had been carried into Babylon and spent 70 years in captivity. A remnant from Judah returned in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah, and the temple and the walls of the city were rebuilt. This return and the building of the temple and walls of the city were all pure grace from the Lord.

We see, on the part of the people so favored, a constant tendency to decline. They did not go on with the work as they should. They yielded to the influence of the enemy and the work ceased. Haggai charged them with living in ceiled houses while God's house lay waste, and they had to be stirred up afresh to go on with the work.

Then in Malachi, a little over 100 years later, we see most dreadful declension—a mass of profession without reality, in the midst of which were to be found a feeble few who feared the Lord and spake often one to another.

This little remnant alone got the approval of the Lord with the assurance that they should be His when He makes up His jewels. About 400 years later we still find this feeble remnant in such as Zacharias and Elisabeth, Mary, old Simeon and Anna, and the shepherds on the plains of Bethlehem. But oh! how few and how feeble. And it is something the same now as we draw near the end—a great mass of profession with but little reality.

There are those the Lord owns and of whom He can say, Thou "hast kept My word, and hast not denied My name," and those too who have kept their garments, and who shall walk with Him in white.

But these are the few—not the many. Well, in such a day what we are called to is to hold fast. "Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown" (Rev. 3:11).

The struggle will be short, for He is near, but it is real, and we need courage to stand even if it is alone. There was a time when no man stood with Paul, but the Lord stood with him and the testimony was given. He was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. How blessed to be able to count on Him, though all others forsake us!

A. H. Rule

Proverbs

Simon Patrick on the Proverbs

1683

Chapter 5:15-23

15. "Drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well." Such are the fruitless moans of a man that hath quite exhausted himself in those lewd courses, which show how much better it is to follow the advice which I now give thee: marry; and in a wife of thine own enjoy the pleasure thou desirest, and be content with them alone; innocent, chaste, and pure pleasures; as much different from the other, as the clear waters of a wholesome fountain are from those of a dirty lake or puddle.

16. "Let thy fountains be dispersed abroad, and rivers of waters in the streets." Of whom thou mayest have a law full issue, which thou neediest not be ashamed to own; but openly produce, and send them abroad, like streams from a spring, to serve the public good: nay, a numerous progeny may be derived from your happy society, and match into divers other honest families.

17. "Let them be only thine own, and not strangers' with thee." Children that acknowledge no other father, because they spring from one whom thou enjoyest (like a fountain in thine own ground) to thy self alone: being taught by thy confining thy self to her, never to admit any stranger to thy bed; but to keep it solely unto thee.

18. "Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth." Happy shall thine every way be in such a wife; whom I advise [advise] thee to take in thy youth, and avoiding those filthy cruel harlots (vs. 9) to solace thy self in her innocent and delight-full company: whereby thou wilt long preserve thy youth, which they speedily deflower (vs. 10).

19. "Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant roe; let her breasts satisfy thee at all times; and be thou ravished always with her love." Love her and cherish her with a most tender affection; and let her always seem amiable in thine eyes: if thou wouldst recreate and disport thy self (as some are wont to do with young fawns, and other beautiful creatures of like kind) let it be with her, as the sweetest companion; in whose embraces take such satisfaction, as to forget all other, and to be excessively transported with her as long as you live.

20. "And why wilt thou, my son, be ravished with a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger?" Consider, my son (vs. 1), what I say, and deny if thou canst, that it is an unaccountable folly to seek in a vile harlot (to whom thou oughtest to be as great a stranger, as to her religion) that which thou mayest more fully, more pleasantly, securely, and constantly, as well as more innocently, enjoy in a pious wife of thine own nation.

21. "For the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and He pondereth all his goings." And which is most considerable, enjoy with the approbation and favor of the Lord: from whom no man

can hide his most private actions, but He plainly sees and weighs all he doth, wheresoever he be; and will exactly proportion rewards and punishments, according as he behaves himself.

22. "His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins." If he be a wicked fornicator or adulterer, for instance, let him not think to escape, because he is so cunning that nobody observes him, or so powerful that none can call him to account: for his own manifold iniquities shall arrest and apprehend him; and he shall need no other chains to bind and hold him fast, to answer for them to God.

23. "He shall die without instruction; and in the greatness of his (ally he shall go astray." Whose sentence upon such a person is this; that he shall inevitably perish (vs. 5), because he refused to follow these instructions; and not only miss of his aim of being happy, but like men that wander from the right way, precipitate himself into unexpected ruin (vss. 9-11) because he was such an egregious fool, as to take no warning by all that could be said to him; but still to commit innumerable sins (vss. 13-14) though he as told the many inconveniencies, nay, mischief they would bring upon him.

Questions and Answers

QUESTION: Who are the many that "run to and fro"? What knowledge is increased (Dan. 12:4)?

ANSWER: It is the last days of Israel's history under the times of the Gentiles. Another translation puts "run to and fro" as "shall diligently investigate." The Psalms, Prophets, Gospels and Revelation will be well investigated and guidance given to both converted Jews and Gentiles then where the gospel of the kingdom is preached. It is not yet. Daniel's book is still sealed.

Amazing Love!

The Lord that I have known as laying down His life for me is the same Lord I have to do with every day of my life, and all His dealings with me are on the same principles of grace. How precious, how strengthening it is to know that Jesus is at this moment feeling and exercising the same love towards me as when He died on the cross for me!

The Lord Is My Shepherd, I Shall Not Want

Psalm 23:1

Give me ten thousand dollars, and one reverse of fortune may scatter it all away. But let me have a spiritual hold of this divine assurance: "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want," then I am all right; I am set up for life. I never cante a bankrupt, for I hold this security: "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want,"

Do not give me ready money now; give me a checkbook, and let me draw what I like. This is what God does with the believer. He does not immediately transfer his inheritance to him, but lets him draw what he needs out of the riches of His fullness in Christ Jesus.

Editorial: Repentance First, Then Peace

"Jordan Renounces Its Religious Links to Areas; Not Jerusalem." So reads a current headline out of Jerusalem. This statement is intended to avoid more bickering with the P. L. O. Relations between Jordan and the Palestine National Authority have been strained since the signing of the Jordanian-Israeli declaration in which Israel acknowledged a special Jordanian role in Moslem sites in Jerusalem. This, of course, includes the temple site where the Mosque of Omar occupies the prominent place. So we see that the place the Jews would so much like to control is very much under the control and the desires of two or more Arab nations.

Jordan seems prepared to sign a peace treaty with Israel as soon as a few things are settled to the satisfaction of all. To us it seems that each of these treaties with neighboring nations comes with a loss to present-day Israel.

Luke 21:24 clearly states that "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." Therefore we are not surprised that, instead of Israel's adding to the partial control they have there, they are losing more to the nations in the area.

In the last three verses of Matthew 23, Jesus weeps over the city of Jerusalem and then prophesies this: "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see Me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." The Messiah was about to leave them and they should see Him no more, until repentance had turned their hearts unto Him whom they had rejected.

When the Jews look upon Him whom they had pierced and mourn for Him as one mourns for an only son, then they shall be ready, through deep repentance, to receive the King.

The blessing of the 1000-year kingdom of the Lord Jesus will even include some of those nations which came against Jerusalem (there are many nations against her today). They shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles (Zech. 14:16).

Many changes in that area of the world must take place before this comes to pass. Present-day, proud Israel will indeed have to be brought low and repent before it can have Jerusalem and peace. Changes that occur now should not surprise us. Meanwhile, we can do what it says in Psalm 122:6: "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem." Ed.

The Book of God

In the various and fruitful light of Scripture, what fresh wonders cast themselves forth under the eye of the soul! Scripture's seed is in itself, like the trees of Eden. Its witness is in itself, like all the works of God. Its honors and its virtues are all its own—made ours, indeed, only by the power of the Holy Spirit. But such it is. Its worth and its excellency proceed from itself, and we want only the faith that walks in the light of it, apprehending and enjoying Him whose wisdom and grace it reveals to us.

That each of the four gospels has its own character and purpose under the Spirit of God is now sufficiently familiar to us. And this was a judgment among the people of God from the earliest days of Christianity. They perceived then, as we do now, variety in unity, so that some of them said, "It is not so properly four gospels that we have, as a four-sided gospel." The one life is seen in different relations—the same Jesus passes through the same scenes and circumstances in diverse characters.

This is variety in unity. And this leads me to suggest that in like manner the Book of God has also unity in variety. We see our world in all the parts of it, and ourselves in all the persons of it. We listen, for instance, to the grace which addresses us as sinners, and learn ruin and redemption now as Adam learned them in the day of Genesis 3. When putting on the righteousness of God by faith, we find ourselves in the family and fellowship of Abraham (Gen. 15). At the table of the Lord spread in the midst of the redeemed every resurrection-day, we sit in one spirit with the congregation of God as in Exodus 12. In the conflict of flesh and spirit we not only see what manner of people the saints in Paul's day were, but we read our own well-known, everyday experience.

Thus we are at home throughout the whole Volume, tracing our own world in all the scenes of it, and ourselves as the actors. This is unity in variety. Such is the wondrous character of the Book.

Thousands of years are but one and the same day. The Book is one, though Moses and John, the earliest and the latest writers in it, were separated by centuries and centuries, and though kings and fishermen, scribes and herdsmen, prophets and publicans, separated by all the habits of human life and human circumstances, all were called to put their hand to it.

It is a Book of wonders, but the Book itself is a principal wonder as this may show us. Its naturalness and its beauty are, with all this, admirable beyond expression. This quality of the Book of God once reminded another of a striking analogy in the kingdom of nature. "It is," he said, "as a noble tree of which the inward energy, the freedom of the sovereign vital power, produces a variety of forms, in which the details of human order may appear to be wanting, but in which there is a beauty which no human art can mutate."

True indeed, and true also is what he adds after: contemplating the materials which form and furnish this Book. "All combine to crown with divine glory the demonstration of the origin and authorship of the Book which contains these things."

May meditation on it be mixed with faith, that the sour may be profited while the heart is charmed!

J. G. Bellett

Balaam and Jonah

Balaam the son of Beor and Jonah the son of Amittai were somewhat alike in one deplorable particular: each was willing that a vast number of souls should be sacrificed for some advantage to himself. With Balaam it was money; with Jonah it was his reputation! Balaam was a downright emissary of Satan, masquerading as a prophet of Jehovah for the sake of gain; Jonah, on the contrary, was a true man at heart, but somewhat of an untrained colt, sorely needing to learn important lessons in the school of God. From both Balaam and Jonah we may learn much: from the one, the danger of trafficking in unfelt truth, and from the other, the importance of entering into the divine sympathies while engaged in work for God. if we do not feet towards men as God feels, how can we be efficient as witnesses for Him?

Bible Challenger-02-February V.10

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the words describing a possession that believers have as verified by the writings of an apostle. [2] The number in brackets indicates the number of missing words in each answer.

1. "These shall go away into: _____ but the righteous, into life eternal." [2]
2. "Behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and _____ Him." [1]
3. "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the _____." [1]
4. "Both he that soweth and he that _____ may rejoice together." [1]
5. "They shall _____ neither shall any man pluck them." [2]
6. "We should be made heirs _____ to the hope." [1]
7. "Keep yourselves in the love of God, _____ for the mercy." [1]
8. "God, that cannot, _____ promised before the world began." [1]
9. "By patient continuance _____ seek for glory and honor." [3]
10. "Laying up in store for themselves a good _____ against the time." [1]
11. "Labor not for the meat which perish, but for that meat which _____." [1]

Bible Challenger-01-January Answers V.10

1. Kinsmen Ruth 2:20
2. I have loved thee Jer. 31:3
3. Name Psa. 138:2
4. D own Gen. 24:14
5. Nat sown Jer. 2:2
6. Eat bread 2 Sam. 9:7
7. Shadow Asa. 36:7
8. Say of me Gen. 20:13

"That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His KINDNESS toward us through Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:7).

Hebron

W. Brockmeier

It is a poignant paradox that this very city Hebron, which God once ordained for refuge, now stands as an unofficial monument to the massacre of innocents. It was one of six cities of refuge God provided under Mosaic law for the protection of individuals who inadvertently killed their fellowman. Numbers 35, Deuteronomy 19 and Joshua 20 give the particulars of their locations, qualifications for entry and conditions for asylum.

The name Hebron means communion. As there is no refuge for the sinner from the judgment of God except the blood of Christ, so there is no refuge for the saint from sin and its far-reaching consequences but by abiding in communion with Christ. Hebron is mentioned in several different contexts in Scripture, yet each instance may be profitably viewed as figurative of the believer's privilege of communion with his Lord. While it was not until Israel was settled in their inheritance that Hebron was specifically identified as a city of refuge, its typical bearing remains Constant.

Abram's Altar

Material abundance effected strife and division between Lot and Abram. Selflessly, Abram deferred to Lot, who separated himself from his godly uncle. Abram walked by faith; Lot by sight. (See Gen. 13; 2 Cor. 4:18; Hell. 11:8-10.) Lot, governed by the lust of the eye, set his heart upon the plain of Jordan (typical of death) which was well-watered everywhere, even as the garden of the Lord. Delusive mirage!

Following Lot's departure, the Lord appeared to Abram, directing him to lift up his eyes—Lot had no such word—to view the scope of his inheritance. Settled in his soul with God's assurances, Abram relocated his tent to the plain of Mamre in Hebron (communion), a striking contrast to Lot's choice. The place of blessing is always and only found in communion with the Lord.

Dwelling as a pilgrim, Abram once again built an altar for worship. (See John 4:24; Phil. 3:3.) Lot had no altar. How is it with us?

Lot, who had moved into a house in Sodom, was subsequently taken captive. Abram, abiding in the place of God's blessing and unfettered by the pursuit of earthly gain, was prepared to recover "his brother" (Gen. 14:14). Detached entirely in spirit from the rebellion and greed characteristic of man's day, Abram refused the proffers of the King of Sodom, even to a thread or a shoe latchet.

His example should encourage us to wait upon God and accept blessing from His hand rather than forge ahead without a word from Him. As we abide in communion with the Lord, we will revel in His blessing that "maketh rich" (Pray. 10:22), respond in true worship, and be fitted by our Master for devoted and intelligent service.

Caleb's Inheritance

It seems appropriate that Caleb received Hebron as his inheritance (Joshua 15:13). In spirit he had lived at Hebron during the wilderness journey and thus had not fallen into flagrant sin, nor under God's chastening hand as did the multitudes. Caleb's view of the land (compare with 2 Car. 12:4) undoubtedly sustained him and encouraged him forward despite being surrounded by murmurers. Desert travel is neither pleasant nor easy, yet the vision of faith will enable us to endure as we approach that eternal day of unbroken communion with our Lord Jesus Christ (Prov. 29:18; Heb. 11:27).

Samson's Shortcoming

Self-confidence coupled with the lust of the flesh led to Samson's demise. Raised up by God to be a deliverer, he instead became a Philistine captive. Samson was more of an escape-artist than a conqueror. Living for himself, he eventually fell victim to his cavalier ways and gained deliverance only by death.

The character of Samson's life and his failures are perhaps capsulated symbolically in the incident in which, after a sinful tryst, he carried the gates of the city to a hill which stood before Hebron (Judges 16:3). Perhaps he was content merely to have Hebron within view; regardless, he never made it there.

Deliverance from sin without repentance is only outward and short-lived. Strength of character and personal discipline may temporarily free us from certain vices, but such can never restore our souls or bring us to Hebron. We need God. "He restoreth my soul" (Psa. 23:3).

David's Exaltation

David lamented over Saul and Jonathan after their ignominious death at the hand of the Philistines. In the face of this shame and sorrow to the people of God, David inquired of Jehovah for his next step. He was directed to go up with his household to Hebron (2 Sam. 2:1-4).

Is there not a word in this for ourselves? As we consider what has come about in the Christian testimony, is it not God's mind for us to move to Hebron rather than continually occupy ourselves and our households with a scene of slaughter?

In Hebron David was anointed king over Judah and at a later time over all Israel (2 Sam. 5:3). When we are in communion, and only then, will we render to the Lord Jesus His rightful place. It is here, too, that we can be of positive encouragement to others. To feed upon the ruin and failure of the first man only withers and enfeebles the soul. God would have our hearts occupied with the excellencies of the second Man, the Lord from heaven. How much have we considered Him today?

Absalom's Takeover

Although not anointed king, Absalom rose up to wrest the reins of administration of Israel from his father. David's laxity with his sons surely contributed to the sorrowful state in the kingdom. Yet he was still God's anointed king and his failures, grievous though they were, did not entitle Absalom to lay claim to the throne.

Absalom stole—notice Scripture does not say "won," as in Proverbs 11:30—the hearts of the men of Israel by posturing himself as possessing greater sensitivity to their needs than David. In actuality, his maneuvers were components of a larger scheme designed to capitalize on the people's simplicity and ultimately thrust him into a position of political ascendancy. By repeated, denigrating jabs at David as an out-of-touch and uncaring leader, Absalom fueled the fire of discontent. Fifty men who led his well-orchestrated public relations campaign coordinated their efforts with the spies who, working behind the scenes, had infiltrated every tribe of Israel. Finally the momentum of his conspiracy crested, the trumpet sounded, and Absalom was declared king in Hebron.

Paul refused to have dominion over the Corinthians' faith, or, in the spirit of this passage, he refused to reign in Hebron. Being an apostle, he could have invoked his authority over them, but instead he sought to stir their consciences by bringing before them their responsibility to God. By faithfully ministering the truth—not fables—he was a helper of their joy. This is true Christian ministry. It is by faith we stand, not by human persuasion and reason (2 Cor. 1:24).

May we value leaders God has raised up for the good of the assembly, but reject outright any man that seeks to bring us into bondage (2 Cor. 11:20). We have been bought with a price and are not to be the servants of men (1 Cor. 7:23),

Rehoboam's Defense

Rehoboam caused a division in Israel because he refused the wise counsel of the old men and followed the hard-line approach recommended by his peers. Scripture speaks of them as young men, but they were hardly novices. Rehoboam began to reign at forty-one years of age (2 Chron. 10:8; 12:13),

Admittedly, Solomon's idolatry was the root cause of the tribes of Israel being divided (1 Kings 11:30-36), yet Rehoboam's unwarranted threats were the immediate cause for the breakup of the kingdom. Following the breach, it appears Rehoboam still had not comprehended that unity is not produced by human force, but by the power of the Spirit of God (1 Kings 12:21; Zech. 4:6; Eph. 4:3).

Shemaiah's prophetic word from Jehovah that "this thing is from Me" caused every man to return to his house. It was at this point Rehoboam built fifteen cities of defense in Judah, of which Hebron was one. These strongholds were each supplied with food, oil, wine, shields, spears and captains. These items each have a spiritual counterpart and we do well to attend to their application in our personal lives and in the assembly. In so doing we will "strengthen the things which remain" and manifest we have "understanding of the times."

Our Perfect Example

The Lord Jesus was always in communion with His Father. True, it couldn't have been otherwise, but it is a wholesome occupation to trace His path through this sad world and see a man who always dwelt in the bosom of the Father. He was in such concert with His Father that He could say, "The words that I speak unto you I speak not of Myself: but the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works" (John 14:10).

As Joseph was sent by his father to his brethren, going from Hebron to Shechem (Gen. 37:14), so the Lord Jesus came in lowly grace and in full communion bearing His Father's message. "For I have not spoken of Myself; but the Father which sent Me, He gave Me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak" (John 12:49). He bids us walk in the same path (1 John 2:6; John 17:18).

Questions and Answers

QUESTION: What is "the unity of the Spirit?"

ANSWER: "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling" (Eph. 4:4). All true believers are in this verse. When the Holy Spirit came down in Acts 2, He baptized the believers in that upper room into one body. By the Holy Spirit's presence in them, they were all livingly united to Christ, the Head on high, and to each other. This was a new thing on earth, the fruit of accomplished redemption, and as one after another believed the gospel and received the Holy Spirit, they were added to this body, whether they had before been Jews or Gentiles. And so it is up to this present time. Every believer is livingly a member of Christ, a member of the body of Christ, and members one of another (Rom. 12:4-5; 1 Cor. 6:15, 17, 19). We are also children of God the Father (Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6; 1 John 3:1-2).

Many believers do not realize these relationships for themselves. God declares them to be true of all His redeemed people of this present time. Believers who lived and died before Christ came did not possess these blessings, though they were born again as well as we. God can show His grace in these ways, because of accomplished redemption (John 12:24; John 7:39; Acts 10:43-44).

What a great favor to be put in living union with our Lord Jesus Christ by the Spirit! What a new light it throws on the Church of God! We see ourselves united to Christ in glory and to even, true believer on earth. At the beginning all were together; not so now, though they ought to be, for faith takes in the truth that God has made us one by that one Spirit, and we therefore should act as one.

This is the unity of the Spirit. It is the inward realization and behavior consistent with the truth that we are one body—a behavior produced by subjection to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 4 begins with the Apostle beseeching those saints to walk worthy of the vocation, the new relationships, he has unfolded to them, including the mystery that we with Christ are one. Some might wrongly think from verse 2 that this is impossible, considering their varied tempers, dispositions, etc., and it would be, unless the grace of God rules in their hearts and controls them.

So he exhorts them, with all lowliness and meekness with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love, to endeavor to maintain this unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

It is not unity of spirit only, but the unity of the Holy Spirit in the ways and truth of God. The unity of the body is formed and maintained by God. Our obedience or our failures do not alter it, but if we do not seek to be led by the Lord, we must grieve and quench the Holy Spirit, who will not fail to carry us through to the end of our journey in this life. What unhappiness in life this makes for many of the Lord's dear ones. The Holy Spirit ever puts the Lord before us as our object and center. His is the only name given to be gathered to (Matt. 18:20).

But though we cannot walk with all believers, yet we must think how He loves all His members, and love them as occasion is given. We may not like their ways in many things, nor can we walk with them in ways contrary to the Word of God, but we must in our hearts love them because they are dear to Him. Carefulness becomes us not to do anything that would hurt them or influence them to walk in ways not pleasing to the Lord.

It is quite true, sad to say, that many of Christ's members are linked up with divisions and associations quite contrary to the Word of God (2 Cor. 6:14-7:1). And now, if true to the Lord, we could not go with them in paths of disobedience, but as far as the truth of God will allow us, we should walk with and help them to advance in the truth. This is our privilege toward every member. To be in divisions or sects is carnal (1 Cor. 3:3). It would not help them for us to go there, and we would put ourselves in wrong ways. It may seem egotistic, but Christ is the center because He is the Head of the body, and there each member should be. He is our guide and His Word is sufficient to show us the way. The Holy Spirit will not lead us any other way than by the Word.

Then Matthew 18:18-20 is important. If we maintain the unity of the Spirit, we recognize the action of the two or three who, with Christ in their midst, are acting for Him. We must recognize that we are in one fellowship with all that are so gathered. It is not a union of assemblies, but it is a recognition that they are all one though in different localities. If the man in 1 Corinthians 5 was put away at Corinth, he was put away for the whole Church on earth. Letters of commendation are given to receive those coming from other places as strangers.

We see in Scripture how serious has been the Church's departure from this truth of the unity of the Spirit in divisions (Rom. 16:17), in departure from the truth (2 Tim 1:15), in self-will and self-exaltation (Acts 20:30).

The question for us is: Whose are we? Do we own the Lord's claims over us? Then we have no choice. If we ask Him, "Where dwellest Thou?" His answer to us will be, "Come and see" (John 138-39).

Praise

Let us be persuaded to praise the Lord alone. He only is worthy of being praised, revered and adored. The song of the blessed (Rev. 5) praises none but Him who redeemed them with His blood. It contains not one word of praise for any of their own number. Let us strive to bring our hearts into unison with that song. This will be our happiness even here below, and contribute to God's glory, which is wronged by the praise that Christians too often bestow on each other.

Knowing the Lord Intimately

There is a difference between intimacy and familiarity. I may be familiar with the condition and circumstances in which another commonly walks, but have very little real intimacy with himself—as in the case of a master and his servants. And this has its strong illustration in the history of the Lord.

The centurion, the Syrophenician and Mary the sister of Lazarus were with Him comparatively little. They are not seen in company with Him wherever He goes, but cross His path, to say the most, only occasionally. But when they are brought to deal with Him, they do so with most bright and blessed intelligence. They show that they know Him—who and what He really is. They make no mistakes about Him, while even the apostles, who waited on Him day after day, betrayed again and again the ignorance and distance of mere nature.

Is there not a lesson in this for us? Is there not a fear lest familiarity with the things of Christ be much more than the soul's real acquaintance with Himself? I may be often, so to speak, handling these things. I may be reading the books which tell of Him. I may be busy in the activities which make His service their object. I may speak or write about Him, while others, like the centurion, may be a good deal withdrawn from all this, but their growth in divine knowledge and living understanding of Him may be advancing far more. Saul had David near him, even in his household, at his bidding, as his minstrel when he needed or wished for him, but Saul did not know David.

Surely this is a lesson for us. The multitude who waited on the Lord and watched His steps must have been able to give even Mary of Bethany, had she sought it, much information about Him. Hundreds in the land, as well as the Twelve, might have told her what He had been doing, where He had been journeying, the discourses He had delivered, and the miracles He had wrought. Information like this they had in abundance, and she but sparingly, except as she was debtor to them for it. But all that, I need not say, left them far behind her in real acquaintance with Him.

And is it not so still? How many of us can give information about the things of Christ and answer inquiries correctly too, while the soul of the instructed sits and feasts on the things themselves far more richly. For the knowledge that a Mary may gather from the report of a multitude, or from the lips of apostles, often becomes another thing with her than it had previously been with them. A poor stranger, making her modest and yet earnest way to Jesus in the crowd, may shame the thoughts of those who were entitled to be the nearest to Him, yea, of Peter himself (Luke 8:45).

We need not so much to covet information about Him as we need power to use divinely what we know, to turn it through the energy of the Spirit into matter of communion and the feeding and enlivening of our renewed affections. Then, and then only, is it what our God would have it to be. Colossians 3:16 may teach us that while inquiring after knowledge and laying up "the word of Christ," the material of all wisdom, we should take care to nourish the simpler affections of the soul. Melody in the heart should be the companion of the indwelling word of wisdom and

knowledge (Eph. 5:19). If it is not, the knowledge will be wanting in its savor and in its power to refresh either ourselves or others.

At the same time, this is not to lead us to give up action or daily companionship with the interests and people of Jesus in the world. Perfection is likeness to Himself, and in that living Pattern we see this: busy in service wherever or whenever a need called Him, but all the while, in spirit, in the deep sense of the presence of God. Here alone lies the way that is fully according to the Great Original. As one sweetly says, pressing on the soul this grace of communion combined with service:

J. G. Bellett

Proverbs

Simon. Patrick on the Proverbs 1683

Chapter 6:1-11

1. "My son, if thou be surety for thy friend, if thou hast stricken thy hand with a stranger." And now, my son, that no difference may arise between thy wife and thee; be advised by me, not to pass thy word rashly for the money which thy neighbor or friend borroweth of another: much less stand bound for a stranger, whose honesty or ability is unknown to thee.

2. "Thou art snared with the words of thy mouth, thou art taken with the words of thy mouth." Young men indeed think this no great matter: but if thou hast been so incautious, as to be drawn into such engagements, look upon thy self as no longer a free man; but hampered and enslaved in dangerous obligations.

3. "Do this now, my son, and deliver thyself, when thou art come into the hand of thy friend; go, humble thyself, and make sure thy friend." And therefore, in that case, immediately follow the counsel which I now give thee, my son; do thy utmost endeavor to be discharged, by pressing thy friend forthwith to satisfy the debt, or to give thee security against the creditor: make no delay, and stick not, if need be, to cast down thy self before him on the ground, and beseech him as readily to grant thy request, as thou wast forward to comply with his: be not modest at all; nor cease to urge and importune him by thy self and by thy friends, till thou hast prevailed with him.

4. "Give not sleep to thine eyes, nor slumber to thine eyelids." Be not quiet till this be accomplished; nor take so much as a wink of sleep till thou art eased of this care: which, if thou understandest thy self, may well disturb thy rest.

5. "Deliver thyself as a roe from the hand of the hunter, and as a bird from the hand of the fowler." For thou art in the same condition with a young roe, or silly bird; that is taken in the toils of the hunter or the snare of the fowler: and therefore struggle, like them, with all thy might, to get loose (if it be possible) and to be released from the bond wherein thou art entangled.

6. "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise." Nor is industry and diligence requisite in this alone, but in all thine affairs: to which therefore, if thou art slothful, I must excite thee by the example of the ants; whose orderly and unanimous diligence, in collecting and preserving food for themselves, if thou wilt mark and observe, thou mayest be ashamed to be an

idle spectator of their labors; and learn hereafter to imitate their provident care.

7. "Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler" Which is the more remarkable, because they have none to lead and direct them (as mankind have), no overseer to exact their labors; no supreme governor to call them to an account for any negligence.

8. "Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest." And yet they never omit the opportunity they have in harvest, to make provision against the winter; but toil perpetually in gathering, and carrying food into the cells they have digged for it in the earth; where they lay it up and secure it with admirable art; that it may neither be injured by the weather, nor stolen from them by other creatures.

9. "How long will thou sleep; O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep?" O the strange idleness of mankind! who have many monitors and governors, that call upon them again and again, and stir them up in vain to labor. What recklessness is this, which makes thee, O sluggard, indulge thy self in laziness and sloth? as if thou wast made for nothing else, but to sleep and take thine ease?

10. "Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep." Rolling thy self in thy bed, and ridiculously desiring thy pains may be spared, and thou mayest be suffered still, without any disturbance, to enjoy a little more sleep; when thou hast loitered too long, and put off the care of thine affairs from time to time, till thou hast none left to do it in.

11. "So shall thy poverty come as one that travaileth, and thy want as an armed man" But poverty comes apace upon thee, and before thou art aware leaves thee as naked, as if thou wast strip t by a highway man nay, extreme want seizes on thee unavoidably, like an armed man, which thou canst find no means to resist.

"He satisfieth the longing soul

and filleth the hungry soul with goodness.'

Psalm 107:9

Matthew 13

In Matthew 12, Jesus passes sentence upon the Jews, for He was come to gather fruit, and had found none. In chapter 13 He must needs sow. He no longer recognizes the Jews as Jews; He sows for all, Jews and Gentiles. The six other parables present us with the forms taken by the kingdom of heaven in its various phases.

The six parables form a whole; the first three speak of the Church in the fullest sense of the word, of the Church as a thing seen by men. The last three speak of what the Church is inwardly, as hidden in the world and even in the kingdom.

1. The bad seed in the midst of the good. Tares—error disseminated.
2. The great tree. Hierarchical system of Rome, Greece, England, Protestants, etc.
3. Leaven. Diffusive doctrine, which, spreading everywhere, in the end leaves nothing but corruption.
4. Hidden treasure. The Lord Jesus gave Himself for its purchase. He values it; for Him the Church is a treasure. Every Christian whose thoughts are as his Master's can appreciate the Church.
5. Pearl of great price. The moral beauty of the Church, which is discerned only by Jesus and by those who are spiritual of the children of God.
6. The net. The draft of fish presents Christendom.

Those who know how to discern between the good and the bad are not men, but angels. It should be noticed that it is never men (children of God) who are to be occupied with the cutting off of the wicked. Another thing altogether is the means of doing this. Their occupation is with that which is good that they ought to discern. It is the duty of the angels to be occupied with the bad and to take them and put them apart for the judgment. The angels are occupied always with the bad, men with the good.

"Kingdom of heaven" is found only in Matthew. When the Lord is come, the kingdom must become the kingdom of God; it was so in a sense, during His life on earth, but now that the Messiah is rejected, the kingdom can only exist in mystery, therefore it is called the kingdom of heaven.

The kingdom of God gives the idea of the government of God in the hands of the Messiah.

The kingdom of heaven is the government of God in the hands of the Messiah while He is in heaven.

G. V. Wigram

He Got the Job

A young man walked from the pier on the Mississippi River direct to the captain's cabin of a riverboat plying between New Orleans and St. Louis. He was young and filled with confidence. The captain asked him what he wanted and the young man replied that he was looking for a job as a wheelman. "What experience have you had on the river?" asked the captain. "Five years, sir." "Do you know the location of all the shoals and snags?" "No, sir, but I know where there aren't any, and that's where I will steer." He got the job. In the Christian life, the path of safety in Christian living is not in knowing all the nature of sin or the path of wickedness, but in knowing the will of the Lord and in being willing to stay in it. The obedience of the saints in Rome at the time Paul wrote to them had become known throughout the Christian world. Paul wrote to them, complimenting them on this obedience, and said, "I am glad therefore on your behalf: but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil" (Rom. 16:19). We must steer where sin is not.

Editorial: A Word to Parents

At this late time in the twentieth century when the world is so highly developed in both good and bad ways, many Christian parents are intensely concerned for their families. Problems arise that were not exactly known or even heard of in the past. Many sincerely desire to know what the answers are and where they may be found.

Thankfully, the true Christian knows where he can get help, or, perhaps we should say, to whom he can turn for that help. "Our sufficiency is of God" (2 Cor. 3:5) is an exceedingly broad statement and very-comforting when we realize that we can get what we need from Him. In this chapter these five words seem to apply especially to the understanding of the Scriptures, both the Old and New Testaments. In the Bible we can, then, find answers to the problems that every family experiences.

Fathers and mothers are genuinely distressed at the horrible, daily accounts of all kinds of murder, corruption and violence. Even the most sacred family ties no longer exercise any restraint upon men's and women's passions. There are increasing wars in many places in this poor world in which thousands of people are swept into eternity. Numberless families are plunged into sorrow and despair. Terrible weapons already exist which, if used, would destroy whole nations.

Besides all these inventions for destruction, there is the sinister opposition of Satan against the Christian home. Each member of the family feels the pressure to compromise with the world that is presented as so attractive and gratifying to the flesh. What should we do? (Read 1 John 2:15-17.)

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."

Another one of the enemy's devices is that he tries to divide the family. Parents in particular need to be on guard against this, for the results of division are disastrous. The words of Jesus in Matthew 12:25 are: "Every... house divided against itself shall not stand." We beseech parents to practice the truth that applies to each one, whether it is to submit or to love. You will find instruction in Ephesians 5 which, if practiced, will safely keep your home; the enemy will be defeated, and happiness and blessing will be your reward.

Sometimes as children grow up they want to be independent and leave their family before they are ready for such a step. Any young person who considers doing this should be extremely cautious and search his own heart as to the motive for leaving and how it will affect others. We recommend the book of Proverbs where you will find the father and mother instructing the son in the first seven chapters while he is at home. Then in chapter eight he has left home, but the voice of wisdom is still crying out to him. In chapter twenty-three, the longing cry of the parent is: "My son, give me thine heart" (vs. 26). The teaching in chapter 4:23 is: "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." Matthew 6:21 says: "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

Where is your heart? Let us each be careful of the object before us.

Parents sometimes fail in that they desire something for their children that they would not think of having for themselves. A respected servant of the Lord once said, "Raise your children for the world and the world will get them; dress your children for the world and the world will take them."

When Paul wrote to the Corinthians, he said: "Yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel" (1 Cor. 4:15). Later, in 2 Corinthians 12:14, he writes, "I seek not yours, but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children." What was he laying up for his children? Was it fame, fortune or wealth? Oh, no, he had left all such earthly things for "the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." To him was given the truth as it is in Jesus and he would pass that on to his spiritual children. May we then, as Christian parents, prize and so enjoy the truth that our children, too, will want for themselves those riches and joys that endure throughout all ages.

For those who are wanting answers, we ask you to answer the following questions for yourself.

1. Parents: Do you, with your children around you, read a portion of God's Word daily and also pray?
2. Fathers: Do you bring your children tip in the nurture and admonition of the Lord? Do you restrain them without provoking them to anger?
3. Mothers: Do you, during those precious, young years of your child, tell that dear little one of Jesus? Yours is the greatest privilege in this.
4. Children: Do you obey your parents in the Lord? Do you honor your father and mother?
5. Wives: Do you submit yourself unto your own husband as unto the Lord?
6. Husbands: Do you love your wife, even as Christ also loved the Church and gave Himself for it?

In concluding, we will notice two men from the Scriptures, one as a warning and the other as an example for us. The warning is: "The Lord said to Samuel, Behold, I Will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle. In that day I will perform against Eli all things which have spoken concerning his house: when I begin, I will also make an end. For I have told him that I will judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not" (1 Sam. 3:11-13).

The example is this: "The Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which He hash spoken of him" (Gen. 18:17-19).

Ed.

1 John 2:12-15

We find three classes of Christians: fathers, young men and babes. John addresses them each twice. That which characterizes fathers in Christ is that they have known Him who is from the beginning, that is, Christ. This is all that he has to say about them. All had resulted in that. He only repeats the same thing again when, changing his form of expression, he begins anew with these three classes. The fathers have known Christ. They are not occupied with experience-that would be being occupied with self, with one's own heart. All that has passed away and Christ alone remains as our portion, unmingled with aught besides.

Devotedness

"The three mighty men brake through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem, that was by the gate, and took it, and brought it to David: nevertheless he would not drink thereof, but poured it out unto the Lord" (2 Sam. 23:16)

There is something peculiarly touching and beautiful in the above scene, whether we contemplate the act of the three mighty men in procuring the water for David, or David's act in pouring it out to the Lord. It is evident that David discerned, in an act of such uncommon devotedness, a sacrifice which none but the Lord Himself could duly appreciate. The odor of such a sacrifice was far too fragrant for him to interrupt it in its ascent to the throne of the God of Israel. Wherefore he very properly and very gracefully allows it to pass him by in order that it might go up to the One who alone was worthy to receive it or able to appreciate it.

All this reminds us forcibly of that beautiful compendium of Christian devotedness set forth in Philippians 2:17-18: "Yea, and if I be offered [poured out] upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all. For the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me." In this passage, the Apostle represents the Philippian saints in their character as priests, presenting a "sacrifice" and performing a priestly ministration to God. Such was the intensity of his self-forgetting devotedness, that he could rejoice in his being poured out as a drink offering upon their sacrifice, so that all might ascend in fragrant odor to God. The Philippians laid a sacrifice on God's altar, and the Apostle was poured out upon it, and all went up to God as an odor of sweet smell. It mattered not who put the sacrifice on the altar, or who was poured out thereupon, provided that God received what was acceptable to Him.

Truly this is a divine model for Christian devotedness. There would, then, be far less of "my sayings" and "my doings" and "my goings." It would be our joy, wherever we saw one or another laying a sacrifice on the altar of God, to allow ourselves to be poured out as a drink offering thereon to the glory of God and the common joy of His saints.

C. H. Mackintosh

"I beseech you therefore, brethren,

by the mercies of God,

that ye present your bodies

a living sacrifice, holy,

acceptable unto god,

which is your reasonable service

Romans 12:1

Our Great High Priest

M. Priestly

In Hebrews 7:1 it is said of Abram that Melchisedec, priest of the most high God, "met" him returning from the slaughter of the kings, and "blessed him." Let us follow the events of this Biblical warfare, which is the first mentioned in Scripture and is divided into two battles. The first is a battle of oppression and captivity; the second is a battle of recovery. Abram is involved in this second battle. In Genesis 14 he is seen marked by resolve and courage, which carried him to victory against very great odds.

What was it that drew Abram to lead out his three hundred and eighteen trained servants who, with the aid of three allies, engaged in battle with such a mighty host as Chedorlaomer and his confederate kings? It was love for the "brother." (See Genesis 14:14-16.) God came in with power to bring him back with all the persons and goods. At this point Melchisedec met Abram, coming on the scene after the significant victory (Gen. 14:18).

There has been spiritual warfare today covering a space of time, where the truth has been recovered, and, with it, brotherly love. Now when Melchisedec appears, it is said in Hebrews, "First being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace." There is no mention of parentage—father or mother, nor genealogy, neither beginning of days, nor end of life— but it says, "Made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually" (Heb. 7:2-3). This is a tribute to our Lord's eternal Sonship, which supports the reality of His eternal Priesthood. (See Hebrews 7:28.)

If we go back to Hebrews 2:9, we find the source from which our Lord's Priesthood springs. Here Jesus is seen as Son of man—"made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor." From here on, this is transmuted into a priestly crown, as the "miter" on the forehead of the high priest for glory and beauty (Ex. 28).

Continuing with the Old Testament account in Genesis 14, Melchisedec comes upon the scene and meets Abram. Then notice what he did; he "brought forth bread and wine" (vs. 18). He then blessed him and said, "Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth" (vs. 19). Again he said, "And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand" (vs. 20).

This Old Testament account is set on record for our present understanding, and the sustaining power of the heavenly priesthood meets our needs at a time of crisis. Is it not significant to us today, when the Christian testimony is in public ruin? "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." The Melchisedec priest brought forth "bread and wine." Here there is a return to what was at the beginning (1 Cor. 11:23-26). All has been carried away, but God has intervened in grace.

The early Hebrews were reminded of the heavenly reality of the Melchisedec priesthood which was "an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil" (Heb. 6:19). We, too, in this day come into the efficacy of this great priesthood. Christ has gone on high interceding for us. This is for the whole household of faith. As we remember Him in His death for us, we remember every true believer is in "the loaf" and "the cup." This brings the bread and the wine down to us today. Communion overflows into worship. Blessing comes down and goes up (Song of Sol. 2:14). The blessing of the Lord strengthens and satisfies. We go out and are thus equipped for the spiritual conflict that lies ahead (2 Cor. 10:3-4).

The king of Sodom meets Abram and notice what he says, "Give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself." Abram refers back to his first having been met by the Melchisedec priest and can now give a direct and uncompromising answer. He is caught up in the Melchisedec blessing. Hear his reply, "I have lifted up mine hand unto the Lord, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth, that I will not take from a thread even to a shoe latchet, and that I will not take anything that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich" (vss. 22-23). The king of Sodom is a type of the god of this world. He wants our souls, but the true God has put in His claim for us first.

The Jews regarded earthly riches as blessing from God, but Christian blessings are heavenly and spiritual (Eph. 1). God can give earthly riches also if He so will, for our God is "possessor of heaven and earth." Melchisedec is the heavenly King and Priest. How blessed for him to meet us in all the riches of grace, to satisfy the soul as worshippers, and to go out to the "brother." This leads into self-judgment and self-sacrifice (2 Cor. 2:6-11). Consider the state at Corinth: there was much which came in from the devil's world. See I Corinthians 10:21-22. This and the general state were met by the "demonstration of the Spirit and of power" which came in with Paul (1 Cor. 2:4).

Now go back to Abram who was named "the patriarch" in Hebrews 7:4. He came forward as an intercessor for the "brother" who was tempted back into Sodom, and what did Abram do? Did he stand off and say, "He should never have gone back there into that wicked city He should have kept a separate pathway." No, he pleaded with God to spare the city for Lot's sake (Gen. 18:24-32).

It is said of the Melchisedec High Priest, "Because He continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb. 7:24-25).

Our Lord went out after the lost sheep and the lost son, and He gave His life for us, and "we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." Many examples come to mind: there was Moses who said, "Blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy book" that God might be able to go on with His people (Ex. 32:32). There was David who said, "The Lord forbid that I should stretch forth mine hand against the Lord's anointed" (1 Sam. 26:11; see also ch. 24:6). And Abigail said, "Upon me, my lord, upon me let this iniquity be" (1 Sam. 25:24). And then, but not the least, there is the occasion of Solomon's wisdom which called for a sword, which brought forward the true mother whose heart yearned for the child and was prepared to forego her rightful claim that it be not divided (1 Kings 3:24-27).

Would we say Paul comes the nearest to the Lord in all he endured in service to Him and to His people? This is brought out in 2 Corinthians 11:23-33. Patience heads the list of the labors and sufferings of Paul and his co-workers in chapter 6:4-10. Patience also comes first in "the signs of an apostle" in chapter 12:12, when Paul wrote to the early Hebrews. Peter notes that "our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you" (2 Peter 3:15).

It is not without meaning that the manner of the Lord's going up into heaven is given in Luke, the gospel of the priest, nor to say, "He led them out as far as to Bethany." Then he adds, "And He lifted up His hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while He blessed them, He was parted from them, and carried up into heaven." And then follows: "And they worshipped Him." And the next thing is, "And returned to Jerusalem with great joy: and were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God" (Luke 24:50-53).

Questions and Answers

QUESTION: Please explain, "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living" (Matt. 22:32). Luke 20:38 adds, "For all live unto Him." See also Romans 14:9.

ANSWER: To men, the departed are dead, and their graves are with us where the body is sown in corruption, but they live to God, as may be seen in Moses being with Christ on the mount. So then while they are dead as to the body, they are alive as to the spirit. Matthew 22:32 and Romans 14:9 are in perfect harmony. God is the God of the living as to departed spirits, and in that sense Jesus is the Lord both of the departed dead, as to their spirits, and also of those who are still here alive in the body. He is also Lord as to those who have eternal life and will be raised at His coming. And He is Lord of "the rest of the dead" who "lived not again until the thousand years were finished" (Rev. 20:5). "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God" (Rev. 20:12). Men may despise and reject Him now; they will have to stand before Him then.

The Third Thing

Two Christians were speaking together about their privileges and responsibilities, when one of them said, "I think the first thing for a Christian is to do all the good he can."

"I do not," replied the other, "for God's Word shows that to be the third thing."

"What do you mean?"

"Well, turn to Hebrews 13:12-16, and you will see. `Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach. For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come. By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. But to do good and to communicate forget not for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.'"

Here we learn that Jesus suffered without the gate, that is, outside the Jewish order of things. These things were defiled and coming into judgment, and He would sanctify for set apart) the people with His own blood. Then these three exhortations for the Christian follow, and the order in which they are presented is most important. You will find that doing good comes third.

First: "Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach." That is, get into the right company, in a right position. Christ is outside the Jewish order of things often revived in Christendom under other names. The Christian is first of all to be found in His company. He is not exhorted to go forth without the camp and then unto Him, but unto Him without the camp. His Person is the attraction. He suffered outside and He takes His place outside. He would have us with Him. Will not every heart that is true to Him desire to be found there? That is where His presence is known and enjoyed. Could we be in better company? May each of us be found there.

Second: "By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name." This is sure to be the spontaneous result if the soul is in communion with Him. Get into His company and the joy of His presence, and the glories of His Person revealed to the soul by the Holy Spirit will surely cause the heart to overflow in worship, praise and thanksgiving. The lips will be found expressing the heart's joy in the ear of God. One continual stream of praise will ascend to God by Him. In the company of Christ, in a right position and with the soul in communion with God, what is due to Him will be before us before we think of man.

Third: "But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." The activity of the love of God in the Christian toward his fellowmen comes third and last. To do good is perfectly right, but the glory of Christ stands first, and the worship of God stands before service toward men. The order is most instructive.

How are we to do good? By expressing Christ morally in our ways. Jesus went about doing good. If we are walking in the power of the Spirit who dwells in us, goodness will manifest itself in

innumerable ways in ministering for Him both to the souls and bodies of those around us. The heart will be happy and confident in God as to temporal resources. Liberality will characterize us in communicating of our substance for the benefit of others. Selfishness will depart with self being displaced by Christ.

The divine order, then, is to go forth to Christ first, to praise God by Him second, to do good for Him (in His name) third. Fellow-Christian, do you follow this order? Young Christian

Suffering in Temptation

"For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted" (Heb. 2:18). He suffered—never yielded. We do not suffer when we yield to temptation; the flesh takes pleasure in the things by which it is tempted. Jesus suffered being tempted, and He is able to succor them that are tempted. It is important to observe that the flesh, when acted upon by its desires, does not suffer—being tempted, it, alas! enjoys. But when, according to the light of the Holy Spirit and the fidelity of obedience, the Spirit resists the attacks of the enemy, whether subtle or persecuting, then one suffers. This is what the Lord did, and this we have to do.

Forsake Not Assembling Together

No doubt the spiritual instincts of the children of God would lead them always to desire lobe together. Why would any child of God abstain from an occasion that summoned round the name of the Lord the members of the household of faith? Far from being a waste of time or from any other object being of the same moment, it is simply a question whether we value Christ, whether we truly are walking in the Spirit and living in the Spirit, whether the objects of the constant active love of God are also in measure the object of our love in Christ's name.

It is according to the Lord that the children of God should, if practicable, be together every day. To this the power of the Spirit would lead; only the circumstances in which we are placed in this world necessarily hinder it. Therefore, the true principle according to the Word of God is coining together around Him whenever it is practicable. We do well to cherish a real exercise of heart and conscience in judging what the practicability is, or rather whether the impracticability be real or imaginary.

Very often it will turn out to be in our will, an excuse for spiritual idleness, a want of affection to the children of God, and a want of sense of our own need. Accordingly, obstacles are allowed in our minds, such as the claims of business, or the family or even the work of the Lord.

All these have their place. Surely God would have all. His children to seek to glorify Him, whatever may be their duty. There are natural duties in this world, and the wonderful power of Christianity is seen in filling with what is divine that which without Christ would be merely of nature. This should ramify the whole course of a man's life after he belongs to Christ.

So again the claims of children, for instance, or parents or the like cannot be disputed, but then if they are really taken up for Christ, it will not be found that it is to the loss of either parents or children. Nor that the little time is missed in the long run that is spent in seeking the strength of the Lord, and in communion according to our measure.

We ought to be open for both. We shall never have any power to help, unless we have the sense of the need of help from others. Both will be found together.

"They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42).

The Way Everlasting

"Lead me in the way everlasting" (Psa. 139:24). Is not this way Christ Himself, the only way, the way everlasting? He is pleased to search out our own ways, that He may lead us therein—to show us that Christ must be practically to us that which He declares Himself to be in His Word, "the first and the last," our "Alpha and Omega." All is well that leads us "in the way everlasting," that beats us out of our own ways and brings us there, that makes us in result value Christ for the way, as well as at the outset, and the end—Christ learned as our portion to live upon, as well as known for the pardon of our sins.

Bible Challenger-03-March V.10

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the word identifying a pair of near relatives to a rather loathsome creature, the leech, who never seems to be Fully satisfied. [1] The number in brackets indicates the number of missing words in each answer.

1. "Your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall_____." [2]
2. "Yea, he is_____. This is my beloved, and this is my friend.'" [2]
3. "And it grew_____ together with him, and with his children." [1]
4. "How that the Lord had visited His people in _____ them bread." [1]
5. "Eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's_____." [1]
6. "Came out to meet him with _____ and with dances." [1]
7. "But David _____ himself in the Lord his God." [1]
8. "Moses, when he was come to years, _____ to be called." [1]
9. "Whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the_____?" [2]

Answers to these questions will be found in the next issue of Christian Treasury.

R. Erisman

Bible Challenger-02-February Answers V.10

1. Everlasting punishment Matt. 25:46
2. Tempted Luke 10:25
3. Earth Dan. 12:2
4. Reapeth John 4:36
5. Never perish John 10:28
6. According Titus 3:7
7. Looking Jude 21
8. Lie Titus 1:2
9. In well doing Rom. 2:7
10. Foundation 1 Tim. 6:19
11. Endureth John 6:27

"These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of Gad; that ye may know that ye have ETERNAL LIFE, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God" (1 John 5:13).

Perfection

The only perfection put before the Christian is conformity to Christ in glory. I have got Christ in glory as my life, and I am never satisfied until I am in that glory. The only perfection presented to the Christian a glorified Christ in heaven, and you will be conformed to Him when the time comes, but now, meanwhile, I must be as much like Him as I can. (See 2 Corinthians 3:18.)

Proverbs

Simon Patrick on the Proverbs 1683

Chapter 6:12-19

12. "A naughty person, a Wicked man, walketh with a froward mouth." By which means thou mayest be tempted to become the worst of men, a perfect shark, void of all faith and honesty: whose mouth never speaks a word of truth; but makes it his business by lies, or flatteries, or slanders, or perjuries, to maintain himself in his idle courses.

13. "He winketh with his eyes, he speaketh with his feet, he teacheth with his fingers." His very eyes are instruments of deceit, or mischief; for he makes signs with them to his companions, when they are to play their pranks: or if that be too broad, he secretly treads upon their toes; or signifies his mind by the motion of his fingers; for every part of him is employed to make his wicked meaning understood.

14. "Frowardness is in his heart, he deviseth mischief continually; he sowed: discord." How should it be other ways, when his heart is a shop, furnished with nothing but all manner of perverse inclinations; which are perpetually at work to contrive some mischief or other: and (if they can do nothing else) by casting suspicions into men's minds one of another, to stir up hatred, dissention, strife, brawling, law suits, and all manner of discord; which are the destruction of families and kingdoms.

15. "Therefore shall his calamity come suddenly; suddenly shall he be broken without remedy." And shall prove his own utter ruin; which, for this very cause, shall sooner than he thinks of in a terrible manner come upon him: when he fancies he hath carried his matters so cunningly, that nobody discerns his villainy, he shall on a sudden be looked upon as the pest of mankind; and, like a vessel broken into little bits, be incurably undone.

16. "These six things cloth the Lord hate; yea, seven are an abomination unto Him." For among offenses of this kind, nothing is more odious to the Lord (who is the dispenser of rewards and punishments) nothing more opposite to the Divine Nature, and which He more severely punishes, than these six or seven things; which are commonly found in such loose companions, as I have now described.

17. "A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood." First, pride and haughtiness of spirit; which swelling a man with a vain opinion of himself, make him contemn all

others, and overlook them as below his notice. Secondly, falsehood, or treachery; which stick not at any lies, or flatteries, or calumnies. And thirdly, a violent, cruel disposition; which makes a man rather embroil [soak] his hands in the blood even of an innocent person, than not have him removed, who stands in the way of his designs.

18. "A heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief" To which add the fountain of all these, and of those that follow, a mind that studies nothing but how by fraud or force (though never so injurious to others) to satisfy some desire of pleasure, covetousness, or revenge: which produces three other abominable vices. First, forwardness to execute such mischievous intentions and desires cheerfully, without any check or delay.

19. "A false witness than speaketh lies. and he that soweth discord wrong brethren." Secondly, an atheistical impudence, which makes a man in open court (when he is upon his oath) testify any falsehood against his neighbor; and lastly, such malicious envy, as loves to make the dearest friends fall out; and takes pleasure to see those at variance, who ought to be most closely united in brotherly affection.

"Men Ought Always to Pray"

Luke 18:1: "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint." But, you say, how is it possible for us to be always in prayer? It is, of course, impossible for us to be always in the outward attitude of prayer, but it has been likened to the way our bodies are sustained by receiving, from the outside, fresh air, which vivifies and oxygenates our lungs, necessary to our very life. So as to our spiritual life, we should be in the atmosphere of constant dependence on God, our thoughts turning to Him habitually throughout the day. If trial or difficulty comes our way, then we can just lift our hearts to Him—we may do some spiritual "deep breathing." And so our hearts will be sustained, the despondency passes away, and our strength is renewed. The Lord was always thus; He prayed always; He never fainted.

F. L.

The Pearl of Great Price

In the parables of Matthew 13, the "treasure hid in the field" and the "pearls" are typical of the Church. We read about the pearls in verses 45 and 46. "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchantman, seeking goodly pearls: who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it."

In Ephesians 5 we read, "Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it." This is like the merchantman seeking goodly pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it. We can be quite sure about the meaning of this parable, for definitely Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it. The gem that is used here is the pearl, which is formed in a living organism down in the bed of the sea in darkness.

In Psalm 139:15-16 we find: "My substance was not hid from Thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth, Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect [unformed]." The Church is formed here in this dark world. In this comparison, this world is like the womb of a woman in which the seed has been planted and the child grows in darkness. It grows and grows—"my substance," because that is the likeness.

In verse 13 of Psalm 139 we read that "Thou hast possessed my reins: Thou hast covered me in my mother's womb." Doubtless David was thinking of himself, but God was thinking of more than David; I believe He was thinking of the Church. Just think that God, through that wound in the side of our Savior where the precious blood was shed, has saved millions and gathered them in this earth, and yet He has not displayed the whole Church in all her glory and all her beauty because she is imperfect. She is not imperfect, she is just not complete. What a beautiful comparison we have for ourselves to enjoy.

"Curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in Thy book all my members were written." This is language that we find about the Church, members of His body, members one of another written in the book—the book of life. God has a book, and every member is registered there.

These words are in the Old Testament, not the New Testament, but they fit the truth of the Word of God concerning the Church. "Which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." That is as far as we can go, but when we enter into God's thoughts: "How precious also are Thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!" Ed.

Peace

Can we have abiding, abundant peace and rest with no disturbing element? Is it possible to have "peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ"? May we know it in a world of unrest?

Yes, it is blessedly possible. More than that, it is the true and proper portion of the Christian, and nothing less than this is right for any believer on the Son of God. We who trust in Him can say: "Jesus our Lord was delivered for our offenses." That is the foundation on which all rests. Our offenses were charged to the Lord Jesus at Calvary. He bore the judgment on account of them and glorified God. "And [He] was raised again for our justification" (Rom. 4:25).

God has shown His entire satisfaction with what His beloved Son has done by raising Him from the dead, Christ is clear of our offenses. And we are clear! He is beyond death and judgment, and we are beyond death and judgment too.

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:1). God having cleared us from every charge as to all our offenses, "peace with God" is our happy possession. Is it yours?

Editorial: the Center of the Earth

We live in such very interesting times, for the things that are happening today often relate to something found in the Bible, the Word of God. We know that God has His plan for the earth and that nothing can hinder the full accomplishment of everything that has been purposed in the eternal counsels of God. All shall be fulfilled.

In Psalm 132 we read, "The Lord hath chosen Zion; He hath desired it for His habitation." Then He says, "This is My rest forever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it." This place is the center of the earth in God's purposes. The four directions—north, east, south and west—relate to Jerusalem. Zion is one of its hills.

Immediately north of Israel is Lebanon with a population of about three and a half million, and also Syria with nearly fourteen million inhabitants. Both are warlike nations, with Syria having much control over Lebanon. Just lately much pressure has been put upon Syria to come to peace with Israel. There may be more pressure put upon Syria to reject even outward peace with Israel. Certainly Turkey, with a population of nearly sixty million, of which ninety-eight percent are Moslem, has little love for Israel.

Every action in this part of the world is of special interest to Christians today. Whether it is war or terrorism or the signing of peace agreements, we know that in the end all will progress toward what Daniel has written: "The end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined" (ch. 9:26).

Those who look for the glory that is to come to the Lord Jesus Christ know that there are certain events to take place before He will have His rightful place on the earth. We know from Daniel 11:40 and other scriptures that at the end there is to be a great nation to the south of Israel and one to the north. After years of weakness, Egypt has been gaining strength and so seems ready to fulfill her place in prophecy. The king of the south will be from Egypt.

These events now shaping up the nations for the judgments that precede the millennial kingdom are strong indications of the nearness of the Lord's coming.

The Apostle Peter, when writing about coming things, left us this exhortation: "What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" (2 Peter 3:11). It is important for us, then, to learn by what is taking place among the nations, particularly around Jerusalem, and to live as those who belong to Christ. It may be that because of this we suffer reproach and tribulation, but if it is for the name of Christ, the answer is in 1 Peter 4:14, "Happy are ye." Then he adds, "The Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you."

What a joy it is to realize that, as Luke 21:28 says, "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Ed.

Jesus in the Midst

"Ye seek Jesus" (not as Savior, but as center) describes a state of soul rarely met with in these days. Such is the confusion of Christendom and such is our indifference to His presence "in the midst."

"There shall they see Me" is His response to this desire. Those who have gone, how sweetly true they have found it. Conforming to Jesus' appointment, "they saw Him" and "they worshipped Him." Then they received that soul-sustaining word that, notwithstanding the difficulties and the darkness that would ensue, they should have Him "in the midst." How long? Even unto the end of the age. Nothing can lose to us this unspeakable privilege. It holds good to the end for those who answer to His appointment (Matt. 28). Compare Matthew 1:23 and 18:20.

We need to search our hearts deeply before the Lord as to how far we are up to this privilege in the state of our souls. How far have we the subduing sense of His presence, so that we can say as worshippers, with deep and solemn joy, "Surely the Lord is in this place."

Those to whom "the meeting is dry and disappointing" belong to the class of whom it is said, "Some doubted." Perhaps they have not come to "see Him." May the Lord maintain in us a vigorous faith, and the ravishing sense of His presence. Does this not antedate heaven, which that blessed One is pleased to define as, "Where I am."

F. C. Blount

Why This Trial?

About eight years after he had given his heart to God, a blacksmith was approached by an intelligent unbeliever with the question: "Why is it you have so much trouble? I have been watching you since you have been saved and began to 'walk square and seem to love everybody, you have had twice as many trials and accidents as you had before. I thought that when a man gave himself to God, his troubles were over. Isn't that what the preachers tell us?"

With a thoughtful, but glowing face, the blacksmith replied: "Do you see this piece of iron? It's for the springs of a carriage. I've been 'tempering' it for some time. To do this I heat it red-hot and then plunge it into a tub of ice-cold water. This I do many times. If I find it taking 'temper,' I heat and hammer it unmercifully. In getting the right piece of iron, I found several that were too brittle, so I threw them in the scrap pile. Those scraps are worth about a cent a pound; this spring is very valuable."

He paused, and his listener nodded. The blacksmith continued: "God saves us for something more than to have a good time—that is the way I see it. We have the good time all right, for God's smile means heaven. But He wants us for service, just as I want this piece of iron. And He has put the 'temper' of Christ in us by testing and molding us with trial. Ever since I saw this, I have been saying to Him, 'Test me in any way Thou dost choose, Lord; only don't throw me into the scrap pile?'"

"The Lord of hosts...shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver" (Mal. 3:1, 3),

"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years" (Rev. 20:6).

"Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God" (Isa. 62:3).

God's Will, Christ's Work, the Spirit's Witness

Justification and sanctification alike stand on a threefold basis: In Romans we are justified by the grace of God, by the blood of Christ, and by faith, the operation of the Spirit (Rom. 3:24; 5:1-9). In Hebrews we are sanctified by the will of God and the work of Christ, of which the Spirit is the witness (Heb. 10). Righteousness and sanctification are both the combined work of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Father's will and grace gave the Son, the Son's blood and work accomplished our redemption, and faith causes us to accept this work to which the Spirit bears witness. Young Christian

Importance of Love

H. H. such

In almost all the writings of the apostles the same preeminent place is given to love. In the fruit of the Spirit, in all the precious variety which its clusters present, love stands at the top of the list. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace," (Gal. 5:22).

If the wondrous mystery of the Church be unfolded to the Ephesian believers, that marvelous subject which has been brought out in these last days with such dearness to the joy and comfort of our hearts, yet, precious as it is all the attempts for its practical acknowledgment would be futile unless love were energizing our souls. So we read, "With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." In order to secure edifying, love is the food, the mainspring of all, for by speaking the truth in love, the body edifies itself in love (Eph. 4).

So also in Colossians, after the Apostle has enumerated a variety of earnest exhortations as to practical walk, he puts love again in the highest place of eminence. He says, "Above all these things." Notice that it says, "Above [love] all these things put on charity [love], which is the bond of perfectness." That is, no bond can hold things together perfectly that is not wrought by the mighty power of love. Valiant then as Paul was for the truth, the vessel used by the Lord to communicate to us the mystery of the Church and other great truths of Christianity, yet can language possibly convey to our hearts more thoroughly the vital and prominent aspect in which he sets love before us?

Let us now hear the instruction of another inspired apostle. Peter owns the love of the brethren as the fruit of obedience to the truth in the power of the Spirit. He encourages them to love one another with a pure heart fervently. And like another inspired by the same Spirit, after many practical exhortations, he gives love an importance beyond all else that he had said. "Above [before] all these things," but notice again here it says, "And above all things have fervent charity [love] among yourselves." It was not love merely, but warm, earnest, burning love to one another; for love will cover the multitude of sins (1 Peter 1:22; 4:8).

Hear also a third apostle's inspired statement on the all-importance and priceless value of love. John leads us up at once to the same apex by assuring our hearts that "love is of God," and that "God is love." After solemnly informing us that "he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us" (1 John 4:6), he brings forth love as the vital test of Christianity. "Every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love." The apostles thus stand before us with one voice; writing at various times and to different persons, to assert the vital character of love. It is the essential and superlative element of true Christianity, the grand, distinguishing, unmistakable test as to who really knows God, and who knows not God.

Let us not fail to notice that we here read that "God is love." This is not merely that God loves, most precious true as it is, but that His nature is love. It is equally true that "God is light." His essential nature is light, therefore He cannot possibly fail to make every hidden thing manifest. But it is also blessedly true that the activities of His nature are loving, for He is love. We know, too, that God is righteous in all His ways, and holy in all His works. The cross of Christ most thoroughly sets forth that He does not sacrifice His holiness to love, or His love to holiness, but that His nature is love. "God is love." This faith receives and enjoys, because it is God's revelation of Himself.

Here the fact is turned to practical account, for if God's nature is love, and we are born of God, it is clear that the moral qualities of a child must be according to those of the Father. The Apostle therefore says, "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love" (1 John 4:7-8). The exhortation that we should love one another is founded, then, on the fact that we are born of God and therefore have a nature that loves, for God is love.

The fact is also stated that the person who loves according to God must be born of God. It is impossible, therefore, that one who is born of God can be one who loves not. He may be in a bad state of soul and the divine work in him be much obscured by carnal ways and associations. But it is as natural for the new nature, which we have as a new creation in Christ, to love as it is for the old Adam nature to be selfish and to hate. Hence you find the Apostle Paul, in writing to the Thessalonian saints, declaring that they are taught of God to love one another. And how many souls before they were established in Christ have found comfort from this text which assures them they were God's children: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." They know this to be true of them. They know well that the poorest man by the roadside who shows plainly that he is the Lord's engages His affections and interests more than all the princes of this world who are enemies of the Lord of glory.

Every one, therefore, that is born of God loves the brethren; they are objects of his tenderest regard, because they are God's. He knows also that the matters of one of His feeblest children are of more importance to God than the political movements of the whole world. Oh, the blessedness of having passed from death unto life, of being born of God and of knowing God, for He is Love!

The nature of God being love, He Himself is the spring of it; for "herein is love, not that we loved God," that is, that love did not originate in us, "but that He loved us." Therefore, "he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." Hence the word of the gospel is not about our love, but about His Love. And those who have eternal Life can say, "We have known and believed the love that God hath to us."

A Righteous and a Holy God

"Righteousness" is spoken of in Romans, "sanctification" in Hebrews. The scene in Romans is the throne, and a righteous God; in Hebrews, the sanctuary and a holy God. In Romans the point is the guilt of the sinner; in Hebrews, his defilement, while with regard to the sacrifice of Christ (of which both speak) Romans sets before us its perfection as meeting the righteous claims of God, whereas in Hebrews we get its eternal character in being offered once for all on these two foundations our peace rests.

Christ's work must be perfect that we may have a standing at all, before a righteous God; it must also be of eternal efficacy that this standing may never be lost.

Questions and Answers

QUESTION: Will you kindly explain Hebrews 10:25?

ANSWER: The Hebrew epistle looks at Christians as journeying can through the wilderness to their heavenly home, and the writer seems to set' that some were in danger of going back to Judaism. Some had grown dull of hearing and had become such as had need of milk, not of strong food (Heb. 5:11-12). So they are exhorted to hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm into the end (ch. 3:6,14). Among other warnings we find some in this chapter: 10. Verse 25 continues an exhortation to hold fast the confession of the hope without wavering (for He is faithful who has promised), and to consider one another to provoke unto love and good works by doing them, and not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together. The "ourselves" are those who know redemption, those who are sanctified by Christ's one offering. It is by this means they are built up and strengthened in their faith, and, with Christ in the midst, see Him and have their hearts filled with joy.

The manner of some seemed to be to stay away, and, indeed, we need this exhortation, for some seem to look on the assembling of ourselves together as a matter of choice. They come when they please, and stay away as they please.

With the Hebrews this was dangerous ground; for all falling away in this epistle is really apostasy from Christ. Self-will in any of us is sad indeed, so we need to exhort one another, especially as we think of the day soon coming when all our ways will be manifested whether we are doing OUT own will or the will of God.

Take No Thought—Take Thine Ease

Notice the striking contrast between verses 19 and 22 of Luke 12.

"Take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry."

This is what one man said to his soul after he laid up a great store of earthly goods. He thought of the future, made his plans accordingly, carried them out, and then relaxed into self-indulgence with great satisfaction, but forgot God, who called him a fool.

"Me no thought for your life, what ve shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on."

This is the word of the Lord Jesus to His disciples, so that they would not be filled with anxious care about their earthly needs. He gives several reasons why they should not be troubled about these things: God cares for the fowls, and the disciples are more important than the fowls (vs. 6-7), and if they are ever so anxious, it is still beyond their power to make certain provisions—they are not able to do that which is least (vs.: 25-26). He clothes the lilies and the grass of the field, and they are better than such (vs. 27-28), and after all, their Father knows what they need (vs. 30), and it is the Father's good pleasure to give them even more—the kingdom (vs. 32).

God's Purpose and Rest

In the revealed purposes and counsels of God we can look into a scene which reminds us of a family at home. We see the Father's joy in His children and the children's joy in their Father and in the Son in whom all is made known and bestowed. The Father will have His eternal delight and joy in His children and Christ in His Church.

These two truths are brought before us in Ephesians 1. The first blessing brought out is that of the Father and the children, "that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself." God purposed a family for His own delight and marked us out in Christ for the adoption of sonship. Second, God gave Christ "to be the head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in All."

"Christ loved the church" refers to eternity, when the Church was given to Christ in His own eternal counsels. When He gave Himself for the Church was not in eternity, but was in the past. What is the present? It is that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." What is the future? "That He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing."

What a wonderful thing it is, then, to see these two truths: the Father and the family, and Christ and the Church. We enjoy the Father's love to the children and His delight in them and Christ's love to the Church and His delight in it. When the Father has His children according to His purpose all will be complete. How long will that last? It will last forever. All had its origin, not in time, but in eternity. All had its origin in the love and wisdom of God, The Church of God is His dwelling place. In Ephesians 2 it is, "Builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit" But in Revelation 21 it says, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them." The Church's relationship to God is as a house where He dwells; with Christ it is His body. These are two distinct lines of truth: one is relationship to God, the other to Christ.

When God rests again, He will not rest in the works and fruits of His creative power. He will rest in the fruits of redemption, a redeemed creation. It is evident His joy will be much fuller in a redeemed creation, for mere creation only tells of the power and goodness of God. But redemption tells of His love and the holiness of His righteousness. In short, it tells of His character. In creation we might say we see the attributes of God, but in redemption we see Himself, His whole character and being—what He is in Himself. His in this that God will rest eternally.

In Leviticus 23 God has told us what He is doing. Those feasts begin with rest and creation; they end in the fruits of redemption—a new creation—the eighth day. They began with the Sabbath, then came the Passover. Because the Sabbath was broken, God began again. How did He begin? He began with the Passover, and that is redemption. All that comes between, until the seventh feast with its eighth day, are the ways of God.

W. Potter

Peace Through Prayer

In all things, instead of disquieting ourselves, we ought to present our request to God with prayer, with supplication, so that, even while making our petition to Him, we can already give thanks, because we are sure of the answer of His grace, be it what it may. It does not say, you will have what you ask, but God's peace will keep your hearts. Oh, what grace! that even our anxieties are a means of our being filled with this marvelous peace.

Bible Challenger-04-April V.10

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the word describing something usually dreaded, but which in God's perspective is light and of short duration. [1] The number in brackets indicates the number of missing words in each answer.

1. "That ye might know the love which I have more_____ unto you." [1]
2. "The wall of Jerusalem also is broken dawn, and the gates thereof are burned with_____ ." [1]
3. "Unto a land_____ with milk and honey." [1]
4. "Unless Thy_____ had been my delights, I should then have perished." [1]
5. "Call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were _____, ye endured." [1]
6. "We stand before this house, and in Thy presence... and _____." [3]
7. "Neither doth_____ spring out of the ground." [1]
8. "Persecution ariseth for the word's sake, _____they are offended." [1]
9. "With the people of God, than to enjoy the Pleasures_____ for a season." [2]
10. "AU the days of his life, and there shall _____ come upon his head." [2]

Answers to these questions will be found in the next issue of Christian Treasury.

R. Erisman

God Is Light

1 John 1:5

A. H. Rule

The Apostle John had seen Jesus and beheld in Him the manifestation of "that eternal life, which Was with the Father." What he had "seen and heard" he declared unto the saints to whom he wrote that they might have fellowship with him—a fellowship which was "with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ." Nothing could be more blessed than this wondrous association and fellowship into which the saints are brought, and so the Apostle had written these things to them that their joy might "be full."

All this is the expression of God's infinite grace to poor sinners whom He has been pleased to lift out of the depths of ruin and to deliver from the power of sin and Satan. He gives them divine, eternal life and brings them into His own presence, establishing them there in a known and eternal relationship with Himself. This is pure, unmingled grace, the fruit of infinite, eternal love, and it is most blessed indeed.

The human heart in its wretched perversity and wickedness is ever ready to abuse grace; yes, even to turn the grace of God into lasciviousness, if it can. So we find the truth of God guarded on every side. If God in infinite grace takes up vile sinners and brings them into His own presence and into fellowship with Himself, it is cause for most profound joy and gratitude. But in so doing this, God never does and never can set aside His own character. His unsullied holiness, His absolute purity, as We as His love and grace, must shine out in all that He does.

If "God is love," "God is light" as well. "Light" and "love" are the very essence of what He is in His nature. And if we are made partakers of the divine nature; recipients of that life—that eternal life—which was manifested in Jesus the Son of God here upon earth, we must remember it is the nature of One who is light, absolute purity, necessarily detecting and excluding all evil. Hence the Apostle says, "This then is the message which we have heard of Him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all."

No language could be used to describe more forcibly God's intrinsic and absolute purity. It is a purity that admits of no degree of evil. Not only is God "light," but no "darkness" can mingle with that light. Darkness is necessarily excluded by what He is as light. And if we have been brought to God, we are not in "darkness," but in the "light." It is the place and condition into which we have been brought: We were once darkness, but now light in the Lord (Eph. 5:8).

In our natural state We were "darkness"; now, as redeemed and brought to God and made partakers of the divine nature, we are "light in the Lord." What a change, both of place and condition! Once afar off, but now in God's presence in Christ, we are brought nigh through His blood! Once enemies; now reconciled and in cloudless light, we are able to look up into God's face and say, Abba, Father! Once incapable of having a common thought, or feeling, or desire with

God; now we are possessed of the divine nature and able to have fellowship with Him and with His Son Jesus Christ!

Do we then say we have been brought to God and have fellowship with Him, and while claiming these things, walk in darkness? Then it is all a lie, and we do not the truth.

If we have been brought to God, we are in the light, for God is light. We have been made partakers of the divine nature. God has been revealed in Jesus, and through this revelation we have been brought to Him, receiving the life which was manifested in Jesus. And thus we are brought into fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. Only as possessing this life can we have fellowship with God.

If we possess this life and are in this fellowship, we are necessarily in the light. The light is what God is in the purity and holiness of His nature, and we participate in this nature and thus are in the light. But if we say we participate in this nature, and in it have fellowship with God while we walk in darkness, we connect darkness with Him who is light. It is to say darkness belongs to that pure and holy nature, that divine life which was manifested in Jesus. And this is a lie, and we do not know the truth. We are still in the moral darkness of nature and know not God.

"God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." It is a solemn statement which shows the necessary exclusion of evil from His presence. The cross is the measure of this. There we see His awful abhorrence of sin when He abandons His own sin hearer, and commands the sword to awake against Him as made sin for us. Abandoned of God on that cross, the suffering Victim was overwhelmed in darkness, in unfathomable sorrow, left to drink the cup of God's wrath against sin. That bitter cry of anguish, "My God; My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" shows the utter impossibility of the darkness mingling with the light, or of sin having a place in the presence of God.

All this is unspeakably solemn if we look at the flesh or the old nature and what flows from it. And yet it is unspeakably blessed when we realize that we are in the Son, and that our life is in Him. We are brought to God in Christ. "As He is, so are we in this World." We are in the light, but it is as partakers of the divine nature, and thus in our nature morally, like God Himself, and this is most blessed indeed. But it searches the heart, and tests our practical state. Are we habitually walking in the fear of God, and judging the flesh with its lusts, so that nothing is seen in our walk or ways but What is Christ-like? Do we carry in our souls, daily and hourly, the sense that we are in God's presence? And do we realize the manner of life that becomes that place? We are in the light; we are in God's presence.

We are not there today and some place else tomorrow. it is the place we are in as Christians. May the power of this truth possess our souls, giving us that hilt' sobriety of soul and abhorrence of sin suited to the place we are in and the nature and character God has given us as His own children.

God's Righteousness, Not Mine

The righteousness is divine, not human. The righteousness of works had been sought for in vain for four thousand years, from the Gentile, the heathen philosopher and the Jew (Rom. 1-3). But both the Jews who had the law and the Gentiles who were a law unto themselves had Failed. The trial is finally summed up in these words: "Therefore by the deeds of the law [that is, by works of any kind] there shall no flesh be justified in His sight." And now a new righteousness apart from law (of every kind) is manifested, a righteousness not of man but of God. This new righteousness is not on the principle of works at all, neither our own nor the works (or law keeping) of another put to our account, for then would righteousness still come by the law and Christ would be "dead in vain" (Gal. 2:21). It is most important to be clear on this. Righteousness comes to me through Christ's death and resurrection, not through His spotless life. Indeed, it is only in dying that He takes up my cause as my substitute.

Young Christian

Proverbs

Simon Patrick on the Proverbs

1683

Chapter 6:20-35

20. "My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother" And here, my son, must remember thee of what I said in the beginning about a reverend regard unto thy parents; especially when they warn thee against such wickedness's as these: do not make light of their admonitions; but observe the precepts of thy father, and let thy mother's commands be a law to thee.

21. "Bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck." Fix them in thy mind, and link thy affections so fast to them, that they may not only be continually before thine eyes; but seem the greatest ornament to all thy words and actions, when they are ordered by their directions.

22. "When thou pest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee." Thou wilt find the benefit of giving early entertainment to such good counsel from thy parents, in every passage of thy whole life: for when thou goest about any business, it will guide thee to doe [do] it honestly and successfully; when thou liest down to sleep, it will make thee rest secure of the guardianship of the Divine Providence over thee; and, when thou awakest in the morning, suggest to thy thoughts how thou oughtest to behave thy self at home and abroad.

23. "For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life." In the darkest times and the most dubious cases, it will both direct and comfort thee: for

every particular commandment of God (which they teach thee) is like a candle; and the whole law is like the light of the sun; to show thee thy way, and to exhilarate thy spirits, while thou walkest in it: nay, the severest reproofs, which correct thy errors and reduce thee to obedience, are the way to the greatest happiness.

24. "To keep thee from the evil woman, from the flattery of the tongue of a strange woman." As those instructions and reproofs, for instance, ought to be accounted, which preserve thee from being deluded by the flattering speeches, and enticements of a lewd woman: from whom thou oughtest perfectly to estrange thy self, as from a sink of all wickedness.

25. "Lust not after her beauty in thine heart; neither let her take thee with her eyelids." Let me advise thee again (though I have done it oft) not to gaze upon her beauty, or upon her fine attire; but suppress the very first desire, which a glance of her may have kindled in thy heart: do not consent to pursue it in the least; much less suffer thy self to be caught in the nets of her wanton eyes, and thereby drawn into her dangerous embraces.

26. For by means of a whorish woman a man is brought to a piece of bread: and the adulteress will hunt for the precious life." For such is the cunning of a harlot, that having got a silly youth into her toils, she will hardly let him go, till she have reduced him to the extremist beggary: and if she be another man's wife, a train [trap] is laid for that which is more precious by far than all the treasures he hath spent, namely, his dearest life; which he foolishly loses for the short pleasure of a sinful lust.

27. "Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned?" He may think perhaps to enjoy his pleasure so privately, that none shall know it; but that's as unlikely, as that a man should take fire secretly into his bosom, and so conceal it that it shall not break out and burn his clothes.

28. "Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned?" Who ever heard that fire will doe Idol no hurt, because it is closely lodged? or that anybody ever walked barefoot upon red-hot coals, and his feet escaped from being burnt?

29. "So he that goeth in to his neighbor's wife; whosoever toucheth her shall not be innocent." Even so is it sottish folly to imagine that a man shall suffer nothing, who lies with his neighbor's wife: let him be who he will that commits that crime, he shall not escape unpunished.

30. "Men do not despise a thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry." For he is not a common thief, who only steals a man's goods, and that perhaps out of extreme necessity, merely to satisfy his hungry appetite, which he knows not otherwise how to fill: such an one we are apt to pity, and do not expose him to shame, by whipping him, and laying stripes upon his back.

31. "But if he be found, he shall restore sevenfold; he shall give all the substance of his house." But when he is found out, he shall only make as complete a restitution as the law requires, though that perhaps may be no less than all that he is worth.

32. "But whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul." But the adulterer robs a man of his wife without any such necessity, there being other and honest ways to satisfy his desires: and therefore hath no excuse, but must be looked upon as a stupid fool void of common understanding; and when he is found out be punished, not merely in his estate, but with the loss of his life.

33. "A wound and dishonor shall he get; and his reproach shall not be wiped away." And besides the quarrels and other troubles wherein this sin may engage him, his reputation shall receive a deadly wound; and it will make him infamous, as long as he lives and when he is dead: for while his name lasts it shall not be mentioned without reproach; but have a brand of disgrace set upon it, which shall never be blotted out.

34. "For jealousy is the rage of a man: therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance." For no restitution can be made, or satisfaction given in this case, as there may be in the other; no prayers neither, or submissions shall prevail with the injured husband: whose justly provoked indignation rises up to a furious rage, which will not pity or spare the adulterer (though the public Justice should be asleep) when he finds an opportunity to be revenged.

35. "He will not regard any ransom; neither will he rest content, though thou givest many gifts." Though he may be willing to expiate his crime, and redeem his life at any rate, it will not be accepted; the largest gifts will be refused; and though greater and greater be still offered, they will not appease his wrath: which pursues the adulterer implacably, and never rests contented, but in his utter ruin.

Bible Challenger-03-March Answers V.10

1. Dream dreams Acts 2:17
2. Altogether lovely Song of Sol. 5:16
3. Up 2 Sam. 12:3
4. Giving Ruth 1:6
5. House Job 1:13
6. Timbrels Judges 11:34
7. Encouraged 1 Sam. 30:6
8. Refused Heb. 11:24
9. Sabbath day Luke 13:1-6

"The horseleech hath two DAUGHTERS, crying, Give, give. There are three things that are never satisfied, yea, four things say not, It is enough" (Prov. 30:15).

The Father's Love

Well may the Spirit of God invite us to behold that "manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God"! Those words give us a glimpse of the exhaustless stores and fathomless abyss of our Father's love to us?

Love that no tongue can teach,

Love that no thought can reach,

No love like His.

God is its blessed source;

Death ne'er can stop its course;

Nothing can stay its force;

Matchless it is.

Paul, the Apostle of glory and of the Church, in addressing the Church, and in a special way in his apostolic greeting to the Church at Ephesus wrote: "Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father; and from the Lord Jesus Christ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:2-3).

Of what love does that wonderful heavenly greeting remind us? That same love of the Father, which rests on Christ, rests upon us, for we are "accepted in the beloved." And how does the Father look at the face of His Anointed? With the supreme delight of a Father and God. That same perfect, eternal love rests upon us, poor and feeble though we be. We are accepted in the beloved, and "as He is [accepted and beloved in heaven], so are we in this world"—a world of enmity, hatred and opposition against everything that is of God and belongs to God, and which persecutes all who "will live godly in Christ Jesus."

We have the assurance that the same Father's love that rested upon His own Son, when He as the perfect Man walked this earth, rests upon us. He was opposed at every step of His life and was lifted up from the earth and nailed to the cross. What a comfort rests upon us while we, like Him, pass through a cruel and subtle enemy's country towards our final rest and glory with Him; what comfort to know that the love that rested upon Christ in His life here rests now upon us.

J. von Poseck

The Study of the Word

I am daily more convinced that the study of the Word is the only sure way to growth and strength. The true way to get interested in the Word is to feel you need its counsel to guide and help you. The Word is the only thing for faith to cling to, and it is in depending on God's Word, because it is God's Word, that the soul is strengthened in God, and not from the blessings, merely, which flow from keeping the Word. If we felt it more a journey of faith, we should be more unceasing in seeking for the Word as the trellis-work on which our faith might climb.

Editorial: Pray Without Ceasing!

Prayer is based upon the privilege of having common thoughts with God. We find His thoughts in His Word. God desires to communicate with His creatures; therefore, we need to be acquainted with His mind through the reading and knowledge of His Word, the Bible.

In Luke 18:1, it says: "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint." That is, we should ask from Him and not give up. Persistence in prayer is clearly taught in this scripture.

In seeking an answer from God, we will find that the Spirit of God will always guide a child of God according to the Word of God. The Spirit of God wrote the Book and He cannot and does not answer contrary to His Word.

Abraham may have uttered the first prayer recorded in the Bible when he said, "Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless?" (Gen. 15:2). The Lord quickly answered him as to his seed. Galatians 3:16 takes up this promise and says: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ."

Throughout God's Word we find many prayers. Most of them are short. Perhaps the longest is Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the temple. The last prayer in the Scriptures is only five words and is found in Revelation 22:20: "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." We, who belong to Christ and who are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, await the answer to this beautiful prayer, knowing that soon it will be fully answered.

Meanwhile, our spirit and attitude should be one of dependence. This is good for us, for God wants two things from His children: dependence and obedience. A verse in 1 Thessalonians 5 has only three words, and they are, "Pray without ceasing." Surely this means for us always to be dependent and ready to cry to God even as Peter cried, saying, "Lord, save me" (Matt. 14:30).

The largeness of what we should speak to God about is expressed in 1 Timothy 2:1-2. "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority"

In 1 Samuel 12, the people of Israel were convicted about their sin and said to Samuel: "Pray for thy servants unto the Lord thy God, that we die not: for we have added unto all our sins this evil, to ask us a king" (vs. 19). Samuel replies, "Fear not." Then he says: "For the Lord will not forsake His people for His great name's sake: because it hath pleased the Lord to make you His people. Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way: only fear the Lord, and serve Him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great things He hath done for you" (vss. 22-24).

Surely all this is beautiful instruction for us today. Let us "pray without ceasing"! Ed.

Psalms 19-24

B. Anstey

Psalms 19 to 24 outline God's prophetic dealings with the godly Jewish remnant from the time of their first gathering back into their land at the beginning of the tribulation period. It continues until their deliverance from Antichrist by the coming of the Lord (the appearing) to bring in His kingdom.

Psalm 19

This psalm gives the means by which God will bear testimony of Himself in the tribulation period. Since Christians will be taken out of the world at the rapture (see 1 Thess. 4:15-18), and the testimony of the gospel of the grace of God will be preached no longer, God will still have a testimony of Himself to man, namely, through His creation (vss. 1-6) and through His Word (vss. 7-11). God will work through these two testimonies particularly among the Jews who will return to their land early in the tribulation. A remnant among them will be awakened and seek to live uprightly in accord with the knowledge they have of God.

The final portion of the psalm shows the effect these testimonies will have upon their soul. There is a searching of heart and a seeking to be kept from the current of apostasy in the land referred to as "the great transgression" (vss. 12-14).

Psalm 20

While Psalm 19 shows how a remnant will be formed and separated from the mass of the Jews by having a conscience toward God, this psalm gives the persecution they will encounter as a result of their faith in Jehovah. Christ enters fully into the sufferings of the remnant, desiring that they be heard by Jehovah in the "day of trouble"—the tribulation (Dan. 12:1; Jer. 14:8; 30:7). He pleads their cause and speaks of the time to come when all God's counsels concerning Himself and Israel will be accomplished, when they will be delivered and able to rejoice in His salvation (vss. 1-5).

Meanwhile, the mass of the Jews (the "many" of Daniel 9:27) will put their trust in the military power ("chariots" and "horses") of the Beast, the revived Roman Empire, by a covenant which they think will provide protection from the pressures of the Arab nations of the Middle East. Consequently they are "fallen" deeply into apostasy. The godly remnant, however, will not put their hand in with the apostate mass of Jews (Isa. 8:11-13), but will lean upon Jehovah alone whom they trust will deliver them in His time (vss. 7-9).

Psalm 21

This psalm is the answer to the call in the previous psalm. Christ, as Israel's Messiah, has appeared to deliver the godly remnant by putting down their oppressors. God has heard the intercession of Christ, and has granted the desires of His heart regarding His suffering remnant who have been waiting for Him. As Messiah, Christ manifests His kingly glory to the remnant. The use of His title "Most High" indicates He is about to set up His kingdom according to the promise given to David (vss. 1-7). Seeing their Messiah in His kingly glory and power, the remnant are confident that He will judge the remaining kings of the earth, whom they refer to as His enemies (vss. 8-13).

Psalm 22

In the previous psalm the Lord manifested Himself to the remnant as their Messiah, but now they see something more in Him who has come to deliver them. They see it is Jesus of Nazareth, the One whom they, as a nation, have rejected and crucified. At once the light will flood into their souls. They will "look upon Me Whom they have pierced" (see verse 16) and mourn in repentance. (See Zechariah 12:10-44.)

This psalm unfolds the atoning sufferings of Christ as realized by the remnant. They now learn that on the cross the Lord Jesus was wounded for their transgressions and bruised for their iniquities (Isa. 55:5-6). The heading "Aijeleth Shaha" means "the hind of the dawn of the morning." With Christ appearing (Psalm 21) and the remnant brought to repentance through the realization of His sufferings on the cross by which they are restored to Him (Psalm 22), it is certain a new day is dawning indeed for Israel.

The psalm opens with the Lord's cry of abandonment on the cross (Matt. 27:46). During the three hours of darkness God took up the whole question of sin and settled it to His own glory by pouring out His wrath against sin on Christ (vss. 1-3). Then the whole story of the cross is unfolded with its suffering and shame (vss. 4-21).

The "strong bulls" (vs. 12) are the leaders of Israel—the Sanhedrin—in their headstrong character. The "ravening and... roaring lion" (vs. 13; 1 Peter 5:8) is Satan himself who has moved men to crucify Christ. "Poured out like water" (vs. 14) would refer to the tremendous perspiration that is a result of crucifixion. His "bones... out of joint" (vs. 14) was perhaps caused by the cross being lifted and dropped into its hole, and through the weight of His body hanging from the cross. His strength "dried up like a potsherd" (vs. 15) refers to His bodily weakness and physical exhaustion. His tongue cleaving to His jaws (vs. 15) is the result of immense dehydration. The "dogs" (vss. 16-18) who compassed about Him are the Gentile soldiers. The "sword" and the "power of the dog" (vs. 20) are the imperial power of Rome. And the "lion's mouth" (vs. 21) is death itself. Such were some of the sufferings of Christ on the cross.

The work He accomplished there in putting away sin by the sacrifice of Himself is the foundation upon which all blessing flows to man. Hence, in the latter part of the psalm there is widespread blessing extended to Israel and the nations of the earth. The work of redemption then completed, Christ in resurrection sees the praise that will ascend to God from various groups of men. His "brethren" (vs. 22) are perhaps the heavenly company (Heb. 2:12). The "congregation" (vss. 22-24) is the remnant. The "great congregation" is all Israel (vss. 25-26). Then finally the Gentile "nations" are mentioned as participating in the praise of Jehovah (vss. 27-31).

Psalm 23

Christ's having returned (Psa. 21) and Israel's being restored to Him through their realization of His work on the cross (.Psa. 22), the redeemed of Israel now speak of the Lord very personally as their Shepherd. This psalm sees Christ as Jehovah-Shepherd guarding and caring for the sheep of His pasture (Ezek. 34:11-13; Psa. 77:20; 95:7; Isa. 40:11). It has particular reference to the protection the Lord will give to restored Israel when enemies are still existent in the earth (Isa. 31:4-5; Zech. 9:8; 12:8). They rejoice over what the Lord has done. He has restored them, "He restoreth my soul," and caused them to be at rest in their promised inheritance "to lie down in green pastures" (vss, 2-3). Though they are still in "the valley of the shadow of death" through enemies existent, they fear no evil because the Lord is with them. Overwhelmed by the sense of the Lord's goodness and mercy, they see their future as dwelling in the presence of the Lord forever (vss. 4-6).

Psalm 24

This psalm doses the series with Christ, the Icing of glory, associating Himself with "the excellent" in the earth—the saints (Psa. 16:3). Having taken possession of the earth by putting down the rebellious nations (seas and floods—compare Psalm 46:2-3; 65:7; 93:3-4), He enters the temple as the triumphant Jehovah. All who have purified themselves will also have the privilege of entering there for worship. This includes the Gentiles as well as Israel (vss. 7-10). Also see Ezekiel 43:1-5.

Sore Travail

"This sore travail path God given to the sons of man to be exercised therewith" (Eccles. 1:13).

The sorrows that befall alike both righteous and wicked during the short years of our lives will always be a mystery to the natural mind and eye. Only faith can see beyond natural sight and understand. Solomon, like ourselves, sought to find some satisfying portion in earthly things, but did not find it. The sameness of all that ever happens, the weary labor that all creation shares in performing and the sorrows and unrest of all things burdened his spirit. The sun rises and goes down and hastens to the place where it arose. The wind repeats its sounds, all the rivers run into the sea and yet the sea is not full; the water returns to its sources to run the same race again. "All things are full of labor; man cannot utter it" (Eccles. 1:8). The tenor of it presses down upon the soul, and we might ask, Why is all this? What fruit is there in any labor under the sun?

Solomon, the Preacher, proved all things and found nothing to rest in, nothing enduring and nothing but what is vanity. He tried pleasure, but it was all "vanity and vexation of spirit [pursuit of the wind]." He sought to find joy in wisdom, for he saw that wisdom excelled folly as light excelled darkness, but this, too, was vanity, for death overtakes all. What good was there in anything? All things had to have their season and nothing lasted. And even worse than all that, wickedness was in the place of judgment and the oppressor in the place of power. The slothful and the miserly were alike vanity. Wisdom too, was emptiness, for it gained nothing for its owner but increased capacity to suffer (vs. 18)

Why all this? The answer Solomon came to is this: "This sere travail hath God given to the sons of man to be exercised therewith." The travail is, indeed, sore and the exercise of heart induced by it is deep. But we learn from it, for it makes us long for something better than the best things earth can furnish.

This answer is as far as Solomon with all his wisdom could go: he could close the door on earthly hopes for lasting joy. The death and resurrection of a greater than he was needed to open the door to abiding and satisfying joys. Before Christ, man might discover the vanity of the world, and, in faith, trust God to solve all mysteries, but not until Christ came was the door opened to heaven. The only One who had a right to life had to die, be raised and ascended to His place on the Father's throne in order to give us real intelligence as to why the righteous suffer here.

In the triumph and glory of the Captain of our salvation we see the object in view and result to us of the sorrows we pass through. They are to fit us for that glory unto which God is now bringing many sons, there to share the company of Him who overcame for us. "If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him." By suffering we are led more deeply into fellowship with Him and thus gain greater capacity to share His joy. Just as gold, by being beaten, becomes able to hold more, so we as vessels are hammered out that we may be able to hold a larger measure of joy when the reigning time comes.

When we grasp this, it gives power even to "glory in tribulations," and what a triumph of grace this is! But this is only as we "rejoice in hope of the glory of God." When that glory has become the hope of the soul, tribulations are accepted as being a part of the path to that glory. Suffering for Christ is just as much a gift of grace as believing. "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake" (Phil. 1:29).

Let our souls grasp the purpose of God in saving us-fellowship with Him in the coming glory-and tears are seen to be the needed watering of that which the sunshine of His grace has caused to spring up. And not one tear is lost. David could say in Psalm 56:8, "Put Thou my tears into Thy bottle." They are preserved to that day when each one seen in the sunbeams of God's glory will sparkle as a brilliant jewel. Jewels that are formed in these days of trial will be the everlasting reminders of that wonderful love that led us and bore us up through all our sorrows.

The Lord said, "Ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy" (John 16:20). And it shall be so. He who, in fellowship with the rejected Lord, has trod a path of tears, will find that he has laid up for himself a larger treasure of jewels than he whose path was smooth and whose tears were fewer.

In trials the heart gains the capacity to enter into the Lord's mind as to ourselves and as to His things, and we may well conclude that the impressions made on the character are made for eternity.

Worship

J. N. Darby

Love seeks worshippers, but it seeks them under the gentle name of "Father." It places them in a position of freedom before Him as the children of His love. The Spirit, who acts in them and produces worship, is "the Spirit of adoption" which cries, "Abba, Father." It is not that God has lost His majesty, but that He whose majesty is far better known is known also under the more tender and loving character of Father. The Spirit, who leads to worship the Father, leads us also into the knowledge and enjoyment of all the love of God who would have us to worship Him as His children.

The enjoyment of this love and of these privileges, God be thanked, belongs to the most simple and the most ignorant among Christians. The Christian, when once he has understood what the grace of God is and has received the spirit of adoption, is entitled to enjoy them without any reasoning as a child knows and loves and enjoys his father before he can give any account of that which he enjoys. "I write unto you," says John, when addressing himself to the little children in Christ, "because ye have known the Father" (1 John 2:13). The feeblest Christian is therefore perfectly competent for worship.

At the same time, it is sweet to be able to estimate and explain this relationship with God. The more we think of it, the more we examine the Word on the subject, the more we shall see the import and the deep blessedness of it. The simple fact that God is our Father and that we possess the enjoyment of such a relationship with Him by the Spirit is in itself an immeasurable privilege for creatures such as we are. Every child of God has this privilege in unquestioned right, but it is in Christ and with Christ that we possess it. He is "the firstborn among many brethren." He is gone to His Father and our Father, to His God and our God. What a sweet and blessed relationship! What a family is that into which we are introduced!

How are we who were formerly strangers to these affections and to this love—how are we to learn these things? How are we to learn what the Father is and the knowledge of whom gives birth to these affections in our hearts? It is the only-begotten Son, the firstborn in this new relationship, who reveals Him unto us. Eternal Son of the Father, enjoying the infinite love of the Father in whose bosom He dwelt, is He who reveals the Father as He Himself has known Him.

Become man upon this earth, Jesus ceased not to be the object of the same affection—which, when challenged, could not remain silent. "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Nor did Christ in anything put Himself at a distance from this love. Upon earth from the cradle to the cross He was the object of it in all its fullness, and He revealed Him in whom it was found. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him" (John 1:18). Jesus, a man, but also the Son of God, in the enjoyment of the fullness of this affection, dwells, even while upon earth, in the bosom of the Father to originate and make known here below all the beauty—all the force—of that affection. As man He was the object

of this infinite love in order that we might understand it in its application to men. So He associates us with Himself in the joy of this love, and He reveals it to us as He Himself knows it.

What grace in Him! And what a position for us! How does Jesus Himself, who by His death and resurrection has planted us in this blessedness, become to us an object of love, of adoration, of devotedness of heart! The very glory which is given to us is presented to us by the Savior as a proof of this love. "The glory," said He in John 17:22-23, "which Thou gavest Me I have given them... that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me." Such is His affection towards us, that He desires that we may enjoy the Father's love. So He renders us capable of this enjoyment by revealing to us the Father's name. "I have declared unto them," says He in the same chapter, "Thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them." Our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus. This fellowship expresses itself in adoration towards Him who is revealed and towards Him who reveals.

It will be easily seen how the work of Christ is the foundation of all this blessedness, whether in order to introduce us without spot and without fear into the presence of the God whom we adore or in order to place us in the relationship of children towards the Father. It was after His resurrection that Christ could say, "I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God." Then it was that He could say, "Go to My brethren." Now the Spirit which He gives from on high answers to this blessing. He is "the Spirit of adoption," as He is the Spirit of liberty, because we are "accepted in the beloved." We enjoy a redemption which has made us "the righteousness of God in Him" and therefore placed us in God's presence without a spot or stain of defilement.

Thus we have reviewed, at least in principle, the great foundation truths of Christian worship. Perfect in Christ, united to Him, brought into the presence of God, whose love and holiness are manifest without a veil, as children beloved of the Father, and objects of the same love with Christ the firstborn, we worship together according to the power and affections which the Spirit, who has been given to us, inspires.

We worship the God of glory whose presence is the stay instead of being the terror of our souls. We worship the God of love, whose will it is that we should be perfectly happy in Him, that He Himself might enjoy our happiness, Himself finding more joy in it than even we ourselves. We adore our Father with endearing confidence in His kindness, which blesses us with all spiritual blessings and counts the very hairs of our head, while thoughtful of all our present need. We adore Him for that which He is in Himself. We adore Him for that which He is to us, the children of His house for eternity. We thus present ourselves in sweet communion before the same Father—our common Father—as His beloved children. So brotherly affections are developed, and, the joy of each being reciprocally the joy of all, multiplied praises ascend to God.

Hence we see in the New Testament that while indeed the consciousness of this relationship must necessarily be individually realized in order that we may enjoy it together, yet, at the same time, the Spirit constantly associates us and uses the words "we" and "us" when speaking of Christian affections and feelings. The Holy Spirit shedding abroad the love of God in our hearts, it could not be otherwise.

But the effect of the presence of this "one Spirit" goes yet much farther. Not only does He give us the consciousness of being in Christ, of being perfect before God, according to the efficacy of the redemption which Christ has accomplished, and not only does He witness with our spirits that we are the adopted children of the Father, but He gives us also the consciousness of being but "one body"—the "body of Christ" and "members one of another." The Church, which God has newly created in Christ—that "one new man"—the redeemed who have been "all baptized into one body," offering worship in "the unity of the Spirit," necessarily offer it as but "one body," and that "with all the saints." They are the "habitation of God through the Spirit." And that Spirit uniting them all in the unity of the body of Christ, adoration ascends on high towards God who formed them to be but "one new man" in Christ.

If Israel, as a whole, was represented by the priests who officiated in the tabernacle, the faithful now who render direct worship to God do it in the unity in which they are all "one body in Christ." In this worship there is more than brotherhood. There is unity, not of nation and not only of family, but of the members of one body, formed as such, and in-dwelt by one Spirit. This is the endowment, privilege and position of the Church, which is baptized into "one body in Christ." The Head is ascended up on high in order that the members of the body may render worship freely and with joy before God by that unction which descends from Him.

Let us state some of the practical effects which flow from these truths. First, it is evident that worship is the privilege only of the children of God. Being offered "in spirit and in truth" and being offered to Him who cannot admit sin into His presence, they, and they alone, who are washed in the blood of the Lamb and who have received the Spirit can draw near to God to adore Him. That a man who is not converted should render worship to God is simply impossible, for "without faith it is impossible to please Him [God]." Such a one may be blessed in temporal things. He may perhaps ask such a blessing and be heard. God may have tender compassion for him as a poor sinner, but as yet he knows not God, as yet he has not the Spirit, and as yet he is not washed in the blood of Christ. Therefore it is utterly impossible for him to worship God. That he thinks he can draw nigh to God is but the proof that he is ignorant of what he is in himself and of what the God is whom he thinks to serve.

Who can enter into the sanctuary save he who is sanctified? Who can address himself to a father, as such, save as a child? Worship, moreover, being offered in the unity of the body of Christ, and by the Spirit who has formed this unity and who dwells in the body as in a temple, he who is not of the body is necessarily excluded. To suppose that a person who has not the Spirit can be a member of this body is to deny its existence, its end and its nature. For if a man who is not converted can enter into the presence of God and worship there, there is no need that there should be a body in which God dwells as in a temple. Nor is there need of redemption which is the basis of everything.

Why should there be a redeemed people if the worldling can serve God in His presence? Wherefore adore God by the Spirit if he who has not the Spirit can adore just as well? Worshipping in common supposes persons united in one by the same Spirit and that each can say "we" in sincerity when addressing God. A hypocrite may be present; he will be a hindrance in the worship, but its validity will not be thereby destroyed, when the worshipper says "we" in truth, in the name of all. It is believers who worship God.

To render true worship to God supposes that a soul is set at liberty and is free to draw near to God in virtue of the efficacy of the work of Christ. If a person who loves God and who has no other hope than the work of Christ is timid in drawing near, it is right to encourage him. But, if such an one has no real knowledge of the efficacy of the work of Christ, he will be ill at ease even in drawing near to God, because God's presence will communicate to him rather the conscience of sin than of the joy which that presence inspires to him who enjoys it in the peace which Christ confers. Nevertheless, in such cases of doubting and trembling, right affections often precede the being set free and are more true to Christ than the reasoning of the mind. But this state of soul is not the normal state of worship. To be consciously in the presence of God, purified from all sin by the blood of Christ—in the light as He is in the light—such is the true worshipper. This is the standing of the believer in Christ, and in order to worship truly, this standing must be known and enjoyed.

Sometimes bad teaching neutralizes this liberty, although the soul all the while in its secret communing with God cries, "Abba, Father"! As a principle, however, whatever allowance be made by charity for these cases of ignorance, true worship supposes that we can draw near to God without fear. This freedom of access is a necessary and absolute effect of the complete and triumphant work of Christ, of which every true believer has the benefit. But it is the presence of the Spirit which enables us to realize it.

How delightful to be able thus to adore God! What a source of joy is He whom we adore! How great the blessedness of finding oneself in His presence with no cloud between Him and us, and no tinge of fear because no vestige of sin! Being made "the righteousness of God in Him [Christ]," the presence of God becomes but an inexhaustible spring of happiness for that new nature, which He has given us and finds its enjoyment in Himself. What joy to be able to express one's acknowledgments and to render to Him one's thanksgiving, knowing that they are acceptable to Him! What a blessing to have His very Spirit, the Spirit of liberty and of adoption, as our power of worship and as the inspirer of praise, of confidence and of adoration! What joy thus to worship in unity as members of the same family and of the same body, sensible that this joy is a joy common to all. What joy to know that those whom we love are infinitely precious and acceptable to the Lord and that they all find their pleasure in praising Him who is worthy—the God who is the source of all our happiness—the Lord who gave Himself for us in order that He might be our eternal portion!

Bible Challenger-05-May V.10

The First letter of each of the following responses will form the words of something to be opened as a prerequisite for being satisfied with bread. [2] The number in brackets indicates the number of missing words in each answer.

1. "I counsel thee to buy of me gold____." [4]
2. "If the Lord would make windows in____."
3. "Thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing____." [4]
4. "Give us seed, that we may live, and____, that the land be not desolate." [2]
5. "Behold, I have played the fool, and have erred____." [1]
6. "Riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an____." [1]
7. "Rejoice, O young man, in thy ____; and let thy heart cheer thee." [1]
8. "I have learned by ____ that the Lord path blessed me for thy sake." [1]
9. "There is but a____ between me and death." [1]

Answers to these questions will be found in the next Issue of Christian Treasury. R. Erisman

Proverbs

Simon Patrick on the Proverbs 1683

Chapter 7:1-5

1. "My son, keep my words, and lay up my commandments with thee." There is great reason then, my son, to repeat the caution I have often given thee, against this and other vices: and to beseech thee, to observe my instructions, and to lay up my commandments in such faithful remembrance; that they may not fail to produce the fruit of obedience.
2. "Keep my commandments, and live; and my law as the apple of thine eye." For if thou wilt be ruled by them, assure thy self (as I have said before in chap. 4:4) thou shalt enjoy long happiness. Therefore observe them carefully with a tender affection to them; and looking upon them as thy safest guide and director, consent as soon to wound the apple of thine eye, as in the least to violate any of my laws.
3. "Bind them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of thine heart." Do not merely read what I write, imagining thou canst have continual recourse to them here in this book; but be so well acquainted with them, as to have them (as we speak) at thy fingers ends: or rather, let them be transcribed from hence into thy very heart.

4. "Say unto wisdom, Thou art my sister; and call understanding thy kinswoman." There embrace them with ardent love; and set such an high esteem on wisdom, that thou mayest invite it more and more unto thee: till it be as familiar with thee as an only sister, born at the same time with thee; and thou understand and delight in all her precepts, as so near a kin to two, that thou find them to be the very reason and sense of thine own mind.

5. "That they may keep thee from the strange woman, from the stranger which flattereth with her words." Which will be a powerful preservative to thee from the snares of the naughty woman: who, though her company be so pernicious that God would have thee perfectly estranged from her, as if she were not of the Commonwealth of Israel, yet hath powerful charms about her, to flatter those into her embraces, who are not heartily in love with wisdom.

Questions and Answers

QUESTION: What did the blessed Lord mean when He said to Peter, "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation" (Matt. 26:41)? What is entering into temptation?

ANSWERS: The Lord desires His disciples to "watch and pray," instead of which they slept and prayed not. And when the hour of temptation came they fled, and Peter, who was so confident of his own strength that he said, "Though I should die with Thee, yet will I not deny Thee," most signally failed. What brought him into the judgment hall? Why did he thus "enter into temptation"? He had not been told to do so. In verse 58, Peter followed Christ "afar off," and "went in and sat with the servants, to see the end." This was "entering into temptation." There he was at that moment, flesh unjudged and trusted in, prayer and watchfulness lacking, a moral distance between him and Christ. Temptation was entered upon and unhallowed companionship was sought. What a fit one he was at that moment to be the sport of Satan.

How often do the Lord's people fail in this way. Instead of distrusting themselves, they enter into this or that, and when the time of trial comes, there is failure and a practical denial of Christ. The flesh has been unjudged, and it leads them where the Spirit never would have led.

Thus we see many with unjudged flesh, no moral nearness to Christ and temptations of one sort or another sometimes unthinkingly entered upon. It may be an infidel publication opened and read, or an association of one kind or other taken up—unhallowed companionship sought or fallen into without divinely given moral courage to resist them. The ear is opened to a suggestion of one kind or other, which is known to be subversive to divine truth, and thus the poor, weak vessel becomes a stranded one on the shores of infidelity. Then the clear divine testimony of one who might have been a faithful, firm and devoted disciple is lost to Christ through the machinations of an ever-watchful enemy.

All these things and many more of a like nature come under the term "entering into temptation." It is the exercise of one's own will and the disregard of the will of the Lord—self trusted and wisdom from above unsought. It would be a useful question to ask ourselves with regard to everything in which we are engaged, whether of a religious nature, or business, or other occupations of life. "Am I sure that Christ has sent me here? Would He have me engaged in this association or that occupation? Would He have me read this book or take part in this or that?"

If we cannot satisfactorily answer before the Lord such questions, depend upon it, we have engaged in that which is the exercise of our own wills and thus have "entered into temptation." We cannot count on the result if we do these things. No doubt God will take care of His own to the end, of this I am sure, but we cannot count upon Him if we "enter into temptation." We may have to learn our folly, like Peter, by a deep and shameful fall. Oh, for a more thorough and growing distrust of self!

How can we expect to be preserved from contamination if we enter into some place or companionship or occupation which the Lord would not sanction? As long as we are in the path of obedience, we can count with the utmost confidence upon the care and protection of the Lord. He charges Himself with all the rest when we are there. But the moment we get out of this path, we have left the place where He would have us and where we can count with all confidence upon His care and love.

When walking in dependence and obedience, we will not move one step till we know His mind and will.

Bible Challenger-04-April Answers V.10

1. Abundantly 2 Cor. 2:4
2. Fire Neh. 1:3
3. Flowing Psa. 119:92
4. Low Psa. 119:92
5. Illuminated Heb. 10:32
6. Cry unto Thee 2 Chron. 20:9
7. Trouble Job 5:6
8. Immediately Mark 4:17
9. Of sin Heb. 11:25
10. No razor 1 Sam. 1:11

"For our light AFFLICTION, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (2 Cor. 4:17).

Living for Christ

In Romans the Christian is always viewed upon earth. He has died to sin, is alive in Christ and is perfectly justified He is walking through the world in that condition and has to yield himself up to God.

In Colossians he is dead as in Romans, but also as risen with Christ. He has a hope laid up for him in heaven. Ephesians goes a step further, for there he is seated in the heavenly places.

Let us see how the Christian lives. You cannot live in the world without an object before you, so the Apostle says, "I live by the faith of the Son of God," that is, he lived with Christ as the object of his faith (Gal. 2:20). How far can we say that we live by the faith of the Son of God? "Whatsoever ye do... do all in the name of the Lord Jesus."

Christ, my object, loved me, and gave Himself for me.

This acts upon the heart and the affections. You get two things connected together: Christ living in me and being my blessed object. And I have the certainty of His deep affection for me, for He has laid down His life for me.

He loved us and gave Himself for our sins, to deliver from this present evil world. Are we living for Christ or has the world got hold of our hearts? It is possible to live like Lot for a time. Are we living in association of Faith with Christ in heaven, or are we living for this world?

Now is the time of God's long-suffering, but Peter says He "is ready to judge the quick and the dead."

God knows the moment when grace will cease to gather souls to Christ in glory. Be assured there is reality with God. We must walk by faith, not by sight.

Things to attract are presented on every hand. Shops are full of things to tempt us. We know it well, but do we allow it to control our lives? Or are we so living by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us, and gave Himself for us, that the world and the devil cannot distract us? Can we say, "This one thing I do"?

The Lord is patient in His love, but are we, with purpose of heart, living to Him who died for us and rose again? We know we have come short, but still, is there a perfect heart with us, so that we walk with a good conscience? Our conscience is purged and made perfect before God by the blood of Christ, but I speak of it now in a practical sense.

The great truth and essence of Christianity is that it takes the heart out of this world and fixes it on Christ. It makes us live by Christ, on Christ and to Christ.

"Let us lay aside every weight,
and the sift which doth so easily beset us,

and let us run with patience
the race that is set before us,
looking unto Jesus.”

Hebrews 12:1.2

Editorial: the True Vine

In Psalm 80 the nation of Israel is likened to a vine which the Lord brought out of Egypt. In Isaiah 5, we learn of the care and culture the Lord bestowed upon His vine. Sadly, it brought forth wild grapes. He says, "I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed: how then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto Me?" (Jen 2:21). Then in Hosea 10 He says, "Israel is an empty vine, he bringeth forth fruit unto himself." On account of this, the Lord gave up Israel to the Gentile King Nebuchadnezzar. In Ezekiel 15, it tells of the vine being "cast into the fire for fuel."

Matthew quotes from the prophet Hosea, "Out of Egypt have I called My Son." Thus Jesus replaces and begins again, morally, the history of that people. In John 15, Jesus presents Himself as "the true vine." He is the root of the now fruit-bearing system on the earth, and the disciples become the branches. By abiding in Christ and Christ in them, they would be fruit-bearing branches and the Father would be glorified in them.

Today, we live in the time of the calling out of a heavenly people. When the Church will be taken away, Israel will come again into the dealings of God with them, before He owns them and the millennial kingdom is established in the earth. Their state is described as a "vine" returned to their land by the help of a great maritime power, but not yet owned of God (Isa. 18). Doubtless, today we can easily see that the United States is such a power.

Verse 5 reads, "Afore the harvest, when the bud is perfect, and the sour grape is ripening in the flower, He shall both cut off the sprigs with pruning hooks, and take away and cut down the branches." Notice that the grapes are still sour like the wild grapes of Isaiah 5. The Lord at this time watches from His dwelling, when all seems to go well to man's eye and Israel is apparently reestablished, yet the fruit-bearing vine is again trodden down and destroyed by the Gentile powers.

It seems that as we are nearing the close of this century and we see present-day Israel back in their land, without producing fruit for God, surely the time of their being trodden down is very near. The end of what is again a corrupt fruit-bearing system in the world receives its judgment at the hand of the Lord in Revelation 14:15-20. She is the "vine of the earth" whose grapes were fully ripe, and which are cast into the great winepress of the wrath of God.

The judgment of God will come, and then, "In that day sing ye unto her, A vineyard of red wine. I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment: lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day" (Isa. 27:2-3). In verse 6 it says, "Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit."

At the last Passover Jesus said, "I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come." This will be under the new covenant. (See Hebrews 8:8-13.) Ed.

Christianity

C. Stanley

Four persons are used by the Holy Spirit to relate the life, the words and the miracles of the incarnate Holy One. These four gospels do not present Christianity fully, but they present the Person and work of Jesus Christ our Lord, the foundation of Christianity. It is important to see this. Take the ministry of John the Baptist: he is the forerunner of the Messiah, and yet he points Him out as the Lamb of God, and as the Lamb of God He is the foundation of all blessing. But notice that John does not say one word about the Church (the assembly of God). He came as a Jewish prophet, reaching only to the Jews, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. But he did not preach that the assembly was at hand—that great truth was not revealed to John—but that "the kingdom of God is at hand."

The kingdom and the reign of the Messiah was the burden of the Old Testament prophecies. They never once named the Church. That mystery was hid from them and hid from John. No doubt repentance was requisite, equally for the foretold kingdom (Ezek. 36) and also, as we shall see, for the forming of the Church (Acts 2).

What was the teaching or preaching of Christ? It would be most profitable to study the four gospels in their distinctive characters. This would fill a volume. Whether as the righteous Jew in Matthew, or the Servant in Mark, or as the Son of man in Luke, and still more wondrous as Son of God in John—each is perfect and a perfect part of the whole. If you examine each, you will find, in the first three, Jesus preaches the coming kingdom. Only twice does He name the Church and then only as a future thing, "I will build My church" (Matt. 16 and 18).

In the Word of God everything is found in its proper place and time. The presence and teaching of Jesus on this earth is the last trial of man, God who had sent His prophets, had now sent His Son-God manifest in the flesh. He came to His own people, the Jews, and His own received Him not. To them there was no beauty in Him that they should desire Him. He was truly God, yet perfect man. He was absolutely perfect in every relation; whether to man or to God. John says, "We beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." Oh, how wondrous to have the invisible God revealed. Surely every ward demands our study with profound reverence. We cannot conceive the profit and deep, untold joy we may have in becoming more thoroughly acquainted with each gospel in its own peculiar character.

All is pure grace, yet there is truth in every line. Man's true condition is set forth in each gospel. The presence of Jesus among men is like the rising of the sun on a dark world. Take just a little sample of man's need and condition as illustrated in Mark, chapters 1 and 2. Jesus enters a meeting room of religious men, the synagogue of the Jews at Capernaum. What does His presence reveal? Man under the power of an unclean spirit! The demon is in the synagogue. But here is One with power to deliver, and all that were brought to Him were healed. "And He preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out devils."

Then there came a poor leper to Him, the very picture of sin in the flesh. Does He spurn him? No, with tender compassion He heals him. Then a helpless man, sick of the palsy, is let down at His feet. He saw the faith of those who carried him, and now hear strange words from the lips of this Man, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." To the scribes this was blasphemy. Yes, that which man needs first and above all things is forgiveness of sins, but this was blasphemy to the scribes! He who forgave sins had power to say, "Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk." Whether man knows it or not, these miracles truthfully set forth man's real condition. He is under the power of demons and cannot free himself. He is full of the leprosy of sin and cannot heal himself. He is utterly without power to walk in the holy commandments of God. He needs forgiveness and power to walk, and there is only One who can meet his manifold need and that One is Jesus. Has He met yours? None other can.

Consider the parable in Luke 15. Man is lost, but the blessed Shepherd seeks the lost until He finds him and then He takes the lost sheep safely home. The lost piece of silver is sought until it is found. This gives joy. Then the lost son comes to himself, and repents in the confession of his sin. But oh, what a joy it is to the Father! His great delight is to receive, forgive, clothe and bring into His own presence. The work of the Son in redemption, the work of the Holy Spirit in seeking the redeemed, and the unspeakable joy of God the Father in receiving the redeemed sinner—what a revelation these are of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit!

We might dwell forever on the life, teaching and miracles of the Lord Jesus as a Jew in the midst of His Jewish disciples. But the time drew near when the Passover must be killed. He set His face for the last time to go up to Jerusalem. He must needs suffer and rise again, or Christianity could never begin, or the kingdom be hereafter set up.

He fully exposed the wickedness and hypocrisy of the priests and Pharisees who were pretending to righteousness by the law. God had provided a great supper, but men made light of it and rejected it (Matt. 22-23). He then spoke of the immense change close at hand. Their house was left desolate and would be destroyed; Jerusalem, the future metropolis of the earth, would be destroyed and long trampled underfoot (Luke 21). This was all very strange to Jewish ears. All this implied a total change and an entire setting aside of the ancient religion of the Jew with all his privileges, and it all came to pass. He was presented to the Jewish nation for the last time in the flesh as Messiah and utterly rejected.

His last Passover came. See Him sitting with His disciples, and saying, "With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer." After the supper He took the place of the paschal lamb. "This is My body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of Me.... This cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you." Yes, a far greater redemption was about to be accomplished than the redemption from Egypt, which they had just commemorated. But as yet they understood not. He was about to be "reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning Me have an end" (Luke 22:37).

What a night that was! What words did Jesus speak to His beloved disciples? "Jesus knew that His hour was come that He should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end." We must, however, remember that as yet they were only disciples, just as John had had disciples. They had been drawn to Him as a center, and yet He was alone; they could not be members of His body, neither was that wondrous truth as

yet revealed. Wondrous was the truth He had revealed to them, for He had shown them, under the figure of the corn of wheat, that He must die or remain alone. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (John 12:24).

No words can express the importance of this great truth, that until He should have died, been buried and had risen from the dead, Christianity could not begin. He, until then, must remain alone. Nothing then could be more false than the error that the incarnation of Christ is salvation or the improvement of man. His holy life and heavenly teachings could not have imparted full help to man, lost man. He must needs suffer the atoning death of the cross, and even that death is not the improvement of man, but the end of man in death.

All this was evidently utterly unknown to His disciples, and how little known now. What God had made known by all the holy prophets was that one like the Son of man should come in the clouds of heaven, deliver His people and reign over the whole world. This the disciples expected just as they were. There were also other prophecies which spoke of the sufferings of Messiah, of His bearing the sins of His people and of His awful death being forsaken of God (such as Isa. 53 and Psa. 22). And had not every sacrifice, with all the blood of beasts shed from the days of Abel, pointed on to Him, the Lamb of God? But as yet they knew not and felt not the need of this. Never had it dawned on their minds that He must bear the wrath and be forsaken of God for 4,000 years for our sins. And how few really know this now. Do you?

Well, the time had come that, instead of receiving the long-foretold kingdom, He must suffer such treatment from man and bear the whole weight of God's wrath against sin, as never was and never can be borne again. And thus He must be turned Out of, and depart from, the world He had made.

We must read this wondrous discourse (John 12-17), as anticipating the very period of His rejection on earth and His presence in glory above all heavens. He knew it all, and He knew all we should need. "Clean every whit," as born of God, and as a new creation in Him, yet we have still to contend with an evil world and the flesh in us, though reckoned dead. It is His blessed service to wash our feet and to restore our souls to communion by the Word during His absence, exalted as He is above all heavens (John 13).

He knows all the sore difficulties of the path during His absence. We shall not see Him now, but we may believe in Him as we believe in God. Could He have said this if He had been only a man? He is as truly the Object of faith as God the Father. And now, being so near His departure, He tells them that which no man had ever heard before. He lifts up their thoughts far above the earthly kingdom of Israel and He says, "In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

They do not seem to have understood this in the least. Do we? What would a place in this world be to us if we really grasped the wondrous grace revealed to us in these words, that He who loved us and gave Himself for us is gone to prepare a place for us in the glory and will come Himself for the one special purpose: to take and have us with Himself? Is this the love of that Man in the glory at the right hand of God? Does He not say to us, "Let not your heart be troubled"?

Remember, there had not been a word of all this in the Old Testament or in His teaching until the night of His betrayal. The nearer He approached the terrible hour of darkness and wrath, the sweeter the savor of Jesus as the meal offering. In all things, and in every way, He was only proved to be a sweet savor to God: without spot, blameless. Holy, holy One of God. How well did He know the need of His Church during the long period of His absence.

Bible Challenger-06-June V.10

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the word which tells what our innermost being might well refuse to be when our thoughts are self-centered in a day of trouble. [1] The number in brackets indicates the number of missing words in each answer

1. "Great mourning, Rachel weeping for her ____." [1]
2. "For ye may all prophesy ____, that all may learn." [3]
3. "Brought her into his ____ Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah." [1]
4. "She said, Let me ____ in thy sight, my lord." [2]
5. "Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, ____ ; and break forth into singing." [2]
6. "Son, ____ that thou in thy lifetime receivest thy good things." [1]
7. "who comforteth us in all our ____ that we may be able." [1]
8. "Every man also gave him a piece of money, and everyone an ____ of gold." [1]
9. "All his sons and all his ____ rose up to comfort him; but he refused." [1]

Answers to these questions will be found in the next issue of Christian Treasury,

R. Erisman

"My God, My God, Why Hast Thou Forsaken Me?"

We never find such a thought in Scripture as the Father's wrath being on the Son of His love. The great force to me of Psalm 22 is this: the Son of man did not forsake, or forget to vindicate God's glory, just when God, on account of His taking upon Him our judgment—made sin for us—forsook Him. The scene was in no sense one of enjoying anything, as far as the Lord Jesus was concerned, but not to forsake God. When God for our sin's sake had to forsake Him, it proved that He was God and that the everlasting springs were in Himself. He knew who He was, and knew that none but Himself, as Man, could go through what He had undertaken to pass through. He was still "the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father." Therefore it could not be said that the face of the Father, as the Father, was hidden from His own Son.

G. V. Wigram

Ministry on Worship

The preaching of the gospel and listening to a lecture are quite distinct from worship. But salvation must precede worship. In John 4 the Lord says, "Salvation is of the Jews." Among them the true God was known. There was no true knowledge of God except among the Jews. Paul says to the Athenians, "Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you." Only those who know God can worship. I get into the place of perfect acceptance through the work of Jesus Christ, and there I can worship. None can worship unless in this place of divine favor.

This chapter (John 4) takes the place of worship away from among the Jews, and it supposes accomplished redemption. Wherever God put His name, there was the place of worship. Now Christ declares, "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." It can only be in His name.

The essence of worship is that the Holy Spirit can take up our praises and prayers to God in perfect association with Christ. In the offering in Deuteronomy 26, we find a beautiful picture of holy worship offered by the individual, but worship in the assembly supposes the Holy Spirit uniting all together in joy and praise—"they lifted up their voice to God with one accord" (Acts 4:24).

In Deuteronomy 16 we get three feasts: the pass-over, Pentecost, and the feast of tabernacles. The Passover is the sacrifice of Christ for us. Pentecost is the Holy Spirit already given us, but the feast of tabernacles is still future. There is very little joy in the Passover; as soon as it was done they returned to their tents. At Pentecost we find, "Thou shalt rejoice before the Lord." But in the feast of tabernacles there is something more; here they have come into the fullest blessing, and worship flows because of being in that fullness of blessing.

Certainly we must get our conscience cleansed first, but Christ wants children to be with the Father. Is all we know of God this: that He is satisfied about our sins? satisfied with the blood? No, He wants to get our souls into the sense of relationship with Himself when we worship, and this, too, as the Father. In Luke 15 we get God's own joy, "Let us eat, and be merry" When we come up to the cross, we do so only about our sins, but when we have passed through the rent veil, we have gotten to God's side of the cross. That is, God Himself is known as well as the blessed truth that "the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Our place of worship is in the holiest where all the value of Christ is put upon us. In Exodus 12 they fed upon the sacrifice—redemption accomplished. Worship is the return of the heart to God for all His blessings in Christ. The Holy Spirit gives us God's feelings about the sacrifice of His Son, and worship goes up to the Father. All our joy and peace flow up to God in praise.

Worship is the best part. When we get to heaven, we shall not want gifts. All who praise ought to walk so that praise should readily burst out. What is so beautiful is the thought that "praise waiteth for Thee, O God"—their voices all ready, and their hearts all tuned to praise.

Our place is that of children with the Father, and our fellowship is with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ. Praise belongs to both.

Christ's heart ought to move ours, and He never leaves out any. It is the first circle and love must flow to all the saints in it. Some may be going wrong, but we are to love them still.

What we get by the Holy Spirit is a child worshipping the Father. We are standing with the Holy Spirit dwelling in us, between the first and second coming of Christ, as worshippers waiting for His coming.

Bible Challenger-05-May Answers V.10

1. Tried in the fire Rev. 3:18
2. Heaven 2 Kings 7:2
3. I am a stranger Ruth 2:10
4. Not die Gen. 47:19
5. Exceedingly 1 Sam. 26:21
6. Eagle Prov. 23:5
7. Youth Eccles. 11:9
8. Experience Gen. 30:27
9. Step 1 Sam. 20:3

"Love not sleep, lest thou come to poverty: open THINE EYES, and thou shalt be satisfied with bread" (Prov. 20:13).

God's Truth

Scripture I believe to be the Word of God. it is a revelation from God of His mind, His thoughts, His purposes and His counsels. We have in the Scriptures the truth written, and in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ we have truth incarnate. The result is that the man who receives the truth of Scripture, in the power of the Holy Spirit, will invariably be brought into contact with Christ who is the Truth.

First then, you may ask me, "What is truth?" Truth is the exact, the perfect and the absolute expression and delineation of that which is. It is the identity of the statement and the fact stated. I could not say that God was the Truth. God is true, but of the Lord Jesus Christ it is said, "Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (John 1:17). He Himself has said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). He was the Truth. And He was the truth about everything—the truth about God, the truth about man, the truth about the heart of God, the nature of God, and the claims of God, and the truth, moreover, about man in every possible relation of his being.

He was no mere man, for He was verily God. Nevertheless, He was a real, true, perfect man, As man He was in this scene to declare God and to meet man divinely. "To this end," He says, "was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." None could reveal God and none could unveil the love of God or declare the heart of God other than He who came from God.. There was none who knew the claims of God and could meet those claims, except the One who came from God. He must come from God if He is to bring God to us, and He must be a man, a veritable man, to bring us to God, because we are men and sinners. Sin carries its consequences and merits judgment, and the truth as to this alone is seen fully in Christ.

In the Lord Jesus Christ, the absolute truth about everything is beautifully blended. The perfect and whole truth about everything is seen in every part, and not one side of the truth more than another. We get the truth that "God is love," for instance, and we see the reality of the truth of God's love in Christ's self-sacrifice, for He gave Himself that He might unveil the heart of God to us and bring us to God by His death.

Jesus said that He was the Son of God. Only the Son could make the Father known. Surely, as He Himself says, "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven" (John 3:13). This claim must either be accepted or rejected. I must either own what He says, I must acknowledge the truth that He came from heaven, or I must refuse absolutely to believe it and proclaim Christ to be not an impostor, but One who knowingly spoke what was not true. If He said a single word which was not true, then He cannot be the Truth. I do not mince matters, for I must either own Him to be what He said He was or else deny Him all right to the allegiance of my heart and conscience.

Although I thus speak, I delight to acknowledge and heartily believe that He is what He said He was. I have proved Him to be what He said He was—a Savior. If you have never known Him as your Savior, let me now urge you to put Him to the test. You accept the truth of that which He says

concerning Himself, and then you will find out that you need a Savior and that He is that Savior, and He alone. I know well that men would like to set aside His claim on the ground that they do not need saving. You have to go into eternity! You have to meet God, and where are you going to spend eternity? How are you going to meet God? Are you fitted to meet Him? If you have had nothing to do with God, you are not ready. The Lord said, "Every one that is of the truth heareth My voice."

I come therefore to the question, an important one for you and for me-have I got the truth? If I am not of the truth, I have not heard His voice. The man who has not heard the voice of the Son of God does not possess the truth. You can hear other voices, for there are plenty of voices these days. The voice of the truth is that of Him who could say, "I am the truth," and who could say to the man, who told Him he had power to put Him to death, "Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered Me unto thee hath the greater sin." He it is who says, "Every one that is of the truth heareth My voice." Have you heard His voice?

W. T. P. Wolston

Questions and Answers

QUESTION: Of what is leaven a type in Matthew 13?

ANSWER: You will find in Scripture that leaven is generally used as typical of evil, whether in doctrine or practice. For instance, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees. Then understood they how that He bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees" (Matt. 16:11-12). In Luke 12:1 we read, "Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy."

Paul writes to the Corinthians with regard to evil practice, "Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" (1 Cor. 5:6). And to the Galatians he writes with regard to evil doctrine, subversive of Christianity, "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" (Gal. 5:9).

In Matthew 13:33 we are taught in one of the six parables, which follow that of the sower, a similitude of the kingdom of heaven in its new mysterious form, which was about to be brought into the world on the rejection of the King. One peculiar and striking characteristic of the kingdom of heaven in mystery is that the King is not here. This was some of the "things new" which a scribe, instructed in the matter, would now bring out of his treasures, added to the "things old" which the prophets had afore-time written about the kingdom of heaven (vs. 52).

It was said that it would be "as the days of heaven upon the earth" (Dent. 11:21). And of the throne of the King it is said, "His throne [should be] as the days of heaven" (Psa. 89:29). And again, the Gentiles should "have known that the heavens do rule" (Dan. 4:26).

Now all this state of things was entirely set aside, for the time, because of the rejection of the King-of Christ. And instead of all the blessings consequent upon His reception, a state of things far different would be introduced. The enemy would come and sow tares among the wheat in the world, or, as it is called, the field (Matt. 13:38). The outward appearance that the kingdom of heaven would then assume would be that of a vast sheltering power, under the figure of a tree, which would shelter the birds of the air, or, as they are interpreted to be, the emissaries of the

wicked one (vss. 4,19,32),

And again, as our parable tells us, evil doctrine or profession would spread through the three measures of meal, or the sphere of the nominal profession of Christianity, till the whole should be leavened. You have only to lift up your eyes and see what has come to pass.

An Invisible Church

An "Invisible Church" is an invention of men to enable the church to shake hands with the world. What would people say if we spoke so in natural things! An invisible light is nonsense.

Proverbs

Simon Patrick on the Proverbs 1683

Chapter 7:6-23

6. "For at the window of un house I looked through my casement." Of which a memorable instance comes now into my mind; for looking one day from my chamber, through the lattices of the window of my palace.

7. "And beheld among the simple ones, I discerned among the youths, a young Mind void of understanding," I observed, among the undisciplined and inexperienced striplings of the city, one that was as childish and void of consideration, as he was youthful and eager in his desires.

8. "Passing through the street near her corner; and he went the way to her house." Who, as if he had a mind to be undone, passed idly through the street, till he came to a corner, where naughty women use to haunt: walking in as stately a manner as he could devise, directly towards one of their houses.

9. "In the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night." It was in the twilight, while he might see his way and yet hope to be concealed: in the close of the day; which was followed by a night as dark as pitch, and fit for such works of darkness.

10. "And, behold, there met him a woman with the attire of an harlot, and subtle of heart." There, on a sudden, I was surprised with the sight of a woman starting forth; who did not stay till he came up to her, but went to meet him, in a gaudy lascivious dress, apt to allure a weak young man: who thought presently she was in love with him; when her heart, as full of subtlety as his was of folly, is reserved only to herself.

11. "(She is loud and stubborn; her feet abide not in her house." This is her character: she is full of talk, and of bold unseemly courtship; unruly and not to be controlled or broke of her will; idle also and always gadding abroad, as if she had no business (but with her foolish lovers) at home.

12. "Now is she without, now in the streets, and lieth in wait at every corner.)" Sometime she stands before her door; and, if that will not do, she goes further into the streets and places of greatest concourse: and, more especially, waits at every corner (where she may look into two streets at once) to ensnare such as are apt, like silly birds, to be taken by her.

13. "So she caught him, and kissed him, and with an impudent face said unto him." At one of those corners (as I said) she met this young fool; and, contrary to all the rules of modesty, caught him hard about the neck and kissed him: and after these amorous caresses put on still a bolder face,

and without any blushing, made this following speech to him.

14. "I have peace offerings with me; this day have I paid my vows." I am a happy woman, in many blessings that God hath bestowed upon me, for which I have given Him solemn thanks this very day: and, as religion and custom bind me, I have provided as good a feast as those sacrifices would afford, which I formerly vowed and now have paid; having no want of anything but of some good company at home to rejoice with me.

15. "Therefore came I forth to meet thee, diligently to seek thy face, and I have found thee." Which made me go abroad to try if I could meet with thee (who art the very person whom I came to seek) that I might invite and earnestly beseech thee to be so kind as to bear me company: and, to my great joy, this is added to all my other happiness, that I have found thee speedily and most opportunely.

16. "I have decked my bed with coverings of tapestry, with carved works, with fine linen of Egypt." There shall no other pleasures be wanting when our feast is done; but from the table we will remove to my bed: which I have richly adorned with everything that may please the eye; and made it as soft also as heart can wish.

17. "I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon." Where thou shalt be entertained likewise with the sweetest perfumes, that ours or the neighboring countries could furnish me with all; such as myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon: wherewith I have sprinkled my bed, to render it more grateful to all thy senses.

18. "Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning: let us solace ourselves with loves." Why do we waste our time then here in the street? Come along with me, and let us go thither; and there satisfy our desires to the full with love: we will solace ourselves with the sweetest pleasures; which shall not end till the morning light.

19. "For the goodman is not at home, he is gone a long journey." For there is no fear they should be interrupted or disturbed; the man (whom they call my husband) being from home, and not likely to return in haste: for he is gone to a place a great way off.

20. "He hath taken a bag of money with him, and will come home at the day appointed." Where he hath much business to dispatch; which will detain him so long, that I am sure it will be full moon (and now the new doth scarce yet appear, v. 9) before he can be at home again.

21. "With her much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him." In the representing of these, and many other like specious pretenses (of great affection to him, of all sorts of pleasure, of secrecy, and safety in their enjoyments) she showed herself such a mistress of her art, that she bowed the heart of the young man to become her disciple: and, having wrought upon his inclinations, she pursued her advantage with so much cunning; that she rather compelled than attracted him, by her charming voice, and her soft alluring language.

22. "He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks." For he made not the least objection, but away he went immediately, and followed her like a great calf (as we speak in our language) or a stupid ox; that fancies he is led to the pasture, when he is going to be killed: or like a fool, who takes it for an ornament, when the stocks are brought for his correction, to be clapped upon his legs.

23. "Till a dart strike through his liver; as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life." Just so he hastily threw himself into her embraces, and dream of nothing but pleasure; till, like a rash soldier that falls unexpectedly into an ambush, he received a mortal wound by that, which he fancied would be his highest satisfaction; or like a silly bird that greedy of the food which is laid to entice it, never minds the snare that is laid together with it. So he eagerly longing to taste of her feast and the following delights, had not so much as a thought, that this was a design upon his life; and would not end, but in miseries infinitely greater than all his joys.

God's Love

God's love is always perfect, always the same. We do not always enjoy it. He never makes us doubt His love, but makes us feel the loss of it, consciously, at times. It may not be for positive evil, but for a slothful state of soul in not acting in the light. Still, though I have to go through exercises, I am as sure of His love as ever. I am sure of the sun when it rains, but still I say, "What terrible weather we have! not a gleam of sunshine!" He loves us too well not to put us into these exercises. Do I suppose He will go on and give me the enjoyment of His love if I am careless and neglect it?

"I have loved thee with an everlasting love:

therefore with loving-kindness

have I drawn thee.

Jeremiah 31:3

God's Love

In 1 John 4:8, we get the character of God. "God is love" is the family feature of the children of God, and "every one that loveth is born of God." The righteousness and holiness of God have reference to the sphere of things created, but here we are shown the character of God in His own sphere.

How sweet the thought, as the contrast with all that man is, that God is love: no selfishness there and no having to turn away from Him because we cannot get anything. As rain on the thirsty ground, the soul draws in the thought that God is love. It is a balm to soothe the soul under all circumstances, and not only that, but the mind is drawn into certain scenes where it finds that love has been displayed. God thought of poor sinners thought to send His Son to die that we might live through Him.

Who and what were those for whom He was sent? Poor creatures that were dead in trespasses and sins. Nothing but particles of dust driven round by Satan and going into the vortex of destruction. God could say, They may be dead and they may be as dust in Satan's hand, but I will send My Son to give them life. Throughout eternity we shall rejoice in God's thought of sending this Son of His love to give life to dead sinners. Christ was given to us as eternal life. I should have been dead for eternity if God had not interfered to give me life in His Son and a nature capable of enjoying all in the glory.

Editorial: Temporal or Eternal?

This is a day of great development in natural science acquired by much study and research. The extent and rapidity of communication and computers is truly amazing. This enlarging of man's use of computer-based communications has brought up the necessity of policing what is called "cyberspace," and the control of such a complex area is exceedingly difficult. How can a cyber thief be controlled? We are thankful for a government that wants to control stealing and vandalism and all kinds of lawlessness. Just one rogue computer "Thacker" can cause millions of dollars of damage or can break into a national defense computer and erase or change government security.

In contrast to the much study and effort necessary to gain what natural science can attain, the knowledge of God is gained by faith in God's holy Word. God alone is the teacher of the knowledge of Himself. He who wants to know God has Logo to God's school to be taught. In Job 36:22 it says, "Behold, God exalteth by His power: who teacheth like Him?"

God's ways are not man's ways. The first lesson to be learned in God is school is faith, and all must enter this school in the beginner's class. For except a man he converted and become as a little child., he will fail to know God. These questions are asked, "Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?" (Job 11:7). The answers are found in 1 Corinthians 2:14. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

On the positive side, it says in verses 9 and 10, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."

We do not make light of nor diminish the amazing attainments of man, and especially the progress in these last centuries. What marvelous inventions, mechanisms, medicines and useful things have come to the human race in such a relatively short time. What we call attention to is the fact that all these things are temporal. In contrast, all that the believer has by faith is eternal. It can never be lost.

We are tested, but "our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal" (2 Cor. 4:17-18). Ed.

"If ye then be risen with Christ,
seek those things which are above....

Set your affection on things above."

Colossians 3:1-2

There Shall Be One Flock and One Shepherd

John 10 has special instruction for us at this moment. It is said, "They [the sheep] know His voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers."

The great and important matter is that "they know His voice." Beautiful and divine order is here, and a necessary effect of this is that they do not know the voice of strangers. What then? This is not all. It is also said that they will not follow the stranger; they will flee from him.

How can you discern if it is the voice of the Good Shepherd? Easily. You know Hint. You know then His thought, His care, His interest in feeding and nursing every lamb and sheep of His flock. You know what He thinks of anyone who would make the sheep his Own sheep, forgetting that they are Christ's sheep. "The thief [thus He calls that maul cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy." All this, true in Israel in that day, has remained always true and is still true. He uses plain words; may we hear!

But there is even more for your guidance than this. The thief gathers the sheep for his own ends and the result is that there is scattering, for every thief that comes (and there are many that come during the passage of the sheep through the wilderness) is found taking some and thus increasing The confusion if one comes, and by him the sheep are more distinctly led after the Good Shepherd, then the flock is more distinctly united, and thus the opposite of the work of the thief is done. So you discern the voice of, the Good Shepherd speaking through the under-shepherds whom He sends forth now to feed and nourish His flock. (See Acts 20:28; John 21:15; 1 Peter 5:2-5.)

The wolf may come too, as well as the thief. Even then, he who serves the Lord as an under-shepherd does not flee as a hireling. Imitating his Lord, who was faithful even unto death, he will not leave them. Any voice you hear suggesting that it is time to flee, you at once know it cannot be the Shepherd's voice. It is the voice of a stranger.

Few animals are more foolish as well as more feeble than the sheep. And so the Lord by this Figure would show us ourselves, and, blessed be His name, Himself, too, as the Good Shepherd. They only know it is not His voice, and thus everything is settled for them. They do not argue about the claims or the statements the voice makes. If it waxes louder and louder, it only Makes them flee the farther and the faster from it. It is their wisdom to hear the Shepherd's voice; there is no path for them but what it points out, no food for them but what He gives, no love for them like His.

How does all this apply to the troubles and difficulties of these last days? How has it helped you in them? And where will you be found if the Lord leaves you yet awhile to tread the wilderness? Oh, the grace that cares for us, notwithstanding all! Jesus is the same (Heb. 13:8), His voice is still to be heard; His sheep are His still, either stumbling and scattered, or feeding and resting (Psa. 23:1-2). Which? Young Christian

A Servant

Although you may have little qualification, less gift and no office whatsoever, yet, as an individual member of Christ, child of God and inheritor of the kingdom of heaven, you must, as partaker of the blessing and dwelt in by the Spirit, desire the honor of God and the glory of Christ. While waiting for His Son, the Savior from heaven, you serve the living and true God.

Labor with God and be the servant down here, in every way, of the interest, honor and glory of Christ in His members. it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaks in you.

"They Made Him a Supper"

John 12

"Then Jesus six days before the Passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom He raised from the dead. There they made Him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was One of them that sat at the table with Him, Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment"

We have in this beautiful scene a normal Christian life and a normal Christian home. In these actors in this beautiful scene, we have service, communion and worship. How fitting each one is in this scene as it is recounted here. There is no dissension, no rivalry; each one is in his and her place, taking that place beautifully.

There are elements here that are implied, and I would like to bring before each of us, before your heart and mine, these elements that activate each one in their part in this lovely scene. Remember this scene occurs toward the end of the Lord's life here. He is soon to go to Calvary, and we might say this is His burial supper. There is something solemn about it and something precious. May there be in these words something that each one will have to wrap around his heart. These things that are brought out are not new, but may they be fresh and may they touch our hearts.

Martha here is serving. She is in her place serving with no rivalry and no complaint. How beautiful this is. There were women who followed the Lord and ministered to Him of their substance. It was nothing that someone else may have given them, nothing that they may have borrowed in order to do it, but it seemed to be just what was at hand. The Lord does not ask us to give that which we do not have, but according to our possessions and according to what He has given us. These dear women ministered to Him of their substance, and Lazarus was one who sat at meat with the Lord.

We have here a statement that is pertinent to the whole scene: "They made Him a supper." How precious; it was just for Him. This was something that was different and not haphazard. The Lord Jesus is the center of this activity, as homey as it may be. It was in that place where He often resorted, Bethany, that they made Him a supper. There was one there who entered a little more deeply, or shall we say differently, into the feelings of that blessed Person and His attitude toward her and His revelation of Himself to her. This seemed her natural place—to be at His feet.

How precious and what a privilege it is to be at the feet of Jesus. This does not take education. This does not take a deep learning or knowledge of Scripture, which in its place is to be cherished. Mary gives what she has, but she gives what she had saved up. Is there that in your life and mine which is devoted to Christ, to be presented to Christ at an opportune moment? This was a costly gift that Mary had. It says so—"very costly."

I know that there is criticism as to the waste of time for praise and worship. That was the attitude of the critics of Mary. But was it a waste? Was it not something that was precious to the heart of the

One to whom the worship was directed? What was the result of this? The house was filled with the odor of the ointment!

Now let us consider and go over this again. Martha was busy at her service; but while Martha was at her service, she had to breathe even as we all have to breathe. But there was an atmosphere that Martha breathed which was the odor of that ointment. In every breath she drew she enjoyed the odor of the ointment, for it filled the house. And in measure I do believe that, when we worship, the house is filled with the odor of the ointment.

Lazarus was in a different position that was very blessed. He was hearing the word of the Lord, and having the purposes and counsels of God revealed to him. He was enjoying sweet communion with His Savior and life-giver—communion of which he had tasted deeply a few days before when he was raised from the dead. It is mentioned here in this chapter in a double way: in the place "where Lazarus was... raised from the dead," and he was raised from the dead by this One with whom he sat. What a scene that was. But Lazarus had to breathe too. And when he breathed, what was it that he breathed? It was the odor of the ointment. Who appreciated that the most? It was our blessed Lord. We may feel dull; we may feel as if our response is not as it should be, and it isn't. But He puts value to it, and the odor of the ointment is valued by Him. So the odor of the ointment is filling the house as to the activity of each one. Mary, of course, is at His feet. She enjoys that odor in a more solemn way than they all, except the Lord Himself.

This is a scene that is near the end of the Lord's journey on this earth. I would like to read of a scene that is at the beginning of His life to see if there is not a connection which is precious. Matthew 2:1 speaks of the wise men of the east. How many there were we are not told, but there were at least two because it is in the plural. They come from the east, guided miraculously by a star. When they come to Jerusalem, the star does not supersede the Word of God. The star was given to them; the Word of God was not given to them in the east.

When they come to Jerusalem they have to inquire, "Where is He that is born King of the Jews?" The informers, in order to answer this question, had to refer to Scripture, this very book we are reading. They said, "In Bethlehem," because that is where the prophet said He was to be born. So they go to Bethlehem. They are not guided by the star; they are guided by the Scripture. Where the Scripture guides us, let us not be guided by anything else.

When they get there, what is His address? They don't know and that is not in the Scripture, so the star appears to them again and directs them to the very place where He and His mother were. Now let us read Matthew 2:11, "And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child [notice it is a child and not a babe], with Mary His mother, and fell down, and worshipped Him." It says they worshipped Him, "and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto Him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh."

In Philippians 2 we read, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God" (vss. 5-6). Now these wise men had three gifts. We don't know how many men there were, but we are told what they brought. Christ Jesus was in the form of God. This was the gold. This was one gift that they gave. "They had opened their treasures, they presented unto Him gifts; gold"—"being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God." This is His deity. They were wise men, were they not?

Then it goes on, "And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient." This was the frankincense. This was His spotless, holy humanity which was acceptable to God. How wise these men were! Gold to tell of His deity, frankincense of His perfect humanity, and He was obedient. We refer back to Philippians 2 now. "He... became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." This was the myrrh. So we get here the very existence, the very being of the Lord Jesus Christ.

But there is something that draws these two scenes together—the one at the beginning of the Lord's life and the other at the end. Worship We don't need to be clever to worship; we don't need to have a glib tongue to worship. It is from the heart; yes, it is from the heart and may it be your place and mine. We have recourse to a place, and this is open to each of us from the oldest to the youngest and to the most humble child to give homage to our blessed Lord. What will the result be? The house will be filled with the odor of the ointment.

Philippians 2:5 begins, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." How can we do that? Is it your desire and mine to have this mind that was in Christ Jesus? How can we have this mind? There is one way: by sitting at His feet. Where is there a more blessed place than being at the feet of Jesus? Do you covet to have that mind that was in Christ Jesus and to be at His feet and in that place of worship? We can't go any tower than that to worship, and we can't go higher.

You recall that Leah had four sons: Reuben, Simeon, Levi and Judah. Reuben means "behold the son" and we "behold the Lamb of God." Simeon means "hearing"; we hear His blessed voice. Levi means "joined"; we are joined by the Spirit to that blessed One. Judah means "praise," and she left bearing. There is nothing higher than that.

So here we have two lovely scenes, one at the beginning of the Lord's life on this earth when these wise men, wise indeed, came from the east and worshipped Him. And then we have the beautiful scene at that burial supper in Bethany. Soon after, our Lord was crucified, and the Lord states the beautiful value, exquisite value of what she did: "Against the day of My burying hath she kept this." This is the myrrh that the wise men gave, that which spoke of His death, so we have His birth, His life, His death, and who He is—God, manifest in the flesh, come into this scene for you and me. Our place is at His feet to give Him homage.

We shall behold Him, whom not seen we love,

We shall be with Him, whom we long to see;

We shall be like Him, fit for realms above,

With Him, and like Him, for eternity!

Is now to sit at Jesus' feet our choice?

How will fruition then our souls rejoice!

The simplicity of a life of faith has charms that

they do not know who never tried it.

Bible Challenger-07-July V.10

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the forceful word that only the Lord could use to convey His great desire for Zion (Israel) to obtain blessing forevermore. [1] The number in brackets indicates the number of missing words in each answer.

1. "Your little ones... your wives, and bring your father, and_____." [1]
2. "The gates should be shut. they should not be_____ till after the Sabbath." [1]
3. "The children... took up twelve stones out of the_____, as the Lord spoke." [3]
4. "The_____ feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt." [1]
5. "God hath given you this land to possess it: ye shall pass over_____ before your brethren." [1]
6. "If any would_____, neither should he eat." [2]
7. "Thy God whom thou serves! continually, He will_____ thee." [1]
8. "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the_____ ." [4]
9. "If so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a_____." [1]

Answers to these questions will be found in the next issue of Christian Treasury.

R. Erisman

The Sun of Righteousness the Morning Star

The Lord Jesus appealed in His day to the Jews (Matthew 16:1-4) to discern "the signs of the times," even by the force of natural conscience and to judge what was right. His word should find an echo in many a Christian heart now that has sunk down to sleep among the dead (Eph. 5:14). Everything around us in the present day—religion, the state of men, nations, powers and kingdoms—is each gradually and perceptibly taking its place for the closing scenes of judgment.

The Christian, instructed beforehand of these things, can watch them calmly and quietly, awaiting the coming of his Lord. He knows his calling is a heavenly one where judgments cannot come. The coming of the Lord, the Son of God, for His people is the one boundary or horizon of his hopes. His actions, service, plans and sojourn here are arranged in view of that event. If called to serve his Lord and Master here, he does so in the sense that he serves as in the last days. May a deepening sense of this fill the souls of His people. And may this, their proper hope before the day dawn, be formed in their hearts and serve to direct their ways!

It has been said that the Old Testament Scriptures end with the hope of the coming of the Sun of Righteousness, and the New with that of the Morning Star. This is sweetly beautiful. The godly remnant of Israel who feared the Lord and spake often one to another (Mal. 3) had that precious consolation before them—that of the coming of the Sun of Righteousness with healing in His wings (Mal. 4). And we find them in Luke 2, the Simeons and Annas, and "all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem" (vss. 25,38), rejoicing in the advent of the "Sun of righteousness," the consolation of Israel.

But alas, His beams fell coldly on the hearts of His nation; they had no heart for Him. Men were morally unfit to have God among them. So He was obliged to hide His beams of blessing in the darkened scene that surrounded the cross and to reserve the day of blessing until another season. Meanwhile, our calling was revealed and our hope presented to us, not as the Sun of Righteousness, but as the Morning Star.

The more we contemplate the fitness of this symbol of our hope, the more does its divine origin appear. It is the watcher during the long night who sees the morning star for a few moments, while the darkness is rolling, itself away from the face of the earth, and before the beams of the sun enliven the earth with their rays. So it is with the Christian's hope, as he watches during the moral darkness of the world till the dawn. Just as the darkness is deepest and is about to roll itself away before the beams of the advent of the Sun of Righteousness, his hope is rewarded in seeing the Morning Star (Rev. 22:16) in His earliest brightness. He comes to take His people to Himself that they may shine forth with Him as the sun in the kingdom of their Father (Matt. 13:43), when He reveals Himself to the millennial earth as the Sun of Righteousness!

May He, who alone can give blessing, abundantly bless the consideration of these things and give that hope its own sanctifying power in our souls! "I Jesus have sent Mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning

star.... He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”

F. G. Patterson

Little in Thine Own Sight

It is always well to remember the great principle in those words of Samuel to Saul, "When thou wast little in thine own sight." How constantly we see in the history of God's people that those who were great in their littleness became little in their greatness. Lord, keep us very lowly!

Conformity to Christ

The only perfection put before the Christian is conformity to Christ in glory. I have got Christ in glory as my life, and I am never satisfied until I am in that glory. The only perfection presented to the Christian is a glorified Christ in heaven, and you will be conformed to that when the time comes, but now meanwhile, I must be as much like Him as I can (2 Cor. 3:18).

New Position, New State

Ephesians 4 gives us quite a good part of the vocation wherewith we are called. Nearness to God is a part of it: "Ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh." And the means of it is the blood of Christ. Here it is individual, but down towards the end of the chapter it is collective. We do not speak of the relationship now, but of the effect in itself, and it is nearness to God in Christ. "Through Him [Christ] we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." This is new ground and has changed our relationship entirely as being in Adam. Now we are in our new creation place and risen in Christ. It is most important for us to know, not only that the blood has cleansed us from our sins, but that it has put us into a new place entirely. Those who are "in Christ Jesus" cannot get any farther up nor down. It is not experience, but it is our position before God in Christ. We are partakers of the new creation; we are His workmanship (Eph. 2:10).

Romans 8:1 gives us what there is not for those who are in Christ Jesus, but it does not give us what there is. The first thing God teaches us is to know that those who are in Christ are as far beyond the reach of condemnation as He is. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." Well, what is there then? Oh, there is nearness to God in new creation. Then Romans 8:2 adds to that, for there we get the power of the new state-the Holy Spirit dwells in us. "For the law of the Spirit of life"-not only the Holy Spirit, but the new life-"the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." It is not only a new position, but it is a new state also. I suppose that is the new life, not the Person of the Spirit as we get further down. You get the Spirit as life, and then the Spirit later in the chapter means the power of the life.

"One thing I know, that,
whereas I was blind; now I see."

John 9:25

Bible Challenger-06-June Answers V.10

1. Children Matt. 2:18
2. One by one 1 Cor. 14:31
3. Mother Gen. 24:67
4. Find favor Ruth 2:13
5. O earth Isa. 49:13
6. Remember Luke 16:25
7. Tribulation 2 Cor 1:4
8. Earring Job 42:11
9. Daughters Gen. 37:35

"In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord: my soul ran in the night, and ceased not: my soul refused to be COMFORTED" (Psa. 77:2).

Intellect and God

Spirit and soul are never separated; one is the higher part of the other, so to speak. The Word of God is the only thing that can distinguish them. Philosophers were wrong, as Aristotle. To them it was merely mind and the animal soul which loves, for instance, one's children. I have a mind that thinks about children, and so on: that is all right so far, and philosophers recognized that there was this in man. But they went no farther than this intellect. We know there is a link between man and God, and that is responsibility too, though now man has got into enmity.

The "dividing asunder" in Hebrews 4 is that which just gives the difference between the two, for it cuts them in two. Heathens saw the superiority to beasts, but I do not believe the intellect that they owned has anything to do with God. All philosophy is a perfect delusion; intellect has nothing to do with God at all. God may act upon it; that is another thing.

It is not, of course, as with a stone that God acts upon man, but it is through his conscience. It is not the activity of man's intellect at all. A man of considerable intellectual powers is all the more likely to go wrong. God may take a chosen vessel and fit it for Him to act in and by, but never for the vessel to act. Wherever the vessel acts, it shuts God out. That is what Paul insists on so much in the opening of I Corinthians. Faith is never in the intellect, and what is more, the intellect never knows a truth. Intellect knows consequences, but these are not truth. That is, truth is not the object of intellect, but of testimony. This is where the difference lies. You tell me something and I believe you, but the thing that receives truth (on a testimony) is not intellect. "He that hath received His testimony hath set to his seal that God is true" (John 3:33).

The very thing by which man proves there must be a God is a proof that he cannot know God. Take this world: there is evidence of skill, there must have been a designer, someone must have made it. So it is with a watch (the common illustration), someone must have made it. So to the infidel geographer they brought once a globe, and when he asked, "Who made that?"

"Nobody," was the reply.

"What do you mean? I ask who made that globe?"

"Nobody." Of course he was confounded. I am not capable of conceiving of such a thing existing without a cause, but if I see it there, I must get a former [maker] of it. I am so constituted that I cannot think of such a thing without a cause. This is exactly what it amounts to. God must have wrought: without a cause you cannot think it out. I cannot conceive of anything existing without finally a causing cause. But a cause not caused is above me! The thing that proves He must be, proves I cannot tell what He is. Logic says, If so-and-so is true, then so-and-so must be, but this does not say that it is, which is a very different thing to my soul. If I say "must be," that is a mere inference. The moment I get a testimony that it is, how different! I get a divine testimony, and set to my seal that God is true. This is faith, divine faith. One thing flows from another, and I cannot help inferring. That is the constitution of man, and he must think according to what he is; he cannot think otherwise.

Intellect never discovered anything in divine things; it may deduce correct conclusions, but it never can go above itself. That is another way of looking at it. If intellect pretends to go above itself, it is an absurdity on the face of it. If it pretends to rise to God, He is not the true God at all, but the mere conclusion of my mind, God can act on me, as physic [Medicine] acts on man; but that is not what I am. God has given us receptivity so far as that goes. It is as simple as ABC. Here is God, and if I bring Him in, it closes reasoning, and if I leave Him out, everything is false.

I may have the pennies but no dollars in the account. Nine-tenths of our ideas come from relationship, not from intellect, just as a child knows its father. Relationship is never known by reason; mind is fond of a kind of metaphysical reasoning about this, but it is all folly. The moment relationship is formed, all moral duty flows from it, and from it alone. Duty has nothing to do with intellect. This it is that makes us totally dependent. Man at the outset tried to get out of dependence on God, and really got into dependence on the devil and his own lusts. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God" was dependence and obedience, and that was where Christ was. It is the proper place of every intelligent creature who ought to be both dependent and obedient.

J. N. Darby

"in Everything Give Thanks"

"In everything give thanks: for this is the will of
God in Christ Jesus concerning you."

I Thess. 5:28

"In everything give thanks,"

My God, is this Thy will?

Give thanks for disappointments given,

For prayers unanswered still!

Give thanks! when in the place

Of health and usefulness,

Through sickness Thou hast paled my face

With pain and weariness.

Give thanks! if 'twere Thy will

Submission to demand,

I then might bid myself be still,

And bow to Thy command.

Give thanks! Yea, Lord, I do,

And by Thy help I will,

Give thanks! for blessings not received,

Although expected still.

Give thanks! for mercies given,

Unnoticed oft by me;

Give thanks! for sins forgiven,

Known only, Lord, to Thee.

Give thanks! in word and deed,

For Thy surpassing love,

That sent Thy Son on earth to save,

And now to plead above.
Give thanks! for tender love,
That our Redeemer showed,
Who, in the absence of Himself,
A Comforter bestowed,
Oh, grant me by Thy grace
To walk by faith alone,
Until before my Father's face
know as I am know!
J. G. B.

The Man Christ Jesus

"Jesus therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well." Oh! to think of the Lord Himself, whom none of the princes of this world knew, but who was the Lord of glory, sitting weary on the well, thirsty, and dependent upon this world for a drink of water—the world that was made by Him, and knew Him not!

Proverbs

Simon. Patrick on the Proverbs

1683

Chapter 7:24-27

24. "Hearken unto me now therefore, O ye children, and attend to the words of my mouth." This is a true representation, my dear children (whom I love unfeignedly, not deceitfully like those harlots) of the folly and danger of these lewd courses, in which youth is prone to be engaged: and therefore do not look upon it as an idle speculation; but give diligent heed unto it, and be ruled by my advice.

25. "Let not thine heart decline to her ways, go not astray in her paths." Let not one of you so much as entertain a thought of going to such a woman; much less of consenting to her enticements: or if any of you have been so unhappy as to be engaged in her company, let him think it is too much that he hath adventured to turn aside out of the right way, and not wander till he hath utterly lost himself in those strange paths, and cannot find his way back again.

26. "For she hath cast down many wounded: yea, many strong men have been slain by her." Do not presume of being safe in such courses, and of making a good retreat at last: for many have been the examples of no mean persons, who have fain in their reputation, their estates, their health, their comforts of life, and in truth have utterly perished by her: innumerable are the mighty men, both for valor and for wisdom whom she hath brought to ruin.

27. "Her house is the way to hell, going clown to the chambers of death." In short, to follow her unto her house, as this young man did, is the direct way to hell: every step that is taken to her bed (unto which she invited him to ascend) is in truth a going down to the dismal' chambers of death, and to the most horrid miseries.

Question and Answers

QUESTION: What is the present truth?

ANSWER: The present truth is the present testimony in contrast with the past. Judaism was the truth—Christianity has displaced it and is the present truth. One was set aside, and another one has taken its place. The gospel, in contrast with the law, is present truth. The present truth will be the past truth presently, and some may ask what I mean by this statement. Well, God is now writing Christ on the Christian's heart. He is now looking to see the life of Jesus manifested in the flesh. But when the next dispensation comes, God will not be writing Christ on people's hearts then instead, He will write His law in their hearts and minds. So there will be another present truth then. God is not now writing on tablets of stone, but on tablets of the heart. He is writing Christ there, and then (future) He will write glory (the glory to follow). I dare say that is to call attention to the ways of God in reference to His various testimonies in the earth.

Thoughts of Christ

How many thoughts of Christ have you found in your soul today? We shall never walk apart from the world save as Christ is in our souls. Has your walk today flowed out of your consciousness of Christ as a living person in heaven?

If the God of heaven is occupied with us, how many thoughts ought not we to have of that God? It is only as occupied with God and with Christ that we can be unworldly.

When Christ went up to heaven, was He not competent, not only to claim, but to keep a people separate from the world down here, in spite of all that Satan would do? How are they kept? is it by what is earthly? No, but by the Spirit of God using truth connected with Christ in heaven. It is heavenly truth that keeps a people looking up.

Has God a right to speak? Does He know how to use human language and drive it right home to souls? To be sure He does, and He says, "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God."

The Lord Jesus declares about His sheep that they have eternal life and that no one can pluck them out of His hand or out of the Father's hand. But human nature says, How can I know that to be true? How can you know it? What an awful word for a creature to put forth! Far better for the creature to say, "Let God be true, but every man a liar."

Have you ever thought of God dealing with you, not as to what you are in yourself, but as to where. He has set you in Christ? Have you ever thought that it is the affections of the Father's heart which flow down to us where we are, seeing us in Christ and not in our poor, wretched selves? What we are in self is not the thing to be occupied with, but what we are, and where we are, in Christ. We also delight in what there is in the living affections of the God of glory who has raised us up together with His Son and has given us all heavenly blessings in Him.

G. V. Wigram

The Intercession of Christ

My salvation in Christ is perfect, but I am not perfect. How can a man that is not perfect in himself walk according to a perfect position, if he is set in it? It is just here where the intercession of Christ, who is in heaven, comes in. Having set us in the perfect liberty of the appreciation of His own work by God the Father, the Lord, now on high, is occupied in bringing us through the wilderness. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John 2:1): From on high He sees our sin as He did Peter's, even before we sin and, as He said to Peter, "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren" (Luke 22:31-32). Nothing but a living Christ on high could suffice to meet our needs, assure our hearts and cultivate our affections.

Editorial: Tribulation and Then Triumph

Many believers today know of the time, called the tribulation, that soon will come upon this world. It is a principle with God that He never judges without warning.

The way that the prophet Isaiah writes about the tribulation in the last chapter of his prophecy is very interesting. "As soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children" (Isa. 66:8). While still future, this time must be very near. What great travail shall come upon that nation before they get the kingdom under their Messiah.

Now notice verse 7, "Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child." That was Jesus, born of Israel over 1900 years ago without any pangs to that people. But when the time of the tribulation shall come, such as never was before, it will be especially upon the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin to whom Jesus the Messiah came, and whom they rejected and crucified. At the close of this time, the remnant of Israel will appear.

In Micah 5 it was foretold that Messiah should be born in Bethlehem and that He would be caught up to God; also that He is "from of old, from everlasting." Then God says by the prophet, "Therefore will He give them up [the nation's present condition before God], until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth." After the travail the verse goes on to say, "Then the remnant of His brethren shall return unto the children of Israel." These are the ten tribes who were carried away into Assyria and lost. When these ten tribes are brought back and see Jesus the Messiah, they will be among those who say, "What are these wounds in Thine hands?" These tribes did not have their Messiah presented to them, and so they are ignorant and not guilty of His rejection. A reply comes in the same verse: "Those with which I was wounded in the house of My friends."

These quotations from Isaiah, Micah and Zechariah make the subject quite clear, and all the politics of this world are now tending to that time of the end. Israel's travail (or tribulation) and then the supremacy of Zion over the whole earth will be the end of the Middle Eastern question. Men may forget God in all this, but God will not forget His ancient people Israel. Agreeing with this also are the words of Jesus in Luke 21:20-27 with the certainty of His return. He comes then with "power and great glory" to judge those yet living on the earth.

May the Lord lift up the hearts of every believer, for soon we shall be caught up to meet Him in the air. Ed.

God's Two Gifts

A. P. Cecil

The glory of this dispensation is that God is revealed to us as a giver. The New Testament fully makes this known to us, and this is the glory of the Christian life, that having received eternal life from God, we should go forth and show His grace and His free gifts to others. We should be imitators of God as dear children (Eph. 5:1-2), walking in love as Christ has loved us and has given Himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God as a sweet-smelling savor.

In John 3:16 and 4:10 we have God revealed to us in this blessed way. He is the giver of two gifts: first, the giver of His Son; second, the giver of the Holy Spirit. The first gift is a gift to the whole world of sinners, God's only begotten Son! He who was ever in this relationship with the Father became a man, lived among them, died for them, rose again and now sits on high as the object of faith for any poor sinner who will accept Him. The second gift is only given to those who have accepted the first gift; it is God's gift to His own who have believed on His Son.

The Lord Jesus had to ascend on high and receive from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, before He could be sent down on the hundred and twenty disciples who had already believed in Christ. These had already been born again, by hearing the Son's word, and had already become possessors of eternal life in Him by the reception of the first gift. But now they were united to Him by the gift of the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven, made members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. (See Acts 2; compare with Acts 1:4-5; 1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 5:30.) Still this second gift is not too high a thing for a sinner to desire it and, when quickened, to ask for it, as we see in the striking instance in John 4. The great mark of it is that it is a gift, and God is therein revealed as a giver, which is the great revelation of the gospel.

Let us consider God as the giver of His Son. If the Jew had received the law as God intended him to receive it, the law would have taught him the lesson that he was nothing but a sinner. And instead of thinking of being justified by it, he would have fallen down on his face and cried like the poor leper who was put outside the camp of Israel, "Unclean, unclean!" (Lev. 13:45). For the law not only forbade the bad things he had done, so that he was proved to be a transgressor and guilty in this way, but it was given to unveil the very root of sin. It was to give the knowledge that deep down in the heart there was an evil spring which was continually vomiting forth filth and pollution, and which displayed itself outwardly in the various acts of sin that men commit (Rom. 3:19-20; 8:7). Thus, if the Jew had learned the real lessons taught him by this wonderful schoolmaster, he would have been thoroughly humbled and broken, confessing himself to be nothing but a lost sinner.

But whether the Jew learned this lesson or not, this was what was proved by God during more than a thousand years of test and trial. When this had been fully made known and man was proved to be guilty as well as a poor creature under the power and dominion of sin which ruled over him like a tyrant, then God began to work from Himself. If the very spring of man's heart was

evil, God must begin from Himself, outside of man in order to save him. And this is the blessedness of the gospel and the blessedness of John 3:16. We begin with God—God so loved the world!

God was revealed in His only begotten Son. He had been walking about Jerusalem and had been in the temple, and many, we are told, believed in Him when they saw the miracles that He did. "But Jesus did not commit Himself unto them, because He knew all men" (John 2:24), In the presence of God's Son on earth, man was tested afresh, and, as before, he failed under it. Man will believe on Jesus for the miracles. Anything for excitement! If any make a profession, he will follow the leader, but God looks not on the outward appearance; He looks on the heart, There was no proper response in the hearts of this multitude to Him. The faith produced by the miracles as well as the works of man are utterly worthless. He is lost! He must be born again! There may be some, like educated and refined Nicodemus, who believe in a religious way on Jesus, because of the outward signs of power around, and who thus judge and rightly too that Jesus must have been the Christ. But still the verdict goes forth to all, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Not only the fruit is bad, but the tree is bad. Man, as man, is utterly lost.

If, then, man is to be saved, of necessity God must be a giver. That God working in man by the Spirit was not sufficient to save was shown by all the history of the Old Testament saints up to that time. We see this specially in the instance of Job who, though conscious of inward uprightness, and that, too, testified of by God's own word, found it insufficient for righteousness when brought into the presence of God at the end of his trial. Yet it is necessary to be born again to enter the kingdom of the Messiah, the highest blessing for which a Jew was looking. God must therefore give His Son! The Son of Man must be lifted up that whosoever believeth in Him might have eternal life (John 3:14-15). There must be a Person given from outside of man, who, in a holy nature, might take upon Himself the penalty due to sin. This Person must be One who would fully glorify God in every quality of His nature as righteousness, love and light.

"God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son" (1 John 5:11). "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son." There was the secret of Jesus walking about this world and showing nothing but love to all around. His birth in the manger, His life of patient toil, even before the crowning act of His death, proclaimed that "God is love His righteousness demanded death as a ransom, therefore the Son of Man had to die. Thus God was Fully glorified in His righteousness and in His love. Christ risen from the dead is God's gift of eternal life offered to the whole world.

God's Second Gift

Now consider God's second gift: the gift of the Holy Spirit. There are two necessary things to have in order to get it (see John 4:10). First is to have the knowledge of God as a giver: "If thou knewest the gift of God." Second is to know the person of God's Son; in other words, to believe on Him. The Lord said; "If thou knewest... who it is that saith to thee, Give Me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water" (John 4:10). (Also see John 7:38-39.) As the blessed Lord talked to this poor, fallen woman about the living water, her heart was opened to desire it and she said in John 4:15, "Sir, give me this water." Not that she understood, but it was the first desire that came from her heart! The Lord, in answer, revealed Himself to her as the anointed One, and indeed He was the first gift, so that when the time came for the second gift to be given, she was ready to receive it, having believed in Jesus!

We read in John 7:39 that this second gift could not be given till Jesus was glorified. He must die and rise again and go up on high before the Holy Spirit could come down and take up His abode in any believer.

It is simple to see in the four gospels the history of the gift of God's Son. The anointed One of God was offered to man and rejected by the world. But He was received by His own, and whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have eternal life. This life was given in the power of resurrection after He rose from the dead.

Then in the Acts we read of His exaltation to the right hand of God and of the descent of the Holy Spirit, the second gift of God by which those who had received the gift of God's Son were united to Christ and to one another. Thus they had the knowledge given them that He was in the Father, and they in Him, and He in them, and that they had been made members of His body. See John 14:20 and 1 Corinthians 12:12-13.

Receiving the Holy Spirit

Now I would ask in all love, every soul who professes to have believed in Christ, but who is still trembling and fearing, not knowing whether he is certainly saved or not, Have you received the Holy Spirit since you believed? We have seen that He is certainly a distinct person from the Son and a distinct gift. The Son came into this world at the incarnation; the Holy Spirit came on the day of Pentecost! Both, of course, are divine persons existing from eternity!

Perhaps you answer me, I always thought that both gifts were received at once. Well, let us look at one or two scriptures in the Acts and see. In Acts 2:37, we do not see the Holy Spirit given when they first believed that Jesus was the Christ. But they were convicted divinely and said, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" The Holy Spirit was given after repentance, and after they were baptized unto His name and received remission of sins.

In Acts 8, Philip preached in Samaria that Jesus was the Christ, and they believed and were baptized. Yet we read in verse 16 that as yet the Holy Spirit was fallen on none of them, only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus! The Holy Spirit was given when the apostles laid their hands on them.

Acts 9 gives us a remarkable account of Paul's conversion. He was converted to God through the revelation to him from the glory of His Son, Jesus. From that time he owned Him as his Lord, and yet for three days was without sight and could neither eat nor drink. It was not till Ananias, a simple Jewish Christian, came and brought back to his mind the name of the person who had spoken to him and had put his hands on him that he received his sight and was filled with the Holy Spirit.

In Acts 10 we have the remarkable account of Cornelius's conversion, the first Gentile. Here was a man evidently "born of God," a devout man, one that feared God with all his house, and yet Peter had to go and tell him words whereby he and all his house should be saved (Acts 11:14). Peter went and preached the gospel of the remission of sins through the Christ crucified by men, but raised from the dead by God. Also He was coming to be the judge of the living and the dead, and Peter testified that "to Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins." This testimony of the gospel he received and was sealed with the Holy Spirit (vss. 36-44).

Then in Acts 19:1-6 the Apostle actually finds some believers at Ephesus who had received John the Baptist's ministry through Apollos, testifying of a coming kingdom and a coming Messiah. They had no idea that He had already come! So Paul asked them the very question I am asking you, "Have you received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" They had not even heard of Him. He then put before them the fact that the Christ had already come and died and was risen again and glorified. Then they were baptized unto His name and received the Holy Spirit.

Now we find some believers today in a state somewhat similar to some of these cases. They have never heard a full gospel! Many look upon salvation as a promise in the future, and have had no idea of a present Christ as a gift to be received and possessed consciously as their own. So we

have to say to them, "Have you received the Holy Spirit since you believed?"

"How am I to know?" they say. My friend, if I came into your house, how would you know I was there? Would it not be by my actual presence? And how are you to know that God dwells in you? My answer would be that it is by His actual presence there! Can you have God dwelling in you and you not know it? Impossible!

But you say, "What am I to believe to receive it?" What did they believe on the day of Pentecost? What did Paul believe? What did Cornelius believe? They believed in the testimony of the remission of sins preached to them in the name of a dead, risen and glorified Christ whose name was Jesus, or Jehovah Savior! They believed not merely in His person as the Christ or even as the Son of God, but in the efficacy of His finished work and in God's acceptance of it and His glory. Immediately when they believed the gospel, they were sealed with the Holy Spirit!

Thus the Holy Spirit is carefully shown in the Acts to be a distinct person, and a gift distinct from that of the Son, generally, if not always, given at a distinct time. That is, first the sinner believed that Jesus was the Anointed, through hearing the word in his soul. Afterward, on the reception of the gospel, the Holy Spirit sealed him. This we have in Ephesians 1:13, "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise."

So God is in every way a giver, no longer a requirer as under the law. He gave His Son and He gave the Holy Spirit. What has any poor, needy creature to do but to receive what God has given, to appropriate all to himself and to thank God for it all? Having the Son, we have eternal life and glory, and it is ours by simple faith. Having the Holy Spirit, we are actually, in spirit, heavenly men. Receiving the gospel, we are in Christ. Receiving the Holy Spirit, Christ is in us. "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." And if Christ be in us, all that is of Adam in us we may treat as dead, having received the Christ that died. All we wait for is for our bodies to be raised up or changed when the Lord returns. See Romans 8:1, 9-11

Thus we are not only forgiven and justified from our sins, but we are in Christ and Christ is in us. Having died with Him and risen again with the Holy Spirit dwelling in us, we know our place as sons while we wait for the redemption of our bodies. Glorious news, glorious portion! "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 15:55-57).

There is no position a saint be in but that he may

Go to God for help.

The Passover

The Passover was instituted when the Israelites were in Egypt. Jehovah was about to cut off all the firstborn of Egypt, and the Israelites were ordered to sprinkle the blood of a lamb, taken for each house, on the lintel and two side posts of their houses. The promise was given, "The Lord will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you." The Israelites obeyed, and, in perfect safety, fed upon the lamb under shelter of the blood. When they should come to the promised land, they were enjoined to keep the Passover as one of their yearly feasts (Ex. 12:3-28; Lev. 23:4-8).

The Passover sets forth typically the offering of Christ as that in which the righteousness of God in regard of sin has been declared. The blood was a witness of death, that is, of the removal from under the eye of God of the man, or order of man, that had sinned against God. This removal was brought to pass vicariously in the person of the righteous One who gave Himself a ransom for all. In the eating of the lamb roast with fire, the people were to enter into the solemnity of what had been effected.

The Lord Jesus greatly desired to eat the last pass-over with His disciples, forming, as they did, a unique "family" circle. It was about to be fulfilled in the kingdom of God, and the Lord takes the place of separation from the earth until the kingdom of God should come (Luke 22:15-18).

Connected with the Passover is the feast of unleavened bread. This feast was kept for seven days, during which all leaven had to be put away. The first day and the seventh day were holy convocations, on which no servile work was to be done. This feast was intimately connected with the Passover: "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." The unleavened bread sets forth that sense of grace through faith, in the Christian, in which, apart from influences of the flesh and old associations, he can be habitually in the appreciation of and in communion with the sacrifice of Christ, so that his whole life is consistent therewith.

It appears evident that the term "Passover" was also applied to the feast of unleavened bread, as in Deut. 16:2. "Thou shalt therefore sacrifice the Passover unto the Lord thy God, of the flock and the herd." The "herd" here must refer to the seven days' feast, and this may account for the Jews' refusing to go into the judgment hall "lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the Passover" (John 18:28), though they had eaten the paschal lamb the night before. Bible Dictionary

Joy in GOD is communion

presenting a wont to God is not communion.

"God talked with Abraham," "his friend"—

that is communion.

The Judgment Seat of Christ

"Every one of us shall give account of himself to God."

Romans 14:12

It may be well to make a few remarks with reference to the judgment seat of Christ, as we have found many souls confused and troubled on this subject.

First: The person of the believer can never come into judgment; he has passed from death unto life (John 5:24). He is justified from all things. Christ was delivered for his offenses and where are they? All gone and gone forever. Praise His name! He was raised again for his justification and what then? Being raised up together with Him, he is associated with a risen Christ, in this eternal life, and in His acceptance before God. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:1).

The believer himself, then, can never be brought into judgment. Besides this, when he is brought before the tribunal of Christ, he will be in his body of glory. He will then be like the blessed Lord Himself. "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself" (Phil. 3:21). How very far this glorious truth removes all thought of judgment as to the person of the believer, I need not say. He is glorified before he is called to the judgment seat and knows well that he is a coheir with Christ in the same glory with Him.

Second: The sins and iniquities of the Christian can never be brought into judgment. Christ has already borne their judgment on the cross, and put them all away by the sacrifice of Himself.

There "will be no second judgment of the believer's sins. A full end has been made of all sins confessed by us and borne by Jesus (Heb. 9:28; 1 John 1:9). "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body I on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Peter 2:24). So complete and so perfect was the work of Christ on the cross, as the substitute for His people, that not the least question as to sin was left unsettled. Every question was forever closed when He exclaimed, "It is finished."

On the ground of this gloriously finished work, divine love meets the chief of sinners in all the riches of the grace of God. So great is this love toward the sinner, who pleads the name of Jesus before God and trusts only to His precious blood, that not only are his sins and iniquities all forgiven, but they are not to be remembered. "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more" (Heb. 10:17). "For by one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified" (vs. 14). Such is the power, the potency of love over all our sins, that they are gone from the recollection of Him who loves us and they can never come into judgment.

Third: Although neither the person nor the sins and iniquities of the believer are the subjects of God's judgment at that day, his works must all be brought before the tribunal of Christ.

Hence the faithful word of warning by the Apostle, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor 15:58). He had been dwelling at great length on the resurrection of the body; now he touches on what may be called resurrection of works. "Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is" (1 Cor 3:13). But this trial of the quality of our works should not be thought of with fear and dread, but as one of our greatest privileges, because then shall be fulfilled that precious word, "Then shall I know even as also I am known" (1 Cor. 13:12).

A. Miller

Let us delight in dependence—that a Person above us should minister to us and care for us.

Questions and Answers

QUESTION: Will the Lord be able to say to any of His own: "Well done, good and faithful servant" (Matt. 25:23; see also vs. 21)?

ANSWER: The Lord say to His disciples amid all their failures: "Ye are they which have continued with Me in My temptations" (Luke 22:28), when they could not impute faithfulness to themselves. He, knowing their hearts' earnest desire to please Him, though hindered by weakness and all that belongs to the flesh, could say it of them. We are His servants and His friends also. It is our portion to serve in the devotedness of friends. And in glory "His servants shall serve Him" (Rev. 22:3). There will be no mixture of self in it then.

Notice how Matthew 25:23 reads: "His lord said unto him; Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord." It does not say that anyone was faithful in everything. What encouragement this is to seek to please Him in all that we can. "Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God" (1 Cor. 4:5).

A Mere Legal Estimate

We must guard against the mere refusing to take a place in the world, because we know it is wrong as followers of Him who has been rejected. A mere legal estimate of what is right can never last. A thing may be very right, but there is not stability in pursuing it, because there is no power to subdue the flesh in merely doing what one knows to be right. There was the sense of obligation with the law, but the law did not set an object before us to attract our hearts; it did not bring God to us nor us to God. That lasts which feels that we are nothing and that God is everything.

Many have begun very energetically and taken a certain place right in itself, but if legality be the source of it, there will be no power of perseverance, for that which is taken up under law will be sure to be lost in the flesh. When God is the object, the low place here is sufficient. He Himself carries us on, and whatever it be, if the mind and affections are upon Him, what was hard at first is no effort as we proceed. His love, which attracted and gave us power at first to take such a position, becomes brighter and brighter when better and longer known, and what was done at first tremblingly is easy with increasing courage.

The only thing which can enable us thus to go on is to have Christ the object before us, and just in proportion as it is so can we be happy. There may be a thousand and one things to vex us if self is of importance; they will not vex us at all if self is not there to be vexed. The passions of the flesh will not harass us if we are walking with God. What trials we get when not walking with God and we think only of self! There is no such deliverance as that of having no importance in our own eyes. Then we may be happy indeed before God.

J. N. Darby

Philippians 3:18; 4:4

If Paul even weeps over many who call themselves Christians, he always rejoices in the Lord; in Him is that which nothing can alter. This is not an indifference to sorrow which hinders weeping, but it is a spring of joy which enlarges when there is distress, because of its immutability, and which even becomes more pure in the heart the more it becomes the only one, and it is in itself the only spring that is infinitely pure. When it is our only spring, we thereby love others. If we love them besides Him, we lose something of Him. When we are weaned from all other springs, His joy remains in a It its purity, and our concern for others partakes of this same purity.

Bible Challenger-08-August V.10

The first letter of each of the Following responses will form the word identifying someone with whom we should agree quickly, thereby forestalling some unwanted deliveries. [1] The number in brackets indicates the number of missing words in each answer.

1. "Then Haman was_____ before the king and the queen." [1]
2. "Oh that one would hear me! behold, my_____ is, that the Almighty would answer me." [1]
3. "Be sober, be_____." [1]
4. "O God, how long... shall the_____ blaspheme Thy name forever?" [1]
5. "Now the Lord my God hath given me_____ on every side." [1]
6. "Behold, there stood a man over against him with his_____ drawn." [1]
7. "God's anger was kindled because he went: and the_____ stood in the way." [4]
8. "All the people_____ for all the glorious things that were done by Him." [1]
9. "I will therefore that the_____ marry, bear children, guide the house." [2]

Answers to these questions will be found in the next issue of Christian Treasury.

R. Erisman

Proverbs

Simon Patrick on the Proverbs 1683

Chapter 8:1-9

1. "Doth not wisdom cry? and understanding pat firth her voice?" Can you then here after pretend ignorance, and say you never had any caution given you against these snares? Or rather, have I not the greatest reason to chide you for your stupidity in hearkening unto those secret allurements to the deeds of darkness; when their shamefulness is so apparent? and you have had so many open and loud admonitions given you to be wiser? and such serious and earnest endeavors have been used, by repeated instructions and reproofs to reclaim you from your folly?

2. "She standeth in the top of high places by the way in the places of the paths." There is no public crier better heard and understood by all, when from an high place he makes proclamation to the people, than the rules of wisdom and venue are which do not lie concealed, nor can be altered at our pleasure; but present themselves continually to men's thoughts wheresoever they go, being as plain as the highway, and remaining unmovable and fixed, notwithstanding all the attempts that have been made to subvert them.

3. "She crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors." Let their business be what it will, whether in the courts of judgment, or among those that traffic in the city, or in their own private habitation, still they know what their duty is: which their own conscience, as well as God's ministers, rings so continually in their ears; that they cannot avoid such information.

4. "Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice is to the sons of man." Which they hear as plainly and distinctly, as if wisdom itself should call to them from above, saying; hearken, O men, of whatsoever rank and condition you be: whether high or low, rich or poor; for my instructions are common to you all.

5. "O ye simple, understand wisdom: and, ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart." Your fault is, that you are inconsiderate and easily cheated (chap. 7:21-22), or which is worse, stupidly bent to follow your sensual appetite; as if you had no better inclinations: but if you will attend, I will make you more circumspect and wary; and dispose you to be led by prudent counsels.

6. "Hear; for I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips shall be right things." Do not turn away your ears, but listen to my words; for I will teach you things most worthy of your notice and choice: which will conduct you safely in all the passages of your life; and lay before you such a plain, direct and easy path, that if you walk in it you shall not miss of being happy.

7. "For my mouth shall speak truth; and wickedness is an abomination to my lips." For I will utter nothing rashly, or contrary to the truth; all falsehood, deceit and whatsoever may do hurt, being so detestable to me, and so far from my thoughts, that the correction of such wickedness is the aim of my discourse.

8. "All the words of my mouth are in righteousness; there is nothing froward or perverse in them." Every word of which is exactly conformable to the rule of righteousness: there is nothing I enjoin or forbid merely to hamper and perplex you, or to abridge you of your just liberty: much less to misguide and pervert you, in the pursuit of what is good for you.

9. "They are all plain to Him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge. But whatsoever they may seem to inconsiderate and prejudiced minds, they will all manifestly appear equal and just unto him that uses his reason; and approve themselves as I said, exactly conformable to the strictest rules of righteousness, unto well-disposed minds; who will be at the pains to know the difference between right and wrong, or between that which is good and that which is evil for them.

Bible Challenger-07-July Answer V.10

1. Come Gen. 45:19
2. Opened Ne. 13:19
3. Midst of Jordan Josh. 4:8
4. Midwives Ex. 1:17
5. Armed Deut. 3:18
6. Not work 2 Thess. 3:10
7. Deliver Dan. 6:16
8. End of the world Matt. 28:20
9. Dart Heb. 12:20

"As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord COMMANDED the blessing, even life for evermore" (Psa. 133:3).

The Witness for God

Revelation 11

The book of the Acts gives us the account of the establishment of the church, and its being called to be the witness for God. This involves the setting aside, (ruin its place of standing before God, of Jerusalem. It was soon after broken up as a place. From that time onward, we have no recognition, on God's part, of any places upon earth, as such. Individual persons as forming parts of the church are recognized, and churches are recognized in the epistles; but places, as such, are never owned as having, as mere places, any interest in the mind of God.

In the eleventh chapter of Revelation, however, we find a definite place on earth again recognized as the subject of special interest to the Divine mind, and in that chosen place, in spite of all its evil, and in spite of all the evil of the Gentiles, we find a witness is raised and marvelously maintained there.

The place of strength is always that of being forced
to lean on God.

The Church

The church is not of the world. As to prophecy, it sits in heavenly places where prophecy does not reach. The church will never be established on earth as the Jews were; it is not its calling. The government of God will never settle it there in peace. The church's blessing is to be taken away from the earth to meet the Lord in the air. Those who claim to be part of the church, but are not, may come under the judgments of the Apocalypse, but that does not make the true church the subject of prophecy. The church in heaven will reign with Christ over the earth. But God is not now setting up the church on earth for that purpose. The church suffers with Christ here and reigns with Him hereafter. The church is the display of God's grace; the world, of His government. The church is the full exhibition of God's sovereign grace in redemption, which puts her in heavenly places in Christ, that, in the ages to come, God might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness to her in Christ Jesus.

Editorial: The Poison and the Remedy

Frequently we have heard that the Christian has three enemies: (1) Satan, (2) self and (3) the world. At the present time it seems that the world is more influential as an enemy than it has ever been. In the lifetime of many of us we have seen such a tremendous development of things that allure and attract. Also, there is such a horrible declension in teaching and in practicing what is right and good. So, the world tempts and tries the true believer. On the one side, what may appear harmless, as the forbidden fruit appeared to Eve, attracts us. On the other side, wickedness abounds. We learn in 1 John 5:19 that "the whole world lieth in wickedness (or, in the wicked one)."

How can we help our dear children as they grow up in this world? Life goes on and we live daily under the influence of our surroundings. Not all that influences or directs us is bad. This is where we as believers have privilege and responsibility. How wonderful it is to seek to help our children for their eternal as well as temporal good. Happiness and blessing will follow.

In the educational systems of today much that is not true and right is taught. Also, in the great house of Christendom much has become like the world. A comparison of 2 Timothy 3 with Romans 1 is enough to show this.

We cannot leave the great house of profession, but our God has supplied all that we need to keep us and to teach our children the right way. "Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river of Ahava, that we might afflict ourselves before our God, to seek of Him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance" (Ezra 8:21).

In 2 Kings 4 we find much that is typical of God's people today. Elisha came to Gilgal, and there was a dearth in the land. Elisha said to his servant, "Set on the great pot, and seethe pottage for the sons of the prophets." Then what happened? "One went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a wild vine, and gathered thereof wild gourds his lap full, and came and shred them into the pot of pottage: for they knew them not." It is like nourishment gathered today in a worldly Christendom which is wild and has some poison in it. It says, "They knew them not"—a great lack of discernment. What was the remedy? God's prophet knew. He said, "Then bring meal. And he cast it into the pot; and he said, Pour out for the people, that they may eat. And there was no harm [evil thing] in the pot" (vss. 38-41).

The meal is typical of Christ in His perfection brought to us down here as food for God's people. Today every believer is a priest and we all need to feed upon Christ. Christ in His life is food to sustain us in our life.

What can we do to help our children living in this world? The answer is clear: we must put more of Christ into their daily food. It will counteract the poison that is in this field in which we all live. Ed.

Love's Call

Revelation 3:12, 19-21

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches" (Rev. 3:22). This appeal goes to every assembly from Ephesus to Laodicea, and it is taken up individually. What then follows is found in every assembly addressed. Listen to the words spoken: "Him that overcometh." There is an overcomer in every assembly addressed—a select seven.

The first three follow consecutively; the next four run on concurrently from when they come in. When we come to the final two, they are no exception. There is a call to the overcomer in each. Would we expect this in Philadelphia?

Philadelphia means "brotherly love," but the outer circle is formed from the Center where the personal pronouns "I," "My" and "Him" occur nineteen times; it is not "Me," which comes later. Nothing is said of the circle except that there is an address to an overcomer in verse 12. We may wonder why there is an overcomer in such a circle of "brotherly love."

Come now to Laodicea, where there is also an overcomer, and a call, for the word means "lukewarm," and the Lord is seen outside, not in the center. Nevertheless, here too there is an overcomer who responds to His call of love. Only through grace can there be a response to such a call, for we see His patient attitude in verse 19: "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent."

Laodicea is profession with the "door" closed, while professing to accept Him. The awakened soul opens the door to private communion with Him, for He knocks and calls, "If any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me" (vs. 20). Notice this is personal; it is not a reference to the breaking of bread. But here we have the personal pronoun "Me" applying to the Lord, but not found with the others in the address to Philadelphia, only in a private setting. And the believer sups with the Person who gives impulse to the Philadelphian circle. Does this responder move out to Him? (See verse 21.) There is the supply of grace to do so, and the promise of an overcomer's reward.

We can now draw on some Old Testament scriptures for the focus of our attention on the value of one person in the estimate of the Lord.

"For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones" (Isa. 57:15).

"For all those things hath Mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at My word" (Isa. 66:2).

He is far beyond us in the inscrutability of the majestic glory of His Deity, but comes so close to us in the lowliness of His humanity. "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20). This is where He loves to be; He went to the cross that all this could be for His heart, and for our present and eternal gain. It is us the Lord wants, not primarily our service for Him, far be it to fall into ritualism. There are many scriptural illustrations: "Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?" (Luke 17:12-18). It was one in ten lepers that returned to worship and give glory to God. And he was a Samaritan.

Do we seek to shelter behind a facade of undetected pretention by saying, "We are in the right position"? Philadelphia is not ecclesiastical; it is spiritual, moral, personal, yet collective. If there is failure, there is loss to the Lord and to His brethren. But the Spirit draws attention to "the overcomer" in messages both to Philadelphia and Laodicea. Take account of what the Lord says, "I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it." It is by the hand of the Lord, and in the power of the Spirit. And we remember He has the "key of David." He "openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth" (Rev. 3:7-8).

We have noticed that there is a "door" shut upon the Lord in Laodicea. This may be applied to sectarianism, for it shuts the door to the truth of the Lord in the midst, according to the Scriptures. To be neutral or indifferent about it is to declare a position of lukewarmness. Recall Revelation 3:19! Let us lift up a prayer, "Preserve me, O God: for in Thee do I put my trust." There will always be an overcomer and a collective testimony right up to the rapture (Rev. 3:10).

"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent." We do well to again go to the Old Testament for a luminous illustration found in Habakkuk 3, where the prophet looks about and trembles. "Thy bow was made naked, the rods of discipline sworn according to Thy word. Selah" (vs. 9 JND). When everything threatens to fail, he looks up, and rejoices in "the God of my salvation. The Lord God is my strength, and He will make my feet like hinds' feet, and He will make me to walk upon mine high places" (vss. 18-19). What an example of spiritual alacrity, which takes us into the heavenlies (Eph. 1:3-6).

"His foundation is in the holy mountains. The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob" (Psa. 87:1-2).

M. Priestley

The steps of a good man are ordered by Jehovah. This is a vast and precious blessing. A young Christian may, in confiding zeal, not see so much the value of this, but when one has seen the world, what a pathless wilderness it is; it is beyond all price that the Lord directs our steps!

David

Words of Truth

In the books of Samuel and Kings, we have the histories of David and Solomon. There they are considered historically. In Chronicles they are to be considered in their moral and typical character, whether as showing forth the Lord Jesus or His saints.

Did you ever meditate on the difference between David and Solomon? David teaches of grace, and Solomon of glory. Grace is illustrated through David's whole course. He was a poor shepherd boy, despised by man, a stripling. Samuel asks Jesse, "Are here all thy children?" The right man was almost passed by, but Samuel says, "Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither." This was the Lord's anointed, chosen by grace when despised by man, sustained by grace when destroyed by man, and ultimately, when set on the throne of Judah, kept there by grace.

There is still more: He was chosen, anointed, sustained and raised to the kingdom, but, besides that, when he had fallen, he was restored by grace. It was by grace through righteousness he was restored—that was grace. But the sword never departed from his house—that was righteousness. When defiled, he was kept to the end and allowed to depart in peace—that indeed was grace.

Solomon teaches us of glory. If he had never been a despised shepherd boy nor, like a partridge, been hunted upon the mountains. We catch our first sight of him on the throne. The tale of glory is less affecting than that of grace. We live in the midst of scenes more affecting than those of glory, more sweet than eternity can tell.

Again, in David we have the warrior king, in Solomon the peaceful king. If David views the surrounding nations, he finds them enemies, and sallies forth against them, sword in hand. Solomon, from the quiet dignity of his palace, accepts their homage, and is honored and sought unto by them. Lastly, David is the servant, Solomon the son. The book of 1 Chronicles gives David as the servant; 2 Chronicles gives Solomon as the son.

These combinations often occur in Scripture, and the more we are let into the secret of the dispensations, the more we can enjoy the Word of God. For instance, Enoch gives us heavenly strangership, Noah earthly blessing. Moses on Pisgah takes us to heaven, while Joshua follows taking possession of the land. Elijah is the heavenly stranger, and Elisha is the man of the earth. These things show unity of purpose throughout the whole Book and prove that God's own principles and purposes have been always before Him. His Book is no mass of confusion with a bright thought glittering here and there. It has a well-defined, premeditated character framed for eternal blessing.

David illustrated the blessing of God in His servant. Solomon sat in the fruit of David's labors. Jesus in His first coming was the Servant; in the second coming He will be manifested as the Son. Was He not always the Son? Most assuredly He was from all eternity. But He came as a servant, and when He comes again shall He not serve you? Surely He "will come forth and serve," but it will

be in the character of the Son. In all these combinations of which we have spoken, from Enoch and Noah, David and Solomon, we are in company with the Christ of God.

At the end of 1 Chronicles 12 we find David established in full blessing. By the unanimous voice of the tribes, he is anointed king in Hebron with hosannas! It was an intoxicating moment, more so than any we have known, yet we can understand it, for we know that it is easier to gain a victory than to use it. The use is more moral, while the gaining of the victory is more, so to speak, physical.

David in his humiliation had gone from strength to strength, but in his day of triumph he got restless and summoned his captains to bring home the ark from Kirjath-jearim. How could he think of entrusting the ark to his captains? Ah! there it was, he had just been among them, the favorite of the nation. It was a moment of intoxication, and David was thrown off his guard. Very, very natural.

There was, besides this act of the flesh, a very beautiful one of the Spirit. It was the desire to bring home the ark; never had Saul attempted it. It might have lain at Kirjath-jearim forever, as far as Saul was concerned, but David desired to bring it back. The Spirit and the flesh were acting together. The flesh demanded the captains, and set the ark upon a cart. The Spirit had set David's heart on having God with His people, and made him resolve that his throne should be where God was.

How interesting to see these two agents working together in one act, and to trace each as clearly as if the other were absent. Cannot we often see this in our own doings? This is a vivid instance of the complex nature in the saint of God. If the carelessness of the flesh puts the ark upon a cart and commits it to the care of the captains, it is the earnestness of the Spirit that desires to bring God back to His people and cares not for the kingdom in His absence. If God be not king, neither will I be!

Let me ask, Will God form an alliance with your carelessness? He could as easily join with your lusts! "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other" (Gal. 5:17).

The Word of God had commanded that the ark should be carried on the shoulders of the Levites, and if David prefers a new cart, God will vindicate His own Word (Num. 4:15). To touch the ark was, for any but a Levite, judicial death. Uzza touched it and he died "before God." It could not be otherwise. "Hath He [God] spoken, and shall He not make it good?"

You might say, Perhaps it was a pardonable fault in David. I grant you, indeed, it was very different from the matter of Uriah the Hittite. But can God be as indifferent as I am about His own Word? We think the Levite and the cart equally suitable; God thinks differently. He surely pities me, but He never complies with my ignorance. The idea of the ark on a cart!

Could there have been greater carelessness of Scripture, yet where is there more beautiful energy of the Spirit than the desire to have the ark of God at home?

Now David quite misunderstood the dealings of God. He was displeased. He was quite in a sulk about the death of Uzza. After all my hilarity and my merry-making in the presence of God, after all my desire to bring the ark home, is this all I get? David allows the ark of God to pass into the hand of a Gentile (1 Chron. 13:13). Have you not sometimes felt in a sulk, out of humor with God? Has

He ever crossed a day of your festivity, and dashed all your joys to the earth, so to speak? David sulkily judges that God has interfered without reason with his spiritual enjoyment.

As we go through chapter 14, we find the Philistines assembled against David, and he applies to God to know if he should go against them. God says, "Go up; for I will deliver them into thine hand." And again they come against him, and again he asks, and again God says that He would deliver them. Think about this. If we were more familiar with the Word of God, we could never be puzzled as to what to do in any emergency. Here is a man, coming back to God, yet needing to be nearer still. Have you not seen this at home, a shadow in the family, yet they are thrown together still?

Now God does not deal with David's temper. He melts all the sulkiness clean out of him by heaping coals of fire on his head. This is what you must do; you must not be overcome of evil. God overcomes evil. He does not resent the ways of His children, but gives sulky David victory over the Philistines. God takes coals of fire and heaps them on David's head and melts the sulkiness out of him! God never tells you to do anything that He does not do Himself. He tells you to love your enemies and give them food, and He does it Himself. He tells you to overcome evil, and He does it Himself.

Here it is. The consequence is that David finds out his mistake. I see how it is, he says, "none ought to carry the ark of God but the Levites" (ch. 15:2). It was late in the day to discover the mistake, but David had to say, "Perez-uzza" (the breach of Uzza), at his own door at last.

Blessed is the moment in which I find myself wrong and God right! I can bear to find out that I am wrong—to find that God was wrong would be eternal ruin. No doubt it is very humbling to discover that I have been sulky, unwarrantably sulky, and with God, but then no two things more sweetly combine than broken heartedness and joy. You cannot be truly happy, unless you know a broken heart. Joy in God demands a broken heart. I do not speak of the measure but of the fact. How can you be happy in God's presence, unless you know that you are a sinner?

David no longer sulks with God. He blames himself now, though God has never upbraided him. Was the prodigal upbraided when he returned brokenhearted? And when Jesus spoke to the woman of Samaria, did He reproach her? One beam from Sinai He let fall to discover to herself her condition, but the moment she saw herself, He let the matter go.

The ark was in Obed-edom's house. The Lord blessed Obed-edom for its sake and used this blessing to melt David. The process works the cure; David discovered it all now. Poor foolish David! How like ourselves he was! We all blame God when the mischief is at our own door, but He restores us, and leads us in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.

David calls Aaron and the Levites. He is now with God. David brings no cart now; he calls the house of Aaron and the Levites. Ah, brethren, "I commend you to God." Is that all? Nay, "I commend you to God, and to the word of His grace." Devotional feelings won't do; you must get the illumination and seal of Scripture.

"Because ye did it not at the first" (1 Chron. 15:13). I do not blame David a bit for putting blame on the Levites; they ought to have resented it. They ought to have protected the purity of the house of God. The Levites in Uzziah's days were more faithful. When Uzziah dared to go into the sanctuary,

they forced him out. "It appertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto the Lord, but to the priests the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense: go out of the sanctuary; for thou hast trespassed" (2 Chron. 26:16-21). And Uzziah was angry and became a leper until the day of his death.

In 1 Chronicles 15, we have the great preparations that were made to bring the ark home; there is neither stumbling nor smiting now. All is in accordance with the Scriptures, as well as with the piety of the mind, and the ark is safely brought to the tent prepared for it.

In chapter 16 David steps into millennial days and gives us, as it were, a rehearsal of them. David has singers; Moses never prepared a song for the tabernacle. David does for the temple and delivers it into the hands of Asaph and his brethren. There had been a burst of music on the banks of the Red Sea, Moses and Miriam answering each other, but there was no music for the tabernacle. There could not be, for Israel was not at rest. The songs of Asaph could not be awakened till David had prepared for Solomon. Then they could rehearse the songs of the kingdom.

Can you do it? The kingdom is not yet come, but you can be tuning your cymbals about the door! David does it, and puts in the hand of Asaph a composite song, made up of patches of various psalms, where Israel leads the praises and the Gentiles join the chorus. "O give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good; for His mercy endureth forever." Yes, whatever may have been the depths of wickedness, whatever the impious apostasy, the kingdom will be the witness of this—that God's mercy has prevailed!

We have seen David restored. Can anyone enter the kingdom without being restored? Rare it would be indeed, for grace reigns through righteousness.

Does David ask if he may sing his songs to God? Does he ask liberty to do so? No, he knows his title to praise his God, and you should know your right to tune your instruments about the gates of heaven, till they burst asunder, and you join the shout of the kingdom, "Oh, give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good; for His mercy endureth forever."

Nothing keeps the soul in such peace

as a settled confidence in God.

"If Need Be"

"Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness" (1 Peter 1:6). What a singular combination! Paul says, "As sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing" (2 Cor. 6:10). You will have noticed that it is not "in heaviness" at one time and "rejoicing" the next, but both blended together. Yes, we have much to mourn over, yet much in which to rejoice. There is joy underneath our tears, and sorrow mingled with singing. "For a season, if need be," or, if you need them. By God's grace, there is the qualifying clause. They are only for a season, but, the Apostle says, you need them. Let us not forget that the joy will wax greater till it ends in everlasting joy; the heaviness is only for a season. It will have an end, and soon, praise God!

E. F. Smith

"Who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well." The valley of Baca is a place of sorrow and humiliation, but one of blessing also. With some of us this valley may be the loss of that nearest our hearts, or the thwarting of the will-something that will humble us; but it is a place of blessing. We get more refreshing from the painful than the pleasant things. The refreshment and the blessing come from that which has pained us, humbled us, emptied us of self.

Dominion

Man lost the headship and dominion given to him in Genesis 1 and 2. If we turn to Psalm B, we shall find that there is a "Son of Man" on whom this dominion is bestowed. 'Thou madest Him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands; Thou hast put all things under His feet: all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas' (vss. 6-5). Who is this "Son of Man"? And where is this dominion to be exercised and enjoyed?

Hebrews 2 answers us: "Unto the angels hath lie not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak. But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? or the Son of Man, that Thou visitest him? Thou madest Him a little lower than the angels; Thou crownedst Him with glory and honor, and didst set Him over the works of Thy hands: Thou hast put all things in subjection under His feet.... But now we see not yet all things put under Him. But we see Jesus... crowned with glory and honor" (vss. 5-9). It is the second Adam—the Son of Man—to whom this headship is given. It is in an age to come that this dominion is to be exercised and enjoyed. Meanwhile, when waiting for the assumption of this headship, He is "crowned with glory and honor."

We will now turn to Ephesians 1:19-23 to discover what work progresses while He is there. We find the Apostle again quoting the same psalm in verse 22. He speaks of the exceeding greatness of God's power: "Which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world [age], but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all."

We learn from this and other scriptures that while He is thus exalted and hidden from the world, a church, or bride, is being formed for Him out of Jew and Gentile. And God puts forth the same power that He used to raise Christ, as man, from the dead and set Him at His own right hand. (He was always the eternal Son, the Word that was with God, and was God.) That same power is put forth to quicken with, raise up together and seat together in Christ in the heavenly places the joint-heirs by the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven.

We find this psalm again used by the Apostle in 1 Corinthians 15:27. There we learn that this dominion is taken by Christ at the resurrection of the saints from among the dead, of which the chapter treats. Christ has been the "firstfruits" of this "first resurrection." Then follows, "They that are Christ's [and they only] at His coming." When that day comes, some shall not have been laid to sleep by Jesus, but all—living or dead—shall be raised or changed.

The dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. It is then that God will gather together all things, both which are in heaven and which are on earth in Christ, and the saying shall be brought to pass, "Death is swallowed up in victory" (1 Cor. 15:54; Isa. 25:8)

God then brings in the blessing of the habitable earth, in the judgment of the world or the living, as we find largely brought before us in this and its kindred passages or context of the prophets. And the kingdoms of this world shall then become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ, "when the Lord of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients gloriously" (Isa. 24:23).

F. G. Patterson

Foreknowledge, Predestination, Election

Calling takes place in time, but this is antedated in the divine order by predestination and election. Our path as believers, unlike that of Abraham, is a heavenly calling: "For our conversation [commonwealth, citizenship, political rights] is in heaven" (Phil. 3:20). In Abraham we meet one who rises far above the path of mere earthly citizenship. He is a stranger and pilgrim, one unknown and yet well-known, desiring a "better country, that is, an heavenly" (Heb. 11:16).

Bible Challenger-09-September V.10

The first letter of each of the following responses (Bible quotations with one or more words to complete) will form an action word denoting something positively acquired, that is, the Christian's inheritance. [1] The number in brackets indicates the number of missing words in each answer.

1. "By His _____ He entered in once into the holy place." [2]
2. "A pattern to them which should hereafter _____ to life everlasting." [31]
3. "Who _____ subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness." [2]
4. "Being made so much better than the_____ ." [11]
5. "Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and_____." [1]
6. "Which in time past were _____ but are now the people of God." [3]
7. "By faith Abel offered unto God a more _____ sacrifice." [1]
8. "I continue unto this, _____ witnessing both to small and great." [1]

Answers to these questions will be found in the next issue of Christian Treasury.

R. Erisman

The Glory of God

"The glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east" (Ezekiel 43:2). What condescension! This is the glory of which we read in chapter 1:22, where the firmament was of the color of the terrible crystal, stretched forth over their heads above. Then in verses 26 to 28 the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man like afire, but having a brightness round about like a rainbow.

In Ezekiel 1, we see God in government on earth, but connected with His throne in heaven. The Spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels, and there was a wheel within a wheel. God rules over all, and the complexity of His government is far beyond our comprehension, but the Christian knows that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. All moved as the Spirit willed, and He who governed did so in perfection, even divine perfection.

If in Ezekiel 43:2-3 that glory came, and, in verse 4, came into the house (prophetic of the millennial glory of that house), it is equally true that the glory had departed from Israel when the evils remained with them, and they listened not to the voice of His prophets. It reluctantly departed (see chapters 10 and 11), for God would rather His people had gone on so that He could have gone on with them.

Now the glory of God has been here in the Person of His dear Son, not in an awe-inspiring manner, but meek, gentle, gracious and loving, making all His goodness to extend toward us (Psa. 16:2-3). He manifested the Father and all His loving heart, while still upholding holiness and every divine attribute of our God. It was God come down, God drawn near unto sinners and publicans, unto a woman at Sychar's well, one whose ill fame was widely known, yet loving and saving her and filling her with His praises.

Such is the glory of God toward us in this day of grace! Who can fathom the wheels of His grace? The wheels are within wheels! There is a glory to that grace: "The praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace" (Eph. 1:6-7). Praise His name!

Questions and Answers

QUESTION: What about body, soul and spirit? Please distinguish.

ANSWER: The divine order in Scripture is "spirit and soul and body" (1 Thess. 5:23). These comprise man's whole being. Soul is used often for man as a whole, both in the Old Testament and the New. "The sons of Joseph, which were born him in Egypt, were two souls: all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, were threescore and ten" (Gen. 46:27). In the ship with Paul there were "two hundred threescore and sixteen souls" (Acts 27:37).

Man's soul and spirit are from God's in-breathing, as distinct from the body which He formed from the dust of the ground, and he is therefore immortal—he exists forever. "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Gen. 2:7). We never read of a mortal soul, but we do of a "mortal body." Scripture clearly distinguishes between soul and spirit; the Word, as the sharp sword of the Spirit, only can separate them. "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. 4:12).

Spirit and soul in man are alike undying. "The spirit shall return unto God who gave it," and "fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul." Beasts have life, or souls of an inferior order but they are part of their organization. (See Genesis 1:30, margin, and chapter 7:22.)

The soul is generally spoken of as the seat of the affections, but this faculty is possessed by brutes in measure, in an inferior character. "The spirit," as another has said, "is that which is most excellent in our moral being, that by which we are placed in relationship with God, and distinguished from the brutes."

"What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?" (1 Cor. 2:11).
"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (Rom. 8:16).

Bible Challenger-08-August Answers V.10

1. Afraid Esther 7:6
2. Desire Job 31:35
3. Vigilant 1 Peter 5:8
4. Enemy Psa. 74:10
5. Rest 1 Kings 5:4
6. Sword Josh. 5:13
7. Angel of the Lord Num. 22:22
8. Rejoiced Luke 13:17
9. Younger women 1 Tim. 5:14

"Agree with thine ADVERSARY quickly, while thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the ADVERSARY deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison" (Matt. 5:25).

Proverbs

Simon Patrick on the Proverbs

1683

Chapter 8:10-19

10. "Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold." They will not think me unreasonable, when I commend the very rebukes which I give them (though administered by some sharp affliction), and set such a high price upon them, as to advise everyone to accept them rather than silver; and to value the knowledge of God, and of themselves and of all things else (which these corrections teach them) above the choicest gold.

11. "For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it." For true wisdom is such an inestimable jewel, that the most precious pearls are trash to it: nor can our boundless fancies present anything to our wishes, that is worthy to come in competition with it.

12. "I wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions." For what is there comparable to a prudent mind, which is not crafty to deceive, but so cautious as not to be deceived? And this I may boast is solely in my power to endow men with all; who ever give the safest, nay infallible advice, and direct men to discreet resolutions in the most difficult cases, than the subtlest head in the world, that consults not with me, can invent for his clients.

13. The fear of the Lord is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate." And rules are as short as they are sure: for I teach men in the first place religiously to worship and stand in awe of the Divine Majesty: I further instruct them, if it do not make them abominate all manner of evil, though but in design: more particularly, I hate that vain opinion men have of their own abilities to compass their designs, which makes them forget God, and despise the wholesome advice of honest men; as I likewise do the use of all unlawful means, though the end be good; especially lying, calumny, detraction, breach of faith, which everyone must renounce who will have my friendship.

14. "Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom: I am understanding; I have strength." Who am the ablest counselor in all deliberations; and give men the most certain, solid and never failing advice, for the effecting their desires, or being contented with disappointments: for I comprehend whatsoever is fit to be done or omitted in all undertakings; and inspire men also with courage to persist in good resolutions, which are neither rashly taken nor wrongfully pursued.

15. "By me kings reign, and princes decree justice." Kings themselves sit not fast on their thrones, though placed there by God Himself, unless they be ruled by me: the wisest senators cannot support themselves and them, but by persuading them to enact and execute just and merciful laws, for the government of their people.

16. "By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of The earth." In vain do their great captains, or other ministers endeavor to defend them, but under the conduct and protection of my virtuous discipline: nobles, and all the judges of the land lose their authority, if they do not faithfully observe the rules that I prescribe them.

17. "I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me." Which are no less amiable than they are easily known; there needing no more to come acquainted with me, but only to love me; for they that love me are beloved of me; and as they will not fail to seek what they love, so they shall certainly find what they studiously seek.

18. "Riches and honor are with me; yea, durable riches and righteousness." And together with me, they shall find such riches and honor, as shall add to the greatness, and splendor, and stability of their kingdoms and dignities: for not merely riches and honor are in my donation, but durable possessions; which will last the longer, because they are not gotten either by oppression, or by niggardice [stinginess]: for I teach men both to do justly and to love mercy also.

19. "My fruit is better than gold, yea, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver." Whereby I bring them in greater treasures than gold, though never so massy [massive], never so refined; a revenue of higher value, than the purest and choicest silver in the world.

May you be in yourself so broken down that you must find

One who never break down.

God's Promises Are Kept

I WILL— (Ex. 6:6-8)|I HAVE—|

—bring you out of Egypt (v. 6).

—rid you of their bondage (v. 6).

—redeem you (v. 6).

—take you to Me (v. 7).

—be to you a God (v. 7).

—bring you in unto the land (v. 8).

—give it to you for a heritage (v. 8).

|—brought you out of Egypt (Josh. 24:6).

—brought thee out of the house of bondage (Ex. 20:2).

—redeemed you (Ex. 15:13).

—brought you unto My self (Ex. 19:4).

—"the Lord your God" (Ex. 16:12).

—given you a land (Josh. 24:13),

—which Israel inherited in the land of Canaan (Josh. 14:1).|

"Not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed" (Josh. 23:14).

"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises" (2 Pet. 1:4).

"Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it" (1 Thess. 5:24).

"If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land" (Isa. 1:19).

N. Berry

Editorial: Learning From the Birds

Israel at present has one problem that is not as prominent as many others. This problem is not exclusive to Israel. It is encountered wherever airplanes fly. Because of Israel's peculiar central position, at the heart of three continents, the migratory paths of more birds pass over Israel than over any other country on earth.

An Israeli pilot today faces greater danger of being hit by a migrating pelican than he does from the fire of man-made guns. The estimate of planes lost to birds in recent years is greater than the losses from the combined forces of their Arab neighbors.

In the autumn months the migration increases as the birds head for a warmer climate. Each spring and fall about a half-billion birds fly that route. In their research, men have learned that birds follow a very specific flight plan, and at particular altitudes. Men cannot ban the bird flights, so they try to avoid or ban their own planes from these migratory paths at certain times.

The Lord sought to reach Job's heart by asking questions. In Job 39:26 it says, "both the hawk fly by thy wisdom, and stretch her wings toward the south?" When we consider the yearly migration of such a vast number of birds, we are certainly amazed. It includes hummingbirds and also very large eagles. Why do they go south for winter and come north for summer? How do they know when to go and when to return? How do these birds all find their way and accurately reach their destination and at the same time from year to year?

The Lord asks in Job 38:36, "Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts?" Does such a thing apply to the tiny hummingbird? Surely it does apply and explains what men cannot. As to the question, "How do birds find their way?" one writer admits that no one can really answer this puzzling question.

How very wonderful to know the Creator who has put wisdom in the inward parts. To know the Creator and to know Him as redeemer is greater than to know all of His creation. If you and I better understand the power and goodness of our Savior God, we can gladly do what Peter exhorts in 1 Peter 4:19, "Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator."

Another thing we can learn from birds is taught in Psalm 84:3. "Yea, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, even Thine altars, O Lord of hosts, my King, and my God." There we see that the least valuable bird, the sparrow, and the most restless bird, the swallow, find a home and a place for their young at the place of worship of the Lord of hosts. Today we have two refuges for ourselves and our children. They are the Christian home and the assembly where the Lord has placed His name. Ed.

"COME HITHER, I WILL SHOW THEE"

W Potter

"Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife" (Rev. 21:9). At once the question arises, Who is this bride, the Lamb's wife? In Revelation 22:17 two parties are mentioned—"the Spirit and the bride."

No doubt both Abraham's servant and Rebecca looked forward to the end of the journey they took together. The servant is a foreshadowing of the Holy Spirit who has taken the place of Servant for the Son of Man's glory. "He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak." He has the interest of the church at heart, for it is Christ's interest and glory. He was sent from heaven to gather this bride—a company of people—and espouse them to Christ.

Look at the end of Ephesians 5. He has been speaking of the relationship of husband and wife, and says: "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church." In the eternal purposes of God, Christ and the church were one from the first. And when He began to reveal that mind, the first type was of Christ and the church: Adam and Eve and the way they were formed.

"Come Hither"

In the Revelation, ministry has to do largely with the angels, because all through the book there is a certain atmosphere of reserve and not one of intimacy. For example, "He sent and signified it by His angel unto His servant John." The blessed Lord was the One who received the revelation from God. In Revelation 21:9 it says, "And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife." And at once he carries him away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, for the calling of the church is far above the earth; it is heavenly. How well the bride has answered to her heavenly calling is another thing. Her response to her calling has been a wretched, heartbreaking failure. Her place and her responsibility in the earth were to represent the Lord as the heavenly bridegroom. She was to go forth to meet the bridegroom (Matt. 25). Her failure has been a complete one. It could not be more wretched or woeful.

In Revelation 17:1 we read, "Come hither; I will show unto thee," not the great whore, but "the judgment of the great whore." This is the professing church in her place of responsibility on earth to bear divine light—to represent Christ. The church has sunk down to the level of the world. So it says, "I will show thee the judgment of the great whore."

Every time we get Babylon spoken of in Revelation (eleven times), it is always great. If faithful, the church never could have been great in the earth. "If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you." Her failure has been outright and complete. The great whore sits upon the waters and rules the masses of the people. Christianity has become popular in the earth, but popular

Christianity is a fallen Christianity. It is an unclean thing—a mixture of what is divine with what is earthly.

"So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness" (Rev. 17:3). The first thing we notice is the "wilderness" in contrast to the "great and high mountain." The truth of Christ and the church, the Lamb and His bride, is only learned as one is, in spirit, outside.

"And he carried me away in the Spirit, and set me on a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city" (Rev. 21:10 JND). The omission of "great" city there is important. Every time Babylon is spoken of (or alluded to), it is always "great," but the first characteristic given of the bride, the Lamb's wife, is not her greatness, but her holiness.

"And showed me the holy city"—I think that is very precious. Holiness is what the new nature longs for, whether individually or collectively. Holiness is the atmosphere in which the divine nature feels at home and where it breathes freely. When in another atmosphere, it does not breathe freely, for that atmosphere is suffocating to the new nature.

"The holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of the heaven from God" (Rev. 21:10 JND). "From God" is a "Come Hither" the source; the city is of God and from God. "Out of the heaven" is the character; the city is divine and heavenly. Look at 2 Corinthians 5:1: "A building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." In this verse we get the origin or the source of these glorified bodies. God is the source, and they are heavenly in their nature.

Look at 1 Corinthians 15:47: "The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven." It is the origin of the two men—the one of the earth and the other from heaven. Then in verses 48-49, "As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." Finally, He tells us how we are going to get the heavenly image, both those who have fallen asleep, and those who have not. Verses 51-52 declare, "Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump." That is how we get conformity to this second Man.

Adam was not made for heaven, nor heaven for man. God prepared the earth for man and put him in it; there everything answered to his nature. If He had taken him to heaven, it would not have answered to his nature, for he was not made for heaven. He lost his earthly inheritance, but now he gets a better one, because redemption gets it to him. Redemption does not simply restore a man when he is lost, but it brings him into an infinitely fuller blessing, as infinitely better as the heavens are higher than the earth.

In Revelation 21:1-8 we get eternity. "And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down [or descending] from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." It is New Jerusalem, not the old one. Here it is not Jerusalem on earth restored, but we see what a wonderful thing Jerusalem on the earth will be.

The marriage has taken place more than a thousand years before, but the bridal beauty is just as fresh. "And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them." The fact is that God did pitch His dwelling place among men, and it is as if heaven itself is surprised: "Behold," it says. God's eternal dwelling place will be among men,

for the Lamb of God takes away the sin of the world.

The bride, the Lamb's wife, brings before us a relationship, which has affections proper to it. They "went forth to meet the bridegroom." "Prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." What is the characteristic of bridal affections? Oh, they are the freshest and sweetest! In the human relationship, perhaps they do not last a long time, but in the heavenly one, it is forever. I do not think that they are the deepest, but they are the freshest.

The bride, the Lamb's wife, is that company of saints that the Spirit of God has been gathering together since He came from heaven at Pentecost, uniting in one body and to Christ in glory. It is not individual; no one saint is the bride. There is no saint on earth that is not of the bride, the Lamb's wife. ("Saint" is an individual relationship, just like "father" and "children" are.)

We have an illustration of bridal beauty in Psalm 45. It is the earthly Jerusalem, typical (as far as it goes) of the heavenly. The psalm refers to Jerusalem and the cities of Judah. Verse 6 applies to the Lord Jesus as we have Him presented in Hebrews 1:8.

It is important to see that the Lord will have two brides: the earthly or the Jewish one, and the heavenly one. He will enter into relationship with the heavenly one before He does so with the earthly one and in another way. Before He establishes Himself with Israel in the marriage relationship, He has to clear the way in judgment—"Gird Thy sword upon Thy thigh, O most Mighty, with Thy glory and Thy majesty. And in Thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness and righteousness; and Thy right hand shall teach Thee terrible things" (Psa. 45:3-4).

After the judgments Jerusalem becomes the center of a system related to Him as His bride. That is easily seen, as in John 3:26, "And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, He that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to Him." They were jealous of their master's reputation. John had a wonderful place with the people. Thousands had flocked to him for baptism. Now he is losing his place.

"John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven. Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before Him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease." Nothing had been made known about Christ and the church. It was hid in God. Now Israel has been divorced for her unfaithfulness; that is, for becoming idolatrous. The Lord will take her up again.

The heavenly and the earthly Jerusalem's will be visibly connected. Heaven and earth in that day will not be absolutely separated, but visibly or physically connected. We see this in Revelation 21:24, "And the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it." There will be a canopy of glory, but they will not be able to see what is inside. On the mount of transfiguration the disciples could see those two men go into the cloud, but they could not see what was in it. They could see the cloud and know they were there, and they knew the Father's voice came out of it. That is the foreshadowing of the two Jerusalem's. What a vast change from what it is now. An awful series of judgments prepares the way, and righteousness will do what grace has not done.

The holy city, descending from God out of heaven, symbolizes a divine and heavenly origin. The bride, the Lamb's wife, is simply a company of redeemed people, united to the Lord in that character of relationship of a man and his wife. The church is not married now. Israel was married; that is why she is called an adulteress. She is put away. The church is only espoused.

In Revelation 17:2 we get, "Drunk with the wine of her fornication." It is the stupefying effect of the union of the church and the world. An intoxicated person cannot see anything plainly. When we get intoxicated with the spirit of this world, we cannot see things clearly at all. Jehovah divorces Israel, but will marry her again. He will never divorce the church. When He deals with the church as His witness, He will give up the false forever. Before judgment He will take the true out of the mass of profession.

The Jews will remain on this earth. I believe the distinction between the Jew and the Gentile will cease in eternity, for in the opening of Revelation 21, we read, "The tabernacle of God is with men." During the millennium they will be in their relationship, but I do not find anything in Scripture that indicates that the Jew goes on to eternity as a Jew. Plainly, the new heavens and new earth in Isaiah 65 do not go on into eternity; they are dispensational. Read verses 17-25. It is clear they do not go beyond time, and the "new" there is a moral new—no more sighing or crying or anything of that sort.

In Isaiah 66:22 it says, "For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before Me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain." That would seem to settle it. Then go on to verse 23, "And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before Me, saith the Lord. And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against Me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh."

So, you see, it is the forever of time, and we find in Scripture more frequently the forever of time than the forever of eternity, but the context has to decide for us. In the end, the tabernacle of God is with men, and dispensational things are gone forever.

I have thought of it in this way. First, there was one people who were all of one speech. They sought independence of God, and went to work to build a tower to reach up to heaven so that they would not be scattered. But God came down and confounded their language. Later He brought about another people by calling out a new flock with Abraham as their leader. At that point you have two peoples on the earth: the Jew and the Gentile. The earth went on that way for about two thousand years. Then Christ came, and a third people, the church of God, now exists. These three peoples have gone on for about two thousand years. Soon He will take the church where she belongs—to heaven. Then He will have the Jew and the Gentile on the earth again, and they will go on to the end of the millennium. In the eternity which follows, we get back to one people again.

God will tabernacle with men for eternity in the new heavens and new earth. During the millennium He will tabernacle immediately over them, but not among them. He will have His temple, and that will be dispensational. There will be nations and the death of the sinner, because there will be disobedience still. From Sabbath to Sabbath they will come up, and they will go and look upon the carcasses of those who have transgressed, and it will be a warning to them. The millennium will be

a wondrous time, but not perfection, not such as that in which God can find full delight.

If you will read Zephaniah 3:14 to the end, you will find a picture of Jerusalem of the Jews in a day to come. It is dispensational and not perfection.

The bride and Israel will remain two separate people. I do not say that Israel goes beyond the thousand years or that the dispensation continues to eternity. We do not get anything as to Israel as far as I know that is properly eternal. There will always be an earthly and a heavenly people.

In Revelation 5:9 it is the heavenly redeemed, and they are the company that sing—"Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation."

Then, there is the outer circle—the angels—and they say, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing."

Next, we have: "And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever." The whole creation (heaven and earth) is brought into blessing.

I would like to say a word about Revelation 7. It gives us details about the heavenly and earthly peoples of the millennial day. It shows the complete number of all the tribes of the children of Israel and an innumerable company of the Gentiles, the brethren and the sheep of Matthew 25. We see them established in blessing in Revelation 7, which is a parenthesis coming in between two sets of judgments.

Notice verses 10-13: "And [a great multitude] cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God forever and ever. Amen. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?" In these verses he calls attention to something by asking a question.

"And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple: and He that sitteth on the throne," that is, He shall spread His habitation over them, or tabernacle over them. We get that in 4. "Come Hither" Isaiah 4 and other scriptures. It is that heavenly canopy over Jerusalem, that heavenly seat of authority, and below it the earthly Jerusalem.

In verse 16 we read, "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat," that is, they will never endure persecution again, nor shall the sun (supreme power) become oppressive again. Never again shall they know any persecution. "For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." This scene is the millennium; it is dispensational, not eternal.

In the transfiguration on the mount, the Lord gives us a picture of the millennium. The heavenly and earthly saints will be as separated as they were on the mount. In those three disciples we have the earthly saints who never pass through death. Then we have the glorified Lord and the two men glorified and appearing in glory talking with Him. We even get the subject of their conversation.

The two men are typical in this way. Moses is typical of the glorified saints who have passed through death, while Elijah represents the saints who have never passed through death. Both are in the same glory, just as it will be when the Lord comes and the living and the dead are brought together in the same glory. They are in the same state of immortality. The one have their bodies raised from corruption, and the other are changed so that they are never subject to death.

Bible Challenger-10-October V.10

The first letter of each of the following responses (Bible quotations with one or more words to complete) will form a word defining one of the attributes of a loving God who can grant deliverance because of something found. [1] The number in brackets indicates the number of words in each answer.

1. "And He said, I will make all My_____ pass before thee." [1]
2. "He hath made His wonderful works to be_____." " [1]
3. "The Lord is... slow to_____, and plenteous in mercy." [1]
4. "And he said, While the_____ was yet alive, I fasted and wept." [1]
5. "Hate the evil, and love the good, and establish judgment_____ ." [3]
6. "_____, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country?" [2]
7. "The Lord make His face shine _____ ." [2]
8. "The lips of a Fool will_____ up himself." [1]

Answers to these questions will be found in the next issue of Christian Treasury.

R. Erisman

Bible Challenger-09-September Answers V.10

1. Own blood Heb. 9:12
2. Believe on Him 1 Tim. 1:16
3. Through faith Heb. 11:33
4. Angels Heb. 1:4
5. Injurious 1 Tim. 1:13
6. Not a people 1 Peter 2:10
7. Excellent Heb. 11:4
8. Day Acts 26:22

"In whom also we have OBTAINED an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will" (Eph. 1:1 1).

Unbelieving Fears

When there remains in the heart any groan which is not uttered to God as to a God of grace, any distrust of Him, it is the flesh and work of the enemy. We may be cast down at times (although scarcely ever without some want of faith) and yet everything goes on well if we bring it all to God.

Satan gets entrance for his full power in the soul the moment there is a shade of distrust in God

New Creation

The death of the Lord Jesus was at the end of the old creation. In resurrection we see Him as the beginning or foundation of the new. The old was not allowed to pass till it had been fully vindicated, as it was in the Person, character, ways and life of the Lord. He stood as the immaculate and perfect sample of it, in the midst of all the ruin in which it was involved. But having been this and done this, He died as under the doom of the old creation—"the just for the unjust." And in Himself, as risen from the dead, He laid the foundation of the new creation.

Let me, however, as I pass, suggest this. His resurrection stands in four relationships: to God, to the world, to sinners and to believers.

1. In relation to God, it is the display of His glory and of His purposes. It is His victory.
2. In relation to the world, it is its judgment. It tells them there is a question between God and them about Jesus—that they cast out and Crucified the One whom God has raised and glorified. Judgment awaits the world because of this, as Peter preaches in Acts 10 and Paul in Acts 17,
3. In relation to sinners, it tells them of redemption—that the sacrifice which puts away sin has been accepted at that very throne which holds the balances that try the claims of God. It weighs the utmost of His demands in righteousness upon sinners.
4. In relation to believers, it pledges, as firstfruits, their own harvest—their resurrection in glorified bodies.

It is one thing, but it has these various aspects, and stands in these different relations. The angel that witnessed it in Matthew 28 accordingly changes his aspect, when turning from the keepers of the stone to the poor women. In the sight of the keepers he had descended in terror, an earthquake attending him, and the lightning expressing him. His appearing put the sentence of death into them: for they represented the world who had crucified the Lord of glory. But on turning to the women, this same angel is all gentleness. His terror does not make them afraid. The light is one to guide and gladden, not to alarm. It is the resurrection in the sight of poor, anxious sinners, as the other was the resurrection in the sight of the world.

This twofold aspect of the resurrection may be seen again in the appearing of Christ Himself to Saul of Tarsus. The risen, glorified Lord, I may say, descended as in lightning and earthquake on the road which lay between Jerusalem and Damascus. Saul was then representative of the world's enmity—as the keepers of the sealed stone had been—and the glory of the risen Jesus throws him to the earth and lays the sentence of death in him as it had in them. But quickly it becomes a guiding, gladdening light. For it tells him of his own hopes and services and securities under this same risen Jesus (Acts 9:22, 26).

The resurrection is the laying of the foundation of the new creation, as we have already said, and such foundations are immovable as is all that rests on them. It is the Son of God in victory. The old creation rested on the tested Adam, and falling in the temptation in his encounter with Satan, the

creation fell and became a mighty ruin. But the Son of God has come, the Repairer of the breach, and has stood where Adam fell, has conquered where Adam was defeated, has broken the gates of hell. In Himself and in His victory He has laid the foundation of an unassailable creation. This new, redeemed creation is to get its beauty as well as its strength from Him.

J. G. Bellett

Bits and Pieces

Christ is the power and wisdom of God (1 Cor. 1:24). He that speaks truth shames the devil. People of prayer are people of power. Never be ashamed to entrust the unknown future to a known God.

Look back and praise Him.

Look ahead and trust Him.

Look around and serve Him.

Look up and expect Him.

"Looking unto Jesus" (Hebrews 12:2).

Questions and Answers

QUESTION: What is conscience?

ANSWER: We understand "conscience" to be the inward moral sense of good and evil. "To know good and evil" is God's way of describing the acquisition of conscience when man fell (Gen. 3:22). Man naturally, therefore, has a conscience. When merely knowing that what he has done is wrong, he has a defiled conscience (Titus 1:15). When he learns that God judges it to be evil, he has an evil conscience.

When, however, through believing God's testimony concerning the blood of His Son, he is assured by God's Word that he has remission of sins, he has a purged conscience—"How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience" (Heb. 9:14). After this, in walking in obedience to the Word of God, he has a good conscience, he has the intuitive perception that he is doing God's will and has the testimony that he pleases God. Happy are those who exercise themselves in keeping a conscience void of offense both toward God and toward men (Acts 24:16).

With regard to "thoughts," the Christian needs both watchfulness and decision lest the dreadful sin of unbelief be allowed or Satan's fiery darts admitted. The spiritual Christian disallows evil thoughts, judges them in the presence of God, and thus great evils are often nipped in the bud. One of faith's activities is "casting down imaginations[reasonings], and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:5).

Looking Above Our Path

Before we are consciously in the glory, we are never on a level with the position we hold here below, while we have only this position to sustain us. We must look above our path to be able to walk in it. A Jew, who had the secret of the Lord, and who waited for the Messiah, was pious and faithful according to the law. A Jew, who had only the law, assuredly did not keep it. A Christian, who has heaven before him, and a Savior in glory, as the object of his affection, will walk well upon earth; he who has only the earthly path for his rule will fail in the intelligence and motives needed to walk in it; he will become a prey to worldliness, and his Christian walk in the world will be more or less on a level with the world in which he walks. The eyes upward on Jesus will keep the heart and the steps in a path conformable to Jesus, and which, consequently, will glorify Him and make Him known in the world. Seeing what we are, we must have a motive about our path to be able to walk in it. This does not prevent our needing also, for our path, the fear of the Lord, to pass the time of our sojourning here in fear, knowing that we are redeemed with the precious blood of Christ.

Proverbs

Simon Patrick on the Proverbs 1683

Chapter 8:20-36

20. "I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment.' For! set their minds and hearts aright; and in rich them with excellent thoughts; which teach them how to use those earthly goods, and govern themselves with such exactness in all their private transactions or public administrations; as never to swerve from the steady rules of justice and equity

21. "That I may cause those that love me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures." In order to their happy settlement in a state of eternal peace and substantial satisfaction; which I confer on all those that sincerely love me and adhere unto me: whose souls I will fill as full with abundance of inestimable riches, as their treasures are with silver, and gold, and all other stores.

22. "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old." For the Lord Himself hath no greater riches than me, who lead men to a participation of Him and communion with Him with whom I was ever present (as well as always most dear unto Him) not only when He began to create this world; but before He made any of His works: when as yet there was nothing but Himself.

23. "I was set up from everlasting, front the beginning, or ever the earth was." My sovereignty and dominion is from everlasting; and hath no superior to it: all antiquity comes infinitely short of mine; who was before the earth itself.

24. "When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water." When as yet there were no depths I, Wisdom, was in God long before the sources and springs: whose excellent waters, which are of greater value than any other, owe their rise unto me,

the unexhausted fountain of all things.

25. "Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth." Who had a being before the mountains, from whence those waters run, were settled; or there was so much as a hillock to be seen in the earth.

26. "While as yet He had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world." For as yet the Lord had not made the earth itself, much less adorned it, and put it into this form of lofty mountains and spacious plains: no, there was not so much as the first atom of this globe whereon you tread.

27. "When He prepared the heavens, I was there: when He set a compass upon the face of the depth." But why do I speak of the earth alone? I was present when He disposed the heavens into this wonderful) order, wherein we behold them; as well as when He moved upon that confused abyss which they enclosed, and fashioned the earth into a regular shape.

28. "When He established the clouds above: when He strengthened the fountains of the deep." When He made the warty clouds also, with admirable wisdom, so firm in the air, that they shall not fall down all together, but by drops upon the earth: and provided strong cisterns for the waters pent up there; from whence they gush out forcibly, and yet wear not away the passages He hath opened for them.

29. "When He gave to the sea His decree, that the waters should not pass His commandment: when He appointed the foundations of the earth." When He prescribed also to the sea its limits, that the waters thereof (though they swell and toss up and down) shall not pass over the shores wherein He hath confined them: and when He settled the earth so steadfastly, like a building upon sure foundations, that it remains unmovable in the place He appointed for it.

30. "Then I was by Him, as one brought up with Him: and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him." Then was I with Him, nay, very near unto Him; contriving all these things: nor had He any higher pleasure than me, who day by day, during the creation of the world, produced some lovely work or other; in which He rejoiced, to see how good and agreeable they were.

31. "Rejoicing in the habitable part of His earth; and my delights were with the sons of men." More particularly, I displayed my skill in the vast variety of creatures, wherewith I have beautified this earth, wherein you dwell; which afford a most delightful! spectacle unto me, and unto all wise observers: who may see, that, above the rest, my principal thoughts were fixed upon the children of men in whom I delighted exceedingly (as the Lord doth in me), beholding them made in the image of God, and after His likeness, capable to converse with me.

32. "Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways." Who may therefore justly expect (all these things considered) that you should cheerfully embrace my repeated counsels; and, as dutiful children, take the greatest pleasure in being obedient to them: for blessed, you cannot but see, blessed beyond all expression, are they who observe (as all other creatures do) the laws that I have prescribed them.

33. "Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not." Harken, I beseech you, and yield to the voice of your own reason, and of God's Holy Word and Spirit: which checks the irregular motions which you find at any time in you: and be so wise and considerate, as not to slight and reject it.

34. "Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors." But rather invite such instructions, by giving them thankful entertainment, and going thither where you may meet with them: for happy, more happy than can be expressed, is that man who not only hearkens obediently when he is told his duty, but makes it his business to be rightly informed; neglecting no opportunity, but constantly and diligently attending there, where he may be taught how he ought to live; most earnestly desiring to become my disciple, and to be governed by me.

35. "For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favor of the Lord." In which, whatsoever pains he bestows, he shall not lose his labor: for as he shall not fail to find what he seeks, so he shall find with all, that I will make his life a perpetual pleasure to him; for I have demonstrated that he must needs be beloved of the Lord, to whom I am most nearly allied, and from Him shall obtain his heart's desire.

36. "But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they flint hale tote love death." From whence it is manifest, that he who violates my laws, doth the greatest injury unto his own soul: and whosoever they be that hate to be reprov'd for it, and can neither endure to be told of their faults, nor receive any good advice, they love to be miserable, and willfully bring upon themselves utter destruction.

Following Christ

Can we honestly say, with glory before us, with Christ before us: "This one thing I do"? Which way does your eye turn? Which way are you going? God has only one way—Christ.

The love of Christ constrains us in the cross to give ourselves wholly up to Him who has so loved us, given Himself wholly up for us. It makes us of little esteem to ourselves in the presence of such love. We see we are not our own, but bought with a price.

Paul saw Christ on the way to Damascus, and he gives up his importance, his Phariseism, his teaching, his everything else, and he counts all but loss that he may win Christ. People talk of sacrifices; but there is no great sacrifice in giving up dung. If the eye were so fixed on Christ that these things got that character, it would not be a trouble to give them up. The thing gets its character from what the heart is set on.

Settled Peace

A dead and risen Christ is the groundwork of salvation. "Who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification" (Rom. 4:25). To see Jesus by the eye of faith nailed to the cross and sealed on the throne must give solid peace to the conscience and perfect liberty to the heart. We can look into the tomb and see it empty; we can look up to the throne and see it occupied and go on our way rejoicing. The Lord Jesus settled everything on the cross on behalf of His people, and the proof of this settlement is that He is now at the right hand of God. A risen Christ is the eternal proof of an accomplished redemption, and if redemption is an accomplished fact, the believer's peace is a settled reality.

We did not make peace and never could make it; indeed, any effort on our part could only tend more fully to manifest us as peace-breakers. But Christ, having made peace by the blood of His cross, has taken His seat on high, triumphant over every enemy. By Him, God preached peace. The word of the gospel conveys this peace, and the soul that believes the gospel has peace—settled peace before God—for Christ is his peace. (See Acts 10:36; Rom. 5:1; Eph. 2:14; Col. 1:20) In this way God has not only satisfied His own claims, but in so doing He has found a divinely righteous way through which His boundless affections may flow down to the guiltiest of Adam's race.

C. H. Mackintosh

Editorial: Our Only Object?

Love directs itself to its object. What then is our object as the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus? For Christians today, many, yes, very many objects appear before our eyes daily. From some we are instructed, "Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken Thou me in Thy way" (Psa. 119:37). Do we know from which ones to turn away, and do we know what object can fill and satisfy our hearts? "Mine eye affecteth mine heart" (Lam. 3:51).

An excellent verse for us is found in 2 Thessalonians 3:5. It says, "The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ."

In love God sent His Son down and He finished redemption's work. Then, the disciples saw Jesus ascend, and they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up. Now, we are told to seek those things which are above, where Christ sits on the right hand of God. "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth" (Col. 3:2).

The Lord led His disciples out as far as Bethany and they saw Him ascending to where He now is—in the presence of the Father. The object of their joy was in heaven. What next? They returned to Jerusalem with great joy. What was the secret of their joy? Was it anything on earth? No! and we also shall not find anything on this earth to fill and satisfy our hearts.

What shall we say about the patient waiting for Christ? In Luke we find a patient few who were looking for the coming of Christ when He came the first time. The Messiah was clearly promised in the Old Testament, and where He would be born was foretold as well. Also it says that He should be born to a virgin.

Zacharias and Elisabeth, Joseph and Mary, Simeon and Anna were among those who were waiting and living in expectation of Christ's coming. They were not disappointed. Imagine the joy in Simeon's heart as he said, "Mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people." Now notice what is said about the prophetess Anna: "She coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of Him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem."

Doubtless, some living today fit into the Lord's teaching when He said, "I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:27).

At this late date, believers have that very bright hope of being among those "which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord" (1 Thess. 4:15).

Perhaps this verse of poetry will help us to wait patiently for Him.

We wait for Thee—Thou wilt arise

Whilst hope her watch is keeping.

Forgotten then, in glad surprise,
Shall be our years of weeping.
Our hearts heat high, the dawn is nigh.
That ends our pilgrim story
In Thine eternal glory!
Ed.

Our Standing

It is blessed to know that, having believed the gospel of our salvation, our sins were not only put away, but "sin in the flesh" was condemned, or fudged, in the death of Christ (Romans 8:3), so the believer is in a new standing before God. He is no longer looked upon as in Adam, or as having any connection with Adam, but he is "in Christ" before God, in new creation where "all things are become new. And all things are of God" (2 Cor. 5:17-18). In salvation there is not only forgiveness, but deliverance from our whole state in Adam.

Thyself Our Treasure

The first chapter of Acts presents the Lord 's departure from this earth. "He was taken up" into heaven. Undesirable as this seemed to His disciples, they were made quite equal to the occasion, for when the time came, it is said that they "returned to Jerusalem with great joy" (Luke 24:52).

Since redemption's work is accomplished and Jesus glorified, the personal presence of the Holy Spirit on earth is the consequence. He is the strength and joy of our hearts during the absence of the Lord Jesus Christ. The disciples seem to have had a foretaste of this joy on the occasion referred to above.

Nevertheless, the Lord's absence still leaves a blank in the hearts of His own which can never be filled till they see Him. Therefore, the disciples hail with joy the words of the two heavenly witnesses who assured these "men of Galilee" as they looked up into heaven that this same Jesus who had been taken up from them into heaven should so come in like manner as they had seen Him go into heaven (Acts 1:11).

And when the Treasure was taken to heaven, the hearts of them that were set upon it were taken there too, "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matt. 6:21).

Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, was greatly attached to David. His heart had been won by acts of kindness, and when the king became an exile, Mephibosheth became a mourner. He refused to make himself at home where the king was not only without a throne, but without honor and without a resting place. It is true that Mephibosheth must have been more an object of pity than of envy, if we judge by appearance from the description given of him on the king's return in 2 Samuel 19:24. But God looks on the heart, and here was one whose joys were so wrapped up in the person of David that he found no rest apart from him. He knew nothing but joy when the king returned to Jerusalem in peace. Christian Truth

'Let us run with patience

the race that is set before us,

looking unto Jesus

the author and finisher of

our faith."

Hebrews 12:1.2

Loving His Appearing

H. H. Snell

"Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing (2 Tim. 4:8).

Who are those who love His appearing? Such will not only have "a crown of life," but "a crown of righteousness." Precious thought! What then are we to understand by loving His appearing? Observe, it is not here His coming for us, but His revelation from heaven, His appearing in flaming fire and His saints with Him. It gives us joy to know that now in heaven He is not only crowned with glory and honor, but angels, authorities and powers are made subject unto Him.

On earth, however, He is still, with very many, the rejected Stone, notwithstanding God's proclamation by His servants of forgiveness of sins, the gift of eternal life and glory to everyone that bows to Him as his Savior and Lord. Every loyal heart must deeply feel the appalling indifference there is on almost every hand to the Lord Jesus Christ and to His present interests. But we remember the solemn testimony of Scripture that this is the prelude to the utter rejection by Him of the professing church as His corporate witness on earth after He has removed His loved and loving saints to meet Him in the air and before His appearing with them to judge the world. How quickly these anticipations may become matters of fact!

"The stone which the builders rejected" will soon come forth in power. The "stone...cut out without hands" must ere long fall upon the nations, and "grind [them) to powder." Alas! how few seem to think of this, and how many are trying to satisfy themselves with a kind of Christianity without Christ which they call religion! At this moment many precious souls are being deceived by reasoning infidelity. They think themselves competent to judge the things of God by their natural powers and thus set aside the divine authority of His Word, instead of allowing it to judge them. On the other hand, multitudes are being ensnared by the infidelity of ritualism, which refuses to accept the "once for all" finished work of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We may be assured that the only deliverance from these fatal deceptions is resting on Christ and finding peace and joy in what He has done and what He is. Blessed be His name, with arms opened wide and a heart full of tenderest love He said, "Come unto Me... and I will give you rest." What a boon is rest! especially rest of conscience as to our eternal safety. This no one but He can give. No one else ever proposed it. Those only have it who have it from Him. Precious indeed are His words, "I will give you rest." Yes, He gives it.

Our Lord spoke of another rest—rest of heart which those would "find" who pursued a certain course. It is, therefore, a conditional rest—rest connected with being heartily and practically yoked with Him and learning of Him. The taking of His yoke is a distinct work and experience in the soul. Oh, those sweet words, "Take My yoke," "Learn of Me," "Find rest unto your souls." His is the only easy yoke and the only burden that is really light. You cannot describe it, but the heart knows it. Rest of conscience He gives. Rest of heart the believer finds if abiding in Him, walking with Him and learning of Him who when walking down here as a man had perfect rest in His Father's will, even when rejected by those cities wherein most of His deeds of power were performed. Sweet tenderness! This is Christianity, and those who know it experimentally doubtless look forward to another rest—endless, eternal rest, for "there remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God" (Heb. 4:9).

In the days of the apostles, believers knew they were called not only to believe, but also to suffer for His sake, and if not always suffering for Him, they were suffering with Him. They knew also the preciousness of Christ as the satisfying and joyful object of their hearts. It was truly said of some, "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Peter 1:8). (See also Rom. 8:17; Phil. 1:29.) Such was the freshness and fervency of believers in the early days of Christianity. Their hearts were taken up with a Person who loved them, died for them and redeemed them from all iniquity. Also He assured them that an incorruptible inheritance was "reserved in heaven" for them, and that they were "kept by the power of God through faith" for it, until His revelation from heaven with them. What marvelous words of comfort!

This surely is the time of our Lord's rejection. The world will not have Him, and Christendom for the most part, as was the case at Laodicea, has I-Fun outside the door. Yet He is knocking. Perhaps it may be that one faithful soul will hear His voice and open the door for personal communion with Himself. To true hearts this is very affecting. Those who love Him best feel it most. He is not here, but His coming draws nigh.

In the death of His cross, instead of Satan's overcoming Him, He through death rendered Satan's power null. Instead of Jew and Gentile getting rid of Christ by their cries of "Away with Him" and "Crucify Him," He was righteously exalted to the right hand of God and invested, as the glorified Man, with all authority and power. And He is soon coming to subdue all things unto Himself according to the will of God. Though He manifests Himself spiritually to our souls and is always in the midst of two or three who are gathered together to His name, yet personally He is absent. We see Him not. Some keenly feel He is not here. Faith knows Him crowned with glory and honor.

Do we not feel His rejection? Are we troubled on account of His absence? These are searching questions, and they test what our state really is. If we can reply that we deeply mourn His absence, then we are necessarily detached in heart and walk, not only from the world which is so rapidly going on to its righteous doom, but from all about us in the professing church that is contrary to His Word. How is it possible that we can be loving His appearing if we are not seeking to please Him and therefore tasting the sorrow of His present rejection? Do not the two always go together? Those who really mourn His absence will feel because of it the loneliness and desolation of their path. They can only cleave to Him with purpose of heart, while keenly feeling the folly and unbelief of those who keep up excitement with the world's pleasures, when our Lord's revelation

from heaven in flaming fire is so near.

Again we press the question, Does our Lord's present rejection give a decided complexion to our course in this scene? If so, surely the prospect of His soon having His rightful place on earth must thrill our hearts with inexpressible delight. When we think of His coming out of heaven in His own glory, the glory of His Father, the glory of the holy angels accompanied by His glorified saints and wearing His many crowns, we may well exclaim, What a blaze of infinite and eternal glory! Then our hearts are ready to sing: "Crown Him, crown Him, crown Him Lord of all."

It is the Lord Himself who thus appears. He comes with clouds and every eye shall see Him. He died for all, has sent the gospel to all, has waited patiently on all, and now the divine long-suffering has reached its climax, and men "wail because of Him." What a wailing that will be! Worse than useless then to cry to the rocks to fall on them, or to the hills to cover them, or to go into the holes of the rocks and into the caves of the earth for fear of Jehovah and from the glory of His majesty. For He must reign till His enemies are made the footstool of His feet. All must be put in subjection under Him, according to the will of God.

Yes, He will judge the quick (the living) and the dead. First will be the quick in various judicial ways and occasions as the Scriptures point out, for He will put down all rule and all authority and power. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. The last part of His reign will be occupied in judging the dead after their resurrection, every man according to his works; hence our Lord called it "the resurrection of damnation," or judgment. How unutterably solemn! And how blessed to our souls is the thought of our Lord's exaltation to His rightful place and of the church, His bride, reigning and sharing the inheritance with Him.

On earth each tribe of Israel will have its portion in the land according to the prophetic word (Ezek. 47-48). They will know that Jehovah has been merciful to their unrighteousness. He will remember no more their sins and iniquities, and He has delivered them from bodily sickness. He will give them abundance of peace and plenty under the glorious reign of their true Messiah, the Son of David.

What a time, too, when Gentiles will go up to Jerusalem to worship and attend the house of prayer for all nations. Our Lord Jesus will then be revealed as the only Potentate-King of kings and Lord of lords, Governor among the nations and King over all the earth. We can think of Him as Son of Man, according to Psalm 8, having dominion over this creation, delivered by Him and brought into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. Is it not a deep joy to those who cleave to Him, and who are often ready to weep at His still being "the song of the drunkards" and rejected by so many, to know for a certainty that in a little while on this very earth, as well as in heaven and in the infernal regions, every knee shall bow to Him, and every tongue confess that He is Lord to the glory of the Father?

How does this contemplation of our Lord's glorious appearing and reign affect our hearts? Are we loving His appearing? Let us pause and well consider that, if we do love it, He is not only the commanding object of our souls, but we are in a place where He is not, and where the prevailing sentence is, "We will not have this man to reign over us." How soon He may come and receive us unto Himself to appear in glory with Him! "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory" (Col. 3:4). May we be so occupied with our Lord where He is, so

learn of Him and live for His honor that we may more and more "love His appearing"!

"If here on earth the thoughts of Jesus' love

Lift our poor hearts this weary world above;

If even here the taste of heavenly springs

So cheers the spirit, that the pilgrim sings;

What will the sunshine of His glory prove?

What the unmingled fullness of His love?

What hallelujahs will His presence raise?

What but one loud eternal burst of praise?

Bible Challenger-11-November V.10

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the word describing an oft-repeated priestly activity in Old Testament times, which was to no avail in taking away sins. [1] The number in brackets indicates the number of missing words in each answer.

1. "Thou didst not desire; mine ears host Thou_____." [1]
2. "He took the_____ in his hand, and a knife." [1]
3. "Cain was very wrath, and his countenance_____." [1]
4. "Shall there not... be given to thy servant two mules' burden of_____ ?" [11]
5. "Behold behind him a_____ caught in a thicket by his horns." [1]
6. "Walk_____, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us." [2]
7. "Elijah the prophet came_____ and said, Lord God of Abraham." [1]
8. "Let my lord the king do that which is_____ in his eyes: lo, I give thee the oxen. [1]

Answers to these questions will be found in the next issue of Christian Treasury.

R. Erisman

My Father Knows

Waiting here impatiently,
And wishing for a chance to see
What future days will bring for me
When they have come to pass.
Trying hard to concentrate
On work that I have grown to hate,
My brain will not cooperate
And focus on its task.
Thoughts abound in such confusion,
Doubts arise in dread profusion—
Searching for the best solution,
I don't know what to ask.
When I'm distraught and overstressed,
One thing alone can give me rest—
My Father knows just what is best;
He'll have His way at last.
He guides me with unerring hand,
And though I may not understand
The way He leads me through this land,
My cares on Him I cast.
The love that gave His Son for me
To shed His blood on Calvary
Will last for all eternity—
It cannot be surpassed.
Why then should I distrust or fear
When circumstance upsets me here?

For He has promised to be near
Until the trumpet blast.
My life on earth will then be o'er;
I'll be with Him forevermore
To sing His praise, and thank
Him for The trials that are past.
D. Harman

Bible Challenger-10-October Answers V.10

1. Goodness Ex. 33:19
2. Remembered Psa. 111:4
3. Anger Psa. 103:8
3. Child 2 Sam. 12:22
4. In the gate Amos 5:15
5. O lord Jonah 4:2
6. Upon thee Num. 6:25
7. Swallow Eccles. 10:12

"Then He is GRACIOUS unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom" (Job 33:24).

Proverbs

Simon Patrick on tire Proverbs

1683

Chapter 9:1-12

1. "Wisdom troth budded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars." Do not imagine that I commend unto you some meaner piece of knowledge or skill, but the most absolute and accomplished wisdom; whose worth and dignity is inexpressible. For as this great world I told you was built by wisdom in most excellent order and perfect beauty; so from every part of it we may learn what regard we ought to have, to her holy precepts which are taught everywhere, but especially in the school's of the prophets.

2. "She hath killed her beasts: she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table." There above all other places a most plentiful! provision is made for all hungry and thirsty souls (that are desirous to know what is good for themselves) who shall find no less life, and vigor, and strength, and joy communicated to them from her sacred instructions, than the body doth when it partakes of a liberal and most delicious feast.

3. "She hath sent forth her maidens: she crieth upon the highest places of the city." For nothing is wanting there, but only guests to accept of her entertainment; unto which her attendants and ministers (persons of uncorrupted purity and sincerity) are sent to invite you, with a loud voice and earnest in-treaties: which cannot but be heard by whole cities and countries; unto whom the dwelling places of wisdom, and the food of souls lie openly exposed.

4. "Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither: as for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him." There is no man so silly but he may be welcome to it; or rather all such persons are desired to bethink themselves, how inconsiderately they have been seduced, and to forbear the prosecution of their foolish desires so long as to take advice of her. Let a man be never so much besotted with vice and wickedness, she doth not reject him, nor despair of him, if he will but hearken, when she makes this gracious motion to the whole knot of them.

5. "Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled." Draw near, consider, and lay to heart, the wholesome instructions which I propound to you: credit me so far as to rely upon the promise which I make you of the highest comfort, pleasure, and satisfaction, in embracing and obeying my precepts.

6. "Forsake the foolish, and live; and go in the way of understanding." Do but make a trial, by forsaking all ill company, and those childish desires, and senseless courses, of which you can give no account to yourselves; and immediately you shall have a taste of happiness, which will invite you to perfect it, by following hereafter the deliberate dictates of sober reason, and the grave counsels of prudent persons, who have discerning minds, and practice themselves what they commend to others.

7. "He that reproveth a scorner getteth to himself shame: and he that rebuketh a wicked man getteth himself a blot." As for those that deride religion and scoff at all good admonitions, it is in vain to meddle with them; for reproofs are fittest for such persons, and he who performs that charitable office, not only loses his labor, but is like to be requited with reproaches: whosoever he be that rebukes one of those impious wretches, hath commonly all the dirt thrown upon him, that their malice can rake together.

8. "Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee: rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee." Therefore men of that wicked temper wisdom doth not invite to her instructions, nor require her ministers to call upon them; but rather to pass them by, when they find by experience that they can do no good to such persons, but only draw their hatred upon themselves. From such it is wisdom to turn away, and bestow reproofs upon those who have so much understanding, as to see God's ministers intend their good, and accordingly thank them for it, and give them opportunity to do them further service.

9. "Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser: teach a just man, and he will increase in learning." For this is an undoubted maxim, that a man disposed to learn will grow wiser even by reprehension; and the instructions given to a man inclined to goodness, will make him better, and much improve him, not only in knowledge but in the practice of virtue (whereas a scorner grows worse by endeavors to reform him, and is only made more incapable of good advice, by being exasperated and imaged at it).

10. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the Holy is understanding." And the very first, and indeed the principal thing that is to be instilled into all men's minds, without which they will learn nothing else, is a religious sense of the Divine Majesty, and an awful regard towards Him (as I have observed already more than once: ch. 1:7; 2:5; 8:13; but it cannot be too oft repeated). And next to this, that no knowledge deserves the name of understanding, but that which is delivered by the Holy men of God, and disposes us to devote

ourselves unto Him in holy obedience.

11. "For by me thy days shall be multiplied, and the years of thy life shall be increased. Other knowledge may make thee subtle and cunning in thy worldly affairs, but this alone can make thee happy. And this will certainly both prolong thy life, as I have frequently said, and lengthen it in health, peace, prosperity and pleasure.

12. "If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself: but if thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear it." This is the true reason I invite thee so earnestly to imbibe my doctrine, not for my own sake, but for thine: who alone wilt either reap the profit of being truly virtuous; or suffer all the harm and mischief (which will not in the least redound to me) of thy profane scoffs and jeers at religion and goodness.

The Mystery

The mystery in Colossians 1:26 is the mystery of the church, the body of Christ, which had been kept hid from ages. The mystery of Colossians 2:2 is not the same, but the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ—the mystery of the glorious Godhead revealed. The mystery of God, in Revelation 10:7, is the mystery of the time of the Gentiles, or the parenthesis of the present unmeasured period in which we are now found. Prophetic time shall be no longer delayed.

The New Creation

Ed.

Let us go to John 20 and look at the Person of Christ who is the head of the new creation. We have a few verses here about the powers of that new race. The chapter is well known, so we will pick out certain parts of it. The chapter begins with an empty tomb. The Lord has risen from the dead. Mary comes and stands "a t the sepulcher weeping" (vs. 11).

The day was the first day of the week. It was the day of resurrection, and there was the empty tomb. Mary could not find Him and was weeping. "And as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulcher, and seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou?"

"She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him." What a devoted soul she was. "And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing." Now here is the very first view of new creation, and it was for Mary to see first. She saw Jesus standing in the new creation. She did not recognize Him; He had a different appearance to her. That is one of the powers of that new creation.

"And [she] knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing Him to be the gardener." You see, to her mind He appeared to be somebody that kept the garden where He was buried. Now that's one of the powers of the new creation: to have a slightly different form, if necessary, and to do many mighty things.

She said to one of the angels, "Sir, if thou have borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take him away." Notice the faith of this devoted woman. She thought that she would just pick Him up and take Him away, but she was talking to Him and did not know it. Oh, the wonders of that new creation.

"Jesus saith unto her, Mary." There was the One who knew her name just as when He approached the grave of Lazarus and called him by name and said, "Come forth." I think it is a sample (an illustration) of what is going to happen when the One who has the power and the keys of hell and of death calls out, at the first resurrection, everyone whose body is lying in this earth. The Lord has that power and will call them out personally; it seems so to me.

Mary, hearing her name, turned herself and said to Him, "Rabboni; which is to say, Master." Immediately, when He spoke her name, she knew Him. Quick intelligence, because she knew the Lord and He revealed Himself to her in that personal way.

Then He says, "Touch Me not; for I am not yet ascended to My Father: but go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father." Here is another power of the new creation. When Elijah went up, he was carried out of this scene. When the Lord went up, it was in the power of that new creation. He brings in a new relationship—"I ascend unto My Father, and your Father."

In 1 Corinthians 15, there is a long list of those who saw the Lord in resurrection. And He only showed Himself to His followers, those who knew Him. He did not show Himself to the world. When He comes again to the world, it will be in power and glory after He has righteously judged it and prepared it for this display. But to His own, in comfort, He showed Himself right away. About 500 brethren at once saw Him. The new creation was seen on the earth for forty days—a proving time. What a wonderful thing the new creation is! We have seen a little bit of the power of it in these verses.

"The same day at evening, being the first day of the week." This all happened on the resurrection day. Now notice the power shown here: "When the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst." There were no limits in that new creation as we know them. There are no limits to the new creation in time, in distance or in physical barriers. It is a spiritual body. Granted, I cannot understand it, but it is a fact and it is true. The doors being shut, He stood in the midst, and what did He say unto them? "Peace be unto you."

Now let us go on to the next chapter and enjoy a little bit of the new creation and the power of it seen there. In this chapter He appears a third time to some of His disciples. The scene in the first fourteen verses is in connection with the Lord's reign in power and glory over more than the Jews. It includes the Gentiles, as well as the spared of the nation.

This fishing expedition, which was carried out by seven of the Lord's brethren, typifies the going forth of the gospel of the kingdom to gather in souls for the millennial day. It connects with the fishing expedition in Luke 5 when the Lord had come the first time. Their net broke in Luke, but it did not in this chapter (John 21). And they made a great catch of fish. When the gospel of the kingdom goes forth by His brethren, it will be in great power to bring souls in to be there for the King to reign over them.

They made a big catch, but as they drew it to shore, look at what has happened. "As soon as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread. Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught" (vss. 9-10). What an interesting scene. "Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken." Men will be caught in the net of the gospel of the kingdom when it goes forth during the end of the tribulation period.

First there will be a preparation for the kingdom; then He is going to rejoin them. In the end of John and in the end of Matthew, He is in Galilee, for in Galilee it is the Lord in connection with the remnant of the Jews who believed on Him.

To His disciples, He says, "Come and dine." Now here is new creation. Here is the Lord standing on the shore, having already prepared a feast for them.

He tells them to come and eat with Him. In John 13 He had departed from supper. He had been eating with them and then arose and took a new position—He washed their feet. That is His high priestly service—one He is still doing for His followers. He is going to change from that priestly service; He is going to rejoin the godly remnant on the earth and have food for them and eat with them, I believe. And it is another power of the new creation.

Go back now to Luke 24 where we get the interesting picture about the two on the road to Emmaus and the Lord's love to restore discouraged souls to the divine center. Think of those two discouraged disciples. One was Cleopas. Perhaps the other was his wife; we're not told. They had been disappointed; they had lost Jesus, the One they thought was to be their king. They did not understand, and so they were walking away, discouraged. The Lord seeks them. Oh, yes, He seeks and He seeks until He finds.

These, His sheep, were discouraged and rightly so. He appears to them and walks with them as a stranger. "Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem?" they asked Him. They did not recognize Jesus yet. Their eyes were holden, and He is testing them. If you and I walk away from the Lord, He is going to seek us. If we depart from the divine center, He wants to bring us back. He will walk with us as far as He needs to in order to get the job done.

He is going to test your heart: "Do you want Him in your home?" If you are walking away from the Lord, invite Him into your home. He will come in just as He came into the home of those two from Emmaus, and He will warm up your heart and display who He is. You remember it says that "He was known of them in breaking of bread," and then immediately He vanished out of their sight—the power of the new creation. Their hearts had been reached; they returned to Jerusalem and found the Lord there.

Go back in thought with me to the mount of transfiguration. Matthew, Mark and Luke all record it. Peter, James and John, as specially privileged servants, were taken up into a high mountain and the Lord Jesus "was transfigured before them...and, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias." These were real men. One of them had died and been buried by the Lord, and the other had been caught up to heaven in a whirlwind.

Now we will turn to 2 Corinthians 12 to get an experience of the Apostle Paul, which tells us just a little bit more about the power of that new creation. "It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord." If we are going to get these things, they have to be as a revelation of the Lord. And Paul says, "I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago." Here is the power of the new creation which Paul could not understand or know for sure. He says, "Whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth."

It is wonderful what God tells us here, which is all we can get hold of. It is just the absence of any limitation in the new creation. We have great limitations in these bodies in which we now live. Paul says that he did not even know whether he had a body or not. The power of that body is so great you are not even conscious of any limitations. He says it again in verse 3: "I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth)." Yes, God knows all!

Why did not he report more on this? Read the next verse: "How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful [or, not possible] for a man to utter." It is God telling us through Paul that it is so wonderful, it cannot even be put into language, so we just have to stop and believe it.

Thank God for the few things that we do know about the power of that new creation, which appear here and there. There were no limitations of distance—Emmaus or Jerusalem. He could appear instantly in one place or the other. There was also the power to ascend, for Jesus at least. He will take us up, we know that, but Paul was caught up: "Such an one caught up to the third heaven."

That's where you and I are going to be caught up soon. And we'll have the body that is suited for that place of glory.

Tax Exemption

A tax auditor came many years ago to a poor servant of the Lord to determine the amount of taxes he would have to pay.

"What property do you possess?" asked the auditor.

"I am very wealthy," replied the Christian.

"List your possessions, please," the auditor instructed.

"First, I have everlasting life (John 3:16).

"Second, I have a mansion in heaven (John 14:2).

"Third, I have peace that passes understanding (Phil. 4:7).

"Fourth, I have joy unspeakable (1 Peter 1:8).

"Fifth, I have divine help that never fails (1 Cor. 13:8).

"Sixth, I have a faithful wife (Prov. 31:10).

"Seventh, I have healthy, happy, obedient children (Ex. 20:12).

"Eighth, I have a true, loyal friend (Prov. 18:24).

"Ninth, I have songs in the night (Psa. 42:8).

"Tenth, I have a crown of life (James 1:12).

"Eleventh, I have a Savior, Jesus Christ, who supplies all my need (Phil. 4:19)."

The tax auditor closed his book and said, "Truly you are a very rich man, but your property is not subject to taxation!"

Editorial: God Speaks: Who's Listening?

The year that is now ending has been interesting and, as usual, beset with sorrow and strife in many places. On January 17 a massive earthquake devastated the port city of Kobe, Japan. This was just one year to the very day after the Los Angeles area suffered its great earthquake.

Many times the Bible speaks about an earthquake, but only three times are earthquakes (plural) mentioned: Matthew 24:7, Mark 13:8 and Luke 21:11. These are parallel prophetic passages that refer to the time of judgment, soon to fall upon this earth, called "the beginning of sorrows." You would not want to be here for that, would you? Isaiah, in writing of that time, says, "And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of His majesty, when He ariseth to shake terribly the earth" (Isa. 2:19).

This year much sorrow and suffering has come to many from war, whether declared or not. Sometimes these are called "peacekeeping missions," or "brush conflicts," or "local uprisings," or it may be "tribal conflicts."

Besides these physical things, there have been huge financial losses that affect nations, as well as businesses, wealthy individuals, and also the poor who surely suffer most.

Speculation caused the collapse of the 233-year old Borings British Bank that once financed the Louisiana Purchase. Orange County of California lost 1.7 billion dollars. Mexico suffered a great financial breakdown. "And when money failed in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, all the Egyptians came unto Joseph, and said, Give us bread: for why should we die in thy presence? for the money faileth" (Gen. 47:15).

While financial losses can often be recovered or corrected, the suffering and sorrows of war remain for whole generations. Sadly, because man is sinful and selfish, wars never cease. There is always war somewhere in this world. Having rejected the "Prince of Peace," this world cannot have peace. But what about you? Do you have peace? If you do, you have Christ, for the Scripture says, "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometime were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and lath broken down the middle wall of partition between us" (Eph. 2:13-14).

Another interesting thing that came out this year was from scientists looking in to the brain for that thing called consciousness. They admitted that it may be that scientists will have to acknowledge the existence of something beyond their understanding. It might be described as the soul.

The peace of the believer deepens as we set our affections—our minds (yes, we have a soul, a consciousness)—upon those things which are above where Christ sits on the right hand of God. No event or effort of man can affect God's throne nor stay His hand. He works all things after the counsel of His own will, bringing glory to Christ and blessing for the believer. Ed

Long-Distance Romances

It is December and the great gray whales are headed south on their annual pilgrimage from arctic waters to Scammon's Lagoon and the warm beaches of Baja. It is a mating and calving journey that has punctuated the lives of these great beasts from time immemorial.

Humankind has its own migrations and rituals. In the Shan States of Burma, nubile maidens of the Karen tribes dance in the light of the full August moon. Spirited away by suitors from faraway tribes, most never see their first homes again.

Today we are much more "sophisticated," with phones, jet planes and flowers-by-phone florists. Yet the impulses are much the same: finding that special partner, cementing another pair of bricks in the fabric of human society (rocks, if you dislike the implied monotony of bricks), providing for the replenishment of humankind.

For believers, raise the sights; what is in construction is the City of God. On their journeys they attend Bible conferences to reaffirm their own faith and, in the fellowship of the saints, affirm the universality of the church. And a vital part of this universality, of being part of something so much greater than oneself, is the vesting of our young in that same fabric, to succeed and outlive us.

Where is a pattern for this? The love story of Isaac and Rebekah in Genesis 24. Abraham sends his trusted servant, Eliezer, to find a bride for his son Isaac. Eliezer, bound under solemn patrilineal oath, moves with remarkable single-mindedness, grace and wisdom. The surrogate suitor returns with "his" prize; she falls in love with Isaac, and the two live "happily ever after."

Spiritually, we get from the story a hint of the three Persons of the Godhead engaged in the grand business of winning a bride—the church—for Christ. For the preacher of the gospel, it is a lovely vision of the wooing of the Spirit, and of Rebekah's decisive assent to the question, "Wilt thou go with this man?" Morally, it is a remarkable picture of intergenerational cohesiveness and filial obedience.

The scene where Isaac, solo, meditates in the field at eventide has a universal poignancy—a yearning laced with filial piety. What young man come to years has not felt the emptiness-amidst-abundance, the loneliness-in-a-crowd, the longing for that unseen stranger, across a crowded room, on some enchanted evening. Socially—in austere social compact of the sere, unforgiving desert—the next generation is provided for, made place for, the bricks set solidly in place, cemented, grouted and pointed. Life, according to promise, will go on.

Is Genesis 24 a pattern for twentieth-century believers and their family life? "Thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the...Canaanites" is a warning well heeded today. But how does a parent go about it? By playing the patriarch? Not today in Western nations does:

- a bride go sight-unseen to a stranger,
- a parent and a hired man arrange a marriage,

- a groom have no choice but to marry his cousin,
- and what about fathers that aren't millionaires?

The idea of a family-arranged marriage seems quaint to us, grown up in the Western romantic tradition of love triumphant—overcoming distance, poverty, storm of sea, mountain heights, warfare, and even parental opposition. While we reject the fantasies of Hollywood, we celebrate free choice. Heirs of the liberation brought by Gutenberg, Luther, Milton and the founding fathers, we are not easily dictated to in matters of conscience and the heart.

The long-distance romance offers surprise, the exotic, the far away. But it offers little time to check out the myriad congruence's, or lack of them, the jigsaw puzzle—social, intellectual, emotional, financial and "kitchenal" that will ease the matrimonial fit. (Did you ever buy a pair of gloves by mail order?)

Still, a hallmark of youth is its plasticity: at 20 I adapt; at 40 I am an old, crusty bachelor. And offspring—the politely unstated purpose of all this nest-building—the offspring of the long-distance romance will almost certainly grow up without the good offices, the final cementing and grouting, of at least one pair of grandparents. These last can help put the stamp of family character on the young—can help with the "spirituals" while parents are busy feeding youngsters and patching bruises.

Most of all, the long-distance romance offers ample time to meditate, solo—to ponder the question, "Can I live my life without this woman?" Young man, don't neglect that vital question inside yourself, to meditate at eventide, and to await that longed-for gift, not from parents, but from the Father

C. D. Lunden

Real Evidence

A scoffer asked an elderly man, "How do you know Jesus rose?" The old saint answered. "I had an hour with Him this morning." It is a wonderful thing to know, on the authority of the Word of God, that the Lord Jesus lives for us now at God's right hand, but it is still more wonderful to enjoy sweet, personal and intimate communion with Him.

Galatians 4 and the Father

In Genesis we have the Father. It is the book of the Patriarchs, and the affections of the Father are displayed and exercised there very beautifully.

Abraham, as well as others in this book, desires a child, and though his house might have been established in a servant, a loved and trusted servant too, Eliezer of Damascus, this will not do for him, As long as he went childless, his heart was not satisfied.

He makes a feast when his son Isaac is weaned, for this was his joy, to hear himself addressed as a father. Sarah will then also have the house cleared of the bondwoman and her child.

Jacob adopts the sons of Joseph, giving them the place and inheritance of the firstborn, and welcoming them with full affection.

These are among the instances, which we find in these early patriarchal days, of the counsel and affections of our heavenly Father, shadowed or expressed in these, His representatives, in the book of Genesis. And I may add, there is no law, no Moses, no schoolmaster in this book. God has the elect immediately under His own hand and eye, dealing with them by home method, so to speak, and not as by the intervention of "tutors and governors."

The law came afterward, and then the elect were carried to school, and put under rules and ordinances foreign to the home of the family, treated rather as servants than as children. The head of a school is a schoolmaster.

The dispensation of the Spirit has now come. The Son Himself has been manifested. He was made of a woman, made under the law that we might receive the adoption of sons. The elect are now put on the ground of His accomplished redemption and in the acceptableness of His loved Person.

Now this condition of things is the Father's delight. There was a need of the schoolmaster for a season, but that need has been answered and the Father has His child home again. This is not the age of the infant, the child that cannot speak, but the age or dispensation of the son, the elect who have the Spirit. The Spirit of adoption cries, "Abba, Father," filling the house with that music. It is the time of the weaned Isaac, and all that appertains to the bondwoman must leave the house.

This, again I say, is the Father's delight. The affection of the Father finds occasion to indulge itself to the full.

The Galatians, however, were disappointing His affection. They were returning to ordinances. This is contrary to the spirit of adoption, taking the elect from the Father's house again to put them under tutors and governors as before, destroying the free, gracious, confiding communion of children with their Father. They were bringing back Hagar to the house. And it is this which the Spirit so earnestly resents in this part of the Epistle to the Galatians (see chapter 4). It is the grieved and wounded bosom of the Father that speaks in this fervent epistle. Sarah had expressed

this resentment in the book of Genesis when she said, "Cast out this bondwoman and her son." That word is quoted in Galatians, for here, in like manner, the Spirit, in the behalf, so to speak, of the Father, expresses the like resentment. Paul would act the part of a parent in this epistle (Gal. 4:19).

By faith we are justified (Gal. 3:11); by faith we are made children (Gal. 3:26). A return to ordinances or works of law, therefore, reproaches Christ as though He had not accomplished our justification. But it also silences in our hearts the cry of adoption and thus disappoints the love of the Father. And it is this which this chapter, with some indignation, resents.

I feel that this gives this part of the epistle a very affecting and beautiful character. It is the resentment, or uttered disappointment, of Him who as long ago as the days of Abraham and Sarah let His elect know this—that no condition of things as between Him and them would satisfy His heart, but the relationship of a father to those who not only are, but also know themselves to be, children. Those are weaned, like Isaac, from the milk of ordinances and brought home to the Father's house and to the good of the Father's table. When our relationship to God becomes the subject of our souls, how commanding it is—at least, if it be a real thing with us. We may be anxious, merely calmly inquiring, or be joyful, but however such affections may vary, they are commanding.

Look at David, happy in God when conveying the ark home—what an "object" in the thoughts of others this made him! Look at him again when under conviction in the day of Oman's threshing-floor. How full of humiliation and yet of self-sacrifice he was!

Look at the congregation of Israel when happy in God in the day of the coronation of David. How large-hearted they were. And look at the princes of Israel in the day of dedicating the house of God with David.

Look at Peter in the hour of his conviction, how careless he was whether the boat sank or swam.

And see Zaccheus, interested in inquiring after Jesus, how heedless of the crowd and of the tree in which he was. Then when happy in Jesus, how heedless of the injurious speeches of the people.

Thus the eunuch, when an inquirer, was not moved by the strange and sudden appearance of a stranger. Then when he was satisfied, he was not moved by the still more strange and sudden disappearance of his companion.

When the Galatians apprehended Jesus at the first, see what manner of "blessedness" was among them (ch. 4). When the Hebrews were illuminated, what unstinted joy, leading to self-sacrifice, was in them (Heb. 10).

All these instances illustrate what I have suggested. When the Lord really becomes the object, how commanding a relation to our hearts He fills and maintains! Others become secondary.

From Words of Truth

Questions and Answers

QUESTION: What is "the dispensation of God," and "the mystery which hath been hid" (Col. 1:25-26)?

ANSWER: "The dispensation of God" given to Paul completed the Word of God. Every subject—creation, providence, law, government, the kingdom, incarnation, atonement—had been unfolded in the Word of God but one. When it was revealed through Paul, the full circle of revelation was completed. This subject was the mystery of Christ and the church. It has two parts: First, Christ should, as Man, be set in the heaven-lies, having all dominion, by redemption (personally He had it as God), as Head over all things in heaven and earth, to the church, His body, united to Him by the Holy Spirit come down from heaven.

Second, He is "in you"—Gentiles—"the hope of glory." This was a new thing. When Christ came, He was the "minister of the circumcision [the Jew] for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers" (Rom. 15:8).

Abraham was the vessel of the promises of God; they were repeated to the fathers, Isaac and Jacob. Israel took the promises on the ground of law and man's responsibility and forfeited them totally.

Then Christ came, in whom were all the promises of God, yea and amen. He came to establish the promises, as He of them all, to the people to whose fathers they had been made, namely, the Jews. He was rejected, and instead of becoming the "Crown of glory... unto the residue of His people" (Isa. 28:5), the Heir of glory goes on high, and the poor Gentile believer who had no promises comes in on the footing of pure mercy, not promise.

As we read, "That the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy" (Rom. 15:9). we get a place in Christ on high, united to Him who is the Heir of all the glory. Not only are we in Him, but He is in us—not the "crown of glory," but "the hope of glory." "To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27).

Bible Challenger-11-November Answers V.10

1. Opened Psa. 40:6
2. Fire Gen. 22:6
3. Fell Gen. 4:5
4. Earth 2 Kings 5:17
5. Ram Gen. 22:13
6. In love Eph. 5:2
7. Near 1 Kings 18:36
8. Good 1 Chron. 21:23

"And every priest standeth daily ministering and OFFERING oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins" (Heb. 10:11),

“Occupy Till I Come”

Luke 19:11-27

Pew portions of Scripture contain fuller instruction as to God's present ways than this parable of the nobleman and his servants. Its object is disclosed in the opening verse, where we learn that Jesus spoke it "because He was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear." Just afterward, as He entered Jerusalem, His disciples hailed Him as King, saying, "Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord" (vs. Mt). They expected, as the two disciples on the way to Emmaus declared, that He would at that time "have redeemed Israel" (Luke 24:21), and that the kingdom of God would thus be manifested.

We see from Luke 17:20-21 that the kingdom had already come. but it was not yet with outward show or "observation." It was even then among them, but neither then, nor now, as a visible kingdom recognizable by the world. The real "children of the kingdom" may recognize it in its present, hidden form; others in Christendom may acknowledge it as a kingdom in word, but with no true sense of God's sovereignty. The rest of the world can see in it nothing but a religious profession, with no character of a kingdom about it.

While the kingdom of God, in its veiled form in which it now exists, had already come, it had not then, nor indeed has yet, appeared or been manifested. It was to check the eager anticipations of the disciples as to its immediate appearance that this parable was spoken. In it, therefore, the Lord details what is to happen before that appearing (for which they were looking) should take place. He Himself, seen here under the figure of the nobleman, was to go into a far country—in fact, to leave the world for heaven—there to receive the kingdom, and having received it to return.

Meanwhile, those who denied His rights—the Jews especially, but also the world as a whole—not only rejected Him in Person while here but "sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us" (vs. 14). Such a message was the stoning of Stephen and the persistent refusal to hear the testimony of the apostles and of the Holy Spirit after Christ's departure. This is, and has been, the attitude of the world as a whole and of the Jews in particular toward Jesus since He "sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." This will be their attitude as a nation till He comes again. He will then return, having had the nations given Him as His inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession. Those who would not have Him reign over them will be dealt with in judgment.

Between His departure and His return there is, besides the citizens who rejected Him, another class of persons called His servants. These, though left among the citizens, are clearly of a different class. They are in the city to care for their Lord's things entrusted to their charge. While the citizens reject Him as their King, these own His authority; while the citizens have no thought of His return, these occupy till He comes. These servants represent Christendom—those who, in name at least, acknowledge the authority of the rejected Lord.

Is it not startling to contrast this picture of the responsibility of the professing Christian with the thought which even true believers commonly cherish as to their place in the world? What is spoken of here is no limited class specially set apart as ministers or servants. This responsibility pointed out is the common responsibility of Christendom. And surely it is impossible to look at Christendom in the light of the responsibility here disclosed without a sad sense of its utter failure to execute the charge with which it has been entrusted. Nevertheless, the responsibility of the Christian profession is to occupy for Christ till He returns. According to this responsibility it will be judged.

By the mass of nominal Christians the charge is simply disregarded. If the "pound" is not thrown away or the very name of Christian abandoned, this is all that can be said. Hard thoughts of God are entertained, His gifts forgotten or despised and His demands regarded as unreasonable exactions. He is looked upon as "an austere man," taking up what He had not laid down, reaping what He had not sown. And yet man, with his usual inconsistency, while judging God as exacting more than is due, has taken no pains to earn, as it were, anything for Him. He is therefore judged out of his own mouth and condemned as an unprofitable servant.

Leaving the sad case of mere professors, let us ask to what extent we answer to the view here presented of the believer's responsibility. To how many true Christians is the thought present, "I am here for Christ, in His interest in the scene where He has been rejected"? What would the world appear to one who had this idea of the place he was called upon to occupy?

The cross as the means by which sins were put away is, of course, valued by all real believers, and in this sense they can and do glory in it. But Paul gloried in it for another reason and saw in the death of Christ another aspect. To him that death was not only deliverance from sins, but deliverance "from this present evil world." To him that cross was not only the place where sin had been judged, but it was the means by which "the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." He saw in the death of Christ the death of all, "and that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again."

What complete separation from the world, what complete devotedness to Christ do we see here! And yet this is only what becomes one who, in the light of Christ's own words, realizes the place he is responsible to occupy in this world. For must there not be a complete separation of heart and feeling between the servant who is truly occupying for Christ and the world which has rejected Him? "What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" (2 Cor. 6:14).

It may be urged that the citizens here do not represent nominal Christian~ who constitute the world around us. This is true, but if nominal Christians have become just as much "of the world" as the heathen, if Christ's lordship is just as little practically admitted among them as in the rest of the world, is the call for separation any the less urgent? Is the world any more allowable because it takes the name of Christ, while practically it disowns and rejects Him?

If there is one rule of separation in Scripture more stringent than another, it is the separation from those who, while called by Christ's name, are walking in an ungodly fashion. If there is one scene over which judgment is impending with more fearful gloom than over any other, it is over this very Christendom which, on account of the privileges it has enjoyed and the sad use it has made of them, is held as especially guilty in God's sight. The principle of separation, therefore, applies

even with greater torte to the believer in the world of Christendom around him at present than to the believer in the midst of Jews and heathen.

What the Lord desires in His people is whole-heartedness for Himself. This does not imply separation from the ordinary occupations of the world but the question is whether these occupations entangle the heart and become our objects, or whether, while pursuing these occupations, the heart is still free for Christ. Is getting on in the world what fills our thoughts? Or, while providing all things honest in the sight of all men, are we really living among men and before men as those who are not their own, but bought with a price? And, as those who are being constrained by the love of Christ, are we seeking however feebly to live not unto ourselves, but unto Him who died for us and rose again?

All are called upon to live Christ. And to live Christ involves taking His place in relationship to the world. "They are not of the world," He said, "even as I am not of the world." It is easy to imagine cases and to ask where the line is to be drawn. The heart that is in communion with Christ, though it may not know how to lay down principles, will distinguish readily enough what will suit Him and what would grieve His Spirit. Indeed it is only Christians who are anxious to mix with the world that have any difficulty in the matter. The world quickly enough discerns what is consistent and what is inconsistent in a Christian, and it estimates without difficulty the value of the testimony given by a worldly believer.

If the heart is really true to Christ, it will unconsciously bear witness to Him and separate from the world, which knows Him not. The spirit and objects of the world cannot have a place in the soul that is filled with Christ. The pursuits and riches of the world will appear worthless to him whose affections are set on things above.

The character of the true servant will show itself in various ways. If to serve Christ is really the object, His own Word and directions will be the rule of service. Who could suppose the servants of the absent Lord taking counsel with the citizens that had cast Him out, as to how they should care for His goods? Is it any better when believers go to the world, or resort to worldly principles, worldly wisdom, and worldly alliances in the hope of furthering the cause of Christ? The power is of God, who does not need our wisdom as to the mode of carrying on His work, but who requires our obedience as servants.

No truth is more needed at the present moment than that of the all-sufficiency of the Word of God. Whatever under the name of service is not built on this foundation is not service such as the Lord owns. There may, of course, be earnestness and truth of heart, which the Lord does own, even where much is added that He could not sanction, but in these cases His blessing is on what comes from Himself, not on what comes from the flesh and the world.

There is another thing that will mark the true servant. He will be waiting for the coming of the Lord. If the heart is really estranged from the world and set on heavenly things, what expectation will bring such blessedness as the thought of the Lord's return? The idle servant, whose heart was full of hard thoughts of his lord, could, of course, entertain no bright hopes in connection with his coming again. To him the thought must necessarily be unwelcome. But what joy would the prospect bring to the heart of the faithful servant who had been living and laboring for him during his absence!

Are our hearts thus waiting and longing? Are we occupying for Christ during His absence, seeking to act in obedience to His Word and waiting in joyful anticipation for His return?

T. Baines

Bible Challenger-00-December V.10

The first letter of each of the following responses will form a word denoting the superabundance of mercy that always dwells in the heart of our God. [1] The number in brackets indicates the number of words in the answer.

1. "The angel of the Lord said unto her, I will_____ thy seed exceedingly." [1]
2. "Vexed with_____ spirits: and they were healed every one." [1]
3. "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy_____." [1]
4. "Because they continue with Me now_____, and have nothing to eat." [2]
5. "As the sand which is by the seashore_____." [1]
6. "One of the_____, went before them, and drew near." [1]
7. "And looking_____, He blessed, and brake, and gave." [3]
8. "In the want of people is the_____ of the prince." [1]
9. "Let Thy promise unto David my father be _____." [1]

Answers to these questions will be found in the next issue of Christian Treasury.

R. Erisman

Remarks on the Gospel Of John

Chapters 3-17

In John 3 the form and eternal foundation of God's acting in grace to man is laid. God loves and gives. But this is not enough. God's compelling grace must be exercised. He goes forth and seeks in chapter 4. The Father seeks "true" worshippers, but before there can be this, there must be life.

In chapter 5 He "quicken," gives new life, and in chapter 6 this "life" is fed with the "true bread from heaven," which is Christ.

In chapter 7 the heart is filled with Christ—runs over and flows out like a "river" to others.

In chapter 8 the soul is brought into the perfect place of liberty. "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free," and not only free, but in chapter 9 the eyes are opened—fitted to walk through a world that is all in pitch darkness.

While so walking, in chapter 10 there is the Shepherd's care and love over the sheep, even to the laying down of His life, If He dies in chapter 10, in chapter 11 He is "the resurrection, and the life."

And on this new resurrection ground there is union. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (ch. 12:24).

In chapter 13 we have the present ministry of Christ to and for the believer. Christ is away in the new place, and the believer is united to Him there, so no uncleanness can be tolerated.

Chapter 14 is what the believer has gotten while Christ is away—"the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost," "the only power for witnessing for an absent Christ.

This bring:, in responsibility, so in chapter 15 it is fruit-bearing. The result of all this, brought out in chapter 16, is that the world and its prince are "judged."

The blessed and eternal result to the believer we hear from Christ's own words: "Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am" (John 17:24).

Is this bright future yours—with and like Jesus forever? Things New and Old

Scripture Quote

"Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear,; slow tea speak, slow to wrath: for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God" (James 1:19-20).

Self-Judgment

Much self-judgment makes a man slow to judge others, and the very gentleness of such a one gives a keen edge to his rebukes.

Proverbs

Simon Patrick on the Proverbs

1683

Chapter 9:13-18

13. "A foolish woman is clamorous: she is simple, and knoweth nothing." Unto which profanity as there wants not temptations, so there is none more dangerous, I think, which makes me mention it so often, than the lewd and impious adulteress; who is no less bold and importunate, than she is bewitching and powerful! to besot the minds of her stupid lovers; but perfectly ignorant of God and religion, and a stranger to all the principles of venue.

14. "For she sitteth at the door of her house, on a seat in the high places of the city." Which she openly opposes, for (as if she would put a manifest affront upon them) in that very place where the ministers of wisdom call men to learn the fear of the Lord, she sits in state at the door of her house to divert their minds from all such thoughts, and drown them in sensual pleasures.

15. "To call passengers who go right on their ways." That's the very business of her life, to defeat all good designs; by drawing even those aside into her chambers of impurity, who were going straight forward to the schools of wisdom and goodness.

16. "Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither: and as for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him."

Whose words she no less impudently than profane returns, and tells them, It is not she but wisdom and virtue that makes men fools; by confining their desires, and denying them the liberties which she invites to come and enjoy in her embraces: where their dullness shall learn this unknown secret.

17. "Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant." That there are no pleasures comparable to those, which a man gets by stealth from them to whom they properly belong: no morsel so sweet, as that which is forbidden; but having been long desired, he finds at last a private opportunity, to taste of without danger.

18. "But he knoweth not that the dead are there; and that her guests are in the depths of hell." But the poor deluded wretch considers not all this while (which have often already represented, and is all that I shall oppose to those sinful enticements) that she invites him to his utter ruin both of soul and body. And she sinks all those down who accept of her invitation, for the very bottom of that pit, where the old giants are, who corrupted mankind with such filthiness and violence, that they

brought a deluge upon the earth (Gen. 6:4-5, 11).

The Furnace of Affliction

Metals will unite in a furnace. How much more will Christians unite in the furnace of affliction. If we suffered together, we could scarcely strive with each other.

A Riddle

Samson, one of the judges of Israel, put forth this riddle to the Philistines: "Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness" (Judges 14:14). Samson alone knew the meaning of this riddle.

One day as Samson was going along the road near some vineyards in Timnath, a young lion came out and roared at him. Samson caught the lion and killed him—"rent him as he would have rent a kid." Some time later Samson passed by the same place and went to see the dead lion, and found a swarm of bees in the carcass. He also found some honeycomb, which he took. Samson went along eating of the honey, and when he came to his father and mother, he gave them some, but did not tell them where he got it.

The lion is a picture of Satan, the "roaring lion." He roars against the Christian, and when the Lord Jesus was here, he roared against Him. Satan thought he would get rid of the Lord by the means of the cross, but He rose triumphant over death and thus overcame Satan who had the power of death. Satan was defeated through that death, and out of Christ's victory has come "meat" and "sweetness."

How sustaining and precious is the victory of Christ to the hearts of His people. What food (meat) for their souls! What "sweetness" to enjoy! This is a precious secret between our souls and the Lord; the unsaved do not know the meaning of our riddle. But when Samson was mixed with the world (the Philistines) in their feast, he lost his secret and his joy. The world was not benefitted by his betraying his secret, but went on its way making light of him and his secret.

Thus will it be with us if we mix up with the world; we will lose our secret—the source of our communion with God—and the world will only despise it and us. It has no heart or understanding, for the things of God, for it is only by the Spirit of God that these things can be understood. They do not have the Spirit of God and so cannot enter into "the deep things of God." May we keep ourselves unspotted from the world, and so enjoy the "meat" and "sweetness" that our Lord's victory has secured to us.

We too have to meet Satan—the devil—who is a constant and vigilant enemy, but when we meet him in communion with God, the conflict is soon over. He is a defeated foe since his encounters with Christ. We are to resist him by the Word of God, as Christ did in the wilderness, and he will flee from us (James 4:7)

“Submit yourselves therefore to God

Resist the devil, and he will

flee from you.

James 4:7

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