

CHRISTIAN TREASURY VOLUME 2

by Unknown

A collection of articles and writings from Christian Treasury Volume 2, covering various biblical topics and Christian teaching.

219 Chapters

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Christian Treasury Volume 2

Editorial

Our calendar tells us that Jesus Christ was born one thousand nine hundred and eighty-seven years ago. But according to the best chronologists we must add about 5 years to that large number. If it is correctly 1992, then in just eight years more will arrive the year 2000.

These figures have special significance to the Christian and also to God's earthly people, Israel. All true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air before the judgments fall upon the world. These judgments will prepare for Christ's righteous reign for 1,000 years.

The Lord spoke through the prophet Hosea of Israel and Judah: "I will go and return to My place, till they acknowledge their offense, and seek My face: in their affliction they will seek Me early. Come, and let us return unto the Lord: for He hath torn, and He will heal us; He hath smitten, and He will bind us up. After two days will He revive us: in the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight." Hos. 5:15; 6:1, 2. If the third day is 1,000 years, then the two days are 2,000 years. That is, we know that the millennium is 1,000 years as stated in Rev. 20:4-6, therefore, the two days before Israel is nationally revived by the Lord is this nearly 2,000 years of grace.

We know the Lord will call us home at least seven years before He comes to set up His kingdom. During that time great judgments shall fall upon the earth and His earthly people shall be prepared for His coming. Truly we as Christians, can rightly expect the Lord's return for us at any moment.

In view of this, there is another precious truth in this issue of the Christian Treasury that we are emphasizing. It is resurrection. "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" Acts 26:8. Our God has given many credible evidences to us.

As the sun moves northward from the southern hemisphere, from January through June, it is very interesting to observe the results of its warmth and light. It causes life to spring forth from the seeds and plants. Resurrection! Steadily the warmth moves northward throughout the spring and the same results are seen and appreciated by humanity in general. This is especially true in climates that know the barrenness of severe frost. Where deciduous trees lose all their leaves and grass turns brown, it is wonderful to witness leaf buds and green blades of plants springing forth. Each year the Creator of all the universe patiently and faithfully places before our eyes a renewed testimony of resurrection.

The beautiful poetic language of the Psalmist says, "The sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof." Psa. 19:4-6. Ed.

The Last Trump

"For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." 1 Thess. 4:16.

There is but one command more for which the Host of the Lord now waits a precious, glorious word! He whose voice once spake on earth in lowly grace, and now speaks from heaven with grace unchanged by man's sin, will utter that "shout" of relationship to His own. It is known only to them, and will be heard only by those who have already known the Shepherd's voice; in the twinkling of an eye all shall be changed, and shall be "forever with the Lord."

What a thrilling note it will be to many a toiling one, who has trodden faithfully his lowly path in the armies of the Lord! Perhaps he had laid down his head on his Master's bosom and "slept," till that day should come—his spirit with the Lord. It may be that he may be found amongst those who are "alive and remain," and when the voice of Jesus sounds, it finds him at his post, like a man who waits for his Lord. In the thousand times ten thousand circumstances of life, the voice will reach those whom He loves, and He will carry him to His Father's house on high. The mighty Host of the Lord will rise, in silence and secrecy, like His own resurrection. He will gather up the dust of His people, hitherto carefully preserved by His living power. The four winds of heaven may have scattered it abroad; the four quarters of the earth may have apparently swallowed it up, but earth must surrender His prize. The sea must give up those who are Christ's, and who perhaps found there an unmarked tomb. The sealed tomb, the silent places of the dead, must be gleaned of their precious dust. The unmoved sod, the yet-sealed tomb, will tell the tale, that He who left the grave with unbroken seal in presence of the sleeping watch, He who left the grave clothes "wrapped together" unmoved, has ordered that with the same silence, the same quiet yet mighty power, the "dead in Christ" will rise. They will quit their places as He, the "first-fruits," did when He comes. The living army still here will then hear His voice, and then this corruption puts on its incorruption, then this mortal puts on its immortality, and the exulting song of the Church is heard in response to His mighty "shout"—"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" 1 Cor. 15. Then "they will gaze upon their Master, with His name upon their brow."

Like Enoch of old, they will not be "found"—for God will have translated them.

What an incentive, meanwhile, is this hope to earnestness of purpose in serving Him for whom we wait. The "terror of the Lord" for those who are not Christ's must press itself heavily upon the heart of His soldiers here. They know that the sleeping Church has had the midnight cry. They know how His coming had been forgotten—even denied. They know how that many who love Him have fallen into the "evil servant's" snare, who said, "My lord delayeth his coming." Again they have heard His voice, and have "trimmed their lamps, and gone forth to meet" Him.

They know the solemnity of the hour in which they now stand. They feel that the dawning of the day is near; they watch through the gloom for the Church's Bridegroom—the "Bright and the Morning Star." They feel that all the confusion of the present moment marks the state of the poor

foolish virgins. They know, too, the solemn wail that will pass over these lands where Christ is professed, but Himself unknown—"Lord, Lord, open unto us," and this when the door is shut forever! Indeed, what a solemn moment of terror it will be!

Oh! how bright and living a moment it will be to those who belong to the "first resurrection," who are raised or changed by His mighty power as the witness and proof of their complete acceptance in the Beloved. His resurrection was a proof of the perfection and glory of the person of Him who was there. Ours will be the proof of the perfection of His work in which we stand. Surely then we may well "comfort one another with these words."

"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. F.G. Patterson
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The Two Trees of Paradise

"Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulcher, wherein was never man yet laid." John 19:41. Here we have the cross, garden, and sepulcher—all telling of the work and triumph of the Second Man. It was in a garden where the two trees stood (Gen. 2) that Satan, too, overcame the first man (Gen. 3). Four thousand years roll on, and once again we have a garden containing a cross and a sepulcher—on the one He terminated the history of the first and responsible man, out of the other He rose—the head of a new and eternally living race before God. He came into the world a man for men; He went out of it a man for God. "The tree of the knowledge of good and evil" has its answer in the cross. "The tree of life" is answered in the resurrection. Defeat was there in the first garden; victory is here in the second. There Satan was the conqueror; here Christ is the victor. There death came in; here life comes out. There Adamic responsibility before God began; here we see its termination for the believer. There sin came in; here it is put away for faith.

So here the past ways of God are taken up in the cross and resurrection of Christ, and the result is infinite gain to us. Let us compare the relative gain and loss.

Loss by the First Man

Man's paradise forfeited.(Gen. 3:23, 24).

Sin entered and innocence sinned away. (Gen. 3).

Conscience in the knowledge of good and evil.

Death and separation from God.

Law could not procure righteousness from man.

Man in Adam and by works alienated from God.

Gain by the Second Man

God's paradise gained. (Luke 23:43).

Sin put away and holiness obtained. (Heb. 9:26).

Conscience purged according to God's knowledge of
good and evil.

Life and everlasting nearness to God.

God's righteousness bestowed upon man.

Man in Christ set in the glory of God.

W. Scott

The Power

The power that gives the individual believer the freshness of the hope of the Lord's return just flows from the knowledge of the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, the One living in heaven, who knows us, whom we know, and who is coming back to give us the blessed taste of being forever with Himself in the Father's house.

Resurrection: Is It True?

Two people talking for some time came to the subject of resurrection and one said, "I don't believe in that. I don't think it is reasonable nor possible. I think that when you are dead you are dead and that's it."

Abruptly the other one said, "Where were you one hundred years ago?"

Surprised and falteringly the first replied, "I—I don't know; why?"

"You are here now, aren't you?" the second man said.

"Yes, yes I am," he answered.

"Well, I'll tell you," said the second man. "The One who brought you into being the first time can just as easily raise you up from the dead and will."

Resurrection is true and God has given the following information:

1. Why, in Luke 20.
2. How, in 1 Cor. 15.
3. Who has the power, in Eph. 1.
4. When, in 1 Cor. 15 and Rev. 20. Ed.

Shall I Ever Die?

"Of course you will, sooner or later," most men will answer. "I DO NOT KNOW," is the answer which most Bible students ought to give.

Of believers, it is only those who have a special revelation that they will die, as Peter had had (John 21:19; 2 Peter 1:14) and Paul (2 Tim. 4:6), who are justified in saying, "Certainly I shall die." Peter could say so, for the Lord Jesus had promised to him in particular the martyr's crown. Paul knew the same of himself; but I am only an ordinary Christian, and I do not pretend to be either a Peter or a Paul, and I do not either pretend to have had any revelation directly from the Lord Himself to me about my own private self in particular. Therefore, I am obliged to be satisfied with the general light which God in His Word gives to His family as such, that clear and broad light which shines upon the people of Christ.

I am thus obliged to be satisfied with such words as these: "As it is appointed unto men [man as a sinner; not, as often wrongly quoted, unto all men] once to die, but after this the judgment [so far we read of what awaits man in fallen nature, death and the judgment, then comes what is true of the believer only]: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Heb. 9:27, 28. As mere man is a sinner, and as such is appointed to death and judgment, so the believer (every believer) had all the penalty due to his sins borne by Christ. He looks for Him; to "them that look for Him shall He appear a second time without sin unto salvation." Again 1 Thess. 1:9: "Ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come." Again, 1 Thess. 4:15-18: "This we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

Again John, in Rev. 1:7 says, "Behold, He cometh with clouds," and in chapter 3 verse 11, the Lord says to John, and to us, too, "Behold, I come quickly." Again in chapter 22 and verses 7 and 12, we read, "Behold, I come quickly:" and when, in verse 17, "the Spirit and the bride say, Come," He answers, "Surely I come quickly." v. 20. To this John replies, "Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." These Scriptures and many others show: first, that the path of the believer, as laid down in Scripture, leads the mind, not down to the grave, but up to meet the Lord at His coming; secondly, that the believers in apostolic times did look up that bright and shining way to the Lord's returning as their hope, even as it becomes those whose "conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ." Phil. 3:20.

Thus they, as I, having no special communication of my death, acted upon the word of the two in white apparel, who stood looking up steadfastly toward heaven (where a cloud had received Jesus

from their sight). "Why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." Acts 1:10, 11. Being myself only one of the flock, not the shepherd, the prospect of the flock is my prospect. I have no special, individual communication as to what I personally ought to look for in particular, so I must content myself with the hope set before all Christians, and seek to be like unto one that waits for His Lord from heaven, "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.

It must be so. The Lord has not yet fulfilled the promise which He gave to poor self-confident Peter in John 13:38; 14:1-3: "Wilt thou lay down thy life for My sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied Me thrice. Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. 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." Yes, such is our hope, that "when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory." Col. 3:4.

Someone may say, If these things are so in the Scriptures, why do the religious people of our day not see them? To this I answer, The Pentecostal Christians were by faith, and through the holy Ghost, occupied with the ascended Lord, who, having by His death cleared them of all guilt, was in heaven caring for all their heavenly and spiritual interests, and about to come again, that He might receive them unto Himself. Few religious people nowadays know even what the value of His death and resurrection is to them; they, therefore, cannot study His glory in heaven, and they do not long for His return, or even wish to do so.

It may be said, "Are you alone right, and everyone else wrong?" I reply, "Thank God, I am not alone in this, but if I were alone, I would rather be alone in truth, than with a multitude in error." "But are you sure you are right?" Of this I am sure: first, that God's Word is with me, and secondly, that God will not suffer those who prayerfully search His Word, and lean not to their own understanding, to err in their faith and hope.

Certainly Christ in His coming, and not death, was the hope of the early Christians. Certainly too it is written at the end of the Revelation (and it cheers my heart to read it for others' sake as well as for my own), "The Spirit and the bride say, Come."

"Surely I come quickly: Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

G.V. Wigram

Doctrine of the Resurrection

Though the word "resurrection" may not be found in the Old Testament scriptures, the doctrine of the resurrection of the body was clearly taught, and the fact known. Our Lord went back to the books of Moses, when meeting the Sadducees, who denied there was any resurrection, to establish the doctrine from Scripture. He said, "Now that the dead are raised, even Moses showed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For He is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto Him." Luke 20:37, 38. Job also said, "Though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." Job 19:26. Abraham accounted also that God was able to raise up Isaac from the dead. (Heb. 11:19.) In Psa. 16, the resurrection of our Lord—the path of life after death—was plainly foretold. "My flesh also shall rest in hope. For Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell [hades]; neither wilt Thou suffer Thine holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt show me the path of life." vv. 9-11. We know that His flesh saw no corruption, and that "He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures." 1 Cor. 15:4. People in Old Testament days were also acquainted with the fact of resurrection, for not only was the prophet "revived, and stood upon his feet," when a man was let down and touched his bones in the sepulcher, (2 Kings 13:21), but "women received their dead raised to life again," as, for instance, the widow's son and the Shunamite's son.

Our Lord taught more than the truth of the resurrection of the body. He distinguished between "the resurrection of the just," or "of life," and "the resurrection of damnation," or judgment, and, in the original, we see clearly that He set forth the doctrine of resurrection from among the dead. He said, "They which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from [from among] the dead." Luke 20:35. He Himself is spoken of as "the firstborn from [from among] the dead" (Col. 1:18), because others are to be raised from among the dead. This distinction has been overlooked by many.

The mystery brought out in 1 Cor. 15:51, refers to the living saints when the Lord comes, because it begins with "We shall not all sleep."

C.H. Mackintosh

Elijah As a Type of Christ

In Gen. 28:15 we read of Bethel as the place where God promised to preserve Jacob (type of Israel) wherever he went, to bring him back, and not to leave him until the promises were fulfilled, which He had made before. This name, Bethel, plays a great part in the Word of God, as recalling the eternal care of God for His people.

In 2 Kings 2:2, we see Elijah as the type of the Man Christ Jesus who enters into the midst of the people and identifies Himself with them, starting from the principles proclaimed at Bethel.

Verse 4: Jericho recalls the most complete curse. It was where Christ went after His identification with the people.

Verse 6: Jordan is death.

Verse 8: The power of death is typified here, that power which falls at the touch of the power of Christ.

Verse 9: After the victory, Christ can distribute gifts. Verse 10: If one can see Him far beyond death, He can give everything.

Verse 14 and following: Elisha shows the character of Christ, after His resurrection.

Verse 22: He returns to Jericho and destroys the effects of the curse, and brings in blessing instead of it.

Verse 23: He returns to Bethel—full realization of the promises made to Israel—but he exercises judgment.

Verse 25: Then he goes to Carmel, the garden of God millennial rest. There one finds Elisha exercising the power of the age to come. The miracles are for the profit of the people of God.

The First Resurrection

The first resurrection that we read of in 1 Cor. 15 and Rev. 20 does not describe a period of time, but a class of persons having this characteristic name.

There are three divisions in verse 4 of Rev. 20.

1. "I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them."
2. "And... the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God."
3. "And those which had not worshiped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands."

The first division includes all who are taken up at the rapture and they reign with Christ. He sees not only thrones but those who sit upon them. They share in the reign of Christ. (B)

The second class are those that are slain under the fifth seal. (See chapter 6:9-11.) (C)

The third class are the martyrs victorious over the full power of the beast. (See chapter 15:2.) (C)

The second and third classes who seem to have lost the earthly blessings of the kingdom by death, are specially named as having gained by death and resurrection, a place in the heavenly glory with those who reign with Christ. The first of these divisions, the sitters on the thrones, have been raised or changed at the rapture. The last two are said to be in company with them, "to live and reign with Christ a thousand years." All are named "The first resurrection."

From Words of Truth

The Sheaf of First Fruits

The sheaf of first fruits was, typically, Christ risen. "On the morrow after the Sabbath" it was waved, and that was the first or resurrection-day.

In the ordinance of waving it we observe that:

1. The Jew, (Israel as a nation), was to bring the sheaf to the priest.
2. The priest was to wave it before the Lord, to be accepted for Israel.
3. Israel was, then, to offer a burnt offering with its meat and drink offering.
4. Israel was not to eat of the new corn, in any form till this was done.

This ordinance, very simple in its materials, was very significant of the way of a believer or of the Church touching the resurrection of Christ, as we see that way presented to us in Luke 24:44-53.

1. The disciples bring the sheaf, that is, they apprehend and believe the fact of the resurrection.

(vv. 44, 45.)

2. Christ, the true Priest, teaches them that this resurrection was for them—that the sheaf was accepted of the Lord for them, and He gives them a blessed pledge of this. (Vv. 46-51.)

3. They make their offerings, because of this, offerings of worship and joy. (v. 52.)

4. They know of no eating, no feast, no communion, but in connection with the waved sheaf, or risen Christ. They occupy the temple only as in company with that very story. (v. 53.)

Such is the simple and direct illustration of this beautiful type, which the earliest moment in the experience of the saints after the resurrection of the Lord affords us.

The principal point of attraction, at least, to me, is in Luke 24:53, connected, as it is, with Lev. 23:14.

The disciples can do nothing but rejoice in the wave sheaf. It affords them their one commanding, absorbing thought. They fill the temple, not as worshiping Jews, with sacrifices and remembrances of sins, but as believing souls with thanksgiving for the resurrection and the remission of sins.

It was the first day of harvest with them. They have lost sight of the temple, save as the due spot for rendering offerings on the waving of the first fruits.

And in all this we have another form of owning, as David did in his day, a new place of service. (1 Chron. 21.) The wave sheaf or Christ risen tells us, like Ornan's threshing-floor, that "mercy rejoices over judgment." David, therefore, could not seek the former altar, or the high place at Gibeon, and so the disciples here forget the old temple, or the temple in all its wonted services, except that which belonged to the first day of harvest.

The resurrection had already done much sweet service for them. It had removed their fears, cleared up many a doubt and perplexity, gratified their poor wounded affections, anticipated the toil of their hands at the great stone of the sepulcher, and the value of their spices for the body of their Lord. But now it does the most sublime service of all for them: it changes their religion. As it had already rolled away the heavy stone for them from the door of the sepulcher, so it now rolls away a yoke which neither they nor their fathers had been able to bear. It builds a temple for them fairer than Solomon's. They serve now in the sense of the victory of Jesus, in the waving before the Lord of the sheaf of first fruits accepted for them. "They returned to Jerusalem with great joy: and were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God." Theirs was now, as the Church's still is, the religion of the victory or resurrection of Christ.

Bible Treasury

The Prospect

Beloved, let us sit down, and consider how long it will be before we shall see His face! His face, His own, even His, who is the chiefest amongst ten thousand, the altogether lovely—Jesus, our Lord. Some of us are still young; others are aged. Even should He not come in our lifetime, it cannot be long, a very few more years at the very longest, and we shall see Jesus.

It will do you good, beloved, to sit still in your room, and to meditate upon that meeting, so close at hand. Perhaps it shall be that, lying upon your bed, the body perishing, your last hour shall come, the last moments of which shall be the soul's straining to catch a sight of Him. Then He shall smile upon you, and your friends shall see His beauty beaming upon your dying countenance, and shall watch your responding smiles of greeting, as your spirit haste's away to be "forever with the Lord."

What is this life? It is a vapor that appeareth for a short time, and then vanisheth away. Yes; but it is our time for learning the Lord, and longing to see Him.

Come back, brethren, to the love of Jesus. True, for many of us our springtime is past. Is it true, also, that the early sweetness of our affectionate devotedness to Him is gone? Do we not love Him as we once did? Is the measure, as well as the manner, less? He knows all things, let Him answer; we will be silent. But the early freshness has gone, like the bloom of childhood from our cheeks; we are getting on in years, and the years, each one of them, declare to us, "Nearer home; nearer to the Lord Jesus." Those who have lived to middle age have lived long enough to have their hearts broken. This, it would seem, is one great object for which we are allowed to live a handful of years in life's school. We have seen our parents die, we have seen our children's spirits wing their way home, and we have seen and felt His presence by the dying beds of the aged and the young. Yet we have lived long enough to have our hearts bound up by His hand, beloved, as we are broken by the sorrows of life. And each succeeding year heaven becomes not only nearer, but dearer to our hearts; more treasures are stored there yearly, as the years roll by, and each period of time teaches us what we could never have conceived of Jesus, had it not been for sorrow.

He is so real, as a person who is the beloved of our hearts, so near as a friend who sticketh closer than a brother. Therefore, let us sit down and count up the longest time that it possibly can be before we shall see His face. We know the shortest time it may be—"a moment, the twinkling of an eye;" yes, we may be home before the next tick of the clock, for come He will, and will not tarry. But the longest—how long shall it be? Sit down in your solitude, alone with the Lord, and consider His greeting, and your meeting of His eye!

What is life? It is the privileged moment for glorifying the Lord on earth. Here we are set to walk as He walked—to shine as lights in the world for Him—to be His epistle, known and read of all men. And as we think of seeing Him, we can only think of pleasing Him. Is it too much to say that many of the Lord's people have a barrier between their affections and the Lord's heart? A hindrance exists. They are not bright. They have peace through His blood, but His peace does not fill their hearts. It is of no use disguising the truth—many of God's people are not at this hour in personal

communion with Christ. The spiritual countenance lacks expression. The features of Christianity are there, but the spiritual eye lacks luster; Jesus is not close to the soul; Christ is not dwelling in the heart by faith.

This is not heaven upon earth, nor is it longing after Himself. Spiritual intelligence is not spiritual affection, and without its love the lamp is dim. Again, we say, Come, sit in your room alone; meditate upon the hour beyond this life and this world, when we shall behold His face. What a remedy this is for present spiritual ailments! Some have one remedy for the soul's state, then another, but all fail, save "Jesus only." We thank God for the doctrines, and thank Him more that each doctrine is a door opening into the presence of the Lord. Are we outside these doors? Many are! They know well what the doors are like. There is the door of shittim wood, and that of silver and that of gold, that is, there is knowledge of His spotless humanity, of His redeeming blood, of His God and Father's glory through Him. But open the door of His humanity, and behold Himself. Before you is the perfect Man; open the silver door of redemption, and behold His once-streaming wounds; open the golden door, and see Him where He is in the glory on high. It is Jesus only that these hearts of ours need; let us seek more of His blest company. His presence will shed its holy glow over our very selves. It is only a little while, and we shall walk with Him in white. Today, our words shall speak the one language of heaven, if only we are in His presence.

What a change there would be in us if Christ formed our hearts. The strife of tongues would cease, pride would vanish, sin would be confessed, and men would take knowledge of us that we had been with Jesus.

H. Witherby

Ascend

"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." John 3:3. What kingdom is it he cannot see, or enter into the kingdom of God?

If you read carefully Ezek. 36:24-35, you will see the Lord was speaking of the kingdom He will yet set up on this earth, with Palestine as its center, And the Jews as its happy subjects. But none will enter or see that kingdom unless they are born from above, with wholly a new nature, as described in Ezekiel. But if that is true of the earthly part of the kingdom of God, how much more so of the heavenly, (that is, the church) of which Jesus says He was not then speaking.

Another question has been a difficulty with many. In John 3:13, Jesus says, "And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven." Some ask, "Did not Enoch and Elijah ascend to heaven?" (See Gen. 5:24; 2 Kings 2:11.)

The answer to this difficulty is in the word ascend. Jesus did not say no man hath been taken to heaven. Enoch had. "Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him." This was far from his own act in ascending up to heaven.

This is true also of Elijah and although he is a striking type of Christ, yet how careful the Holy Ghost is to guard this truth. Elijah descended from the highest Gilgal to Bethel. Jesus descended from the highest heaven to Bethlehem and Israel. Then Elijah descended to Jericho, the place of the curse. Jesus descended still lower, to man under the curse.

Elijah must still go lower, to the Jordan. Jesus must needs suffer death, the death of the cross. But mark the contrast, as well as the parallel. The sons of the prophets say, both at Bethel and Jericho, "Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head to-day?" And Elijah said also to Elisha, "If thou see me when I am taken from thee." Now the disciples did see Jesus as Messiah taken away from them. (Luke 24:51.) Again in Acts 1:9, we read, "He was taken up." So far we have a parallel in all three cases, for He was truly man.

Now look at the heavenly side. He says, "I tell you of heavenly things. And no man hath ascended up into heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven." John 3:12, 13.

Enoch and Elijah were only men, and had to be taken to heaven. Jesus was Jehovah, human and divine. He could be taken, and He in His own right, title, and power, could ascend. No other ever came down to be man. No other as man could ascend. He could say, "I ascend." John 20:17.

In accomplishing our complete redemption, God "raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places." Eph. 1:20, 21. But He had this surpassing preeminence. He is the only one who descended, the only one who ascended. It is only written of Him, "When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that He ascended, what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things.)"

Eph. 4:8-10. This can be said of none other than of Him, who has the preeminence.

It cannot be said of David. (Acts 2:34.) Enoch and Elijah were taken up. And Paul, as in Christ, whether he was in the body, or out of the body, had to be "caught up" to the third heaven. (2 Cor. 12:4.)

Therefore it is absolutely true, and in perfect harmony with all Scripture as Jesus said to Nicodemus, "And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven."

Holy, Holy, Lord, Thou alone art worthy of this high preeminence.

Another thought has been suggested. While it is quite true that there is no contradiction in Scripture, as to the bodily ascension of the Lord, He alone having that right and title, yet it is also true in another and most important sense that there was no moral power in man in his natural state to ascend or rise up to heavenly things. Jesus said to Nicodemus, "If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things? And no man hath ascended up to heaven." In this sense Christ was the only one who came down from heaven and could communicate those heavenly things to others; "He that cometh from above." John 3:31-33. Man needs to be born from above before he can understand those heavenly things.

Whether, therefore, we look at this as to the title of the blessed Person of Christ to ascend to heaven, or spiritually in connection with the instruction given to Nicodemus, all is in perfect harmony. In all things He has the preeminence. Man in his natural state has no knowledge of heavenly things.

C.H. Mackintosh

The Scriptures

Number 1

By "Scriptures" we mean sacred writings. They are a most gracious gift and that they should ever have been recorded is very marvelous. That they should have been preserved for us amidst all the superstition and infidelity of the dark ages, is a standing witness of the goodness and power of God! We can, at this remote point in time, with the volume of inspiration before us and the teaching of the Holy Spirit within us, receive the doctrines of the apostles in all their primitive purity through their epistles. We can be in company with the Son of God, and catch the inimitable utterances which fell from His gracious lips in all their fervor and freshness. We are also able to enter into the divine ways as revealed in past ages and receive instruction, as it were, from the mouth of God. Such is the wonderful reality of possessing the infallible word of the living God.

Blessed be God, He has spoken and inspired His chosen servants to write the revelation of His own mind so that we may read it again and again. In this sacred service, He has been pleased to employ a variety of instruments at different times extending over a period of perhaps seventeen or eighteen hundred years. Persons in very different positions in this life were called and prepared to set before us the mind of God. Sometimes learned men and at other times ignorant and unlearned men were His instruments; on some occasions kings were used in this blessed service and at other times a herdsman or a fisherman.

In many parts and by different instruments, at various times and in many ways, God has graciously revealed His mind in writing. By the Spirit He has manifestly set forth one harmonious whole. However diversified and infinite its depth and range, yet all the parts so fit in with each other that we could not be without any portion of the inspired writings without serious loss. The "words," too, have been given, not according to those taught by human wisdom, but in those which the Holy Spirit teaches. (1 Cor. 2:13.) It is comforting to note that all is given for our profit and blessing. "All [or every] Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect [complete], thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. 3:16, 17.

Moses was commanded of God to write (Ex. 34:27; Deut. 27:3), and the Lord said, "Moses... wrote of Me." John 5:46. Again we read that Moses wrote a song according to the commandment of Jehovah and taught it to the children of Israel. "Moses wrote their goings out according to their journeys by the commandment of the Lord." Num. 33:2. (See also Deut. 31:19-22.) After the smiting of the rock on Horeb, in order that the people might have water to drink, the Lord said to Moses, "Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua." Ex. 17:14.

It is clear that Moses was conscious that the word he gave to Israel had divine authority. He said, "It shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all His commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all the nations of the earth." His writings, therefore, are called "the

words of this law," "the covenant,"

"His statutes which are written in this book of the law," and "Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests." Deut. 28:1, 58; 29:21; 30:10; 31:9. These were some of the beginnings of the Holy Scriptures.

Joshua, who was Moses's successor, was solemnly charged by Jehovah to observe and do according to all the law which Moses commanded. It was also said, "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success." Josh. 1:8. C.H. Mackintosh

The Day of Glory

The day of glory bearing

Its brightness far and near,

The day of Christ's appearing

We now no longer fear.

He once a spotless victim

For us on Calvary bled;

Jehovah did afflict Him,

And bruised Him in our stead.

To Him by grace united,

We joy in Him alone;

And now by faith delighted,

Behold Him on the throne.

Then let Him come in glory,

Who comes His saints to raise!

To perfect all the story

Of wonder, love, and praise.

Bible Challenger-01-January V.02

The first letter of the following responses will form the word telling us of a never-failing regard the Lord has for each of His own.

1. The Lord's invitation to the heavy laden.
2. The risen Lord's comment to two wayfarers who found resurrection truths hard to believe.
3. Jesus' answer to His disbelieving brethren for not going to Judea.
4. Jesus' words to the assembled disciples on the evening of resurrection day.
5. Jesus' counsel to all who would bear fruit.
6. The Lord's unexpected answer to those who tempted Him about paying tribute.
7. What Jesus said to His disciples signifying of whom the kingdom of God is comprised.
8. Jesus' announcement for a world in darkness.
9. How did Jesus address the Pharisees and Sadducees in view of impending wrath?

How did the Lord Jesus conclude His prayer when contemplating the work of the cross?

What did Jesus tell those who doubted that He came from God the Father?

Answers to these questions will be found in next month's issue of Christian Treasury.

R. Erisman

Bible Challenger-00-December Answers to V.01

1. Obed-edom 1 Chron. 13:14
2. Barzillai 2 Sam. 19:32, 35
3. Ehud Judg. 3:15
4. Daniel Dan. 4:19
5. Ichabod 1 Sam. 4:19, 21
6. Elihu Job 32:6
7. Nathanael John 1:47
8. Cain Gen. 4:1
9. Elijah 1 Kings 18:22, 27

"Casting down imaginations, 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.

Taking Our Hearts up

God has two ways of taking our hearts up where He is: wooing by His love or weaning by circumstances.

The Wondrous Ways of God

The wondrous ways of God will never allow a trial in your life without a purpose of love on His part and a needs-be on our part.

The Soul

The "soul" is the seat of desire and appetite.

The Fear of the Lord

"The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether." Psa. 19:9. "The fear of the Lord" is the fear of displeasing the Lord. God never makes mistakes. Let us quietly walk with God; His judgments are always right. There is nothing that brings blessing like walking with God.

The Scientific Age

Releasing the power of the atom is one of the greatest marvels of science. Men have unlocked power far beyond their ability to control. This is truly the scientific age—the age of wonders. On every hand are evidences of the ingenuity of men, so much so that science is almost worshiped as a new god—not that these things have brought men closer to the true God, nor caused them to feel their own littleness and dependence on the God in whose hand their breath is. On the contrary, they have tended to take men generally farther away from God onto paths of conceit and independence, if they have not been used to actually discredit God and make man supreme. And the real purpose of this greatest scientific development was to kill and to destroy—surely "their feet are swift to shed blood."

One is reminded of the magicians of Egypt in the days of Moses who did great and wonderful things by the power of magic, behind which Satan was. The effect of their wonders was to blind the minds of Pharaoh and his men to the fact that God had been speaking to them and that they had to do with Him.

While the magicians did some things that the present men-of-marvels might not be able to do, they never dreamed of the thousands of things that science has developed. There is one point in common between them, however, and that is, there is one certain place beyond which neither can pass. Both alike come to an abrupt stop when it comes to producing life; neither the men of that day nor this one can make a single little louse. They might breed them today and so make a plague, or when ready, use some scientific method to exterminate them and stop the plague, but man never has and never will create life. Only God can give life and (alas, too often forgotten today), only He can sustain it. "Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?" Isa. 2:22. P. Wilson

We Look for Christ, Not Events

We look for Christ, not events. Perhaps no erroneous doctrine has been more detrimental to the souls of God's children, than the teaching that those who compose the church of God will have to pass through "the great tribulation." Such a statement subverts God's revelation of the Church as the Body and Bride of Christ. It reduces the heavenly people to Jewish associations, and robs them of the attitude of watching and waiting for Christ to come at any time. Such, more or less, merge into a political view of the Lord's coming by looking for events instead of Himself, by looking for antichrist instead of Christ. Thus the affections, conscience, and hope of the soul become seriously damaged by it.

Nothing can be clearer in the Lord's farewell address to His disciples before going to the Father, than that He left them with the blessed expectation of soon seeing Him again. Between the coming of the Holy Spirit and His return from heaven, He did not put a series of events to be fulfilled; so we are told that the early Christians waited for God's Son from heaven.

The part of scripture that has been perverted to give a color to the doctrine is Matt. 24. But a brief glance at it will suffice to show that the "coming" referred to by the disciples, in their questions to the Lord, was not His coming for us, but His coming to Jerusalem when we come with Him. Then every eye shall see Him coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. (Matt. 23:39; 24:3.) That those mentioned there who will go through the tribulation are "His elect," is true enough, and a term applied by Isaiah to the blest remnant of the Jews.

The time of "Jacob's trouble" which he will have to pass through and be brought out of, is clearly marked out by the following references:

1. "The Sabbath day."
2. "Judea."
3. "Fleeing to the mountains."
4. "Flesh saved."
5. "The abomination" spoken of by Daniel the prophet.
- 6 "The great tribulation such as was not.... no, nor ever shall be" also spoken of by the same prophet. It is preceded by the preaching of "the gospel of the kingdom of God," not of the grace of God as now preached. It is "the hour of temptation," coming upon all the world, from which the Lord promises to save us. "Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, I also will keep thee from [or out of] the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." Rev. 3:10.

It is interesting to observe that when our Lord referred to His rejection by the Jews, Judah and Benjamin, He said, "I am come in My Father's name, and ye receive Me not: if another shall come in his own name, [the antichrist] him ye will receive." John 5:43. This we know from other

scriptures is how the unparalleled tribulation will be brought about, and in retributive justice, the very tribes which rejected the Messiah will go through it. The ten tribes will not be gathered together till after this, when the Lord actually comes out of heaven. (Matt. 24:31.)

Young Christian

We look not for the beast to come,
Nor for the great false prophet;
We scan not skies for signs of men,
Such studies yield no profit.
We wait not tribulation times,
Nor seek we death to take us.
We wait for God's Beloved Son,
From this hope none can shake us.
Our Lord is coming this we know,
Some day at night or noon,
And though we have no date to show,
We know He's coming soon.

Holy Brethren

"Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession [confession] Christ Jesus." We are holy brethren. I might ask you, "Are you one of the brethren?" Yes, by the grace of God you are if you know the Lord Jesus. If He is your Savior and you have put your trust in Him, you are one of the brethren. But are you one of the holy brethren? Do you shrink from that? Suppose I come to you and say, "Brother, are you one of the holy brethren?" If you know the truth you will have to say, "Yes." Who are the holy brethren? They are the ones who are attached to the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus. He is up there in the glory, and He has been trying for over 40 years to get my heart out of this world. Oh, how poorly I have responded to His love! He has been trying to wean me from this poor scene and get my eye centered on heaven, and He is trying to do the same thing with you, because He wants us to be practically what He has made us in positional.

Now, holy brethren are separate brethren, aren't they? They walk a separate life—and what makes them like that? They are strangers and they are pilgrims. They are seeking a heavenly home, and that makes them misfits in the world down here—and the more they become conformed to that blessed One up there, the stranger they seem down here. When they speak of the things of the world, the people of the world understand each other. But when we speak the language of our heavenly calling, our heavenly hopes and aspirations, and the heavenly promises, the world does not understand what we are talking about. But you and I should be able to understand that language. Which do you understand better—the language that you hear at the meetings, or the language you hear at the barber shop? Where are you more at home if you join the conversation? That is searching, isn't it?

"Partakers of the heavenly calling." What is the heavenly calling?—It is the calling to heaven. What could be simpler? When God called the Jew, He called him to the earth—right to a spot of ground down here in this world. But, Christian, when He found you and drew you to Himself, He started you on the way to heaven, and the only reason you have not landed there long ago is the long-suffering patience of God that is waiting for somebody else.

"Consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus." Why Christ Jesus?—Christ is the Glorified One, and so it is the glorified Jesus. He is the Apostle and High Priest. Now, consider Him! Oh, think of Him. Think who He is, and think where He is—and the two things go together. You will find those two themes running all through Hebrews. If you and I consider Him—if that forms our thinking, we are going to be more like Christians. We are going to be more like heavenly citizens. We sometimes sing a hymn about being more like the saints that used to be. What is going to make us more like the saints of old who had heaven before them? We have it right here "Consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus."

C.H. Brown

The Christian Home

We have some very precious truths in God's Word concerning the assembly, the body of Christ. God has made that wondrous position for His people so they can be one in Christ and go on together in a practical way. This truth concerning the body of Christ, that precious oneness that God has established by His Spirit, is a truth that has been greatly attacked. Satan does not like it because that precious truth draws us nearer to Christ and consequently nearer to one another.

There is another truth we have in the Word of God, another institution that God has established. It, too, has been under attack by Satan, particularly in recent years, and that is the truth in the Word of God concerning the Christian home. These two things, the Christian home and the assembly, are dealt with in the very beginning of the Word of God. It is as if God would say to us, "I want to show you right at the very beginning how important these two truths are."

In the second chapter of Genesis you will see, with God's help, a picture that God has established of what He intends our homes to be.

The Lord Jesus and His Church

We have the precious truth concerning The Lord Jesus Christ and His Church, the assembly, pictured here in Adam and Eve. We find that Adam was under a deep sleep when from his side a rib was taken and for him was fashioned Eve, the woman who was brought unto the man. We see here a beautiful picture of the Lord Jesus and His Church. He went into the deep sleep of death and God formed for Him this woman, and Christ, like Adam, will have that which is so infinitely precious to Himself which is now spoken of as "flesh of His flesh, bone of His bone," made one with Himself.

When we see the picture of the Christian home unfolded before us, we find a very distinct and instructive order. "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." v. 7. Here we have the foundation, the first step in the establishment of a Christian home—the man who becomes a living soul. He belongs to Christ by the miracle of new birth and now he, as a child of God to whom God has given life, is ready for his home.

Man was formed first and then for him God formed the garden. It tells us distinctly that in the garden "out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food." In the garden which God intended to be the home for the man whom He created and gave life to, He provided everything that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. A man does not have to wander into strange pastures to find that which satisfies his heart. It is all in his own home as God has established it.

A Home in Order

In the tenth verse it says "A river went out of Eden to water the garden," the river of God's blessing for the garden. That which originates in the garden, first waters the garden. Sad to say, we can get the attitude that our responsibilities are so world-wide that we forget that the river was intended to water the garden first. "From thence it was parted, and became into four heads" (v. 10), and from there it goes out. When a Christian home is established according to the mind of God, you will find that there Christ is the center. Where the responsibility that God has placed is acknowledged, the home is watered indeed and that home is a blessing to the whole earth. It goes out to the four corners of the world.

"And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it." This word "to dress it" really means to till it—to work it. When it says "to keep it," the thought is to guard it—to till it, to work it, to guard it. This is a very special word to those of us who are in that place of being the responsible heads of our homes. We are responsible before God to work our home. That is, to make sure that we are doing what the Lord would have us do in our home to make it the garden that God intended it to be.

It tells us in the Word of God that husbands are to love their wives. This is one of the principle ways in which we are to till our garden, to work that garden. The husband is to be the principle source of love in his home. That may sound a little strange, but that is the way the Word of God presents it to us because our homes are patterned after the relationship of Christ and His Church. We find that in Ephesians it says, "Husbands, love your wives," but when you turn over to Titus, the teaching is that wives are to love their own husbands. The word that is used there is a less forceful word. It really has the thought of having a strong affection for your husband. It is the pattern that fits into the whole establishment of the Christian home. The young lady is not the one who goes out looking for the man. No, it is the man who before God has that exercise of having a bride. When he feels that the Lord has led him to the right young lady, then it is he who first sets his love upon her. It is a source of tragedy and a serious mistake when a young lady allows her heart's affections to go out and to be fixed upon some young man before that man has given any indication of his feelings for her. That is not according to the pattern that the Word of God presents to us.

The Lord Jesus loved the Church and in return is loved by the Church. It tells us "We love, because He

first loved us." His love is the stronger love. He loves us far more than we love Him. And so it is that the pattern that is shown us here is that Adam was held responsible.

Guarding the Home

He was called upon to till his garden; but he was also called upon to guard it.

How important this is! The husband has that place of responsibility before God to guard his home. Just as there is an enemy who seeks to introduce what is false and what is worldly into the assembly, so there is an enemy who wants to introduce what is false and of the world into our homes. We are to guard our homes and not allow into those homes that which is going to become a source of heartache and sorrow, that which can only result in dishonor to the Lord.

"The Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." v. 16, 17. It is important to see that this commandment was given to the man; it was not given to Eve. This is all tied together with the place of responsibility that the husband has in the Christian home. To till it and guard it is his responsibility as the head of his home, to insure that this home is carried on in a way that is obedient to the Word of God.

A Help Meet for Adam

Through His wondrous grace we find that the Lord God says, "It is not good that the man should be alone." How lovely to see that in all that God has provided, it is not complete without a help meet for him. So it says in verses 19 and 20, "And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam.... But for Adam there was not found a help meet for him." Of all the beautiful animals that this world had, nothing corresponded to Adam.

So it is that God forms for the man from Adam's side, one who is his help meet, his like. How vital this is! Often we hear people say, "Well, the person that he's marrying is a Christian," as if that is all that really matters. It is important that the partner be a child of God. The Word of God is very clear on that. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." But that is not enough. The Christian home, the home that God intends it to be, will not result simply from two who belong to Christ being joined together. What the man needs is one who will be willing to walk in the same path of faith as he does—one who wants to walk to please God and who has the same exercise of heart and conscience.

In the third chapter we find that God had not idly given instruction to guard the garden. There was an enemy and the enemy appeared. He sought to introduce into the garden disobedience to God which would result in the loss of the garden. He first approached Eve with a very subtle kind of attack that, first of all, questioned what God had said and then contradicted what God had said. But what we have shown here in a most striking way is the picture of Eve failing in her responsibility to be a help meet.

Stepping Out of Place

She was to help Adam to go on for God and to fill his function in the garden. Instead she took over and started doing the talking. She sort of set aside Adam's place of headship and stepping out of her place, tried to take Satan on by herself. The result was only chaos, and when a sister steps out of her place in the home, all we can have is chaos. She was to be a help meet, but instead of filling the role that God intended, she became just the opposite and acted in such a way as to lead Adam away. He took the fruit from her and he did eat.

Adam was the one who was told to guard his garden and Adam failed in his responsibility. The Lord God came down and what did He say? "Where art thou?" Did God not know what had happened? Did the Lord not know that Eve was the one who had first taken of the fruit? Of course He did! But He addressed the responsible head, Adam! Adam blamed his wife and said: "The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." As far as Adam was concerned, it was either God's fault or it was Eve's fault.

As we read on in verses 13 through 19, we are introduced to a pattern of sorrow that still applies in the world today. But notice: "And unto Adam He said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life." The Lord God addressed Adam. Eve must bear the consequences of her act, but the responsibility was Adam's. He was the one to whom the Lord said, "I commanded thee." It was Adam's disobedience.

We cannot avoid the responsibility that God puts upon us. Husbands are to guard the home, to insure that nothing is going to come in that will make it lose that character of a garden that God intends it to have. Eve failed in her responsibility as a help meet. Adam failed in his responsibility to guard his garden and to act as the head of his home. God said, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake." In Rom. 5 it says, "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin." If you or I had written it, we would have written, "By one woman sin entered into the world." But the Spirit of God didn't write it that way because Adam had the place of headship and was responsible. It tells us, "Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even to them who had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression." Why doesn't it say Eve's transgression? Because what is being taught is that Adam had a specific known commandment. The result was that his home was no longer a garden.

Children in the Family

We find in the fourth chapter that God introduced children. Cain was born into the family of Adam and Eve. "She conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord." The name Cain means in the acquired. How many dear Christian parents have looked upon their firstborn and said, "How wonderful, we have gotten a child from the Lord." [Another writer has said, "Whatever Eve's own condition as believing the promise, what she says at the birth of Cain was the expression of the thought that the fulfillment of promise was in nature, which could not be. Sin was there and death, and the judgment of the hope of promise connected with nature had come in. have gotten a man from Jehovah' was faith in promise, but the expectation of the accomplishment of promise was in nature. And Cain had to go out from the presence of Jehovah."]

When Eve had the second-born child, it tells us, "She again bare his brother, Abel." The name Abel simply means vanity. There is a real message here. If we look upon the children whom the Lord has put into our families as something simply that we have gotten from the Lord, we are not looking upon them in the way God intends us to. Cain, the first man born into this world, ended up as a murderer. He killed his own brother. Did Adam and Eve have any responsibility for what Cain did to Abel? Indeed they did. I have no doubt that Adam and Eve realized as they saw the body of their dead son just what the enormous consequences were of losing the garden. Adam allowed into the garden that which he was supposed to guard against, and it resulted in this tragedy of seeing Abel dead and Cain banished from, the presence of the Lord.

This should speak to our hearts, particularly to those of us who have young children. We should not allow anything to come into our homes that is going to stop that flowing of the river that God intends to be in the home, or that is going to cost us our garden. Adam was responsible as the head of his home, to guard it. In his children he reaped the consequences of his failure to exercise that responsibility.

There was another child born into the family of Adam and Eve, but they didn't look upon Seth as something that they had gotten from the Lord. They viewed Seth as one who had been appointed to their household.

A Home Appointed by the Lord

It actually says here, "For God, said she, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew." God intends that in the Christian, the children in that home should be looked upon as those whom the Lord has specifically appointed to be there. The Lord maintains that they are His, but He has put them into our homes. If we view our children in this way, we will bring them up in a far different way than if we see them simply as that which we have gotten from the Lord.

When Seth was introduced, he had a son called Enos. We read, "He called his name Enos: then began men to call upon the name of the Lord." Here was the result that God pictured to us as viewing our children as those whom the Lord has appointed to be in our home.

Suppose the Queen came to me and said that out of all the gardens in the world she had picked my garden in which to put six of her plants for me to care for and raise for her. Can you imagine me saying to myself, "Well, as long as they get a drink now and again they'll be all right. It doesn't matter if they get enough food or if they are too hot or cold." Or can you imagine me saying for one moment, "It doesn't matter if there is a little bit of poison in their food—it can't be too bad." I don't believe I would think that way. God has appointed plants in many of our gardens. He has chosen, out of all the gardens in this world, your garden in which to put those plants. And now He holds you responsible as to how those plants are raised. There is a difference in saying, "I have acquired this baby boy or girl from the Lord and he is mine to do with as I please," and in saying, "I see him as one that the Lord has put in my garden— appointed there with the responsibility to raise for Him."

The Lord has faithfully shown us from the Scriptures what He intends our homes should be, what He intends the husband should be and do in his home, what He intends the wife should be and do, what He intends the children should be, and how they are to be viewed in the garden that God intends our homes to be.

J. Brereton

The Day of the Lord, and Events Which Succeed It

Peter, in his second Epistle (Ch. 3), speaking of "the day of the Lord," says: "The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night;" here we have the suddenness of its approach. He then goes on to say, "in the which," (not at its first approach, but) "in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat.... Nevertheless, we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

This promise we find in Isa. 66:22: "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." Its connection here is with the permanent blessing of an earthly people, even Israel.

The more complete unfolding of this subject is found in Rev. 20 and 21, where the order of things is very distinctly marked.

1. We have the millennium, or thousand years' reign, Satan being bound during the whole of that period. The Church reigns "with Christ." The laws and the nations are ruled over.
2. At the end of the thousand years, we find Satan loosed, and, as if to prove that a long period of punishment does not make a sinful being better, he comes forth with more hatred and revenge than ever. In mad fury he gathers together the nations from the four quarters of the earth in open revolt against God, and judgment falls upon them.
3. The devil is now cast into the lake of fire, to be "tormented day and night forever and ever."
4. The great white throne is now set. The Lord Jesus, as the "Judge of all," sits upon it. It is at this period of the day of the Lord that the heavens and the earth "flee away," or, to use the words of the Apostle Peter, "pass away," and are "dissolved." The dead are judged, and "whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire."
5. All evil being now cleared away forever, God introduces the eternal state of blessedness. "Behold, I make all things new."

"I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." Rev. 21:1-4. GOD shall be "all in all." 1 Cor. 15:28. W.C.B.

Editorial

Many episodes of terrorism have been felt in various parts of the world in the past year. One definition of terrorism is that it is the premeditated murder, maiming and menacing of innocent

people to frighten and to gain a political victory. The ruthless murder of 21 Jewish worshipers in the synagogue in Istanbul is a prime example. Kidnapping, hijacking, bombing and hostage-taking are increasing.

Quite naturally, questions arise as to why these things are happening. What is the cause? Is it something new and will it stop? No, it is not new and it will continue. Since this world rejected the Prince of Peace and chose a murderer and robber, it has increasingly suffered from murderers and robbers and has had no peace.

Three cases of banditry or terrorism are cited in the book of The Acts. Gamaliel in chapter five says, "For before these days rose up Theudas, boasting himself to be somebody; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves: who was slain; and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered, and brought to naught. After this man rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him: he also perished; and all, even as many as obeyed him, were dispersed." Also in chapter twenty one the chief captain said, "Art not thou that Egyptian, which before these days madest an uproar, and leddest out into the wilderness four hundred men that were murderers?"

Treachery, terror and treaty-breaking have been the world's history from those days till now. True, it does seem that these things are increasing and we believe that they will increase. We are in the last days of this period of grace and next will come the terrible delusion and dreadful hatred and unrestrained wickedness of men's hearts under Satan's influence in the time of the great tribulation.

Today's terrorism springs mostly from a collaboration of Marxist and Muslim radicalism against the West, the nations of Christendom. The Adversary, the devil, already seems to be exerting what power he can through atheism and Mohammedanism against professing Christian and Jewish lands.

The great power in the background is Russia. Twice the inspired prophet Isaiah tells us something of her character of treachery. "The treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously; yea, the treacherous dealers have dealt very treacherously." Isa. 24:16. Again, "Woe to thee that spoilest, and thou wast not spoiled; and dealest treacherously, and they dealt not treacherously with thee! When thou shalt cease to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled; and when thou shalt make an end to deal treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with thee." Isa. 33:1.

In order to live quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty we ought to pray earnestly for the powers that be. "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior." 1 Tim. 2:3. The Holy Spirit indwells each believer and so we have the comfort that "greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world." 1 John 4:4. Also in 2 Thess. 2:7, about the Holy Spirit it says, "He who now letteth [hinders] will let [hinder], until He be taken out of the way." This will occur at the rapture when all believers are caught up. Then the poor world will not have the direct restraining action of the Holy Spirit and terrorism surely will be everywhere. Ed.

The Scriptures: Number 2

Joshua was assured by direct communication from Jehovah of the divine origin and authority of the writings of Moses. He was also taught that his success in the service of God would be connected with his observing to do according to all that Moses commanded, without turning from it to the right hand or to the left. Thus Joshua had sacred writings committed to him which were to be regarded by him as the Word of God.

We find also that Joshua wrote on an altar to the Lord God of Israel. "He wrote there upon the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he wrote in the presence of the children of Israel." And to show how genuinely he owned the divine authenticity of the writings of Moses, we are told that "afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessings and cursings, according to all that is written in the book of the law. There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, with the women and the little ones, and the strangers that were conversant among them." Josh. 8:32-35.

Isaiah Wrote: Jeremiah Wrote:

The prophet Samuel was also a writer. He "told the people the manner of the kingdom, and wrote it in a book, and laid it up before the Lord." 1 Sam. 10:25. We read also that Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amos, wrote the acts of Uzziah first and last. (2 Chron. 26:22.)

"Jeremiah wrote in a book all the evil that should come upon Babylon, even all these words that are written against Babylon. And Jeremiah said to Seraiah, When thou comest to Babylon, and shalt see,

and shalt read all these words; then shalt thou say, O Lord, Thou hast spoken against this place." Jer. 51:60-62.

Daniel tells us that he had a dream, and visions of his head upon his bed, and he wrote the dream. He also acknowledged the divine authenticity of sacred writings, for he tells us that he "understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem," and he also owned the divine authority of what is "written in the law of Moses." Dan. 7:1; 9:2, 11.

The prophet Hosea says, "I have written to him [Ephraim] the great things of My law." Hos. 8:12. The Lord said to Habakkuk, "Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it." Hab. 2:2. The Psalmist said, "My tongue is the pen of a ready writer." Psa. 45:1. The wise man exclaimed, "Have not I written to thee excellent things?" Prov. 22:20. These instances are enough, we judge, to show that writing was a means ordered by God for communicating and treasuring up divinely given truth, and that it was practiced and acknowledged by His servants.

Sacred Writings

Scriptures, or sacred writings, with all the value of divine authority were also recognized throughout Old Testament times. As we have seen, the statutes written in the Law of Moses were to be kept. When the people of Israel had a king it was said, "He shall read therein all the days of his life; that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law, and these statutes, to do them." Deut. 17:19. Joshua taught the people to "take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law, which Moses the servant of the Lord charged you." Josh. 22:5.

In David's day, the Lord brought a breach upon Uzzah so that he died before the ark, because the king had not sought to do the work after the due order. But when he and those with him acted as Moses commanded, according to the word of the Lord which had been written, then they brought up the ark of God with gladness. (See 2 Sam. 6:7, 8; 1 Chron. 15:13, 15, 28.) In David's dying charge to Solomon, he enjoined him to "keep His statutes, and His commandments, and His judgments, and His testimonies, as it is written in the Law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself." 1 Kings 2:3.

Even Amaziah, though he did not do that which was right as David his father had done, still owned the authority of sacred writings.

Written in the Book

We find when he executed judgment on those who had slain his father that, "the children of the murderers he slew not: according unto that which is written in the book of the law of Moses, wherein the Lord commanded, saying, The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, nor the children be put to death for the fathers; but every man shall be put to death for his own sin." 2 Kings 14:6.

King Asa "commanded Judah to seek the Lord God of their fathers, and to do the law and the commandment." 2 Chron. 14:4.

Jehoshaphat "sought to the Lord God of his father, and walked in His commandments." He also sent teachers who taught in Judah, and had the book of the law of the Lord with them. In the battlefield he said, "Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem; believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe His prophets, so shall ye prosper." 2 Chron. 17:4, 9; 20:20. C.H. Mackintosh

The Third Loft Teaching From Acts 20 Act 20

In the opening verses of this chapter we see the faithful care of God over the Apostle Paul in his travels in the work of the Lord. When the Lord is at work in any place, the enemy always gets busy and those who oppose the truth the most are those who are the most religious. It was Paul's own brethren in the flesh (the Jews) who persecuted him the most. How very deeply the Apostle felt what he wrote to those in Macedonia:

"For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews: who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men: forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins always: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost." 1 Thess. 2:14-16.

We, too, have the same faithful God to rest in and to care for us in our own individual lives and in our time of service for the Lord.

When we come to verse 6 of our chapter, we notice a very interesting thing. The Apostle Paul is joined in his journey up to Jerusalem by Luke and perhaps others, for the author now says we instead of he. Together now are apostles and prophets. Compare this with Eph. 2:20.

In verses 7 through 12 we believe that the Spirit of God is giving us a brief prophecy of the testimony during this day of grace, and especially in connection with the Lord's Supper. In these few verses it is helpful if we think of Paul as representing Paul's doctrine, and the young man, Eutychus, as representing Church testimony and what befell it. If we want to see the Church in its beauty, we must either look at it in its beginning or ending. In chapters 2, 3, and 4 of the Acts, how very bright was the Church's testimony when they were all together and had all things common. So also we see a very bright picture in verses 7 and 8. All is in order and we see that already it had become a custom for the disciples to come together to break bread upon the first day of the week, the resurrection day, that which speaks of the new order of things. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." 2 Cor. 5:17.

Also they are met together in an upper chamber. This would indeed remind us that the Church's true position is heavenly, above the level of the world. In Luke chapter 22, there were two things that characterized the room where the Lord's Supper was instituted. It was a large room and an upper room. This is full of instruction for us. The Lord has room for all that will come and present themselves suitable to His own presence, and the place will be a place that is morally above the level of the world.

In the early days of the history of the Church here on earth, Paul's doctrine was known and practically followed for a brief period. This was a bright testimony made so by individual Christians being together; so also in verse 8 there were many lights together, and in the proper place.

The Lord's Supper is the expression of the fact that we are one with Him. We are members of His body. As being members of His body, we are privileged to break bread. There is nothing else to join, for if we should join something else we would be a testimony to something else. "He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit." 1 Cor. 6:17. (See also 1 Cor. 10:15-17; 1 Cor. 11:23-26.)

In every case in which God has tested man, he has soon fallen from the exalted place in which he had been put. The case here of the Church in her high and favored position is no different. We see this typified in Eutychus' falling asleep and falling from the third loft and being apparently lifeless. As soon as the apostles and New Testament prophets were gone from this scene, the precious truths given through the Apostle Paul were lost sight of. A deep sleep fell upon the Church and the result was a fall down to the level of the world and death as to the testimony. "They all slumbered and slept." (See Matt. 25:1-13.) "Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead." Rev. 3:1.

The Word of God lives and abides. "Forever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in heaven." Psalms 119:89. After many centuries of darkness as to the testimony of the Church here on earth, God again brought out into the light Paul's doctrine to be known and practiced. The result was life as to the testimony and a raising up from the world's level to the same high place it had occupied before. Through the work of the Spirit of God, the mystery of Christ and the Church, the truth of the rapture, the Lord's Supper, and many other precious truths, long lost, were again brought to light. In about the year 1827 a few humble Christians met together simply in the Name of the Lord Jesus and began to break bread on the ground of the truth of the one body. To these God has given much precious ministry to enjoy and to hold till the Lord comes.

"Till the day break" pictures to us the Lord's coming when that day of glory dawns for the believer. All this is the fulfillment of Acts 20:11 and to us it is a great comfort just as those in the upper room were comforted in verse 12. "Wherefore comfort one another with these words." 1 Thess. 4:18. The comfort is the truth of resurrection.

To see the Church in her beauty in the future, we look at the glorious description in Rev. 21 verses 9 to 27. She is pictured as "descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God." Ed.

Bible Challenger-02-February V.02

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the word that we, who love the Lord's salvation, should continually desire Him to be.

1. The message to an ancient King written in an unusual way.
2. Something those in Laodicea were counseled to do.
3. The last words of Elisha to Naaman.
4. What Hezekiah called the serpent of brass that Moses had made.
5. Where Jesus said the many mansions are.
6. Jesus' answer to the scribe who wanted to follow Him.
7. Rebekah's answer of commitment.
8. The three-fold appeal for a careless people to hear the word of the Lord.
9. A prophet's command to those who poured water on a burnt sacrifice.

Answers to these questions will be found in next month's issue of Christian Treasury.

R. Erisman

Bible Challenger-01-January Answers V.02

1. Come unto Me. Matt. 11:28
2. O fools, and slow of heart to believe. Luke 24:25
3. My time is not yet come. John 7:6
4. Peace be unto you. John 20:19
5. Abide in Me. John 15:4
6. Show Me a penny. Luke 20:24
7. Suffer little children to come unto Me. Luke 18:16
8. I am the light of the world. John 8:12
9. O generation of vipers. Matt. 3:7
10. Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt. Matt. 26:39
11. Search the scriptures. John 5:39

"It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because His COM PASSIONS fail not. They are new every morning: great is Thy faithfulness."

Lam. 3:22, 23

Thoughts for Today

Obedience is the only rightful state of the creature.

Wherever there is independence, there is always sin.

Creation makes known the wisdom of God, but salvation makes known the heart of God.

God is satisfying His own heart by having children.

I like to have my children talk to me when they do not want anything but just to enjoy communion with me. So God is going to have a family who thinks as He thinks.

God's Rest: Hebrews 4

The point here is not rest merely, but "His rest"; that is, God's rest. The prominent thought of God from the beginning was to have rest. As soon as everything was made, and He saw that it was very good, He rested. The Sabbath was the sign of it, and in the time that is coming, it is said, "He will rest in His love." Zeph. 3:17. The great desire of man, too, is to rest. It is man's ideal; it is God's reality. The question for each of us is, Are we looking for a rest before God's rest? There is rest of conscience for us "Come unto Me, all ye that labor...and I will give you rest" but it is not that. Neither is it rest of soul: "Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Matt. 11:28, 29.

It is the day when everything will be in unbroken rest, gathered around Himself His rest. Is that the rest we are looking for? What is the desire of every man from the politician down to the lowest and the poorest? He is looking for the day when he can lay down his cares and cease from toil, rest on his laurels, spend a happy old age in the bosom of his family, have a bright sunset in some little spot he has retired to.

If you had asked the Apostle Paul, however, in what way he expected to spend the evening of his days, he would have answered, I expect to be martyred. It becomes a testing question to everyone, therefore, whether it be God's rest he is looking for, or whether it is a rest in time. Are you waiting for God's Sabbath; are you looking for no rest till this comes? We shall never find our resting place until we get into God's rest, and that rest is not on earth; it is in heaven.

Simeon's Pronouncements

When Simeon blesses God (Luke 2:28-32), he declares the sum of God's counsels regarding the Gentiles and Israel alike. The Child is God's "Salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel." That's what He would have been if that nation had received Him—and that is what He will be when they do receive Him.

Simeon, also, expresses his own joy that he derives from the presence of the Child in his arms—a joy which banishes any fear of death: "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word: for mine eyes have seen Thy Salvation." The presence of the Savior is everything to his soul.

Then, when Simeon blesses the parents (vv. 34, 35), he shows what the presentation of the Child to man will produce from man.

,∴ Its effect would be the "fall and rising again of many in Israel." Some would stumble at the lowly, humble One in their midst, while others would be raised up by God. Also, "the thoughts of many hearts" would be revealed by His presence. He would be a touchstone, bringing out what was in the hearts of many. And so He was—and is. There is nothing like Christ to draw out and expose what is in man's heart—whether regenerate or unregenerate man. (See John 1:9; 3:19-21.)

Mary's own soul would know the pain of seeing her Child rejected, abused, and slain. She would feel it as a mother would feel it according to natural affections. In this natural link and its dissolution, we may, also, see the breaking of Messiah's natural ties with Israel. (See John 20:17; 2 Cor. 5:16, 17.)

He would be "for a sign which shall be spoken against." That He was spoken against is abundantly plain. I take it that He was "a sign" in the sense of Isa. 7:14. (See, also, Luke 1:34, 35.) He was a sign of the goodness of God, who would deliver His people, despite their failure and sin, if they would only repent and turn again to their God. (See Isa. 7-8.)

D. Graham

The Grace of God

The Epistle to the Hebrews reveals the heavenly calling. It associates you with Noah, Abraham, Moses and others. The earth at the beginning was given to the children of men. What did they do with it? They forfeited it. Then what did God do with them? Well, He opened heaven to them! He gave them the earth to enjoy they—soiled and lost it by sin.

"Well," said He, "I'll open heaven to you." This is one way in which the grace of God abounds.

What should I say of one, who, when I had abused the gift which he put in my hand, put a better gift in, my other hand? This is God!

Evangelizing

We are all familiar with the gift of the evangelist, but what of the majority of us who never preach or travel or write? Are we to leave soul-winning to the man in the pulpit, or the print shop? Definitely not. We are royal priests and because of this we can, in some way, minister to the lost. It is simply negligence on our part if we don't. God has given us the position, the privilege, and the power. What, then, do the Scriptures reveal for our encouragement and exhortation in these things?

"Andrew.... first findeth his own brother Simon.... And he brought him to Jesus." John 1:40-42. "Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the Lord." Hag. 1:8. Now in plain talk, this means bring someone to the gospel meeting or to a Bible study. Maybe we can't explain the gospel very well, but here is an exhortation from God simply to bring someone to hear the Word of God ministered: a friend, a neighbor, a relative, a slum-dweller, a wealthy man, a ditch digger, a business executive. They all need Jesus and you know where and when the gospel will be preached. Invite them; pick them up; take them home, and pray all the while that God will work in their hearts. Remember, God takes great pleasure in any effort to bring souls to hear the gospel —this is how He builds His house and He desires to use us if we will only take this admonition from Him. "How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?" Rom. 10:14.

"Praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ." Col. 4:3. "Brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified." 2 Thess. 3:1. Would you like to go along with evangelists to the four corners of the earth to preach the gospel? Then pray for them. There is no better company for the evangelist than our fervent prayers at home. The mouth, hands and feet are moved by unseen muscles, and the power behind the evangelist is fervent prayers by secret co-workers. Think of the gospel works you know of and desire to help, then pray and God will reward you greatly in that day, before all heaven.

"The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it." Psa. 68:11. Most Christians have little or no idea about the complexities of publishing in print the Scriptures and attendant ministry. Suffice it to say that the final product of a tract, a pamphlet, a book, or a calendar is often the dedicated work of many saints. We can help those who print the gospel by supplying them news stories or events that have a clear gospel application. We can help them by proofreading, or communicating corrections or helpful changes for the next printing. We can put isolated souls on a mailing list to receive gospel ministry, and supply catalogs to those who might be interested in obtaining tracts or books. We can send tracts to those who are actively engaged in tract work. A few thoughtful minutes by each of us would likely reveal some need in publishing or distributing the Word in which we could help. "Lift up your eyes and look."

"At that time there was a great persecution against the church at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad... except the apostles.... Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word." Acts 8:1-4. We find, in the early Church's history, a great multitude of

believers dispersed from Jerusalem after the death of Stephen, and they went everywhere publishing the good news of Jesus Christ. It should be especially noted that those saints driven from Jerusalem did not include the Apostles. So the prominent, gifted men in the Church at that time remained in Jerusalem, and therefore were not the ones doing this faithful and powerful preaching. It was the ordinary, everyday brethren. Just when the Church could have become too dependent on the Apostles, the Lord stepped in and, through religious persecution, brought out the royal priesthood of all the saints. The refiner's fire of trial brings out the gold in those who are truly Christ's. Instead of fainting, these brethren seized this opportunity to spread the gospel to regions that had never heard it before and there was great blessing, as Acts 11:21 shows. Now, some of us may have a similar opportunity today. Various trials and circumstances may cause us to move to an unexpected or far-away place, perhaps even a distance from fellowship with our brethren. Are we to faint and give up, or are we to seize this chance to spread the gospel, depending on the Lord Jesus to keep us and guide us? Let's be positive, even in those trying times in our lives which may move us about. Redeem the opportunity and watch God bless His Word as you give it out. Too often many of us get quite comfortable in the local gathering and become so contented with the routine and fellowship, we forget that there are others who have not heard the gospel and are thirsty for eternal life. Thank God for trials which disperse us to bring the glorious light of the gospel into those regions of darkness beyond. We must always recall, however, that those brethren who were dispersed were still in happy fellowship with those in Jerusalem. This dispersion was not because of division in the Church or contention among saints, but was from God for the good of the Church.

In Mark 5 and Luke 8, we have the story of a poor soul in the country of the Gadarenes, who was delivered from a legion of demons by the Lord Jesus. After the demons were cast out, we find the happy man sitting at Jesus' feet, clothed and in his right mind (a picture of our holy priesthood). Then we find the Lord sending the man home to "show" (Luke) and "tell" (Mark) his friends what great things God had done for him (a picture of our royal priesthood). He eagerly obeyed, and when Jesus returned, "The people gladly received Him." His witness had power and results. There was nothing spectacular about this man—he wasn't an apostle or prophet—but he was dependent and obedient. That is the secret power of all ministry. After he had dependently been at Jesus' feet hearing His word, he obediently went home to his friends to share what the Lord had done for him. Can't we do the same? Don't we have family or friends who need the liberating gospel of Christ? Can't we in some small, but faithful way show them the virtues of Christ? Many souls have been saved, not through revival meetings, gospel meetings, or street preaching, but through the simple, private testimony of a friend happily delivered from the bondage of sin, Satan, and the world. Even the Lord's ministry was much more personal than it was public, for the Scriptures say, "He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street" (Isa. 42:2), but He went about doing good in the highways and hedges. What a gracious commission from Christ we all have as royal priests to go home to our families and friends and show them Jesus. So many are critical or otherwise indifferent to public preaching, but they can never erase the personal, heart-to-heart, daily ministry of a friend or relative who has been saved and is faithfully living for Christ. T. Clement

Preachers Urgently Needed

"How long have you been converted?" we asked of a young man the other day.

"About fifteen months."

"How did it come about? Was it through any special evangelistic service, or how?"

"No, it was by means of a young lady—a personal friend—that I was brought to know the Lord."

"Any particular passage of Scripture used?"

"It was not so much what she said that first arrested me, as her consistent, godly life. I was powerfully impressed by it, and that was how the work began in my soul."

Precious and beautiful testimony!

Preachers of that school are everywhere needed, and such preaching will be signally blessed of God. Aspire to be a preacher of that sort. No great gift is needed, no great intellectual endowment, and you may begin at once. Now preaching with the tongue has its necessary limits, but this kind has none. A godly, consistent life is a continual sermon full of power.

It is this kind of testimony that the Apostle Peter alludes to in the third chapter of his first epistle. He supposes that a believing wife has an unbelieving husband. She cannot bring the Word before him with her voice. He will not stand it, and she, knowing this, says nothing. But her life is in itself powerful preaching—so wise, so discreet, with so much of Christ interwoven with it. And the unconverted husband is won by this—not driven, but won.

Christian men and women, boys and girls, are needed in every station of life, who by God's grace will preach such sermons continually.

Bringing up Children

"And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." Acts 16:31.

This scripture does not allow any looseness in the bringing up of children. Faith means believing God. If I believe God is going to save my children, I act according to that belief and bring them up for Him. If I do not, I am disobedient to the express command of Eph. 6:4: "Ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Also, I practically deny the faith and am worse than an unbeliever because I do not act up to the light I have and am a hypocrite, pretending to believe when my conduct proves that I do not.

The real difficulty with children is, I believe, that most parents who earnestly desire their children's blessing, seek to produce it by the power of their own will, which the children naturally resist. That is flesh acting against flesh which it inevitably "provokes," and we are told to avoid such a way of acting. If a real effect is to be produced according to God, it must not be done by force of will, but by love acting on the conscience. I might put myself into my child's circumstances, seeking to bear his burden with him and carefully showing him that I, as a father, have to obey God, and that we all, as a family, are learning obedience together. I, as older and more experienced, am able to give him useful advice and, in a measure, lighten his task making it pleasant for him. Then the blessing of the Lord will rest on such endeavors and training and we shall find the truth of Prov. 22:6: "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." The children will be happy to learn obedience in this way and we will be mercifully shielded from the seductions of the world.

The modern system of education is more intellectual than conscientious, and that is a difficulty in the way of parents. It should surely call forth prayer, and keep it in exercise by constant reference to the Holy Scriptures, and especially to the book of Proverbs. There is great need for wisdom, tact and patience, but there are special promises of blessing to those who persistently seek these things from the Lord. The "world" is in our hearts and it is there the real struggle goes on. The worst kind of worldliness is that which passes outwardly as religious. The Lord will, however, abundantly reward those who seek Him and walk in faith. W. Lowe

Questions and Answers

Ques. What is the meaning of "the concision" in Phil. 3:2?

Ans. The concision means those who are trying to improve the flesh by cutting off bad habits. The truth teaches us that the death of Christ is the end of the flesh before God, and that our old man is crucified with Him. (Rom. 6:6.) The circumcision in Phil. 3:3 recognize this. Col. 2:11 means dead with Christ. "The concision" do not know this, but teach the improvement of man without redemption.

The Lord Jesus at Prayer

We read in 1 Peter 2:21, "Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps." You will notice that it does not say we should follow in His steps, for that would be impossible for us, failing creatures that we are. He was the perfect Man, whose pathway was always in perfect accord with the will of God, His Father, and there was never a wrong step in that pathway. But if it is beyond us to follow exactly in His steps, there is His pathway for us to follow as closely as we can.

We get several scriptures in the Gospel by Luke which bring before us the Lord Jesus as a perfect, dependent Man here on earth in prayer, and it is this individual prayer that we are considering.

First, Luke 3:21, 22: "Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon Him." Here the Lord had just identified Himself with the godly few of the Jews who acknowledged the need of repentance for the remission of sins, whether for themselves or the nation at large. Our Lord, of course, had no sins to confess, but, as a godly Jew, would identify Himself with these as being on the right ground. Then, as He prayed, there came this direct voice from heaven, "Thou art My beloved Son; in Thee I am well pleased."

We know that the Lord was the "only begotten Son," and none other can enter that place. He has, however, brought us into the position of sons before the Father, and it is true that as we are in dependence and prayer before God, so we enter more into the fullness of the place we have through His grace.

Next, in Luke 5:16, after the healing of the leper, we read, "He withdrew Himself into the wilderness, and prayed." We may take this as an example of prayer in connection with service. The service the Lord had just showed to the poor leper, and as a testimony to the people was, of course, perfect. But He did not leave it there; He went before God in prayer about it. Herein there is a voice for us; after any little service we are able to do for Him—often as feeble and weak as it is, do we go aside to ask His blessing upon it? All the blessing on it must come from Him.

Luke 6:12: "He went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God." This was before He chose His disciples. He well knew all of them, that so often they would fail to enter into His thoughts, and that of one of them (Judas Iscariot) He would later say, "Have I not chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" Who can tell what it cost the holy soul of the Lord Jesus to be in association with that man during His public ministry here, well knowing what would be the end of His path. So all night He was in prayer with His Father, before choosing those with whom He would be associated. The lesson for us in this is prayer in connection with our associates. The Christian is not left here to be alone; Acts speaks of "their own company" and one is happy to find those with whom one can walk here as with the Lord, and before Him. Hence, the need for our being in communion with the Father as to those with whom we are associated.

Luke 9:29: "And as He prayed, the fashion of His countenance was altered, and His raiment was white and glistering." This is the well-known incident of our Lord's transfiguration; it is recorded in three of the gospels, but it is only in Luke that we are told it was "as He prayed." We know, of course, that the Lord is seen here in His own glory, but the day is coming when we "shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." But it is true of us, even here and now, that if we want to be more like Him here, we must be in prayer and dependence upon God day by day. The more we are in secret with the Father, the more we shall be like Christ, and have power to represent Him here. "Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God." Rom. 12:2.

Luke 11:1: "One of His disciples said unto Him, Lord, teach us to pray." This also was "As He was praying in a certain place." It may have been that seeing the Lord engaged in prayer touched their consciences, and awakened a desire in them also to pray—hence their request. And so the Lord gave them a prayer perfectly suited to their condition then. It is commonly called, "The Lord's Prayer," but it could not manifestly be the expression of the Lord's own heart, nor is it in accord with the full Christian position; for example it is not "in the Lord's name" as brought out in John 16:23, 24: "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name." But what does it mean to ask "in His name"? It does not mean as some think, just adding the name of the Lord Jesus to the end of our prayers. He is absent from the world now, and we are His representatives. The Father looks to receive from us prayers that are in accordance with the mind of Jesus. It is asking for what He would ask for, and if this is true of our petitions, they will be such as the Father will delight to grant. One sometimes hears all sorts of petitions and requests made that are not of this character, and then the Lord's name is added as if to give them weight. This is a very solemn thing, and not at all what is meant by asking "in His name." (See Phil. 4:6, 7.)

Notice that while our Lord taught His disciples to pray, and urged them to it, He did not ask them to pray for Him, nor does He pray with them.

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 fresh air from the outside. This vivifies and oxygenates our lungs, and is necessary for us to live. 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.

Luke 22:41: "He... kneeled down, and prayed, saying, Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from Me: nevertheless, not My will, but Thine, be done." What the Lord had before Him there was the cross, into which none other but Himself could ever enter. The lesson we may learn from this is that it is very important for us to come in the history of our soul to this point—"not my will but Thine be done." Unless we do come to this surrender of our will to His, we have not fully learned our lesson, and there will not be the entire peace of mind that He would have us enjoy.

So we have traced the blessed Master in these connections in prayer. We need to own that our own failures, and indeed the broken state outwardly of the Church of God upon earth, must be

traced in large measure to the sad lack in our own souls and among His people of this spirit of prayer. May we learn this lesson, and try more and more to "follow His steps."

F. Lavington

Advice on Fishing

One day a sportsman was fishing in a Scottish Highland stream. You could see he was a sportsman by his long boots, his large basket (which was empty), and his hat covered all around with the most brilliant artificial flies. You could see he was a fisherman too by the long rod with which he kept whipping the stream. In spite of his boots, his basket, his hat, his rod, and his flies, somehow or other the fish would not bite.

Now this was all the more provoking since just opposite to him was a little ragged, barefooted boy with no particular fisherman's clothing on him at all (at any rate, his feet and legs and head and neck were all bare), and he was using a common hazel rod. He had no hatful of flies, nor had he a large basket slung over his shoulder. But there beside him on the grass lay a row of shining fish, all of which had been caught with that little hazel rod, under the sportsman's very eyes, while the latter spent his skill in vain. The boy was leaning against a little angle of rock, behind which he was partly hidden as if ashamed to be seen, but the fisherman stood boldly on the river's brink as he, at any rate, had nothing to be ashamed of, except that he had caught no fish. Now he was ashamed of this so much ashamed, indeed, that he pocketed enough of his pride to enable him to ask the boy how it was that all the fish were on his side of the river. The reply was brief and to the point: "If you want to catch fish, you must hide yourself."

What a word this is to all fishers of men! Whether it be the great evangelist of world-wide fame, or the young believer teaching in a class, or speaking of Christ at some bedside, it is all the same, "If you want to catch fish, you must hide yourself."

All your eloquence, your skill, your attractive manner, your diligence, will not catch one fish. It must be Christ. And although men (unlike fish) may be attracted by the fishers, they are both alike in this, that the sight of the man hinders their taking the bait. It is Christ alone that can captivate the heart and win the soul, and God will own and bless the labors of the one who seeks to spread the name and fame of Jesus, and not his own.

Besides, it is by the power of God that souls are saved, and not by our skill. We need more faith in God and less in ourselves. Y.C.

Bible Challenger-03-March V.02

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the word describing the unsettling event which prompted these words: "Truly this was the Son of God."

1. Something given to the Christian to establish us and testify that we have been sealed by God.
2. An exhortation that insists there be no evil in the Christian life.
3. A message to a man who was freed from many unwelcome companions.
4. An invitation by the Lord for a close relationship that we might learn of Him.
5. A two-word greeting that preceded a false show of affection.
6. A two-fold description of the Word of God.
7. How we are to keep ourselves, if we would know the meaning of pure religion.
8. A glorious truth which reveals our standing, as His children, with God's beloved Son.
9. The proper relationship of believers' hearts for mutual comfort.
10. A verily, verily, that Jesus spoke concerning those who would see the kingdom of God.

Answers to these questions will be found in next month's issue of Christian Treasury.

R. Erisman

Bible Challenger-02-February Answers V.02

1. Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin. Dan. 5:25
2. Anoint thine eyes with eyesalve. Rev. 3:18
3. Go in peace. 2 Kings 5:19
4. Nehushtan. 2 Kings 18:4
5. In My Father's house. John 14:2
6. Foxes have holes. Matt. 8:20
7. I will go. Gen. 24:58
8. Earth, earth, earth. Jer. 22:29
9. Do it the second time... third time. 1 Kings 18:34

"Let all those that seek Thee rejoice and be glad in Thee: let such as love Thy salvation say continually, The Lord be MAGNIFIED." Psa. 40:16.

Editorial

On September 19, 1985, Mexico City (the largest city in the western hemisphere) was tremendously shaken by an earthquake that killed approximately ten thousand people. It measured 8.1 on the Richter scale. Just a little more than a year later another capitol city to the south, San Salvador, suffered a like destruction from a temblor measuring 7.5 on the Richter scale. Over one thousand people lost their lives and thirty thousand were injured with more than one hundred thousand left homeless. "There shall be... earthquakes, in diverse places." Matt. 24:7. So the Lord spoke when He was here teaching and making known coming events.

The morning of October 10 had gone just as the days before in San Salvador with people busily engaged in the daily occupations of their lives. The rich, the middle class, and the poor of the city were moving about, or were in their stores and offices and the children in school were enjoying a normal day. Then at ten minutes before noon a devastating earthquake struck! People, multitudes of people, ran for the open streets and plazas, weeping and even crying aloud to God.

Ambrosio, a Christian brother, was in the city center at the time of the earthquake. A few feet from him two boys were playing; one was killed and the other was half buried. Ambrosio rescued the one and then helped many others that needed help. All transportation stopped as streets were blocked with much rubble and debris. People were desperately looking for their loved ones or helping the trapped and distressed.

Near the city center was a large five-story building called the Ruben Dario. About two hundred were killed in it. It was a complete catastrophe. In 1965 this building had been damaged by a

quake and declared uninhabitable, but later was patched up sufficiently to be used. Only the buildings that had solid foundations and strong superstructures withstood the shaking of the October 10th earthquake. The Ruben Dario did not meet these qualifications.

Are you a believer founded upon that solid Rock—Christ Himself?

Amos introduces in the very first verse of his book that which he saw concerning Israel as given "two years before the earthquake." Zechariah writes of the same: "Ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee." Zech. 14:5. Surely the earthquakes in our time are warnings of coming judgments that God will bring upon this world.

The subject of the book of Amos might be termed God warns. The first warning is addressed to Damascus and the people of Syria. The second warning is to the remnant of the Philistines (Palestinians) and their cities. The third warning is to Tyros (Tire, city of commerce). The fourth warning is to Edom (south Jordan and part of Saudi Arabia). The fifth warning is to Ammon (Amman, capitol of Jordan). The sixth warning is to Moab (also of Jordan).

All these were the ancient enemies of God's people Israel, and now they are again their enemies in these last, interesting days. Through the prophet Amos, God tells of the judgments that shall fall upon some of these nations that have troubled Israel and laid claim to any part of the land that God has promised to Abraham and his seed according to faith.

God has promised, "Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven." And this word, "Yet once more", signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear." Heb. 12:26-28.

Today, when again we see Israel's neighbors so hateful and radically opposed to her, it seems that the fulfillment of the prophecies of Amos and Zechariah is very near. The stage for these judgments appears to be set. In addition to the warnings given to Israel's six nearby enemies, the prophet has a similar "Thus saith the Lord," telling of judgments coming upon Judah and Israel because of their transgressions. Judah, who rejected Christ the Messiah, shall receive the very severest judgment.

After this comes the millennial kingdom. Zechariah in his prophecy, referred to above, writes in glorious and comforting words concerning this time. "Living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and winter shall it be. And the Lord shall be King over all the earth: in that day (1000 years) shall there be one Lord, and His name one." Zech. 14:8, 9. Next we get the comfort in verse 11, "and men shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited."

These verses describe the earthly side of the kingdom of power and glory, but there will also be the heavenly part with the heavenly saints reigning with Christ. The Revelation describes this in chapter 21. The bride, the Lamb's wife, is pictured as "descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God." (vv. 9-11.) Christ will be displayed in His glory in both spheres. Will you be there? Ed.

God's Ways

The object of this article is to show that God has revealed from His Word what He is about to do regarding Israel and the nations, and to encourage believers who are going through trials while awaiting the promised return of our Lord Jesus Christ for His own. "He made known His ways unto Moses, His acts unto the children of Israel." Psa. 103:7.

We believe that it has been for a specific reason that God has used certain numbers over and over again in regard to His governmental ways with His people down through the ages. As all numbers used in this way in Scripture have a special significance, it seems necessary for the purpose of this article to point out first the meaning of some of them as plainly seen from their usage in the Word of God.

The number one: Supremacy, exclusiveness: one Jehovah, one God and Father, one Holy Spirit, one body, and one faith.

The number two: Distinctness, adequate testimony: relation to the two days of God's grace.

The number three: Divine fullness, completeness: perfectness in testimony, millennial blessing.

The number four: Completeness in that which is created or ordained of God: four winds, four living creatures, four horsemen, etc.

The number five: Human weakness in its appreciation of obligation: five wise and five foolish virgins in Matt. 25.

The number six: Incompleteness, imperfection, (one short of perfection): six steps to Solomon's throne, the number of the imperial beast of Rev. 13 is 666, etc.

The number seven: Spiritual completeness, generally in good but occasionally in evil. The compound of 3 and 4. Seven creation days, hence seven days per week. Every seventh year the land of Israel was to rest. 7 times 7 years brought in the jubilee, the fiftieth year, the times of the restoration of the inheritance. The number 7 appears many times in the Revelation Forgiveness was to be 70 times 7 times (Matt. 18:22). Israel's captivity was seventy years. Daniel's seventy weeks, etc.

The number eight: A new departure outside of, but connected with creation-order: resurrection of Christ, going beyond what God established as Jeroboam did. (1 Kings 12:32, 33.)

The number ten: Complete ground of human responsibility.

The number twelve: Completeness in administration in what is set forth or displayed man-ward: twelve tribes, twelve apostles.

The number forty: 4 times 10. Complete probation to bring to light good or evil. Moses had three times of testing of forty years each, as well as two periods of forty days each on the mount of God.

(See Acts 7:23, 30, 36, 42.) Twelve spies searched the land forty days (Num. 13). Because of Israel's unbelief in God's power and promises, and having tempted Him ten times, they were tested for forty years in the wilderness.

Decree of the United Nations

The nation of Israel was set aside as God's testimony in A.D. 70, when Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed by the Roman Emperor Titus, forty years after their rejection of Jesus as their Messiah at the very beginning of His ministry. (John 1:11; 5:15, 16; Matt. 9:3, 4, 34; Mark 3:6; Luke 4:28, Their status before 29 etc.) Their status before God is still unchanged, but they were granted a national charter by decree of the United Nations on May 14, 1948, over 38 years ago. This put them in the position assigned to them prophetically for the events of the end time.

During this time there has been no recognition by Israel, as a nation, that Jesus was their rejected Messiah. They have been fulfilling Hos. 3:4: "For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim [idols]." At this late date, judicially blinded by Jehovah (see Isa. 6:9-13; Acts 28:25-28, etc.), they are seeking to restore that which was only "the example and shadow of heavenly things." Heb. 8:5.

The first six verses of Isa. 66 give God's thoughts, by the Spirit through His prophet, of His reaction to this sacrilege and insult to their Messiah. This will lead to the unclean spirit of idolatry that characterized much of the early history of Israel, returning to a house "empty, swept, and garnished" but devoid of the sanctifying presence of Jehovah. Then the unclean spirit "taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first." Matt. 12:44, 45. Thus shall it be to this wicked generation (Israel) also!

"When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the [what is a] holy place," etc. Matt. 24:15. Note that the indefinite article before "holy" means that it is holy only to the Jews of that day, not sanctified by Jehovah.

According to Old Testament prophecy, the next phase of God's dealings with Israel will be the beginning again of God's governmental dealings with that nation. Has this already begun?

"I will go and return to My place, till they acknowledge their offense, and seek My face: in their affliction they will seek Me early." Hos. 5:15. This must first take place before their national, public restoration.

One Day As 1000 Years

Then Hos. 6:2, 3; "After two days will He revive us: in the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight. Then we shall know, if we follow on to know the Lord." In 2 Peter 3:8 it says, "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." (See also Psa. 90:4.) So we see from these scriptures that Israel's two days of Hos. 6:2 are almost fulfilled. Afterward comes the third day, the 1000 years reign of Messiah and the full blessing of Israel and the nations. (Rev. 20:1-6.)

There are many Scriptures that tell us that Israel will be gathered again and after God's dealings with them, "they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced.... In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem," etc. Zech. 12:10, 11.

The last week (seven years), of Daniel's well-known prophecy of the seventy weeks, will begin sometime during the turbulent time just ahead for this "scattered and peeled" nation. Afterward they will be completely gathered from among the nations and the prophecy of Ezek. 20:33-44 will take place. Then the prophecy of Hos. 6:2,3 will be fulfilled in the glorious reign of Christ. The book of Revelation has much to say regarding this last week, and especially the last half, variously designated as three and one half years, or twelve hundred sixty days, or forty-two months. Daniel's seventieth week (see Dan. 9:24-27), is better known to Bible students as the great tribulation (though it is the last three and one half years of it that is the "great" part).

Revived Roman Empire

This last week that is determined upon "thy people" (notice how God had disowned them as "His" for a time) will mark the end of God's dealings with Israel because of their rejection of the One who came "to confirm the promises made unto the fathers." Rom. 15:8. We learn from Daniel 9:27, "And he [the prince of the same revived Roman Empire] shall confirm the covenant with many [the rulers of the nation of

Israel] for one week: and in the midst of the week [seven years] he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations [idolatry] he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate [on Israel under God's judgment]." The Lord Jesus refers to this verse in Matt. 24:15-22 as the beginning of the "great" tribulation. Just how quickly the last week of Daniel, the great tribulation, will follow Israel's present testing period of forty years as a nation (which will be completed May 14, 1988) is a question.

There has been a rise in recent years of the teaching of humanism in schools and colleges coupled with plans for a workable system of world government without God. Indications are that the European Common Market governing body is developing into a strong political unit which will soon be ready to assume the last or "revived" stage of the ancient Roman Empire, when a strong leader will appear, who will apparently have at least a seven-year career. This leader and empire are described in Rev. 13:1-10. A second beast, contemporary with him, will be the religious leader called elsewhere "the false prophet" or "the antichrist" or "the king" in Dan. 11:36. The rapid development of computer technology and a dependable system of world-wide communications has made man's long dream of world government with the aid of a false religion, seemingly attainable. The stage will then be set for the fulfillment of Matt. 24:15-22, when this man of sin will be manifested in his true character (see 2 Thess. 2:3,4). Israel still has to pass through the seventieth week of Daniel, better known to us as the seven years of tribulation.

The Lord's coming for the Church (known as the rapture) may take place at any moment and is our present hope as believers, but we can gather from Israel's present history that the end of this dispensation of grace is at hand. Our Julian calendar has an error of four years, or perhaps five. Chronology shows the birth of Christ as 5 A.D. That makes the real date of our 1987 calendar to be 1991 or 1992. "Surely I come quickly: Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Rev. 22:20. L. Huff

The Scriptures: Number 3

In the reign of Hezekiah, there was a remarkable turning to the authority of the sacred writings. They soon discovered that they had not kept the Passover "for a long time in such sort as it is written." We are told, therefore, that the men of Judah had given to them by God one heart to do the commandment of the king, and of the princes by the word of the Lord. Moreover, Hezekiah appointed morning and evening burnt offerings, and the burnt offerings for the Sabbaths, and for the new moons, and for the set feasts, as it is written in the Law of Moses. (2 Chron. 30:5, 12; 31:3.)

In the days of Josiah, king of Judah, the wonderful revival is traced to the practical acknowledgment of the divine authority of the Scriptures. It was brought about by Hilkiah the priest finding in the house of the Lord "a book of the law of the Lord given written] by Moses. And Hilkiah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord.... And Shaphan read it before the king. And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the law, that he rent his clothes." The reason was that he learned from these writings that they were justly exposed to divine wrath and the curses written in the book, because of their sins in having forsaken the Lord God, and having burnt incense to other gods. 'They bowed, therefore, to the authority of the sacred writings, and kept the Passover according to the ordinance "as it is written in the book of Moses," which was accompanied with God's abundant blessing. They were so exercised by the authority of Scripture about it that we read the king's commandment was, "kill the Passover, and sanctify yourselves, and prepare your brethren, that they may do according to the word of the Lord by the hand of Moses." We are further told that the evil and "abominations that were spied in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, did Josiah put away, that he might perform the words of the law, which were written in the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the house of the Lord. And like unto him was there no king before him, that turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; neither after him arose there any like him." (2 Chron. 34:24, 14-21; 35:6, 12; 2 Kings 23:24, 25.)

The return of the Jews from their captivity in Babylon was also strikingly marked by their acknowledgment of the authority of the written law of the Lord. We know that Ezra "was a ready scribe in the law of Moses, which the Lord God of Israel had given." So truly did he recognize the divine authenticity of the sacred writings that we are told, "Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments." We read also that when they were gathered together as one man at Jerusalem, they "builded the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings thereon, as it is written in the law of Moses the man of God.... They kept also the feast of tabernacles, as it is written." Again, when the temple was finished, they dedicated the house of God with joy; they offered a sin offering according to the twelve tribes of Israel. "And they set the priests in their divisions, and the Levites in their courses, for the service of God, which is at Jerusalem; as it is written in the book of Moses." (Ezra 7:6, 10; 3:2, 4; 6:15-18.)

When Nehemiah was the king's cup-bearer, we read that he fasted, wept, and prayed to God, and pleaded the word which He had commanded by His servant Moses, and written in Leviticus and Deuteronomy. When the wall was completed, the people gathered themselves together as one man in the street, and spoke to Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the Law of Moses which the Lord commanded to Israel. This he did, and read therein, and all the people were attentive to the book of the law. And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, and others caused the people to understand the law, so they read the book of the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense and caused them to understand the reading. They found written in the law which the Lord commanded by Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in booths; "for since the days of Jeshua the son of Nun unto that day had not the children of Israel done so. And there was very great gladness. Also day by day, from the first day unto the last day, he read in the book of the law of God." Moreover, we are told that after this "they read in the book of Moses in the audience of the people; and therein was found written, that the Ammonite and the Moabite should not come into the congregation of God forever. Now it came to pass, when they had heard the law, that they separated from Israel all the mixed multitude." (Neh. 1:8, 9; 8:1-18; 13:1, 3.)

It is most interesting to observe here that the faithful who returned from the captivity went back for divine authority to that which had been ordered of God from the beginning. They did not go to any particular period or revival, but stood for what had been written, apart from all traditions of men. Is not this always the path of the faithful in an evil time? C.H. Mackintosh

I Am the Lord's

What comfort may be found in these words! The Lord Jesus has redeemed us with His own precious blood (1 Peter 1:18), and having set such a value upon us, and bought us for Himself (1 Cor. 7:23), He will assuredly keep us (1 Peter 1:5). None shall pluck us out of His hand (John 10:28). Our life is safe beyond all contingencies, for it is "hid with Christ in God." Col. 3:3. "Whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's." Rom. 14:8.

Tossed about as we may be by ever-changing circumstances, still, to be entitled to say, "I am the Lord's," may well keep the soul in abiding peace. It is heaven begun below.

Come what will—painfulness or weariness, poverty or persecution, bonds or imprisonments, fire or flood—still the sweet words, "I am the Lord's," should enable us to say "None of these things move me." Acts 20:24.

And what strength will it impart if this little word, "I am the Lord's," becomes an abiding thought running perpetually through the heart! It will detach us from an evil world; it will keep us calm and patient amidst all its restlessness and striving, its tumultuous commotions and disturbances; it will raise us above its empty pleasures, and protect us from its dangerous devices. We shall then be anxious about nothing, careful only to please our Father, for whatever troubles may threaten or assail, we can come with confidence, making our requests known unto God, and His own peace, according to His word, "shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Phil. 4:6, 7.

Death itself is not death to the believer; it is the entrance into life, unhindered by any of the things that press us down here in this world. But not only will peace be our portion, but joy will be ever bubbling up, knowing that "He that shall come will come, and will not tarry" (Heb. 10:37), and then we shall be forever with the Lord. (1 Thess. 4:17.) E.J. Checkley

Trust Him Fully

"Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee: He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved." Psa. 55:22.

Are you at this moment in any pressure, trial, need, or difficulty? If so, look simply and solely to the living God. Turn away your eyes completely from the creature. "Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils." Isa. 2:22. Let your faith take hold now on the strength of God Himself. Put your whole case in His omnipotent hand. Cast your burden, whatever it is, upon Him. Let there be no reserve. He is as willing as He is able, and as able as He is willing to bear all. Trust Him fully. He loves to be trusted— loves to meet our needs.

The Cross: on Man's Part

- The rejection of Christ was a refusal, and the end of all remedial measures.
- It was the close, therefore, of the moral government of God, as established under the law.
- Man took the place of the betrayer and murderer of Christ.
- The cross was the outlet of human enmity against God.
- All relations with God were closed up by death. The cross showed proof of the world's rebellion.
- It was the new center on which the issue of all things must be tried in righteousness.
- God, of necessity, assumed the place of Judge at the cross.

On Satan's Part

- The masterpiece of the devil's craft, was to get Christ out of the world, and put an end to Him.
- The usurper's hate was concentrated against God and man.
- Earthly revolt was headed up under its ringleader, the prince of this world.
- It was the crisis of the ways of God with the devil.
- The cross was the measure and limit of Satan's power, except to deceive the nations, and head up all things for the Antichrist.

On Christ's Part

- The cross was the place where He glorified God, when He offered Himself up, through the eternal Spirit.
- It was the place where He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.
- By the blood of His cross He made peace.
- The cross was the measure of His perfect obedience unto death.
- It was there that He brought mercy and truth together, and righteousness and peace kissed each other.
- It cleared the way of all the obstructions to God's coming back in grace and blessing to sinners.
- It was the place of the Son of man's glory, for it was He who wrought this for God and men, and for the overthrow of Satan.
- The fire of God's holiness fed there upon the fat of the sacrifice.
- It was there the righteous judgment of God spent itself upon Christ as the sin-offering.

On God's Part

- It is the inlet of divine love to the world.
- It is the wisdom of God, and the power of God to salvation, to everyone that believeth.
- It is the declaration that God is just, and the justifier of the ungodly, who believe in Jesus.
- Righteousness has there a new claim on God, by which grace can reign unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.
- There God condemned sin in the flesh, and by death brought it down to death, and left it in ashes.
- It is the new meeting place between God and the believer, where sin and death and judgment are no more.
- On the cross Christ gave up the ghost, and correspondingly God rent the veil that hid Him.
- There by the death of His Son, God reconciles us to Himself.

The Cross: Between Jew and Gentile

- It was there that man was reconciled to his fellow, and Jew and Gentile were made one.
- It broke down the middle wall of partition, Christ having abolished in His flesh the enmity between Jew and Gentile.
- He made in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace.
- He reconciled both unto God, in one body.
- Those who were afar off, and those who were nigh, both have access by one Spirit, through Him, unto the Father.

The Cross: the Law of Commandments

- There the handwriting of ordinances that was against us was blotted out.
- He took all that was contrary to us out of the way, nailing it to His cross, and triumphing over them in it.
- The shadows of things to come were superseded, and the body is of Christ.

The Cross of Christ: to a Disciple and His Lord

- It is the only way by which he can follow Christ.
- It is the power by which he denies himself, and goes after Him who made the path.

The Cross of Christ: Between the Believer and the World

- It is that by which he is separated from the world, by its own crucifixion to him.
- He maintains by his own death to the world, his part with the Christ whom the world rejected, and becomes a living witness in it to the fact of the judgment of God to be poured out upon the world which rejected His Son.

The Advocate

Jesus Christ, as our Advocate, does two things: He pleads with the Father for us and He applies the word to us. The former work maintains our cause before the Father, if we sin. The application of the word to our souls elevates our practical state to match our standing, always maintained as sinless by the Advocate, who has made the propitiation. The failure in our practical state comes from the fact of our having two natures in one person. "With the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." Rom. 7:25. And though by faith, and in spirit, we are no longer in the flesh, yet actually it is in us (though by faith we reckon it dead), hence the failure. There is no excuse, but the fact is, we fail. Our standing as children ever remains the same, even though we sin, owing to the righteous Advocate who has made propitiation.

"If any man sin, we have an advocate." But we have failed in our practical state—we are defiled. Our bodies are washed with pure water, that is true (Heb. 10:22); we have had once the washing [of resurrection] (Titus 3:5); we are born again (John 3:3); we do not need, then, to be bathed all over again. John 13:10 reads in its literal translation, "He that is put into the bath needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all."

But we have sinned; we have had our feet defiled, as it were, in passing through this sin-defiled world. This will not do for the Father's presence. What does the Advocate do? He applies the word to us, washes our feet, and leads us to confession and self-judgment. The remembrance of our Advocate, who made propitiation, leads us back on our knees to our Father, who forgives us, and cleanses us from all our unrighteousness. We are cleansed according to what He is as the righteous One in the Father's presence. This is cleansing by the water of the word, not by blood, which is never repeated. It is the application of the death of Christ, through the word, to moral defilement, from the root of sin. Thus the blessed work of the Advocate is, on the one hand, to plead for the children before the Father if they sin; on the other hand, the work of the Advocate is to wash their feet with the word, to bring their practical walk and state up to their standing before Him.

How happy for us to be associated with the blessed Advocate! On the one hand we can plead for our brethren if they sin; on the other hand we can carry the word to them and wash their feet. May the Lord grant increasingly this grace, so that the saints may see their blessed privilege of love to cover sins (Prov. 10:12), plead for their brethren if they sin, and act in faithfulness to them, in carrying the word to them, washing their feet, so that they may be cleansed from the defilement. We have as our model the blessed Lord Jesus Himself. He answered the devil when tempting Him to sin, by, "It is written." So should we. If we sin, thank God we can always answer Him by the blood of the Lamb, which is the balm for every wound.

The blood of the Lamb and the word, the sword of the Spirit, are our instruments against the devil down here, while the Advocate maintains our cause before the Father up in heaven. Thus in every case we are maintained, and are overcomers, "more than conquerors through Him that loved us."
A.P. Cecil

The Responsible Witness

1 Tim. 3:15 and 2 Tim. 2:20 1 Tim. 3:15 2 Tim. 2:20

Both these passages present to us the church in the same aspect, though in very different conditions. We have "the house," and the "great house." The foundations of "the house" are laid in pure grace. Paul was a minister, and himself personally a witness of this great and blessed truth. "Christ Jesus," he says, "came into the world to save sinners." 1 Tim. 1:15. When we remember that the church is "the pillar and ground of the truth," and consider the materials out of which it is formed, it is the more marvelous, and makes it plain that grace, and grace only, is in action as to those who "by one Spirit are baptized into one body."

The church's presence on earth, as the responsible witness for God, is what we have before us in these scriptures, and this is proved and enforced by the way in which Timothy is instructed as to how he ought to behave himself in it. We are the living stones of which the house is composed, but we are also in the house, having, like Timothy, to behave ourselves in a manner suited to Him who dwells there.

In Heb. 3:6, we also read of the "house," and again, in 1 Cor. 3:16, where it is termed the "temple." Both are based on redemption, though conduct is in question too. It is important to see that it is only consequent on redemption that God dwells with man. Ex. 15 plainly shows this, where the habitation of God is anticipated by Israel as consequent on their redemption out of Egypt. "Thou in Thy mercy hast led forth the people which Thou hast redeemed: Thou hast guided them in Thy strength unto Thy holy habitation," sang Moses and the children of Israel.

We, too, have been redeemed and led forth by Him, "who gave Himself for our sins that He might deliver us from this present evil world." Gal. 1:4. We, who once were blasphemers and injurious (1 Tim. 1:13), are now by grace, transformed into vessels and living stones of that which is growing "unto a holy temple in the Lord," and hence the exhortation, "Be ye holy, for I [the Lord your God] am holy." He is holy, so must we be.

Then notice that it is the house of "the living God." Do we know Him thus? Are we journeying on through the wilderness in the consciousness that He is with us as He was with the children of Israel, meeting our daily need, as He did theirs, with manna fresh every morning, and making the flinty rock gush streams of refreshment all the way along. It is a great thing to walk with "the living God," and while having Him to turn to in every trouble and necessity, to remember that He is the holy Lord God.

The Transforming Power

The Lord Jesus was, and is, essentially the "holy One of God"—absolutely such in all His words and acts. We have to follow Him, the great mystery of godliness—God manifest in flesh—the One in whom all His nature and ways are brought to light so that we can know and delight in them. He was justified in the Spirit—in all He did and said, acting only by and approved by the Holy Ghost. He was seen of angels—they marveled, and adored at the wondrous spectacle of the One who had created them, and at whose bidding they moved, walking in lowliness as a man on earth. He is the transforming power of the soul that seeks true godliness—the only divine rule and standard of our walk and ways.

We all know how this transforming power had failed to work its proper effect on those who dwell in the house, and how defiled the house has become (1 Tim. 4:1; 2 Tim. 3:1), but this introduces us to our second portion (2 Tim. 2:20), where we find the house has become "a great house"—an ominous change. Here we have vessels of different kinds, but not all alike suitable for the Master's service. Some are of gold and silver, but some others of wood and earth; some are to honor and some to dishonor.

Timothy is not now instructed how to behave himself in the house, but exhorted to purge himself from the vessels to dishonor, that are there. How much rather would the Apostle's heart have rejoiced to dwell upon the order of the house of his first epistle, than on the disorder referred to as characterizing the house of his second. How painful for him to have to exhort his beloved son to purge himself from corrupters lodged within. Yet there is comfort: vessels to honor still remain, and are subjects for exhortation. Such are those who follow "righteousness"—which it is important to see comes first, and leads on to the others—"faith, charity, and peace," calling "on the Lord out of a pure heart."

We cannot get out of this "great house," but the Holy Ghost has provided a remedy in it, in separation from all the evil that is around us. Still it should affect our hearts greatly, and humble us in the dust as those who are connected with, and bearing its shame, that the "house of God"—"the pillar and ground of the truth"—of 1 Tim. 3:15, has enlarged into the "great house" of disorder and corruption, of 2 Tim. 2:20.

Thus we are taught what the church was at the beginning, what it has become through human weakness, and what the Holy Spirit of God would have us to do as now being in it. We cannot root up the tares; they will continue to grow to the end, but we are bound to dissociate ourselves from all unsuited to His holy habitation, and to remember the word that says, "Thy testimonies are very sure: holiness becometh Thine house, O Lord, forever." Psalms 93:5.

C. McAdam

Damaging Doctrine

Perhaps no erroneous doctrine has been more detrimental to the souls of God's children than that those who compose the church of God will have to pass through "the great tribulation." Such a statement subverts God's revelation of the church as the body and bride of Christ, reduces the heavenly people to Jewish associations, and robs them of the watching and waiting attitude for Christ to come at any time. Such, more or less, merge into a political view of the Lord's coming by looking for events instead of Himself, in short, for antichrist instead of Christ. Thus the affections, conscience, and hope of the soul become seriously damaged by it.

Nothing can be clearer in the Lord's farewell address to His disciples before going to the Father, than that He left them by giving them the blessed expectation of soon seeing Him again. Between the coming of the Holy Ghost, and His return from heaven, He did not put a series of events to be fulfilled, so that we are told that the early Christians waited for God's Son from heaven.

The part of scripture that has been perverted to give a color to the doctrine is Matt. 24. But a brief glance at it will suffice to show that the "coming" referred to by the disciples, in their questions to the Lord, was not His coming for us, but His coming to Jerusalem when we come with Him, and every eye shall see Him coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. (See Matt. 23:39; 24:3.) That those mentioned there who will go through the tribulation are "His elect," is true enough, and is a term applied by Isaiah to the blest remnant of the Jews. But the reference to "the Sabbath day," "Judea," "fleeing to the mountains," "flesh" saved, "the abomination spoken of by Daniel the prophet," the "great tribulation such as was not.... no, nor ever shall be," also spoken of by the same prophet, its being preceded by the preaching of "the gospel of the kingdom of God," not of the grace of God as now preached, and other points, clearly mark it out as the time of "Jacob's trouble," that he will have to pass through and be brought out of. It is "the hour of temptation," coming upon all the world, from which the Lord promises to save us. "Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, I also will keep thee from [or out of] the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." Rev. 3:10.

It is interesting to observe that when our Lord referred to His rejection by the Jews—Judah and Benjamin—He said, "I am come in My Father's name, and ye receive Me not: if another shall come in his own name [the antichrist], him ye will receive." John 5:43. This we know from other scriptures is how the unparalleled tribulation will be brought about, and in retributive justice, the very tribes which rejected the Messiah will go through it. The ten tribes will not be gathered together till after this, when the Lord actually comes out of heaven. (Matt. 24:31.) C.H. Mackintosh

Editorial

Knowing something of the keen interest Christians have concerning Israel today, we think it good and very timely to consider what certain scriptures tell us about Israel's return to their land. The land, of course, belongs to Jehovah and the people also belong to Him but are not now publicly owned by Him because they have disowned Jehovah in turning to idols. And even more, they

rejected Him when He came in grace to the remnant of Judah and was presented to them as their Messiah. They cast Him out and crucified Him.

Still, the promises of God remain and all will be fulfilled. "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." Rom. 11:29.

Many scriptures tell about the return of both Judah and Israel to the land promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The particular scripture we refer to now has been explained over one hundred years ago by J.N. Darby who could expound the truth much better, so we quote from his ministry.

"Isa. 18 Whatever critical difficulties exist in this chapter, its great object is too evident to be obscured by any rendering whatever. The rivers of Cush are the Nile and Euphrates. The enemies of Israel, in the biblical part of their history, were situated on these two rivers. There is, in this prophecy, a call made to a country which is beyond them to a distant land which had never, at the time of the prophecy, come into association with Israel. The prophet has then in his view some country which would later come upon the scene. God bids all the inhabitants of the world and dwellers on the earth to take cognizance. (v. 3.) The nations are to have their eyes upon Israel; they are summoned by God to pay attention to what was taking place as to Jerusalem; they are all interested in her fate. The world is invited to watch the judgments about to take place. In the meanwhile (v. 4), God takes His rest, and lets the nations act of themselves; Israel has returned into her land (vv. 5, 6).

"It is a description of Israel's returning into Judea by the help of some nation at a distance from the scene itself, which is neither Babylon nor Egypt, nor other nations who meddled in their affairs of old. We do not say that it is France, Russia, or England. The Israelites return to their land, but God takes no notice of them. Israel is abandoned to the nations, and when everything would appear as if it were going to bear fruit anew (v. 5), behold the sprigs and branches are cut down, and left to the fowls of the air to summer on, and to the beasts of the field to winter on (which terms are designations of the Gentiles). Nevertheless, at that time a present of this people shall be brought to the Lord of hosts, and from this people 'to the place of the name of the Lord of hosts, the mount Zion.' v. 7.

"Psa. 126:4: 'Turn again our captivity, O Lord.' Zion and Judah will be first brought back. The captives of Zion were already brought back when this prayer was presented to God (v. 1); they are only the earnest of what God will do in the restoration of all Israel.

"But it is fitting here to touch on the manner of God's dealing with the houses of Judah and Israel in their judgment and dispersion. The first to be gathered are those who rejected Jesus, those who were guilty of His death. The ten tribes, as such, were not guilty of this crime. The ten tribes were dispersed before the introduction of the four monarchies into the rule of the world. It was the Assyrians who led captive the ten tribes before Babylon had existence as an empire.

"It is evident that those who rejected the Christ will be subjected to the antichrist; they will make a covenant with death, and an agreement with hell (Isa. 28:15), but their covenant will destroy all their hopes. Having united themselves to antichrist, they will undergo the consequence of this alliance and at last will be destroyed. Two thirds of the inhabitants will be cut off in the country of Israel itself after their return (Zech. 13:8, 9).

“With the ten tribes the occurrences are different, as we know from Ezek. 20:32-39. Instead of two parts cut off in the land, the rebels—that is, the disobedient and rebellious ones among them will not enter at all into Canaan. God does with them, as He did with Israel upon their rebellion after their coming out from Egypt; He destroys them without their even seeing it.

1. “Thus there are two classes, so to speak, of Jews in this return. First, there is the Jewish nation, namely Judah, and those allied with her in the rejection of the true Christ. They will be in connection with the antichrist, and of them two thirds will be cut off in the land.

2. “Secondly, there are those of the ten tribes coming up, of whom some will be cut off in the wilderness on their way into the land.

3. “Besides these two classes of Israelites who will return by providential agency (but still of their own free accord), the Lord after His appearance will gather together from among the Gentiles the elect of the Jewish nation. They will be yet among the nations, and this return will be accompanied with great blessing. (See Matt. 24:31; Isa. 27:12, 13; 11:10, 12.)”

It is very instructive and helpful to see that there are three distinct parts to the return. These are first, a remnant of the two tribes called Judah or the Jews, second, Israel (the ten tribes), and third, the rest of Judah who return and own Christ as Messiah. Ed.

Bible Challenger-04-April V.02

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the word applied to a class of people that bore the brunt of judgment but later became a special possession of the Lord.

1. A three-word description of the physical condition and determination of three hundred and one devoted men.
2. The words spoken to eight people when a covenant was sealed with a visible token.
3. A command to someone in order that he not be faithless but believing.
4. The conclusion of the prayer of a disobedient prophet in the darkest of prayer chambers.
5. A statement concerning something everyone is glad to own, but none its unruliness has conquered.
6. A timetable of failures for a self-confident disciple.
7. An entreaty for the double use of the senses to discern the Lord's goodness.
8. Something said of a wise man resulting in a loving response.
9. A promise to those who walk uprightly.

Answers to these questions will be found in next month's issue of Christian Treasury.

Questions and Answers

Ques. Who are the four and twenty elders in Rev. 4 and 5?

Ans. The four and twenty elders represent, not only the Church, but also the redeemed: all that are Christ's at His coming. Thus, the type of the four and twenty courses of priesthood is fulfilled (1 Chron. 24). It is intelligent worship that specially marks them as redeemed. The Church ceases to be seen on earth at the end of Rev. 3, and the elders cease to be seen in heaven when the marriage of the Lamb takes place.

Bible Challenger-03-March Answers V.02

1. E arnest of the Spirit. 2 Cor. 1:22
2. A bstain from all appearance of evil. 1 Thess. 5:22
- 3 . R eturn to thine own house, and show how great things God hath done. Luke 8:39
4. T ake My yoke upon you. Matt. 11:29
- 5 . H ail, Master. Matt. 26:49
6. Q uick and powerful. Heb. 4:12
7. U nspotted from the world. James 1:27
- 8 . A ccepted in the beloved. Eph. 1:6
9. K nit together in love. Col. 2:2
10. E xcept a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. John 3:3

When the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the EARTHQUAKE, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God." Matt. 27:54.

The Jubilee

Many have puzzled over the Jubilee every fiftieth year (Lev. 25:8-11) which will be fulfilled in anti-type when the Messiah comes to restore the complete and full tenancy of the land of Israel promised to Abraham's descendants. "The land shall not be sold forever: for the land is Mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with Me." Lev. 25:23. We have felt that somewhere there was a key to God's ways with Israel closely connected with the Jubilee.

The Jubilee, the year of restoration to inheritance, is a type or foreshadowing of Israel's national restoration to their inheritance of the land as unconditionally promised to Abraham and to his seed. Responsible Israel rejected their Messiah at His birth. The year 2000 will be forty, fifty-year periods—or forty Jubilees if they had been observed—and as a nation they are still in unbelief.

Remembering the significance of the number forty, complete probation to bring to light good or evil, it seems very significant that their long period of testing must be nearing its end. The gospel of God's grace to sinners has gone out world-wide in recent years as never before through every kind of media. Israel as a nation abides in unbelief except for individuals. Their testing time according to God's past ways is almost over.

Fifty is the number connected with the giving of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost on the fiftieth day after the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. The trumpet of the Jubilee was to be sounded on the tenth day of the seventh month, on the Day of Atonement, once every fifty years. On that day all possessions returned to their original owners, with certain exceptions, and Hebrew bond servants were set free. (See Lev. 25.)

Israel has lost their land to strangers because of transgressions, but on that glad day when they have repented, the type of the Jubilee will be fulfilled at the coming again of their Kinsman Redeemer Messiah. All of the land that was promised to Abraham's seed will be restored, and the bond servants set free, no matter how powerful those who hold them may be.

The type of the Day of Atonement was fulfilled at Calvary's cross. (See Isa. 53; Psa. 22; John 19.)

Forty Years: Testing Time

The numbers forty and fifty are used many times in the description of the tabernacle (the pattern of heavenly things) in Exodus. The significance of the number forty, (forty equals ten times four), is complete probation to bring to light good or evil. According to correct calendar reckoning since our Lord's birth, it is now four or possibly five years nearer than our calendar indicates to the close of 2000 years since the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ.

This great Jubilee will mark the time when the land is restored to Israel in its entirety with a sure title. It seems reasonable to attach a significance to the fact that at this present time, all of these happenings to Israel are converging. Add four (or possibly five) years to our present calendar date, plus what may be left of the forty years of Israel's present testing with the additional seven years of Daniel's seventieth week, and you have the year approximately 2000, forty times the Jubilee's fifty years.

To carry this thought a little further, the date (ordinarily) assigned by Ussher to Ex. 12:1, 2 is 1491 B.C. This date, like our own calendar, may not be exact. Ex. 12:2 tells us that the instituting of the Passover in Egypt was to be the beginning of months "to you." This took place about fifteen hundred years before the birth of Christ. This would be thirty-five hundred years before 2000 A.D., a total of seventy Jubilees, again a significant number. Judging from its use in Scripture, the number seventy (seven times ten) indicates complete responsibility, especially in regard to Israel. "You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities." Amos 3:2. Privilege and responsibility go together.

The appearance of the false Christ soon after the rising to power of the head of the revived Roman Empire, will encourage many of the Jews to return to their homeland, perhaps hurried on by economic and governmental pressure and/or collapse of some of the nations among whom the Jews are scattered.

A remnant among the Jewish people will, after the rapture of the genuine among the professing Church, go out preaching the gospel of the kingdom during the tribulation. Even the godly Jews of today have forgotten that during about the first seven years of the Church's existence, the testimony to salvation through a crucified and risen Christ was carried on by Jews only, and a few proselytes.

The Rapture

The purpose in all the foregoing is to awaken the sleeping saints. "And that, knowing the time, that now it is high [already] time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand." Rom. 13:11, 12.

About forty years after the rejection by the nation of the person, word, and work of Christ, the city and the temple of Jehovah were destroyed by Titus. Israel's being set aside by God brings in a dispensation of grace to whosoever would receive Jesus.

The particular purpose in bringing this to your attention is this: there is no definite point in time assigned to the "rapture," the resurrection of the dead saints and the changing of the living to bodies of glory. This will mark the end of the day of God's grace and the end of the work of the Holy Spirit in gathering to the body of Christ that which is known as the assembly.

The rapture will definitely close the present day of God's grace. Those remaining on the earth will be subject to the conditions of "the great tribulation" which will be increasingly severe until the end of the seven years. Then the Lord Jesus Christ (Messiah) will come out of heaven to begin the work of judgment that will restore Israel to their long-promised time of blessing, and inaugurate the reign of righteousness that will bring peace and blessing to this troubled world.

“I Will Also Keep Thee”

While all this presents a most solemn picture of what is ahead for this world, on the other hand it lets us know, as believers in the Lord Jesus awaiting His return for us, that we will not be here very long. "To wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from [among] the dead, even Jesus [our deliverer from the coming wrath]." 1 Thess. 1:10. Also the word to Philadelphia in Rev. 3:10, "Because thou has kept the word of My patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall [is about to] come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." These verses along with many others, particularly Rev. 4 and 5, give Christians to know that they are to expect the coming of the Lord Jesus at any moment now, and before the great tribulation begins. This has been an encouragement to God's people down through the long history of the Church. Conditions in the world are getting more and more troubled. Israel's history has taken a definite turn toward their long-promised restoration to their land of Jehovah.

There is also a great anti-spiritual, anti-religious movement all over the world with the subtle teaching of humanism even in the primary schools. The development of modern means of communication, and the marked inclination toward a one-world government mean that the world is ripe for the appearance of the beast of Rev. 13, and the second beast who will develop into the false prophet and the antichrist.

“the Day Is at Hand”

If you are a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, you will be wondering how much longer we can possibly be left here. Surely for Christians "the night is far spent, the day is at hand." Rom. 13:12. "At hand" in Scripture means that no more prophecy has to be fulfilled before that "day" of the Lord's coming for the Church. The foregoing is not intended to set dates and especially in regard to the Lord's coming for the Church. That has been the blessed hope for the Church down through all its history, though lost sight of for a long time.

We know Peter has written in 2 Peter 3:9, "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." It should be obvious to any Christian who is at all familiar with his Bible that we are in the last moments of the day of grace. May our hearts be encouraged to more faithfulness to Him who is the faithful and true witness.

The moment that God's purposes concerning the Church are completed, our Lord Jesus will come according to His promise in John 14:1-3. The manner of His coming will be according to 1 Thess. 4:13-18. Thus at the very end of the day of grace there is still an opportunity to receive Jesus as Lord and be saved. "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Rom. 10:9. Time is short! Any moment may be the last moment that salvation through the grace of God is available to you. The Lord Jesus invites you, "Come unto Me." Matt. 11:28. God loves you, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16.

L. Huff

The Scriptures: Number 4

Ever since the writings of Moses, God's people have recognized the divine authority of the written word. Besides the books of Moses, God has added to them from time to time by various instruments, and especially by prophets. They not only enforced the divine authority of what had been written, but also spoke authoritatively with "Thus saith the Lord," or "The word of the Lord came," etc. The future blessings of God's earthly people were spread out largely by them to cheer the faithful and to animate them with hope. Although those who were so employed were men of like passions with ourselves, yet to assure us of the authentic character of their ministry and that they gave out the words of the Lord, we are told that "prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." 2 Peter 1:21. All the prophets call earnestly upon the people to be subject to the word of the Lord, for they declared that they spoke His words.

Isaiah said, "Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read." On another occasion he said, Thus said the Lord, "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at My word." And again, "Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at His word." He also exultingly cried out in contrast with the frailty of man, "The word of our God shall stand forever." Besides this testimony to the truth of the words which he ministered as being the word of God, he reproves the wicked in Israel because they cast away the word of the Lord of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel. The prophet further assures them that "The Lord hath spoken." He said, "Hear the word of the Lord." "Therefore saith the Lord, the Lord of hosts, the Mighty One of Israel." (Isa. 34:16; 66:2, 5; 40:8; 5:24; 1:2, 10, 24.)

Jeremiah was so sensitive to the divine authority of the words he communicated to the people, that we find him saying, "Thus saith the Lord," and "Hear the counsel of the Lord." So divinely true were the words to his own conscience that he calls them God's words. He says, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart." Again, we hear him saying, "The word of the Lord was made a reproach unto me, and a derision, daily. Then I said, I will not make mention of Him, nor speak any more in His name. But His word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay." (Jer. 19:1; 49:20; 15:16; 20:8, 9.)

Ezekiel says, "the word of the Lord came unto me," and "the word of the Lord came expressly unto Ezekiel," and "Again the word of the Lord came unto me." This is repeated many times in his prophecy and he was also commanded to write. The Lord said unto him, "Thou shalt speak My words unto them," and in a vision he saw "a roll... written within and without." So assured was he that what he declared was the word of God, that he said, "The word that I shall speak shall come to pass" and "the word which I have spoken shall be done, saith the Lord God." (Ezek. 7:1; 1:3; 16:1; 2:7, 9, 10; 12:25, 28.)

No one can carefully consider the book of Psalms without seeing the value and authority of the Word of God frequently set forth. It opens by marking one point in the righteous man, being that he

meditates in the law of God day and night. In Psa. 119 almost every verse speaks of the word, statutes, commandments, or law of the Lord. Not only does it speak of the purity of the word itself and its cleansing virtue, but its divine authenticity is so regarded that he says, "The law of Thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver," and "I love Thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold." David was one of those holy men of old who was moved to speak by the Holy Spirit. (Psa. 1:2; 119:9, 72, 127.)

Daniel owned the writings, or books of Jeremiah as "the word of the Lord," and also "the oath that is written in the Law of Moses the servant of God," and that God had confirmed His word which He spake against us "as it is written in the law of Moses." We know that the God of heaven made known and revealed wonderful things to Daniel, and used him to communicate His mind both concerning the times of the Gentiles and His own people. Some things concerning them have since been accomplished, and much remains to be fulfilled. (Dan. 9:2, 11, 13; 2:19, 28, 44.)

The other prophets generally ascribed the authenticity of their ministrations to God. In Hosea it is, "the word of the Lord that came unto Hosea." In Joel, "The word of the Lord that came to Joel." Amos said, "Thus saith the Lord." Obadiah said, "Thus saith the Lord God concerning Edom." In Jonah it is twice said, "The word of the Lord came unto Jonah." Micah begins with, "The word of the Lord that came to Micah." Nahum says, "Thus saith the Lord." Habakkuk tells us, "The Lord answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it." Zephaniah begins with, "The word of the Lord which came unto Zephaniah." (Hos. 1:1; Joel 1:1; Amos 1:3; Obad. 1:1; Jonah 1:1;3:1; Mic. 1:1; Nah. 1:12; Hab. 2:2; Zeph. 1:1.)

The testimony of the prophets was nearly completed before the Jews were carried away into Babylon. We have only three post-captivity prophets Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. Haggai distinctly affirms that his word was "the word of the Lord," and that it came to him at different times. He announced it authoritatively with, "Thus saith the Lord." Hag. 1:1, 7; 2:1, 7, 20.

Zechariah also asserts the divine source of his solemn and beautiful utterances when he says, "The word of the Lord came unto Zechariah." Zech. 1:1, 7; 7:1; 8:1.

Malachi also introduces his testimony with, "The burden of the word of the Lord to Israel by Malachi." It is well to observe that this last Old Testament prophet presses, in the Lord's name, the divine authority of the writings of Moses, saying, "Remember ye the law of Moses My servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments." Mal. 1:1; 4:4.

C.H. Mackintosh El

The Past

"Once in the end of the world hath He appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." Heb. 9:26.

He has thus appeared, and He has done the mighty work for which He came from heaven to this earth. He will never thus appear again. The cross is eternal in its issues. What He has done can never be added to nor taken from. By the sacrifice of Himself, He has accomplished this most mighty work, and for His people, sin is put away, and it will be put away from the earth by virtue of that sacrifice, and then the Father's will shall be done on earth as it is in heaven.

The Present

"For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." Heb. 9:24.

Risen from the dead, having put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, Jesus, the High Priest, has entered into the holiest by His own blood and now appears in the heavens, the Man Christ Jesus, in the presence of God for His people, for whose sins He died. He lives to die no more, and He Himself, once the sacrifice on earth, is now the Priest on high for His people. He appeared on earth to die for us; having died, He appears in God's presence to live for us. He abides there as our priest.

The Future

"Unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without [apart from] sin, unto salvation." Heb. 9:28.

On the great Day of Atonement, the High Priest of Israel took the blood of the sacrifice into the holiest of all; God accepted the atoning blood, and Israel was free. The proof to the people that all was well, was the fact that their high priest lived. And when he came out of the tabernacle, they saw in him salvation. He had made atonement, and, having made it, and it having been accepted, he appeared before them, a witness to salvation.

How graciously will the type be fulfilled! For the heavens, which now hide Him from our eyes, will presently open, and Jesus will come forth to bring His people into the full blessing of His accomplished work. He is coming to bring about the lengths and breadths of salvation—salvation from death, from the power of Satan, from this earth and its trials—and its tears salvation absolute and complete.

Christ has put away our sins by the sacrifice of Himself.

Christ lives in God's presence for us, and bears us up through this life's journey.

Christ will come and take us home to be forever with Himself. J.T. Armet.

The Love of Christ

The pattern characteristic of Christ's love was service. "I am among you as one that serves." Selfishness likes to be served; love likes to serve. This is one aspect of Christ's love.

Another is, that it is a companionable love. How free the Lord was in going in and out among men and women, sympathizing with them, even when they had no sympathy with Him! It is a divine love. His love was above all the evil that it met with. We do not have to go along with the evil, but can rise above it with patience, as Christ did, because our love, as His, is not dependent upon the thing that it loves. Because it is a divine love, it is above all the things that could hinder. It goes on and abides, because its spring is in God.

Another characteristic of Christ's love is that it is thoughtful and considerate of us, and consequently adapts itself to our condition, because it is entirely above it.

Another is that it esteems others better than self. Christ could go and take up these poor, failing disciples as those who had been faithful to Him, and say, I will give you a share in My kingdom. Likewise, He encourages every heart by the good He can say of it. Yet in the process, the heart learns its own nothingness.

The measure and extent of the love of Christ was the total giving up of Himself to die for us. If I want to love as He did in a world of evil, it means the giving up of self for others; it is a love that is above the evil.

"Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end." John 13:1. Y.C.

The First Adam

The name is supposed to be derived from Adamah, "earth, or red earth," agreeing with the fact that "the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground." Gen. 2:7. He differed from all other creatures, because God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life by which he became a living soul. He differed also in being made after the image and likeness of God; he was God's representative on earth, and to him was given dominion over all other living things, and he gave them names. He was placed in the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it, showing that occupation was a good thing for man even in innocence. God said that it was not good for man to be alone, so He caused him to sleep, took from him a rib, and of this "builded" a woman. Adam called her Isha for she was taken out of Ish (man), the two being a type of Christ and the Church, in the closest union. (Eph. 5:31, 32.)

Adam and Eve were permitted to eat of all the trees of the garden except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If they ate of that tree, God said, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Gen. 2:17. Eve, beguiled by Satan, ate of that tree, and at her suggestion, though not deceived as Eve was, Adam also took of it. Their eyes were at once opened. They knew they were naked, and hid themselves from God. They were transgressors, had fallen from their state of innocence, and acquired a conscience, and with it the sense of their own evil and guilt. When questioned by God, Adam laid the blame on Eve, ungratefully saying, "the woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." The ground was then cursed for Adam's sake. In sorrow he would eat of it all his life; thorns and thistles would be produced, and in the sweat of his face he would eat bread.

God made for Adam and Eve coats of skins and clothed them, foreshadowing the need for a vicarious sacrifice, and the righteousness that could only come to them through death. They were driven from the garden, and cherubim with a flaming sword prevented them reentering, lest they should eat of the tree of life and live forever in their sin. Adam did not beget a son until after his fall; hence all mankind are alike fallen creatures. (Acts 17:26; Rom. 5:18,19; 1 Cor. 15:22.) Adam lived 930 years and begat sons and daughters. We have no details of the life of Adam as a fallen man. Viewed typically as head of a race, he stands in marked contrast to Christ, the last Adam.

In contrast to the first man, Adam, who was made a living soul, the last Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ, was a life-giving Spirit. The first was natural, the second spiritual. The first man was of the earth, earthy; the second Man was out of heaven. (1 Cor. 15:45-47.) Everything committed to man having failed in Adam, Christ as the last Adam becomes the head of a new and redeemed race. He is the last Adam because there will be no other. Every man must come under one of these two headships: the first Adam, man, or the last Adam, Christ. (see 1 Cor. 15:22; Psa. 8:3-9; Heb. 2:6-9.)

Concise Bible Dictionary

Editorial

Both Syria and Iraq claim to have the Garden of Eden in their territory. The Syrians say it was a few miles outside of Damascus and the Iraqis say it was at the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. Surely both claims are wrong. Eden is not only lost as a paradise, but its geographic location is lost as well.

The sin that drove man out from the Garden of Eden has increased to mass slaughter in the killing fields only a few miles from the Iraqis' Eden. The Syrians, too, are engaged in warfare and terrorism not far from Damascus.

For six years the bloody Iran-Iraq conflict in which thousands upon thousands have died, has raged on and still continues. It began in a quarrel over control of the Shatt-al-Arab waterway which is formed by the meeting of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers.

The prophet Ezekiel writes of a land that "is become like the garden of Eden." Ezek. 36:35. Certainly no one will dispute the undeniable fact that this prophecy has not been fulfilled yet. Instead, the whole world has seen the results of sin in sorrow, pain, hatred, envy, slavery, drudgery and death. Another result of sin is that it takes hard work to produce food, clothing and shelter in order to live on this earth. When shall the prophecy of Ezek. 36 be fulfilled? The chapter begins with:

"Also, thou son of man, prophesy unto the mountains of Israel, and say, Ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord: thus saith the Lord God; Because the enemy hath said against you, Aha, even the ancient high places are ours in possession: therefore prophesy and say, Thus saith the Lord God; Because they have made you desolate, and swallowed you up on every side, that ye might be a possession unto the residue of the heathen, and ye are taken up in the lips of talkers, and are an infamy of the people.... Therefore thus saith the Lord God; I have lifted up Mine hand, Surely the heathen that are about you, they shall bear their shame. But ye, O mountains of Israel, ye shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to My people of Israel; for they are at hand to come. For, behold, I am for you, and I will turn unto you, and ye shall be tilled and sown: and I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, even all of it... I will settle you after your old estates, and will do better unto you than at your beginnings: and ye shall know that I am the Lord." Ezek. 36:1-11.

The Lord's statement in the same chapter, verse 22, is, "I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for Mine holy name's sake." Then the Lord promises:

"I will sanctify My great name."

"I will take you from among the heathen."

"I will sprinkle clean water upon you."

"I will cleanse you."

"A new heart also will I give you."

"A new spirit will I put within you."

"I will put My Spirit within you."

"I will be your God."

In verse 33 we learn when these prophecies will be fulfilled. It is when the Lord has cleansed them and brought Israel again into the land. Then it says in verse 35, "This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden."

The current warfare, in the area where Eden is claimed to have been, clearly manifests the wretched results of sin. Only the Lord can and will cleanse and restore a garden of "Delights" or Eden. Concerning Israel He says, "I will do better unto you than at your beginnings." Ed.

Questions and Answers

Ques. Can you explain 1 Sam. 2:12-17? I don't understand the custom in verse 13. I don't know what a flesh hook is. I don't understand what they did wrong which grieved the Lord in this passage in verse 17.

Ans. The office of the high priest in Israel was to bear the government and the judgment of all the tribes of Israel. He was to instruct them according to the Urim and Thummim—lights and perfections. (Ex. 28:30; Deut. 33:8.) He was to draw near to the Lord for them in all their ignorance and weakness. The home of Eli, the high priest of the Lord of hosts, should have been the fairest spot in the whole earth a home that in a special way witnessed to Jehovah's name and glory. Instead of this it had become a place notable in Israel for foul sins. Eli is charged by the man of God (v. 29) with the guilt of his sons. "Wherefore kick ye at My sacrifice and at Mine offering, which I have commanded in My habitation; and honourest thy sons above Me, to make yourselves fat with the chiefest of all the offerings of Israel My people?" v. 29. (Eli himself was heavy, 1 Sam. 4:18.) "Yourselves" the Lord said. "The priest's custom" (v. 13), doubtless, was this unholy gain the Lord strongly condemns in verse 17. "The sin of the young men was very great before the Lord: for men abhorred the offering of the Lord."

By the ordinance of the Lord, the peace offering had a special and precious significance clearly set forth (Lev. 3). In it the Lord brought the worshipers into communion with Himself. A selected portion was called "the food of the offering," and was to be consumed on the burnt offering and with the meat offering, before they or the priests partook of what was reserved for them. Eli's sons openly set aside the revealed will of God and put their own customs in its place. (1 Sam. 2:13-17.) Even the people knew that the fat must be burnt and was for God. (v. 16.) Eli's sons cared nothing for God's word.

The flesh hook is here described as having three teeth. Its use, perhaps, was like a barbed fork which they jabbed into the meat and pulled out the choicest part which Eli's sons then greedily ate. Their own lusts were, in effect, their god. Besides their very great sins in verses 13-17, more are exposed in verses 22-25.

Surely there is a practical and important lesson for us Christians to learn from this. We know that today every believer is a priest. "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood." 1 Peter 2:5. In Heb. 10:22, we are invited to draw near, but it must be according to God. There are four requisites: a true heart, full assurance of faith, hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. We have no right to change, add to, or diminish from what God has prescribed. Along with the true heart of faith, the blood must be

applied and there must be the washing of the water by the Word. Let us be careful not to depart from the teaching of the Holy Scriptures in seeking to draw near to God. To despise God's word as Eli's sons did, is dangerous. If we come according to God's word, we enjoy the most happy and sweet fellowship and worship and can offer the sacrifice of praise to God. (Heb. 13:15.) Ed.

Truth for the Times

Galatians teaches us that the religion of faith is the religion of immediate, personal confidence in Christ. This truth is pertinent today when the provisions and claims of certain earthly church forms, and a system of ordinances suggested by the religious, carnal mind are abundant and fascinating. To learn, at all times, that our souls are to have their immediate business with Christ, is comforting and assuring. To be told this afresh, at such a time as the present, is needful.

The Apostle is very fervent in this epistle as we all ought to be when some justly prized possession is invaded, when some precious portion of truth, the dearest of all possessions, is tampered with.

The Apostle lets us know in the beginning, with great force and plainness, that he had received his apostleship immediately from God. He had received not only his commission, or his office, but his instructions also, that which he had to minister and testify, as well as his appointment and ministry itself.

Direct Revelation

He was an apostle directly from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, and what he knew and taught he had by direct, immediate revelation.

He tells us that God had dealt directly with him, and he, in answering confidence, had dealt directly with God. For, having received the revelation, having had the Son revealed in him, he at once withdrew from conversing with flesh and blood.

Carrying His Treasure With Him

He did not go up to Jerusalem, to those who were apostles before him, but down to Arabia, carrying, as it were, his treasure—Christ—with him. He did not seek to improve it, but was satisfied with it just as it was.

This brings to mind the Gospel by John, for that gives us, before this time of Paul, sample after sample of the soul finding its satisfaction in Christ. Every quickened one there illustrates it. Andrew, and Peter, and Philip, and Nathanael, in the first chapter, afterward the Samaritan and her companions at Sychar, and then the convicted adulteress, and the excommunicated beggar, all of them tell us, in language which cannot be misunderstood, that they had found satisfaction in Christ, that having been alone with Him in their sins, they were now independent. Having had a personal, immediate dealing with Him as the Savior, they did not look elsewhere. Arabia would do for them as well as Jerusalem, just as in the experience of Paul of the Galatians. They never appeared to converse with flesh and blood. Ordinances were in no measure their confidence. Their souls were proving that faith is that principle which puts sinners into immediate contact with Christ, and makes them independent of all that man can do for them.

How unspeakably blessed it is to see such a state of soul illustrated in any fellow-sinner, in men "of like passions with ourselves."

Assurance and Liberty

Such things are surely written for our learning that by comfort of such scriptures we may have assurance and liberty.

And what is illustrated for our comfort in John's Gospel is taught and pressed upon us in this fervent Epistle of Paul to the Galatians. Having shown the churches in Galatia the character of his apostleship, how he got both his commission and his instructions immediately from God, and was not a debtor to flesh and blood, to Jerusalem, or to those who were apostles before him, and having told them that the life he was now living was by the faith of the Son of God, he begins to challenge them, for they were not in this state of soul.

He calls them "foolish," and tells them they had been "bewitched." How could he do less, when he detected the working of Satan in the fact that they had been withdrawn from the place where the Spirit and the truth, the cross of Christ and faith, had once put them. Then he reasons with them, argues the matter and calls forth his witnesses. He makes them judge themselves, appealing to their first estate. "Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?"

Personal Business With Christ

He cites Abraham in proof that a sinner had immediate, personal business with Christ, and through faith found justification. He rehearses the character of the gospel which had been preached to Abraham, how it told of Christ, and of the sinner, and blessing being put together and alone. "In thee [Abraham's seed, which is Christ] shall all nations be blessed." Precious gospel! Christ, and the sinner, and blessing are bound up together in one bundle. And he goes on to confirm and establish this, by teaching them how Christ bore the curse, and, therefore, surely was entitled to dispense the blessing.

Surely these are witnesses which may well be received, proving the divine character of the religion of faith, which is the sinner's immediate confidence in Christ.

He then goes on to tell us the glorious things which faith accomplishes in us and for us. "After faith is come," he tells us in chapter 3:25-27, "we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Here are precious deeds of faith! It dismisses the schoolmaster; it brings the soul to God as to a father, and then it clothes the believer with the value of Christ, in the eye and acceptance of God. And "God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." Ch. 4:6. And we are redeemed from "under the law." Ch. 4:5. Can any more full and perfect sense of an immediate dealing between Christ and the soul be conceived, than is expressed and declared by such statements? We are brought from under the law—the schoolmaster, and, with him, tutors and governors are gone—we are children at home in the Father's house, and have the rights and the mind of the First-born Himself imparted to us! Can any condition of soul more blessedly set forth our independence of the resources of a religion of ordinances, and the poor sinner's personal and immediate connection with Christ Himself? But Paul finds the churches in Galatia in a backsliding state.

A Backsliding State

They had turned again "to weak and beggarly elements." They were "observing days, and months, and times, and years." It was all but returning to their former idolatry, as he solemnly hints to them, doing "service unto them which by nature are no gods," as they had been doing in the days of their heathen ignorance of the true God. (Ch. 4:8.) Christianity that is merely a formal observation of ordinances is here connected with heathendom. Is it not solemn? "I am afraid of you," says he to the Galatians in this state, "lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain."

Gracious and patient as he was in Christ, Paul labors more painfully than ever, even "to travail in birth again" for them. But all this was only to this end, that Christ might be formed in them.

Restoration of Soul

He longed for their restoration, and that was, that they and Christ might immediately be brought together again, that faith might be revived in them, the simple, hearty, blessed religion of personal and direct confidence in God in Christ Jesus. He yearned that, as in himself, the Son might be revealed in them, and that, regaining Christ in their souls, they might prove they needed nothing more.

How edifying it is to mark the path of such a spirit under the conduct of the Holy Ghost! How comforting to see the purpose of God, by such a ministry, with the souls of poor sinners! How it lets us learn what Christianity is in the judgment of God Himself! The going over to the observance of days and times, the returning to ordinances, is destructive. It is the world. "Why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances?" as the same Apostle says in another place. Confidence in ordinances is not faith in Christ. It is the religion of nature, of flesh and blood. It is of man and not of God.

The Passions of Man

And surely it carries in its train the passions of man. Man's religion leaves man as it found him; in fact, it cherishes and cultivates man's corruptions. This showed itself in Ishmael in earliest days and even in Cain before him. Paul declares that in his day it was the same, and today formal, corrupt Christianity is the same. "As then, he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so is it now." Man's religion does not cure him. By it he is left a prey to the subtleties and violence of his nature, the captive still of the old serpent, who has been a liar and a murderer from the beginning.

The decree, however, has been pronounced. It is: "Cast out the bondwoman and her son." Ch. 4:30. It was delivered in the days of Isaac and Ishmael, of Abraham and Sarah; it is rehearsed and re-sealed by the Spirit Himself in the day of the Apostle Paul, and we are to receive it as established forever.

What a consolation it is to have this mighty question between God and man, settled! And, according to this consolation, we listen to this further word: "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." Ch. 5:1.

All, surely, is of the same character. The Holy Ghost, by the Apostle, is preparing the great, leading, commanding, principle of divine religion. It is faith. It is the sinner's personal and immediate confidence in Christ. It is the soul's finding satisfaction in Him, and in that which He has done for it.

Next Door to Glory

The sinner, in possession of this faith, is set next door to glory. The Apostle quickly tells us this, after commanding us to stand fast in the liberty of the gospel, for he adds, "We through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith." Ch. 5:5. This hope is the glory that is to be revealed—"the glory of God." Rom. 5:2. We do not wait for any improvement of our character, for any advance in our souls. As long as we are in the flesh we need to "grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." But such things are not needed as title. Being in Christ by faith, we are next door to glory. "Whom He justified, them He also glorified." (Rom. 8.) Being in the kingdom of God's dear Son, we are "meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." (Col. 1.) Here, in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, we wait only for glory. Glory is the immediate object of our hope, as Christ is the immediate confidence of our souls.

It is all magnificent in its simplicity, because it is all of God. No wonder that Scripture so abundantly discourses to us about faith, and so zealously warns us against religiousness. The "persuasion," as the Apostle speaks, under which the Galatians had fallen, had not come of God who had called them, and the Apostle sounds the alarm, blows the blast of war on the silver trumpet of the sanctuary, uttering these voices in their ears: "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." Again, "If ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law." Gal. 5:8, 9, 18.

Happy Structure of This Epistle

And in the happy structure of this epistle, the Apostle ends with himself, as he begins with himself. We have seen how he told them, at the first, of the peculiarities of his apostleship, how he had received both his commission and his instructions immediately from God, and how he had then, with a faith that was an answer to such grace, at once conducted himself in full, personal confidence in Christ, and independently of all the resources of flesh and blood. And now, at the close, he tells them, that, as for himself, he knew no glorying but in the cross of the Lord Jesus, by whom the world was crucified to him and he to the world. And he tells them, further, that no one need meddle with him or trouble him with their thoughts about circumcision and the law or the doings of a carnal religiousness, the rudiments of a world to which he was now crucified, for he bore in his body the marks of the Lord. He belonged to Jesus by personal, individual tokens, immediately impressed on him, as by the appropriating hand of Christ Himself, and no one had any right to touch the Lord's treasure.

Precious secret of the grace of God, precious simplicity in the faith of a heaven-taught sinner! It is not knowledge of Scripture, or the ability to talk of it, or even to teach it from Genesis to Revelation; it is not the orderly services of religion; it is not devout feelings, but it is that guileless action of the soul that attaches our very selves to Jesus in the calm and certainty of a believing mind.

Things New and Old

Christ Our Object

As He is our object now, so He will be throughout eternity. We shall ever be with the Lord. He Himself will be with us—the Lamb that was once slain; then, as now, He will be the Man—for He will never lay aside the humanity He has assumed; then He will fill our gaze and our hearts, perfectly and completely. What an infinite study to trace out and contemplate His varied and manifold excellencies! We shall see His face, and shall never weary of drinking in His beauty! We shall hear His voice, and shall never tire of those notes of love.

Christian Conquest

In chapter 6 of Nehemiah we see him in conflict, but it is in personal single-handed fight. In chapter 4 he is marshalling others, putting the sword in one of their hands and the trowel in the other, but in chapter 6 he is fighting alone and face to face with the wiles of his enemies. In the progress of this chapter, he is put through different temptations. Generally we see him as a single-hearted man whose body therefore, is "full of light." He detects the enemy and is safe. Besides this, he has certain special securities which are very profitable to consider for a moment.

1. He pleads the importance of the work he was doing (v. 3).
2. He pleads the dignity of his own person (v. 11).

These are fine arguments for any saint of God to use in the face of the tempter. The Lord Himself uses them, and teaches us to use them also.

In Mark 3, His mother and His brothers come to Him, and they seem to have a plan to withdraw Him to themselves from what He is doing, just as Nehemiah's enemies are seeking to do with him in this chapter. But the Lord pleads the importance of what He was doing in answer to the claims which flesh and blood had upon Him. He is teaching His disciples and the multitude, getting the light and word and truth of God into them. And the fruit of such a work as this, He solemnly lets us know, was far beyond the value of all connections with Him in the flesh. The claims of God's Word, which He was then ministering were far weightier than those of nature.

In like manner He teaches His servants to know the dignity of their work. He tells them, "not to salute any man by the way," or to stop to bid farewell to them that are at home, or to tarry even for the burial of a father (Luke 9; 10).

In Luke 13, the Pharisees try to bring Him into the fear of man, as Shemaiah seeks to do with Nehemiah. (Neh. 6:10). But the Lord at once rises into the sense of His dignity, the dignity of His person, and lets the Pharisees know that He is at His own disposal, can walk as long as He pleases, and end His journey when He pleases. The purposes of Herod are vain, except as the Lord allows them to transpire. And so, in John 11, when His disciples would have kept Him from going into Judea, where so lately His life had been in danger, He again rises in like manner, in the consciousness of personal dignity, and answers them as from this elevation. (See verses 9-11.)

The Holy Spirit by the apostle in 1 Cor. 6, would impart courage and strength to the saints, from a like sense of the elevation and honors that belonged to them. "Know ye not," says Paul to the Corinthians, "that we shall judge angels?" And again, "Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price." "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?"

There is something very fine in all this. These are weapons of war indeed, weapons of divine material. To gain victories with such is Christian conquest indeed. Temptations can be met and withstood by the soul carrying the sense of the importance of the work to which God has set us, and the dignity of the person which God has made us. It would be well if we would take down and

use those weapons, as well as admire them, as they thus hang up before us in the armory of God. It is easy, however, to inspect and verify the fitness of an instrument to do its appointed work, and yet be feeble and unskillful in using it, and in doing the work it is appointed to do. J.G. Bellett

Oneness With Christ

The oneness of believers with Christ and with each other was brought about by His resurrection "from the dead."

As soon as He left the grave, He said to Mary Magdalene, "Go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God." John 20:17.

Never were such words uttered before; indeed, they could not be uttered, because this blessed relationship did not exist till the Lord Jesus died and rose again. He said, "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" He could not tell them what He so longed that they should know till He had passed through death and resurrection.

But as soon as He left the tomb, then He could tell it out in all its fullness and blessedness, even this glorious truth, that they were now one family, and that which was true of Him was true of them. His interests had become theirs, and His glorious future theirs also. The Lord Jesus in resurrection became the firstborn among many brethren. (Rom. 8:29.) And it was there also that He became the Head of His body, the Church. (Eph. 1:19-23.)

What a glorious position believers are in. They are associated with Christ forever, and soon will be with Him in eternal glory. It is only the question of a few short days at the most, and then they will see His face and hear His voice, and be with Him, and like Him forevermore. (Phil. 3:20-21.)

Believers are now in this little interval between these two great events—the cross and the glory—forever delivered by the one and hastening on to the other, and at any moment they may be called away from this scene, to take their places with Himself in the glory. He "shall change our vile body, and fashion it like unto His glorious body."

May all who know the joy of this blessed hope be kept very true and real for Himself and very separate from this evil world, till He comes. H. Tuggy

The Scriptures: Number 5

From the days of Moses, sacred writings were recognized by the faithful in Old Testament times as the Word of God, therefore demanding implicit subjection and continual obedience. They were not to "add unto the word" or "diminish aught" from that which God commanded. It was so indispensable that the Lord instructed Israel that he might "know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live." (Deut. 4:2; 8:3.) But while God's people were called to hearken to, and hold fast what He had revealed, and to obey it at all cost, yet it is well to observe how remarkably in these times God's blessing was with those who honored Him in obeying His truth. His displeasure followed those who turned away from it. This runs all through Scripture. It will be interesting to notice a few examples.

The disobedience of our first parents in doing what was contrary to the word of God, has been followed with unutterable misery to them and to their posterity. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Rom. 5:12. Cain became "a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth," for he refused to hearken to the voice of God and do His will. Abel Noah believed God's testimony as to coming judgment, because men had corrupted the earth and filled it with violence. He therefore, according to the word of God, prepared an ark to the saving of himself and his house. The world, so overrun with infidelity as to reject the testimony of this preacher of righteousness, was therefore swept away by divine judgment.

Abraham was singularly blest and honored in obeying the word of God, while just Lot vexed his righteous soul from day to day and had to escape for his life. His posterity came under God's curse. All this could be traced to walking after the sight of his eyes and doing his own will instead of being subject to the will and word of God.

When God gave the children of Israel manna in the wilderness, He commanded that no man should leave of it till the morning. But some of the people did not listen to Moses and left some manna till the morning. It bred worms and stank and Moses was wroth with them. On the sixth day the Lord sent them a double portion so as to feed them also on the Sabbath day. They had to lay it up to be kept until the morning according to the word of the Lord by Moses and it did not stink, neither was there any worm in it. Again we find there were some who would not believe God, that there would be none sent down on the seventh day; therefore, some of the people went out to gather, but they found none. "And the Lord said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to keep My commandments and My laws?" Ex. 16:28. Scarcely anything could show more strikingly the divine authority of the Word, the peace and blessing connected with subjection to it, and the evil of departing from it.

The children of Israel, after the solemn covenant of the law when they promised obedience to all the words which the Lord had said, almost immediately rebelled in making a golden calf, and worshiping and sacrificing to it saying, "These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." Ex. 32:4. Thus they brought upon themselves the just judgment of God in

acting so contrary to His holy word. We are told, "There fell of the people that day about three thousand men." v.28.

When Nadab and Abihu, sons of Aaron, entered upon the solemn office of priesthood, they were cut off by instant death because they offered strange fire which the Lord commanded them not to do. The Lord said, "I will be sanctified in them that come nigh Me, and before all the people I will be glorified." Lev. 10:3.

When the son of an Israelite woman blasphemed the name of the Lord and cursed, God commanded that he should be put to death, and that all the congregation should certainly stone him. (Lev. 24:10-16.)

Those, too, who were under the Law of Moses, were commanded to keep the Sabbath day holy and to do no manner of work in it. When a man therefore, despised the word of the Lord and was found gathering sticks on the Sabbath day, he was stoned to death. The word of the Lord was, "The man shall be surely put to death: all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp." Num. 15:35. These are some of the instances of the sad results of despising the Law of Moses they died without mercy.

Saul lost the kingdom by rejecting the word of the Lord. He was commanded by the Lord of hosts to utterly destroy and not spare Amalek, man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass. Instead of this he spared the king of the Amalekites, Agag, the best of the sheep, oxen, lambs, and all that was good and would not utterly destroy them. Saul might have thought he was doing a good thing in reserving some of the sheep and oxen for sacrifices, but it was contrary to the word of the Lord. Therefore Samuel said, "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, He hath also rejected thee from being king." 1 Sam. 15:22, 23. C. H. Mackintosh

Guidance

Are you a mother or a father? Are you repeating the Scriptures to your children diligently, "When thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up"? Deut. 6:7. Do you talk to your children about not only the way of salvation, but about the wisdom of God as found in the Word? And do you seek to direct their footsteps into the path where God in grace can bless them, and warm their hearts with the love of Christ, that their lives may be more devoted to Him and His glory? How necessary it is! The parents ought to lay up for the children—not money, brethren. Ah, no. Lay up sound words, sound wisdom; repeat it to them, and plead with them, and pray with them, and entreat them in all fatherly and motherly affection that they may grow in the things of God. H.E.H.

Bible Challenger-05-May V.02

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the words which describe the observation someone standing inside Solomon's temple might have made regarding its construction.

1. How old was Eli when the ark of God was taken by the Philistines?
2. How many priests' garments were given in Ezra's day for the rebuilding of the temple?
3. How many cities of refuge did Israel have?
4. How many stones did Elijah use to build an altar on Mount Carmel?
5. How long did the laborers toil who were last hired in the kingdom of heaven parable?
6. How long was Og's bedstead?
7. How many stars did Joseph see in one of his dreams?
8. How many altars did Balaam build each time he discoursed with Balak?
9. How many sons did Jesse have?
10. How many curtains of goats' hair were used to cover the tabernacle?
11. How many chariots of iron did Jabin have that he used in oppressing Israel?

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

R. Erisman

Bible Challenger-04-April Answers V.02

1. Faint, yet pursuing. Judg. 8:4
2. I do set My bow in the cloud. Gen. 9:13
3. Reach hither thy finger. John 20:27
4. Salvation is of the Lord. Jonah 2:9
5. The tongue can no man tame. James 3:8
6. Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny Me thrice. Mark 14:30
7. O taste and see that the Lord is good. Psalms 34:8
8. Rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee. Prov. 9:8
9. No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly. Psalms 84:11

"Because all the Firstborn are Mine; for on the day that I smote all the Firstborn in the land of Egypt I hallowed unto me all the Firstborn in Israel, both man and beast: Mine they shall be: I am the Lord." Num. 3:13.

Points to Ponder

You will never find in Jesus, an ear which has grown heavy, an arm shortened, or a heart that has grown cold toward us, as we have had to learn from our own hearts.

If I cannot trust God to make me happy by doing His will, I will try and make myself happy by doing my own.

If you take the world, you must take the enmity against God along with it, for the friendship of the world is enmity against Him. Are you going to have this world from Satan, or the other world from Christ?

We need to have perfect confidence in God to dare to obey in this world.

Genesis 24—the Call

The Call

It has pleased God to give us in Abraham's history the fundamental principles of faith, in all the relations of man with God on the ground of pure grace, without law.

In chapter 22 we have a most complete reference to Christ and His death, as the Lord Himself shows in John 8:56. Abraham offers up his son Isaac, and receives him back again through death "in a figure." Heb. 11:19. This act represents in type the resurrection of Christ, who becomes, as Isaac was, the heir of all the goods of His Father, which He can now share with His bride. In this way Rebekah becomes a type of the Church, and, in answering the call, she is an example for each and every Christian.

Scripture exalts the Person of Christ, whether His fullness be portrayed in type and shadow, as in the Old Testament, or in Himself, as the sent One of the Father, as seen in the New, God manifest in flesh, dwelling amongst us here in this world.

In this chapter, Eliezer, a type of the Holy Ghost, is sent by Abraham to procure a bride for his only son. Isaac does not go himself, nor does Christ return from heaven to choose a bride. The bride must go to the land of promise.

As we trace Eliezer's path from the father's house to that distant land, and then escorting the bride back again across a lonely country, we see the features of the Holy Spirit's work, and the way in which a soul is conducted under His guidance. All the goods of his master are under his control, but they all belong to Isaac who is the heir. Notice how he was cast upon God from beginning to end, how he made known the greatness and glories of Isaac, giving Rebekah, in the jewels and presents, a foretaste of the joyous portion that lay before her. When the blessing is known, thanksgiving springs up from the gladdened heart of the servant, and is followed by the manifestation of entire and exclusive devotion to his master's interest and service. He will not eat until he has told his errand. Do we not learn in this a leading principle in the Holy Spirit's operations? He does not act independently; all He does, and all He communicates, is by and from the Scriptures of truth, and according to what is written therein.

As we follow the servant thus, we see the purpose of God carried out by the Holy Spirit, and we become familiar with the ways of Him, who takes of the things of Christ and shows them unto us. At the same time He unfolds to us God's way of dealing with us, preparing our path and leading us into all truth, as we journey on to that blessed moment when we shall hear the Bridegroom's voice.

It is good to hear and to feel that God Himself is making everything ready beforehand, so that we have only to follow on in a path prepared by Him. But Rebekah herself must be tested. A proposition of delay is raised. Granted that she is to be for Isaac in the end, is it necessary that she should be for him now? Is there not room for an intervening period, during which the servant's guidance may be refused (and he surely grieved), while Rebekah weakly yields to the claims of

nature, kindred and the world? Will Rebekah consent to this? What about the "ten days"? She has heard, has believed the servant's report concerning him, whom, not having seen, she loves. She judges Isaac worthy of a full and instant surrender of herself to the leading of his devoted servant.

Beloved brethren, is there not a proposition of delay likewise made in our case? Granted that we are to be fully for our risen Lord, when resting with Him in glory, what about the possible "ten days" of our sojourn in the scene of His past sorrow and present rejection? Very touchingly He told the Father (John 17), "I am glorified in them." Shall we not, under the constraint of His love, with Rebekah-like decision and promptitude, yield ourselves up to the present guidance and control of the Holy Spirit, whose office it is to glorify the Lord Jesus? He will surely do this in and by us if we do not oppose and grieve Him. It may well occur to our hearts in this connection, that Abraham's servant did not, could not, tell Rebekah how Isaac had "poured forth his soul unto death" that she might live and be his.

May our hearts, beloved brethren, impel us to this blessed, instant subjection, while we await His very near coming for us! For we have not only the bright prospect of heaven before us, but the Lord says, "Surely I come quickly." He Himself is coming to take us into the Father's house. The Spirit says, "Come." What is the spontaneous response of our hearts? Does not the Bride say, "Come"? Have we individually the bridal affections, produced by the Holy Spirit, which can join in the Spirit's cry, and say, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus"? May it be so with us! As it has been said by another, "The Christian who is not spiritual, but rather worldly, has a sorrowful lot; if his heart hangs back from following the Lord, he is unhappy; the spiritual things which ought to have constituted his joy, produce reproaches in his heart when he turns towards them. But we have the grace of Him who calls us, and who leads us, if we are faithful, in a uniform path, 'for His name's sake.'" And how bright the future, to be forever with the Lord! W. Lowe

Four Little Things but Exceeding Wise: Proverbs 30:24-28PRO

30:24-28

1. "The ANTS are a people not strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer."

The summer is the time when we have the opportunity to prepare our food for the winter that is fast coming upon us. The ants are exceeding wise because they take advantage of this opportunity and prepare their meat in the summer. Soon many will have to cry, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." "Exceeding wise" is the one who prepares his meat now, when he may do so.

In Matt. 9:37 we read: "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few."

In John 4:35, the Lord tells us: "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest." The white harvest fields tell us that the time for the harvest is rapidly passing away.

In Rev. 14:15, the Word tells us:

"The harvest of the earth is dried." (Margin.) The dried up harvest fields tell us it is too late for the harvest. In Jer. 8:20, we hear the sad cry: "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." And that means they are LOST, LOST forever.

2. "The conies are but a feeble folk, yet make they their houses in the rocks."

Like the feeble, little ants, they are "exceeding wise." They find their refuge in the cleft rock. They know the truth of the words of Psa. 18:2: "The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower."

The ants teach us to prepare our food while we may: Christ, the bread of life.

The conies teach us to find our refuge in the rock, and that rock is Christ.

3. The locusts have no king, yet go they forth all of them gathered together. (Prov. 30:27, Margin.)

Having found food and refuge in Christ, the one who is wise, though perhaps weak and small, will now find Christ to be the One who gathers unto Himself. It may be that those "gathered together" unto Him are only "two or three," but we will find that Christ Himself is there in our midst. And the one who is thus gathered I together unto the Name of the Lord Jesus is, in God's sight, "exceeding wise."

True, the world may not think so. The world would seek "a king," and the locusts "have no king," no visible, earthly leader or ruler, but they have the word of their Lord: "Where two or three are gathered together in [unto] My Name, there am I in the midst of them." And what more can we want?

4. "The spider taketh hold with her hands, and is in kings' palaces."

When Moses made the tabernacle, God commanded that every board in it should rest upon two silver sockets, and each socket should weigh a talent: "a talent for a socket." Ex. 38:27. The weight was about 100 pounds. The silver for these sockets was provided by the "redemption money," and tells us of our redemption. Every board had two tenons, or, as the margin puts it, "two hands." And these "hands" took hold of the silver sockets "Two sockets under one board for his two tenons [or, hands,] and two sockets under another board for his two tenons [or, hands.]" Ex. 26:19.

I think those "hands" which took hold of the silver sockets, tell us of each believer taking hold, by faith, of the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.

Thus we learn from Exodus of the faith of the spider in Proverbs that took hold with her hands and is in kings' palaces. Mr. Darby's translation gives us "lizard" instead of spider, and those who have lived in the tropics and watched the little lizards running about on the ceiling, by "taking hold with her hands," and there devouring the mosquitoes and other insects that so often inhabit a tropical house will better understand the force of "taking hold with her hands." Those little hands of the lizard are provided with what they need to take hold, in some unseen manner, of the ceiling of the kings' palaces, and there she makes her home.

It is true, as the locusts taught us, that we have no visible king, but the spider (or, lizard) tells us that by faith we look for the Father's house, a home, where "God is known in her palaces for a refuge." Psa. 48:3. And of the One of whom it is said, "God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows," it is also said, "All Thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made Thee glad." Psa. 45:7, 8.

Just one word more. Note that the ants and the conies and the locusts are all in the plural, but when we come to the one that takes hold with her hands, we find the singular only. Faith must be an individual thing, something for each one of us. I must take hold of those silver sockets of redemption for my very own self. May God help us to have the exceeding wisdom of these FOUR LITTLE THINGS.

G. C. Willis

He That Hath No Sword

In Luke 22 we find the Lord Jesus and His disciples at the Passover. Following the supper of the Passover, the Lord instituted the Lord's Supper, with Judas not present. It is at the table of the Lord that every heart is searched.

Christ had great things ahead for each disciple to do and had wondrous rewards for them in the next world. In order for them to carry out His plan, they must be prepared morally for their service and communion in His absence, because He was about to leave them and ascend on high.

Inner envying and murmuring, hidden in the heart until this time, were now manifested before Him. Strife broke out (the acting of the flesh and the desire for preeminence) but the Lord taught them that it is greater to serve than to sit at meat. He had given them this example in His own pathway.

Next, He told them that He valued their continuing with Him, and He appointed them a kingdom and twelve thrones, one for each of them to sit on. This is grace which precedes truth.

He addressed 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."

Peter answered, "Lord, I am ready to go with Thee, both into prison, and to death."

Jesus said, "I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest Me. And He said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye anything? And they said, Nothing. Then said He unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one."

The purse suggests a capacity for daily necessities as to natural things as food and raiment, but much more the principles of the kingdom which we need, of which we should be conscious continually. Our supply is drawn from above where Christ is-"Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him."

The scrip suggests the inner man, the place where we keep the precious things of spiritual value which we carry within, besides the supply of the spirit of grace so necessary for one who serves in the kingdom of God. Constant communion and meditation preserve us.

David had a scrip in which he carried five smooth stones, and only David knew their value. The disciples already had a purse, and a scrip, not needed when Jesus was here, but when He was going to leave and be absent, the disciples were to take them.

While Jesus is absent our path takes on this character, with purse and scrip. Faith must act with wisdom and a realization of our responsibilities which rest entirely in an absent Christ. (1 Peter 3:22.) But a sword was something else. It must be bought.

The Jewish people were, as a nation, above the Gentiles, having the oracles of God. But in our day the godly Jew, just as all believers, is in a path of rejection because of Christ, and he has spiritual enemies. We need, therefore a spiritual weapon a sword.

In order to procure this weapon, we must sell our garment (worldly, religious reputation) and buy a sword. The following verses show how the transaction takes place. The Lord Himself saw to it that Peter sold his garment, otherwise he never would have sold it. To sell the garment may be painful and humbling, but the result, Oh how precious!

"And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And He said unto them, It is enough," meaning that the disciples did not understand. Without divine revelation and soul experience, man is without understanding.

They said, "Shall we smite with the sword?" Peter cut off an ear; the Lord healed it. Peter followed afar off. Peter sat down among them by the fire. A certain maid accused him. Oh how clever Satan is, but Peter was in good hands in spite of all.

Peter denied. Again Peter answered, "I am not." One hour elapsed so he might evaluate and judge himself, but to no avail. Another accused. Peter heard the cock crow. Is this the way that Peter sold his garment? Yes.

The Lord turned and looked on Peter; Peter went out and wept bitterly. Later, at the grave, he stooped down and beheld the linen clothes and departed, wondering. After the Lord had risen, He appeared unto Peter. Divine love broke his heart.

In Acts 2:23, Peter used his sword just recently purchased for the price of his garment. Now Peter had a sword. He had learned, "Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary."

Across the will of nature

Lies the path of God.

Ter Steegen

One by one the disciples sold their garments to buy swords. With such a weapon each went forth in victory even to the gallows. Because of having swords, nearly all of the disciples were martyred.

Abraham carried a sword and won as the father of faith. Moses endured. David delivered the kingdom to his son. Solomon had no sword nor did the kings of Israel after the separation from Judah, but Judah's kings had swords for the most part. Rahab, Ruth, Gideon and others recorded in Heb. 11, as well as Ezra and Nehemiah carried swords and won. Saul, Balaam, Joab, and Absalom were without swords.

"The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." A sword is required to enter the kingdom. Satan stands in the way seeking to hinder the soul from taking the first step; habits and companions have a part in resisting our advance. We must do battle.

When a Christian young man refuses to enter the army, it usually is because he has a sword. So also a young person who refuses to marry an unbeliever is carrying a sword. The person who possesses a sword will battle on and discover the testimony that God has set up for this day. We

begin by purifying our souls by faith in the blood of Christ. To be gathered by the Spirit unto the name of the Lord Jesus, the only name, is the present testimony that God recognizes. All other names are false.

To hide under tradition is to be carried about with every wind of doctrine. The enemy lies in wait to deceive, having invented a huge system of error through religious men. It is a system which appears palatable to the professing Christian, but if there were a sincere inquiry into the Word of God, no foundation could be found for gathering on any other basis than unto the name of the Lord Jesus. The true Church is not an organization but an organism composed of all believers.

I am not using a sword unless I comply with Scripture. This is quite humbling for the flesh, yet I must sell my garment and buy a sword. Only that which is found in the Holy Scriptures will be approved at the judgment seat of Christ. C. Lunden

The Morning Watch

Child of God, do you keep "the morning watch"? Do you make it the habit of your life each day to see your Father's face before you see the face of man? Do you hear His voice daily before you listen to the voices and din of this world? Do you read His handwriting in the Word before you look into your letters, papers or books? Once more I would ask you, do you do business with your God before you take up the business and duties of your daily life?

It is well for you if you can answer truly: Yes, "He wakeneth morning by morning, He wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned [instructed]." Isa. 50:4.

I have heard Mr. Hudson Taylor tell how, once, on his return after several years of absence from his family in China, he reached home in the early morning and went to the bed where his little daughter lay asleep. Fondly he stood by her side, looking into her face and waiting until she would awaken. Presently the little one moved, stretched herself, and then opened her eyes. They opened upon her father's tender, loving gaze. What a moment!

Child of God, do you know that your Father stands bending over your bedside each morning longing for you to open your eyes upon Him, and to look into His face until you catch the light of His eye resting in love upon you? What strength for all the coming day will this vision give you! The Lord looked upon Gideon and said, "Go in this thy might."

Have you learned, like Samuel of old, to awake attentive to the voice of God, and to say at once, as he was instructed to say, "Speak, Lord; for Thy servant heareth"? As you awake, do you turn first to the written Word of your Father and say: "Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law"? Do you know the sweet promise concerning His Word: "When thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee"? Prov. 6:22.

Such a beginning as this to your day will prepare you to meet whatever duty, trial, or service that may come.

Abraham Justified by Both Faith and Works

When the Apostle Paul is elucidating God's way of salvation "on the principle of faith," he asks the question, "What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." Rom. 4:1-3. The Apostle's appeal to Scripture (Gen. 15:6) is conclusive, and stills every human reasoning or argument. "To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted [or reckoned] for righteousness." Rom. 4:5. And the blessedness which ensues is celebrated by David in Psa. 32, and is known to the soul as "forgiveness."

On referring back to the scripture in Gen. 15, we note that all this matter passed between God and Abraham alone. Some thirty years, perhaps forty years, afterward, this faith of Abraham's was tested by a call from God to surrender the very son promised on the previous occasion, and of whom God had distinctly said, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." So that quite apart from the consideration of parental affections, the offering up of Isaac really involved putting back into God's hand every promise, every hope for the future, every experience gained, in all his past life, of God's faithful goodness, which had shone out brightly above his own failures. This request Abraham obeyed without hesitation, and the result for him was an entrance into God's thoughts about Christ, and a depth of communion with God which never could have been possible without the trial. He received Isaac back again from the dead "in a figure" (Heb. 11:17-19), and the Lord Jesus said of him, "Abraham rejoiced to see My day: and he saw it, and was glad." John 8:56. To this trial of faith, and its remarkable result, contrary to all human thoughts and methods, James refers in his Epistle, when he speaks of Abraham being "justified by works." James 2:21.

Paul gives God's testimony to Abraham, that upon which faith is founded; James speaks of an act of which everybody can judge, and by which faith is proved.

A familiar illustration of this difference has been offered. A man wished to have a certain pear, highly spoken of, produced in his own garden. In order to make sure of obtaining it, he applied to a famous gardener for the tree, and received the gardener's assurance that it was the right one. He had nothing to rest on but the word of the gardener. After waiting a year or so without seeing any fruit, the man grew impatient, and anxious to be quite sure he had the right tree, consulted another reliable gardener. Showing him the tree and begging him to examine it, he asked him if he could assure him that he had been given the right tree. Well, said the second gardener, when you show me the ripe fruit produced by this tree, I shall be able to tell you, but not until then. The first gardener is Paul; the second, James.

W. Lowe

By Faith, Not by Sight

There are certain great principles of life in which the Christian is led to walk to the glory of God. One of these is, "We walk by faith, not by sight." In this we are at once brought to the sacred Scriptures, and to Christ of whom they testify. We have the Holy Spirit by whom the holy men of God were moved of old, by whom testimony is given to Christ who dwells in us forever. It does not say, we walk by faith, and by sight, but, we walk by faith, and not by sight.

When the rich man in hell entreated that one might be sent from the dead to his five brethren, that they might be kept from coming to that place of torment, he was refused his request. He was told, "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.... If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." Luke 16:29, 31. The sight of one rising from the dead would do them no good if they would not hear Moses and the prophets, for faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. (Rom. 10:17.)

While Christ walked with His disciples in the flesh, they had much of the sight of Christ, and so did the people of the world. But the disciples were blessed by the word of Christ and those who were not blessed by His word, were not blessed at all. In this we see the ignorance of Christ's disciples drawing out much of His compassion to them. They were willing to walk by sight, but He could not allow them to do so. They were very slow to walk by faith, but He could not conduct them in any other course.

The Empty Sepulcher

Why did the women carry spices with them to the sepulcher on the first day of the week, the third day after Christ was crucified? Was it what He said that made them do so? Or was it what they saw, together with their own thoughts about it, without any reference to a word that came out of His mouth on the matter? This was it! They saw the sepulcher and how His body was laid, and then they went to prepare the spices and ointments. But they did not remember His words. If they had remembered His words, they would have gone on this third day to see the empty sepulcher and to look for their risen Lord. The very sight of the stone rolled away would have been a joyous sight, and not to have found the body of the Lord Jesus would have been a sight more joyous still.

The very acts by which the purposes of God are accomplished will perplex those who have not communion with the mind of God in those acts. Those who saw His works for forty years, but did not learn His ways, could not enter into His rest, and therefore the word of warning is, "To-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." Heb. 3:15.

But God was merciful to those poor women who, though ignorant, were full of love to Jesus, so He sent the two men in shining garments to say to them:

"Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen: remember how He spake unto you when He was yet in Galilee, saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. And they remembered His words." Luke 24:5-8.

Even the very apostles themselves were in a worse state than those women. God would warn us through them that the very chief of Christ's disciples, even His chosen apostles, could not walk by sight.

There are the two disciples going to Emmaus the day on which they should have known that Christ was to rise from the dead.

"And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus Himself drew near, and went with them." vv. 13-15.

The subject of their conversation was "the things that had happened." The nature of the conversation was that they "reasoned" together. They told what one person did and what another person said, and then they puzzled themselves to know why all this was so. Oh, poor disciples! Did they speak one word of what God had said in all this matter, and what God had done, and of all the glory that was now awaiting them? No, they did not! Now if walking by sight has gotten them into their trouble, God will show them, and through them show us, that it is not by sight that He will get them out of it. Objects of sight may draw out one's own thoughts, but it is by the Word of God that He communicates His thoughts.

“a Stranger in Jerusalem”

As these two disciples communed together and reasoned, Jesus Himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were holden that they should not know Him and yet they were about to learn more of Him. But first Christ had to cast down their reasoning.

“He said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad? And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto Him, Art Thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?” vv. 17,18.

Jesus was indeed only a Stranger in Jerusalem, and He would make those disciples to know themselves strangers with Him there. His Father had given Him a cup, and He drank it. He laid down His life for the sheep. But Jesus drew out those two disciples by asking them, “What things?”

“And they said unto Him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and have crucified Him. But we trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, today is the third day since these things were done. Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulcher; and when they found not His body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that He was alive. And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulcher, and found it even so as the women had said: but Him they saw not.” vv. 19-24.

“Slow of Heart to Believe”

Such was their account of the things that had happened in Jerusalem, and their own thoughts about them. Jesus heard them and said, "O fools!" They saw what the chief priests had done, but they did not see what God had done. They were not walking by faith; they were slow of heart to believe all that the prophets had spoken. It was there they were to learn Christ and the purposes of God about Him, and so "beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself."

The things concerning Christ can only be learned in the Scriptures, not in the things happening in any place, for we walk by faith, not by sight. You may truly see an important act in the workings of God, and yet be quite ignorant of the purpose of God in that act, or what further result will follow. All these must be learned of God and He has set them, so far as He sees we need to know them, in His Scriptures. He has given His Spirit to show Christ and the connection of these things with the glory of Christ, and this without the aid of the things of sight.

"Their eyes were holden that they should not know Him," because their walk was to be by faith, and not by sight. There must be the exclusion of sight in our walk of faith. It is in the Scriptures that the things concerning Him are to be learned, and "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart." Rom. 10:8.

The Same Communion

Those who know the truth can have the same communion with the Father and the Son as those who saw with their eyes and handled with their hands what they have declared unto us of the Word of life.

“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.” 1 John 1:1-3.

After Christ had reproved and corrected and instructed those two disciples on their way to Emmaus, He then tested their affection for Him and their desire to have Him with them. When they drew near to the village, He made as though He would have gone further. But they loved His presence; they wished Him to stay with them.

“But they constrained Him, saying, Abide with us; for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And He went in to tarry with them. And it came to pass, as He sat at meat with them, He took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew Him; and He vanished out of their sight.” Luke 24:29-31.

In this there was further witness of “not by sight” for when their eyes were opened that they knew Him, instead of His adding something to what He had already taught them, He vanished out of their sight. He left them in happy meditation on the words He had spoken instead of sadness in reasoning on the things that had happened. “And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the Scriptures?”

May we thus have communion with Christ, according to that which is written, and according to the power of His Spirit. May we be kept from the sadness of our own reasoning on the things that happen, that we may not be as fools but as wise. “For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.” Rom. 15:4.

The Remembrance

Editorial

Twenty years ago the army of the Israelis captured the city of Jerusalem. Moshe Dayan, along with crowds of soldiers went down to the western (wailing) wall of the old Temple site. He wrote a note and placed it in a crevice. These were his words: “May peace descend upon the whole house of Israel.” Later he said, “We have returned to the holiest of our sites, and will never again be separated from it.”

To this day the Israelis have tenaciously held on to Jerusalem but most certainly nothing like peace has descended upon the whole house of Israel.

We believe that it is proper and profitable for us to observe and learn from events concerning God's earthly people, Israel. In fact, it states this in Isa. 18:3, "All ye inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on the earth, see ye, when He lifteth up an ensign on the mountains; and when He bloweth a trumpet, hear ye." Applying this means that we are supposed to notice and pay attention to what goes on concerning that nation "scattered and peeled." The meaning of Diaspora (which they call themselves) is, dispersed or scattered.

About 2000 years ago, the Lord Jesus Christ (Messiah) came and was presented to the Jews as their King, but they rejected Him. Christ had fully demonstrated all the power of God against sin and its effects in miraculous signs and wonders in goodness and yet they rejected Him. In Matt. 12 they attributed His works to Beelzebub, the prince of devils. This was the unpardonable sin of the nation.

In the same chapter, the Lord utters a remarkable prophecy concerning "this wicked generation." Generation here means a class of people. Later they said, "His blood be on us and on our children."

Now consider verses 43, 44 and 45. "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none." This prophetic figure presents the Jew as freed from idolatry for which they had been carried into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar, but not finding rest even in their Messiah who in chapter 11 had invited all to come to Him and find rest. Everywhere the "scattered ones," or Jews have been, has only been for them "dry places."

In the prophetic figure in the next verse they say, "I will return into my house from whence I came out." But when they do, what do they find? They find it empty, swept and garnished. Empty because Jesus, their rejected Messiah, has left and it is as He says to those of Jerusalem in Matt. 23:38, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." Swept is the series of events that have happened to that city so very frequently ever since. Garnished is its present condition as rebuilt and the site of the Temple adorned (garnished) with a luxuriant heathen mosque. The "wailing wall" is about all the Jews have as yet at the old temple site.

There are further events to take place according to Matt. 12:45. "Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation."

Idolatry will again be fully embraced by the Christ-rejecters who will receive the antichrist working his lying wonders. We believe this takes place after the rapture of all believers to be with Christ in glory. Surely the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ for His bride, the Church, is very near. Ed.

Watch

"Watch therefore; for ye know neither the day nor the hour." Matt. 25:13. There will be "times and seasons" for the waiting Jews after the Church is gone, but there are none for us. The Lord may come today, or He may come tomorrow. He may come at morning, noon, or night. The one solemn word He left ringing in the ears of His disciples was, "Watch."

"Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when He cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that He shall gird Himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. And if He shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants." Luke 12:37, 38. Who can tell the unutterable blessedness and joy of those who have waited and watched for Christ, and who will be fashioned into His glorious likeness at His coming! "We shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." 1 John 3:2.

What is the power of this wondrous hope? "Every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." 1 John 3:3. If we shall be like Him then, we want to be like Him now, purifying ourselves even as He is pure. Shall we then not cultivate bridal affections in our hearts and keep ourselves, as a chaste virgin espoused to Christ, unspotted from the world? Will He find us walking with defiled garments; walking with the world that crucified Him and now coldly rejects His message of grace? Are we members of its societies, guests at its pleasure parties, attendants at its theaters, and companions of those who by these things drown the voice of God in the conscience?

He who was the light of this world is gone, crucified, and cast out. And now it is night—the long desolate night of His absence. Shall we seek shelter and comfort and carnal ease where He was slain? May we rather cleave to Him with undivided affections, enduring the cold chill of the night, and keep our lamps burning brightly until He comes. Let us go forth to meet the Bridegroom. "Surely I come quickly" are His blessed words of cheer to our lonely and waiting hearts. Let the sound tremble on the chords of our hearts, making melody to Him whose heart will never be satisfied until He has us with Himself. Let us wait for that moment when His heart and ours shall be mutually satisfied, when "The marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready." Rev. 19:7. "Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

A.H. Rule

The Scriptures: Number 6

When David set forth to bring up the ark of the Lord from Kirjath-jearim, because he did not follow the due order, according to the word of the Lord, it was attended with disastrous consequences—Uzzah was smitten and died. Instead of the ark being brought up to the city of David, they carried it aside into the house of Obed-edom the Gittite. But when David found from Scripture that "none ought to carry the ark of God but the Levites" and thus acted, then they brought up the ark of God with great gladness and rejoicing. (2 Sam. 6; 1 Chron. 15.) Can any instance more strikingly show God's jealousy for the authority of His own word than this?

In tracing further the solemn way in which God dealt with those who despised the authority of His own word, whether written or spoken by His servants, we notice His interference on account of the idolatry of His people. The children of Israel "served idols, whereof the Lord had said, ye shall not do this thing." They would not hear His prophets, but hardened their necks and rejected His statutes and His covenant. "They left all the commandments of the Lord their God, and made them molten images... and worshiped all the host of heaven, and served Baal.... Therefore the Lord was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of His sight: there was none left but the tribe of Judah only.... The Lord removed Israel out of His sight, as He had said by all His servants the prophets. So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria." 2 Kings 17:16, 18, 23.

The Ten Tribes

Where the ten tribes are, no one knows with certainty to this day; hence, they are sometimes spoken of as the lost tribes. However, the scripture must be fulfilled that they will yet be gathered back to their own land according to the word of the prophet Ezekiel and other servants of the Lord.

The Two Tribes

Notwithstanding the solemn warning in God's removing these ten tribes out of His sight because of their transgression, scarcely a century had elapsed before the commandment of the Lord came to remove Judah also out of His sight, because of the sins of Manasseh. Besides, the Lord God sent to them by His messengers rising up continually and carefully, but they mocked His messengers, despised His words, and misused His prophets until the wrath of the Lord arose against His people, so that there was no remedy. So "the king of Babylon.... carried out thence all the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king's house, and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the Lord, as the Lord had said. And he carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valor, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths: none remained, save the poorest sort of the people of the land." 2 Kings 24:12-14.

"The king of the Chaldees,... slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age." The people were in captivity for seventy years, "to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her Sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept Sabbath, to fulfill threescore and ten years." 2 Chron. 36:17, 21. What a solemn thing it is to turn away from God and not to hearken to His Word! How offensive to Him to profess to be His people, and yet not be obedient to His will according as He has caused it to be written for our learning and comfort!

Examples of Blessing

The cases in the Old Testament we have thus far looked at, have been for the most part showing the dreadful consequences of despising the Word of God. We will now turn to a few examples of God's remarkable blessing and honor on those who, in times of great darkness, have stood at all costs for the claims and divine authority of the Scriptures. We shall always find whether in the times of the Judges or of the Kings, even when they had for a long season been without the true God, that when they turned to the Lord God of Israel in their trouble, He was found of them. (Judg. 2:16-18; 3:9-15; 4:3-7; 2 Chron. 15:4.)

We are told that Jehoshaphat walked in the commandments of the Lord God of his father, and not after the doings of Israel. (2 Chron. 17:3, 4.) This was boldly standing against his own people for the authority of God, and His Word. But more than this, he taught the people by the Levites, who had the book of the law of the Lord with them, and went about throughout all the cities of Judah and taught the people. God was with Jehoshaphat therefore in a remarkable way, for "the fear of the Lord fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were round about Judah, so that they made no war against Jehoshaphat." v. 10. So truly did he hold the authority of Scripture that the king's motto seems to have been: "Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe His prophets, so shall ye prosper." 2 Chron. 20:20.

Authority of Scripture

When Hezekiah came to the throne, he found that the doors of the temple had been shut up, the lamps put out, and neither incense burnt nor sacrifice offered according to the Scriptures, in the holy place to the Lord God of Israel, but filthiness was in the holy place. The people had forsaken the Lord and turned their backs upon the Lord; they had burnt incense to other gods and made altars in every corner of Jerusalem. Sensitive to these fearful evils, the king brought in the priests and the Levites, opened the doors, cleansed the house, offered a sin offering, and made reconciliation with the blood upon the altar for all Israel. Afterward he utterly destroyed all the images and groves. This was according to the law of the Lord.

Moreover, they found they had not kept the Passover unto the Lord God of Israel for a long time in such sort as it is written. So the king sent to all Israel and Judah that they should come to the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, to keep the Passover unto the Lord God of Israel. This was heartily responded to. "So there was great joy in Jerusalem: for since the time of Solomon, the son of David, king of Israel [nearly three hundred years] there was not the like in Jerusalem." 2 Chron. 30:26.

Not many years had passed before the sin of Judah became very great again, helped on by the great wickedness of King Manasseh. So when young Josiah came to the throne, carved images, molten images, groves and the altars of Baalim were very abundant in Judah. The young king destroyed these and set to work to repair the house of the Lord. In it the priest found "a book of the law of the Lord" given by Moses. This book was read before the king. "And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the law, that he rent his clothes." 2 Chron. 34:19. He saw they were all justly exposed to God's wrath. So weighty was the authority of the Word of God to the king's soul that he read it to all the people great and small, "and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant that was found in the house of the Lord." v. 30.

Josiah

Josiah and the children of Israel kept the Passover and the feast of unleavened bread seven days. "And there was no Passover like to that kept in Israel from the days of Samuel the prophet; neither did all the kings of Israel keep such a Passover as Josiah kept, and the priests, and the Levites, and all Judah and Israel that were present, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem." 2 Chron. 35:18. Great was the blessing and joy of those who so acted on the Word of God.

From these few examples which we have selected from the ancient scriptures, it is clear that a divine revelation was recognized by the faithful from the time of Moses, as that which had proceeded out of the mouth of God. Can we fail to notice when these sacred writings were despised, how markedly God's displeasure was manifested, and what misery the people had to undergo before any were awakened to their state, and they turned again to the living and true God? On the other hand, when what God had said was hearkened to, and the people acted upon it, what remarkable blessing and comfort always followed! Could there be more striking proofs given of the scriptures of the Old Testament being a divine revelation? C. H. Mackintosh

Bible Challenger-06-June V.02

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the word which Zophar thought a man "full of talk" could never be.

1. What articles of fine gold can never be exchanged for true wisdom?
2. What is the ultimate conclusion to man's perception of the great things which God doeth?
3. What is one of the things that responds to God's command, "Be thou on the earth"?
4. What is obviously missing from the white of an egg?
5. How did Eliphaz describe Job's iniquities, thus signifying (erroneously) the source of his very sore trial?
6. What words describe man's allotted time upon the earth?
7. What did the Lord say that Job held fast?
8. According to Job, where had the shadow of death fallen upon him?
9. When Job finally said, "I abhor myself," where did he repent?

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

R. Erisman

Bible Challenger-05-May Answers V.02

1. Ninety and eight years old 1 Sam. 4:15
2. One hundred priests' garments Ezra 2:69
3. Six cities for refuge Num. 35:6
4. Twelve stones 1 Kings 18:31
5. One hour Matt. 20:12
6. Nine cubits was the length Deut. 3:11
7. Eleven stars Gen. 37:9
8. Seven altars Num. 23:1, 14, 29
9. Eight sons 1 Sam. 17:12
10. Eleven curtains Ex. 26:7
11. Nine hundred chariots of iron Judg. 4:3

"And the cedar of the house within was carved with knops and open flowers: all was cedar; there was NO STONE SEEN." 1 Kings 6:18.

Extracts

In Moses, self first emerges in the way of confidence in itself; then, after forty years, in the way of fear.

Faith never makes me, or my state, its object, but it makes Christ and His work its object.

The presence of God, when the conscience is sensible of it, takes away every hope of enjoying sin.

Forgiveness, in the sense of non-imputation, cannot be sought by one set free in Christ, because he already knows that sins are not imputed to him. He confesses his sins and fatherly forgiveness is given him.

Innocence describes the world that was, sin the world that is, and righteousness the world that is to come.

The Prophet

Zechariah was a post-captivity prophet. Why he is called one of the Minor Prophets, it is difficult to see.

His times and work were alike remarkable. He had been in Babylon, but was selected by God as one of those who would prophesy of things pertaining to Israel and the world long after that captivity had ceased.

His name is suggestive. It tells of the special favor conferred upon him by God. It signifies "Remembered of the Lord, which truly he was, not only as to himself personally, but also through him God showed how although Israel was in the deepest humiliation, He could never forget but would always remember them for coming blessing.

It is interesting to think of him as young, God having taken him up early in life, as a fitting vessel for His divine treasure. In chapter 2:4 we read, "Run, speak to this young man. Age is of no significance with God. The great thing is the treasure and not the vessel. Hence, a child, being a Christian, under the teaching of the Spirit through the truth, may be as wise as Daniel on the history of the world, or as Zechariah on the coming kingdom, or as Paul on the Church, or as John on the glory of the kingdom. It is in the earlier years of life that our memories are made; hence, if we could only think of it, there is the need of our living a careful childhood and youth, and a guarded subsequent age. Our memories and our tears, how closely they are connected! J. Smith

God's Handwriting

God has chosen three times to record in His own handwriting that which He wished man especially to notice. Once the finger of the mighty God traced the letters in the solid stone, a second time on the plaster of a king's palace wall, and a third time in the drifting sand. We hear of things written in heaven, but how solemn when God stoops to write on earth!

The Writing on Stone

In Deut. 9:10, God wrote the law on two tables of stone "written with the finger of God." God is holy; man is sinful, and has no righteousness of his own that will enable him to stand in the presence of a righteous God. If Israel of old wished for God's favor, they must walk before Him in a way to obtain it. God therefore gave Israel the law, being a standard of what He required from man, so that Israel could now say "It shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the Lord our God, as He hath commanded us." Deut. 6:25. Yes, "if." No one but the man Christ Jesus ever attained to that, or ever could.

God wrote the law in stone, a type of its unbending, enduring claims on man. For though it finds a man helpless to keep it, yet it abates not one jot of its claims. "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." Gal. 3:10.

The Writing on Plaster

In Dan. 5:5, 24-28, again God writes, this time the sentence of judgment on a guilty king. On the plaster of the palace wall, over by the candlestick, where the light enabled all to see it, a Hand was seen writing: "Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting." No need to record that on stone! On plaster, emblem of weakness and speedy decay, that awful sentence would stand as long as needed. "That night was Belshazzar... slain."

Babylon's mighty city has long been blotted off the face of the earth; the plaster wall, with God's handwriting on it, has long ago decayed, its dust become the sport of desert winds. But your condemnation, if still unsaved, stands recorded on the pages of God's own Word, which shall endure forever. "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." John 3:19.

The Writing on the Ground

In John 8:3-11, we behold God writing the third time. In the One stooping to write on the ground we see "God manifest in flesh." The Jews had brought to Him a woman guilty of adultery. Moses said "that such should be stoned: but what sayest Thou?" they ask. The Lord from Sinai had given that command. Can He now speak contrary to His own command through Moses? He is silent; He stoops, and writes on the ground. Scoffers say it was to gain time to think. Away with such satanic insinuations, as though man, a thing of dust, could put his Creator into a dilemma! His silence! What a proof, even under the law, that "God is slow to anger," that "judgment is ever His strange work"! At last He answers the Jews. "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her."

If stone flinging is to begin, all around must be stoned. Again He writes on the ground. Writes what? Scripture does not say what He wrote, but records what He said.

Christ is seen as God delighting in mercy. Did He then wink at sin, and annul His own laws? No; He had come to take "the guilty culprit's place, and suffer in his stead." He had not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. The Jews had made Him the judge in this case. I love to think that in that capacity, while He had written the law in stone, He wrote possibly the sentence of death on the ground where the next gust of wind could blow it away! It was a sentence no man was able to execute, and the Lord, alone qualified to do so, would not. He was going to die for such as her, and thus the law would be carried out. As a man who writes on the shore may see the waves wash it all away, so what the Lord wrote was never recorded only the gracious words of forgiveness.

The waves of God's awful judgment soon rolled over Him, and wrung from Him the cry, "All Thy waves and Thy billows have gone over Me."

The Word of the Living God

God has placed and preserved the Bible in this world to maintain His own authority in it, and wherever it has gone, and wherever any nation has owned it as the Word of the living God, there has been blessing and prosperity. But when the Scriptures are overthrown, infidelity sets in, and revolution follows.

The overthrowing, therefore, of the Divine authority of the Scriptures is nothing more nor less than the overthrowing of the AUTHORITY OF GOD in this world. The next thing to the overthrowing of God's authority is the overthrowing the authority of "the powers that be [which] are ordained of God." Lawlessness gets the upper hand.

In reference to science: had God wished to make known in the Scriptures what science can discover, He would have done so. But surely "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth His handiwork," and creation manifests "His eternal power and Godhead." God has made known far deeper things in His Word than anything that science can discover. The deepest mysteries of creation cannot be as deep as the mysteries of the Creator. God has given in the Scriptures the knowledge of HIMSELF, THE ABSOLUTE: THE ONE SELF-EXISTING ONE. God existed absolutely in perfect goodness before creation, and therefore before evil was introduced by Satan into a creation where perfect goodness and only goodness was manifested.

Sin, having been introduced by the devil into this creation, is the sole cause of all the sorrow, affliction, and misery in this world. The evil principle of sin having entered, murder followed; Cain killed his brother Abel. All this evil can be traced to the devil, of whom it is written: "He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it." John 8:44.

For the maintenance and development of creation that is, the creation outside man God has established natural laws. These are so perfect in themselves (and the philosopher glories in them) that it is impossible for creation to get out of order unless God Himself upsets the natural laws. He has a perfect right to do this being above all laws, natural or moral. God has not given over natural phenomena into the hands of man. Man can look at them, and admire and credit himself with the wonderful discoveries he has made, but he cannot touch them. This, no doubt, is a mercy because what man has touched he has spoiled.

The brute creation, governed by instinct and brought into existence by God, was placed under the dominion and control of man before and since the fall. God said, "The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered." Gen. 9:2. But alas! All is in a groaning condition, laboring under the cruelties of man. The establishment of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals proves that the burdens of the brute creation even call forth the sympathies of many people. But has God nothing to say about it? Indeed He has. Not a sparrow falls to the ground without His knowledge, and but for His great patience and

long-suffering mercy over mankind, He would have delivered the groaning animal creation long ago. "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.... Waiting for the adoption manifestation, to wit, the redemption of our body." Rom. 8:22, 23.

But the brute creation is of a lower order than mankind; it has no intelligence as to its movements, and carries no responsibility. For instance, a monkey could not be brought before a magistrate to be put on trial, because there are no laws relative to monkeys.

This, although a mere truism, has an important bearing upon recent theories.

Man is placed upon the earth according to the counsels of God (for He had said, "Let us make man in Our image, after Our likeness"), and having received life by God breathing into his nostrils the breath of life, became a living soul in direct relationship to THE ABSOLUTE, THE SELF-EXISTING GOD. Therefore he is not governed by natural laws as the external creation, nor by instinct as the brute creation, but by divine principles or moral laws. Man has a mind given him to understand intelligently the requirements of the One to whom he stands in relationship. Man, therefore, has a relative existence; being a creature, he stands in a relative existence to the CREATOR; being finite, to the INFINITE.

The divine principles established by God for the moral order and government of mankind are dependence and obedience. These have been violated by man himself, through his sin. The human creation is thrown into helpless ruin as far as man is concerned, and the relationship that existed between God and man has been broken thereby. But since the fall, God has been pleased in His grace to establish and to reveal in His written Word other divine principles whereby blessing from God can reach man. He has also shown how the broken relationship between Himself and man can be restored, or the means whereby man can be brought into relationship with God of a far higher character and infinitely more blessed than that in which he stood before the fall.

If blessing reaches man in his fallen state now, and if new relations are established between God and man, they must be established according to the glory of God, in absolute righteousness. God is love and God is holy; that is what He is in His nature. Whatever He does must be in accordance with the glory of His Person. The fall of man from his first estate had far deeper consequences than man is willing to admit. Often it is spoken of as a very trivial thing such as Adam's taking the forbidden fruit, but it was a direct act of independence and disobedience. By it man lost confidence in the living God, who is perfect in goodness.

God had been preparing the vast universe for the preservation of man upon the earth. But how can these purposes and counsels of God be carried out for the glory of God if man is disobedient, and acts independently of God? Impossible! Therefore, the earth has become, through man's sin, the platform upon which other questions must now be raised by God, and divinely settled for HIS GLORY.

First: There is an existing power of evil which must be traced to its source, Satan. There is a positive enemy of God who has taken advantage of the position in which God placed man upon the earth, and through subtlety and temptation has gotten man under his power through his disobedience and sin. This enemy and his power must be eternally set aside for the glory of God.

Second: Had God executed eternal judgment upon our first parents the moment they fell, and also upon Satan himself, a question might have been raised both as to the glory of God and the love of God. Having placed man upon the earth for His glory, if He swept him off under eternal judgment, where would be His glory as to the earth, or where His love as to man? God is love, and God must maintain His own glory.

Third: If God allowed man to go on in his sinful course forever, where would be His holiness?

Fourth: If God reinstated man and put him into a place of honor and blessing without executing the sentence passed upon him at the fall, where would be His righteousness?

All these questions require careful consideration, for they all have a relative bearing to man upon the earth. THE BIBLE has the highest place upon the earth in the sight of God. By it God speaks to man, making known His thoughts, His purposes, and plans in connection with man upon the earth. And even more, therein He reveals His thoughts about heaven.

THE WORD OF GOD IS ABSOLUTE, and God has magnified it above all His name. What God has done, what God is doing, and what God will do, are made known to us in the Scriptures. Although we have had no further communication for over eighteen hundred years, there is no need, for the Word of God is complete; He has "made known the mystery of His will."

The Bible leaves no room for speculation or for the opinions of men, or the development of the mind and thoughts of men as time rolls on. It is as true today as it was in the days of Isaiah the prophet that God's thoughts are not man's thoughts, neither are God's ways man's ways.

"Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord." Jer. 9:23, 24, W. Sibthorpe

The Call of God

The family of God, in the days before the flood, pursue a pilgrim path. They leave the world to Cain. There is not the symptom of a struggle, nor the breath of a complaint. They do not say, nor think of saying, "Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me." In habits of life and principles of conduct, they are as distinct from their injurious brother as though they were of another race, or in another world. Cain's family make all the world's history. They build its cities, they promote its arts, they conduct its trade, and they invent its pleasures and pastimes. But in all this Seth's family is not seen. The one generation call their cities after their own names; the other call themselves by the name of the Lord. The one do all they can to make the world their own, and not the Lord's; the other do all they can to make themselves the Lord's, and not their own. Cain writes his own name on the earth; Seth writes the Lord's name on himself.

We may bless the Lord for this vigorous delineation of heavenly alienation on earth, and ask for grace to know some of its living power in our souls. We need to learn a lesson from it.

The instincts of our renewed minds would suggest that we follow the same heavenly path with like certainty and clearness. The call of God leads that way, and all His teaching demands it. The pastimes and the purposes, the interests and the pleasures, of the children of Cain are nothing to these pilgrims. They declare plainly that they refuse the thought that there is any capacity in the earth, as it is now, to give them satisfaction. They are discontented with it, and make no attempts to have it otherwise.

There lay their moral separation from the way of Cain and his household. They were not mindful of the country around them, but sought a better, that is, a heavenly. They are strikingly opposed to the way of Cain, and remarkably discerning of the way of God.

The Lord would have us to follow this same pattern, being in the world, but not of it; we are of heaven, though not as yet (except in Christ) in it. Paul, in the Holy Ghost, would have us be thus, taking example from those "whose conversation is in heaven." Peter, in the same spirit, would have us be "as strangers and pilgrims abstaining from fleshly lusts." James summons us, in the same spirit, to know that "the friendship of the world is enmity with God." And John separates us as by a stroke: "We are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness." J.G. Bellett

Editorial

Jerusalem today is the capital of Israel, a nation of about five million people of whom eighty-three percent are Jews. It occupies a large place of importance among the nations of the world, all out of proportion with regard to its size or population.

Both the Old and New Testament have much to say about Jerusalem historically, and as to its future glory. Ancient clay tablets found in Upper Egypt give its name as signifying "city of peace." Salem means peace but Jerusalem's history has been anything but peace. In Judg. 1:8 we learn that "the children of Judah had fought against Jerusalem, and had taken it, and smitten it with the

edge of the sword, and set the city on fire." This tells us about the first time the Jews gained control of Jerusalem. The last time the Jews gained control of Jerusalem is still in the memory of many living today. It was in the six-day war of June 1967 that Motta Gur's paratroop brigade forced its way through the Lion's Gate into the old city. Since that time the Jews have tenaciously held on to Jerusalem and the West Bank of the Jordan.

In between the first capture of Jerusalem and the last time the Jews gained it, the city has sustained twenty-seven different sieges. Babylon, Rome, the Persians, the Turks, the Crusaders, Saladin, Christians, the Ottoman Empire and various others have ruled over what was called the "city of peace."

Will peace come to that troubled place? And if so, when?

How very affecting to our hearts it is to read our Lord's words as He beheld the city and wept over it. "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation." Luke 19:42-44.

This has been fulfilled, but now again the Jews are back at the site of the crucifixion. Rev. 11:8 speaks of Jerusalem in this way, "the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified."

What then will happen next? There is to be one more severe judgment that will fall upon that land after they have put themselves under the protection of the future Roman Empire and the antichrist. The city will be taken and the temple destroyed but this will not be the final destiny of Jerusalem. Jer. 31:40 says, "It shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down any more forever."

The beautiful prophecy of Haggai tells us of Jerusalem's future glory. "For thus saith the Lord of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, and the Desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts.... The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts: AND IN THIS PLACE WILL I GIVE PEACE, saith the Lord of hosts." Chapter 2:6-9.

Ezekiel concludes his book with these words, "The name of the city from that day shall be, The Lord is there."

Another bright prophecy to be fulfilled is found in Zech. 8:4 and 5; "Thus saith the Lord of hosts; There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for very age. And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof." Succeeding chapters in Zechariah describe the day of the Lord first in tribulation and mourning and then the blessing of the living waters that go out from Jerusalem. Then it promises that "men shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited."

Not until God's earthly people in deep repentance finally confess and own Jesus as their Messiah and Lord will they get Jerusalem to keep and dwell in as their "city of peace."

Ed.

The Bride, the Lamb's Wife

It is most interesting to notice the divine groupings in Scripture, such as the 22nd, 23rd and 24th Psalms where we have the cross, the crook and the crown of Jesus. The New Testament makes answer to these in the "Good Shepherd" giving His life for the sheep (John 10), the "Great Shepherd" brought again from the dead (Heb. 13), and the "Chief Shepherd" coming in glory (1 Peter 5). As furnishing a starting point and contributing to what we have before us, we have the 22nd, 23rd and 24th of Genesis. It is remarkable that in the 24th chapter, where it is a simple question of procuring for Isaac a bride, we have 67 verses; but in Gen. 1 only 27 verses (less than half the number) are allotted to the question of creation. To be able to dismiss so vast a theme, and yet to do it justice in so few words, suggests the thought that the One describing these wonders, does so as superior to them and as perfectly familiar with the scenes He describes.

But the Author of Gen. 1 is also the Author of Gen. 24, and has made no mistake in devoting twice as much to this sweet bridal story as to the bringing of the universe into being, and setting the earth in order for man's habitation. We see in Gen. 24 another father, another son and another servant, and reach back to Gen. 22, where we find in figure the death and resurrection of this only son. (Heb. 11:19.) Passing on to Gen. 23, we find the death of Sarah (answering to the setting aside of Israel) to make way for Rebekah as the wife of Isaac. In this foreshadowing we have disclosed to us that sweet and wondrous mystery that from counsel to conclusion, reaches from eternity to eternity, the glad story of "the bride, the Lamb's wife." It is then we begin to realize the divine consistency of allowing such a lengthy presentation of what on the surface, in point of magnitude, seems entirely inferior to that of creation. Oh, this holy subject, how can one touch it without spoiling it—"the bride, the Lamb's wife"!

In the New Testament, we find the same order of events as in these chapters in Genesis; the death of Christ recorded in the Gospels, the setting aside of Israel in The Acts, followed by the bringing in of the new thing the Church, the body and bride of Christ, in Corinthians, Ephesians and Colossians. It is true there was an intimation of this in Matt. 13:44-46, in the "treasure hid in a field" and in the "one pearl of great price." The former sets forth the value, the latter the surpassing beauty of the Church to Christ. He sold all that He had and bought the field (the field is the world), in order to possess Himself of the "treasure." In the other case, He sold all that He had and bought the one pearl. This precious jewel He would secure for Himself at the cost of everything. Amazing grace! "Christ... loved the church and gave Himself for it." Eph. 5:25. He not only gave up all His Messianic claims and glories, but He "gave Himself." Forever adored be His name!

For ages Gen. 24 held its secret so well, but now it is revealed for the Old Testament is the New concealed, while the New Testament is the Old revealed. Throughout this portion, the one absorbing subject is, "a wife" for the son. Seven times this expression is found in this chapter. How this thought super abounds in those portions of the New Testament where the mystery is found. Redemption being accomplished, it pervades the writings of Paul through whom this blessed secret was made known. (Eph. 3:21.)

This question of a bride for Isaac was a matter of counsel and purpose, carried into effect by the servant who bore the testimony of the father concerning his son to Rebekah, as now, the Spirit of truth which proceedeth from the Father, testifies of Christ. (John 15:26.) Jesus said, "He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are Mine: therefore said I, that He shall take of Mine, and shall show it unto you." John 16:14, 15. So the servant in Genesis pours into the ears of Rebekah the sweetest story concerning Isaac. He says, "I am Abraham's servant. And the Lord hath blessed my master greatly, and he is become great: and He hath given him flocks, and herds, and silver, and gold, and menservants, and maidservants, and camels, and asses. And Sarah my master's wife bare a son to my master when she was old: and unto him hath he given all that he hath." Gen. 24:34-36. How like "He shall take of Mine and show it unto you." The Spirit of God engages us with Christ and His glories, quite in contrast to much of the pretentious teaching in the present day, which engages us with ourselves and the work of the Spirit in us rather than with Christ and His work for us.

The servant woos and wins her and presents to Rebekah's heart an object so surpassingly lovely and fair that when the question is put, "Wilt thou go with this man?" she said, "I will go." Have our hearts thus been won and "espoused to Him as a chaste virgin"? Are we leaving all behind, counting all but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord?

In pursuance of the happy task committed to him, we find the servant not only pouring this sweet, glad and wonderful story into the ears of Rebekah, but we find him spreading before her, and placing upon her jewels of silver and gold and raiment. So now the Spirit of God engages us with His manifold grace and shows us the preciousness of Christ. "Unto you therefore which believe He is precious." 1 Peter 2:7. As in another day, He said, "Thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty: for it was perfect through My comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord God." Ezek. 16:14. Not that we are now discerned, for he that is spiritual is discerned of no man and the Church is a nondescript. Later, He is to be admired in us. (2 Thess. 1:7-10.) And later we shall appear with Him in glory. If she is not attractive to others, He can say, "Thou art all fair. My love. Thou hast doves' eyes within thy locks. The King's daughter is all glorious within." She has a beauty, if concealed to others, discerned and valued by Him, and the fruit of His own love and grace. It is a principle of the present order of things that it "cometh not with observation." (Luke 17:20.) This is not the time of our display and splendor; later, and sooner than the brightest hope dares to think, the glory shines, for Jesus is coming to receive to Himself His purchased possession a descending Christ, an ascending bride, bodies of glory and eternal rapture.

Closing her pilgrimage, and at the end of the long and lonely way, Rebekah exclaims, "What man is this that walketh in the field to meet us?" Isaac has his hope, his desire and expectation, indeed, he had preceded her for he had already "lifted up his eyes, and saw, and behold, the camels were coming." The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven, and we shall be caught up together with those fallen asleep, "to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (1 Thess. 4:16, 17.) He will then present us to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, holy and without blemish. Nothing shall thwart Him in His purpose. God's Son shall have a bride and she shall be in every way suited to Him. Then it shall be seen in its fullness that the woman is the glory of the man... the fullness of Him that filleth all in all.

As Rebekah sees him, the nearing one, she takes a veil and covers herself. This the Church should be doing now, in view of the imminence of His return. In 1 Cor. 11:15, it is said, "If a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering." Notice that which covers her and puts her out of sight is her glory, so that only He may be seen. The Church should not be seeking a place and portion where He accepted the cross and the grave; much less should she be ambitious of the world's glory which is as the dust of the moth's wing, or the flower of grass. Eternal glory is her portion. "And Isaac... took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her." Oh, the words of greeting He will speak at last!

What is the occasion of that burst of praise in Rev. 19? "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready." How unspeakably precious, "the marriage of the Lamb." It is Christ in His victim character to whom we are joined, we, the purchase of His blood. "And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." This is her wedding gown—"the righteousness of saints." So now we are making our bridal dress, stitch by stitch, the fruit of the energy of His Spirit in us during the "little while"!

As Rebekah had her damsels, her attendants, so here there are those who "are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb" and these are blessed. There are two classes here: the bride and those called to the marriage supper. The latter refers to the Old Testament saints. It was John the Baptist who said, "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." John 3:29. This indicates that there are saints who rejoice in the Bridegroom's voice who are not of the bride. But how sweet is our portion as being of that people whom God is taking out from among the Gentiles for His name. (Acts 15:14.)

The bride is seen again under the symbol of a city in Rev. 21:9. She is holy and descends "out of heaven from God, having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious." This is not heaven, but the bride, the Lamb's wife descending from it. Perhaps she is called a city because she is seen in governmental splendor in relation to the millennial earth. Once she came short of the glory of God. (Rom. 3:23.) Now, through an open heaven, she sees Jesus there and rejoices in hope of it. Here she is in possession of the glory shining like a stone most precious, the nations walking in her light, and there is "no night there." Rev. 21:23-25. Out of the ashes of man's failure God will bring that holy city, fair and new, in the light of which the nations shall walk.

Man's day begins and ends in darkness. Scripture begins by "Darkness was upon the face of the deep." It ends with, "There shall be no night there." With God it was the evening and the morning. His last thought for us is "morning," a morning without an evening, a day without a night. "The Spirit and the bride say come" in response to the announcement "I am...the bright and morning star." It is Himself as the returning One. So with the first streaks of morning shed in her heart, with the blessed Spirit, and filled with rapturous longing for the bridal day, she cries, "Come." She asks those who hear to cry, "Come." Then she turns to the lost one, not even these wedding joys causing her to forget the perishing, saying, "Let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Rev. 22:17. Poor lost one stoop, drink, and live!

If in sin you longer wait

You may find no open gate

And your cry be just too late,

Be in time.

Finally, the bride is seen in eternity. (Rev. 21:2.) One thousand years have passed since that nuptial day, but she is still as a bride adorned for her husband. She is as fresh and fair as when He presented her to Himself without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, as when in the language of that song of loves, The King greatly desired her beauty, the beauty He had placed upon her.

Thus, now and then, in time and eternity, we may repeat "I am my Beloved's, and His desire is toward me." Sol. 7:10. May the deep, sweet sense of this be kept fresh in our hearts until we see His face.

F.C. Blount

Questions and Answers

Ques. A Californian asks about the January editorial concerning the prophecy of Hos. 5:15 to 6:2. What is the point from which the 2000 years is to be reckoned?

Ans. To the Lord be all the praise that you have found the "Christian Treasury" to be a blessing to you over the past several months. Now I reply to your question concerning "the point from which the 2000 years is to be reckoned. Should it be reckoned from the birth of Christ, the death of Christ, the day of Pentecost, the turning away from Israel by Paul in Acts, or the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A. D.?" I do not believe we can state the time quite so exactly. It is important to remember that the Church is a called-out heavenly people and time does not relate to heaven. However we are chosen and called from the earth and all that takes place here does interest us and God has revealed much concerning Israel His earthly people. One verse that impresses me much as a help to your question is Gal. 4:4, "But when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law." We notice that the Son came on time the first time and we can be sure He will come on time (God's time) the second time. I am glad that you understand something about the dispensations and I will just say that I believe that they overlap. Your very questions show this and the book of Acts is referred to in this way in Heb. 9:10 where it is called the time of reformation.

Bible Challenger-07-July V.02

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the word describing some-thing an Israelite did not want to mar.

1. What was the sad commentary of one coming home empty after a sojourn in a strange land?
2. What was the real name of the person who wanted to be called the equivalent of "bitter"?
3. What did a gleaner find on the ground because of the kindness of her benefactor?
4. What measure describes how much barley a barley gleaner gleaned on her first day of gleaning?
5. Who said "Entreat me not to leave thee"?
6. What answer was given when at midnight a mighty man was afraid and said "Who art thou?"
7. With what words did this mighty man greet his workers at the start of a new day?
8. Who was the great-grandfather of Boaz?
9. What relationship did a never-to-be grandmother have to her daughter-in-law's child?
10. What was the custom of presenting one's shoe at the end of some transaction meant to do?
11. What name was commonly applied to those who lived in Bethlehem-Judah? Answers to these questions will be found in the next issue of Christian Treasury.

R. Erisman

Bible Challenger-06-June Answers V.02

1. Jewels Job 28:17
2. Unsearchable Job 5:9
3. Snow Job 37:6
4. Taste Job 6:6
5. Infinite Job 22:5
6. Few days Job 14:1
7. Integrity Job 2:3
8. Eyelids Job 16:16
9. Dust and ashes Job 42:6

“Should not the multitude of words be answered? and should a man full of talk be JUSTIFIED?”
Job 11:20

A Right Way

We learn from the Scriptures that there is not only the giving out of the truth, but that there is a time and state for it, such as John 16:12 and 1 Cor. 3:1-3. Then also we see in Acts 16 that even with the Apostle Paul, his first thoughts as to his pathway were not always the mind of the Lord. "They... were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia." Again, "After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not" (vv. 6, 7).

Jude tells us: "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." v. 3.

From Eph. 4:15, 16, we learn that speaking the truth in love supplies that which leads to the "effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

We can see from 1 Cor. 13:1, 2, that though one may have remarkable gifts of tongues, prophecy and faith, yet if the gifts are not used with a sense of love, the speaking may be as "sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." So the manner in which the truth is brought before the assembly is of great importance.

J.L. Erisman

The Scriptures: Number 7

The books of Ezra and Nehemiah set before us very strikingly, in many ways, the blessedness of returning to God and acting obediently to His Word in an evil time. Ezra, like others we have seen, not only sought the law of the Lord for himself to act on, but he spread the truth among others; "he taught Israel statutes and judgments."

The priests and Levites had their places, "as it is written in the law of Moses." They also kept the Passover on the day it was ordered in the Holy Scriptures, and also the feast of unleavened bread seven days, as it was written, "with joy; for the Lord had made them joyful." They also found written in the law which the Lord had commanded by Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in booths in the feast of the seventh month. The people acted on this at once. They made themselves booths and sat under the booths, for since the days of Joshua, the son of Nun, the children of Israel had not done so, and there was very great gladness. How encouraging to us are all these examples of the blessing which is always connected with obedience to His Word!

We shall call attention to another instance before closing our remarks on the blessing connected with obeying God's Word, and the terrible consequences of despising it. Jeremiah lived in a day when truth was trodden down in the streets, when the people had forsaken the Fountain of living waters and had hewed unto themselves cisterns, broken cisterns which could hold no water. A sense of this gave the faithful prophet much suffering, yet he speaks of having much gladness and rejoicing. How was this? He says, "Thy words were found." It would seem they were so seldom heard that he had to search for them. "I did eat them" not merely look at them and admire them, but receive them into his heart by faith, "and Thy Word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart." Observe, they were not his own thoughts or circumstances, but God's thoughts as revealed in His holy Word.

There was another man who lived at the same time, not a man in poverty and seclusion, but in wealth and prominence; it was Jehoiakim, the king.

The king sent Jehudi to fetch the roll; and he took it out of Elishama the scribe's chamber. And Jehudi read it in the ears of the king, and in the ears of all the princes which stood beside the king. Now the king sat in the winter house in the ninth month: and there was a fire on the hearth burning before him. And it came to pass, that when Jehudi had read three or four leaves, he cut it with the penknife, and cast it into the fire that was on the hearth, until all the roll was consumed in the fire that was on the hearth. Yet they were not afraid, nor rent their garments, neither the king, nor any of his servants that heard all these words. Nevertheless Elnathan and Delaiah and Gemariah had made intercession to the king that he would not burn the roll; but he would not hear them. But the king commanded Jerahmeel the son of Hammelech, and Seraiah the son of Azriel, and Shelemiah the son of Abdeel, to take Baruch the scribe and Jeremiah the prophet: but the Lord hid them.

Then the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, after that the king had burned the roll, and the words which Baruch wrote at the mouth of Jeremiah, saying, Take thee again another roll, and write in it

all the former words that were in the first roll, which Jehoiakim the king of Judah hath burned. And thou shalt say to Jehoiakim king of Judah, Thus saith the Lord; Thou hast burned this roll, saying, Why hast thou written therein, saying, The king of Babylon shall certainly come and destroy this land, and shall cause to cease from thence man and beast? Therefore thus saith the Lord of Jehoiakim king of Judah; He shall have none to sit upon the throne of David: and his dead body shall be cast out in the day to the heat, and in the night to the frost. And I will punish him and his seed and his servants for their iniquity; and I will bring upon them, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and upon the men of Judah, all the evil that I have pronounced against them; but they hearkened not.

Then took Jeremiah another roll, and gave it to Baruch the scribe, the son of Neriah; who wrote therein from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the book which Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire: and there were added besides unto them many like words. Jer. 36:21-32.

What a very solemn thing to reject the Word of God! How fully all these instances exemplify the words of Jehovah, "Them that honor Me I will honor, and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed." 1 Sam. 2:30.

How important it is to have in constant remembrance the fact that we have a revelation from God and that "forever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in heaven." This alone is the authority for faith; we receive the divine testimony and set to our seal that God is true. The infallibility of the Word of God stands, in widest contrast with the traditions and commandments of men. In the days of the prophets, the great point of controversy was whether God's Word was to be believed and acted on or not. And even to this day as we may consider the New Testament, the point still is whether man, either a rationalist, a ritualist, or an infidel is to be believed to the rejection of the divine authority of Scripture.

C.H. Mackintosh

Exhortation to a Preacher

A preacher never has to be anxious about results; that is God's concern. He has to be anxious about only three things: 1) the state of his own soul, 2) being in communion with the mind of God as to those to whom he is speaking, 3) fidelity in delivering the message.

The Man Christ Jesus

Notice the way in which the second chapter of Luke concludes.

You can see how that chapter gives us the early life of our Lord Jesus Christ. We read of His infancy and youth, some details of the circumstances connected with Him in that period, and end with the wonderful declaration, "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man."

That is a very blessed reality for us to dwell upon, because it sets forth the Lord Jesus Christ as God's unique sheaf, so to speak, in His own intrinsic, untainted purity, under God's eye, as Man. This is the gospel that specially and peculiarly sets forth Christ as Man. Thus then the second chapter ends: "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." There was no one like Him. He was alone in His perfection, growing up until the time of the exercise of His ministry, which was yet to come. In infancy, youth, and manhood we see Him in all that beautiful subjection to His parents which marked Him as the perfect man, having, at the same time, the fullest sense in His own person of who He was, as well as of His mission. "How is it," said He, "that ye sought Me? wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?"

W. Turpin

“Rejoice Evermore”

It is the Lord's mind that His children should now, even in this world of sorrow and death, be happy. He has not only created us in Christ Jesus, but we are blessed with all spiritual blessings in Him, and the Holy Ghost says, "Rejoice evermore," "Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, Rejoice."

The source of our happiness, then, is the Lord Himself, and the secret of happiness is believing on Him whom we see not. (1 Peter 1:8.) The measure of happiness we are entitled to enjoy is as unlimited and boundless as glory itself, "joy unspeakable and full of glory." Jesus desired that we might have His joy fulfilled in ourselves, and Scripture is written that "our joy may be full."

Abiding Joy

However dark the day, the Christian can be happy if he simply walks in the abiding sense of the Father's love. He has given us a life that enables us to enter into His own thoughts, to enjoy what He enjoys and to live in the good of it because of the Spirit's power within.

Ireland and Christianity

On the beautiful banks of the Clyde, in the village of Kilpatrick, lived a little boy; his name was Succat, afterward known as St. Patrick. He was born in the year 372 A.D. His father and mother were both British, and were very pious people. They sought continually to instill into the mind and heart of their little boy the knowledge of Christ, but little Succat paid small attention to their loving instructions.

Some years passed and his parents left Scotland and settled in Bretagne. Here a terrible calamity befell them. One day Succat, with his two sisters, was playing near the seashore, when some Irish pirates, led by a robber named O'Neal, carried them all off to their boats, and sold them into slavery in Ireland. Succat was sent into the fields to feed swine by his pagan master. It was here—alone, with no one to speak to him about Jesus and His salvation—that the sweet lessons of his dear mother, Conchessa, came to mind. The Holy Spirit worked upon the young slave. He felt his sin, mourned over it; he looked to and believed on the Savior of the lost. Succat, just sixteen years of age, was born to God in pagan Ireland.

Rescued from his captivity, Succat was taken prisoner, and then again rescued. However, he could not be happy, even with his godly parents; he felt he must go to Ireland and preach the gospel there. His parents and others did all they could to turn him from his purpose, but in vain. During the silence of the night he fancied he heard voices calling to him from the dark forests of Erin: "Come, holy child, and walk once more among us." He went to Ireland and summoned the savage tribes by beat of drum, and then told out simply, in their own tongue, the good news made real to him when a captive amongst them the story of the Son of God. Many of the wild Irish were turned from idols to serve the living God, and to wait for His Son from heaven. St. Patrick, the Irish preacher, thus wonderfully raised up of God, introduced Christ and Christianity to many in the beautiful Emerald Isle.

Oh, the ways of God, how wonderful and gracious! Just think of God using a little boy as His instrument in making known Christ and His great salvation to the Irish people!

“Doers of Our Own Will

“The king shall do according to his will.” Dan. 11:36. Are there any of us sufficiently aware of what a fearful thing it is to be the doers of our own will? Here is the end of self-will. It was the first great characteristic of sin from the beginning. It is what Adam did, and the fall of the world was the immediate result. Here is one who at that day may seem to be the loftiest and most influential of Adam's sons. But he does “according to his own will.” And nothing worse. Are we to read such a history as this without moral profit to our own souls? Do we forget what an evil thing it is ever to be the doers of our own will? Let none suppose that, because they may be in a position to rule, they are therefore outside the danger. It is not so. No one thing so unfits a person for righteous rule, as the inability to obey. It is good first to know what it is to be subject. May it strike deep into all our hearts that “the king,” the Antichrist, is first stamped as one doing his own will. May it test us as to how far we are seeking ours!—how far, under any circumstances, we are doing or allowing anything that we would not wish any soul in this world to see— perhaps even those that are nearest to us. From experience and observation, we know the difficulty and danger in these things from our own hearts. Yet there is no one thing more contrary to that Christ whom we have learned.

We are sanctified “unto the obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.” It is not only to the blessing in the sprinkling of the blood, but to the obedience of Jesus Christ to the same spirit and principle of obedience, for this is the meaning of the expression. We are not like the Jews who were put under the law, and whose obedience had the character of obligation to do such and such things under the penalty of death. We are already alive unto God, conscious of the blessedness in which we stand, and awakened to see the beauty of the will of God, for it is His will which has saved and sanctified us. This is our calling, and our practical work here below. Christians have no other business, properly speaking, than to do the will of another. We have to do God's will according to the character of the obedience of Christ as sons delighting in the will of the Father. It does not matter what we may have to do. It may be one's natural daily occupation. But do not make two individuals of yourselves with one principle in your business or family, and another for the church and worship of God. Never allow such a thought. We have Christ for everything and every day. Christ is not a blessing for us merely when we meet together or are called to die. If we have Christ, we have Him forever, and from the first moment of salvation we are emancipated from doing our own will. This we learn is death, but we are dead to sin through Christ's death. We are delivered, for we are alive in Him risen. But what are we delivered for? To do the will of God. We are sanctified unto the obedience of Jesus Christ.

W. Kelly

A Word in Season

This is the time of the world's manhood. All its elements are putting on strength, and taking their full form. The civil and the ecclesiastical thing is asserting its manhood or full age. Vigor marks the progress of the Church of Rome, and of the commercial spirit, governments linking themselves with the one for their support, and the people imbibing and breathing the other for their advancement.

The world is thus stirring itself and playing the man. But Christ is still the rejected Christ, and faith has to own a weak cause in the presence of an advancing world, and of strengthened apostasies.

Thus is it, I judge, at this moment, and thus it will be. But judgment is to fall on the strong thing in the hour of its pride and vigor, and a glory (still hidden, but trusted and waited for) is to receive, enshrine, beautify, and gladden, that which now walks on as the despised and feeble companion of a rejected Lord.

All this may be serious to the thoughts of our natural hearts, but it is plain in the judgment of faith. It is the will of the Lord to let these apostasies grow up to manhood strength. The book of Revelation presents them to the eye in that form and condition, just when judgment overtakes them. The woman, or the ecclesiastical apostasy, is riding, just at the moment of her overthrow, and the beast is holding and managing the whole world, just as he is met in the day of the Lord. The book of Revelation in no wise shows us a weakened or depreciated condition of these great agents of the course of this world, but exhibits them in surpassing strength and honor, just at the end. We are not in the days of the book of Revelation, it is true, but we witness the energies (which play their part there in all this vigor and pride of manhood) getting themselves ready, and preparing to take their appointed place.

The heart of the children of men is not aware of the true character of all this. Progress is desirable, as they judge. Man in his social place is advanced, and all his welfare in the human system around, with its securities, peace, refinement, morals, and religion, is served. But what is there of God in all of this? Were I to adopt the world's boast, and go on with its expectations, I should be strengthening my securities, but I should, with that, be losing my companionship with the heart and mind of Christ, which is our only true dignity this side of the manifested glory of the kingdom. God gives all spiritual blessings now: peace and joy and liberty, with promise upon promise. But He is not regaining the earth to its circumstances for our enjoyment. Judgment must do that. Judgment is to make way for glory in the world, and peace on earth.

This tries our hearts. We certainly feel that it does. All things are not now disposed by Christ, though He is in the place and title of all power and authority. He does not affect so to speak, to have all that the heart or nature values at His present disposal. His present kingdom does not actually reach so far, though in title His authority is over all things. He does not speak of making us happy in circumstances, and it is for us to count the cost of this. It is for us to acquaint ourselves with what He is dispensing, and then to ask ourselves, Can we value it? And it is faith only that

values it. Nature cannot; the heart cannot. What Jesus now dispenses is exactly what faith, but what faith alone, can understand and appreciate.

May we lay this to heart, and, in the midst of all the alarms and forebodings of this serious, solemn moment in the history of the world, say to our souls, The Lord is gathering out His elect, and leaving the great material around us for judgment—this is the way of His wisdom, and it promises us no security in present things, but will work out, for faith and hope, all their brightest thoughts and expectations.

G.V. Wigram

Remarks on the Epistle of Jude

If you get the character of Antichrist in the epistles of John, you get the opposite element in Jude. "They went out from us." It is open apostasy. Denying the Father and the Son is antichristian; denying that Jesus is the Christ (1 John 2:22) is apostate Judaism. That is not the case with Jude. There you get, not the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, but Christendom —Christians looked at as general profession— and the corruption is in it. It is "crept in" (v. 4), not "went out" 1 John 2:19. They did not deny the Lord but they turned His grace into lasciviousness (Jude 4).

"To convince all that are ungodly among them." v. 15. Even when He executes judgment it is still "among them"; it takes every character of evil up to the very end. Enoch prophesies of these who have "crept in." They denied the character of Christianity, without denying Christ; as in Philipians, they were "enemies of the cross of Christ." The judgment is on those who have got in, though of course there will be a judgment on others.

"Denying the only Lord God" (v. 4) is the comparison of a master to a slave whom he has bought in the market, but who will not own him. The earliest evil bears its fruit to the end—it ought to have been purged out—but as to its fruits, they remain to the end. Cain is natural religion, Balaam, ecclesiastical corruption, and Core, opposition to Christ's royalty and priesthood. We have to look not only for open infidelity, but to moral persons moving on amid Christianity and "gainsaying."

"Looking for the mercy" (v. 21) is striking. You cannot get into an evil that you do not find Christ for you in it; you cannot give up your Isaac without getting him in resurrection. If in trial we look to God, we receive fresh revelations. The disciples gave Him up as a living Christ, and they got Him as a glorified Christ. The mercy throws the soul on the patient goodness of Christ, and of which goodness, if we are spared the evil, we are the expression. If I feel that I belong to a system that has all gone wrong, I feel myself cast on the mercy of God. Do not get out of the place where the sense of divine love can keep you in the sense of divine holiness. (See 1 Thess. 3:12, 13.) If I walk with God, there must be holiness. Christ Himself is the perfection of good in the midst of evil. Elijah goes to heaven in the midst of apostate Israel. In that case we have an Elisha. This mercy keeps the tone of the heart right. There must be real faithfulness, not pretension. We must be looking on to the end, when things will be right, but now things are gone so wrong that I need mercy at every step.

F.G. Patterson

In the Great City

Jonah's visit to Nineveh, with its amazing results, was perhaps unique in the world's history. The entire population of the greatest city of that time was brought low before God, their despotic ruler setting the example.

Let us endeavor to realize the situation. The prophet apparently went quite alone. Fellowship in service is very sweet, as Paul and many others could testify, but there is no hint of a companion for Jonah. He faced the consequences of his terrible message alone. No organizing committee was behind him; no flaming advertisements announced his coming; neither choirs nor notable singers were secured in order to draw the multitude together. Many modern witnesses appear to consider these things necessary if the masses are to be reached. When shall we all learn that the power of God is worth more than all the machinery that the wit of men can devise? Even penniless men, such as Peter and Paul, have accomplished great things for God as the fruit of simple dependence upon the Holy Spirit.

Jonah "cried" his solemn message through the streets of Nineveh. "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." Jonah 3:4. He was not regarded as a public nuisance, and arrested and jailed as such; nor did the inhabitants scoff at him, as the dissolute youths of Bethel (not "little children") scoffed at Elisha at an earlier date (2 Kings 2:23, 24); his message was heard with all due gravity. "The people of Nineveh believed God." This is good. It was not the mere speaker who was accredited; the people felt that their Creator was speaking to them in him. This is exactly what is recorded of the Thessalonians: "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe." 1 Thess. 2:13.

The king of Nineveh doubtless lived in the seclusion of a palace, surrounded by officials all ready to obey his commands, however arbitrary and cruel they might be. It was not easy for any subject to approach an Oriental despot. Esther, although queen, felt that she would endanger her life by venturing into the presence of the king without a summons (Esther 4:11). But Jonah's serious message was carried right into the throne room of Nineveh, and reported to the king. He acted promptly, for conscience told him that the wickedness of his people well deserved divine judgment. Accordingly the king stripped off his robes, "and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes." The whole population was charged to do likewise, and even the beasts were to have both food and drink withheld from them that they might join the people in their cry of distress. The people were not only to "cry mightily unto God," they were also to turn every one from his evil way, and from his deeds of violence. Prayer without action is worthless. Repentance is an absolute necessity with God. The king concluded: "Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from His fierce anger, that we perish not?" This proclamation, and that by Nebuchadnezzar telling the story of his conversion (Dan. 4) are perhaps the most remarkable proclamations ever sent forth. Would God the rulers of men in the twentieth century would address their people in like

manner! What change would come about in world conditions! What disasters would be averted!

Luke 11:30 suggests that God's dealings with Jonah were known. "Jonas [Jonah] was a sign unto the Ninevites." This would give point to his message, and who could so well warn of impending overthrow as the man who had proved in his own experience the power of God to lay low those who presume to oppose His will? The repentance of Nineveh and its king is as great a miracle in the moral sphere as Jonah's experience in the physical.

In a later book than that of Jonah, God states plainly His principles with regard to the nations. "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them." Jer. 18:7, 8. No nation but Israel has ever been in direct relationship with God, but this does not mean that He is not interested in the masses outside the seed of Abraham. The time had not yet come for the sweet "whosoever" of the gospel to go forth, for the Son of God had not yet been given as God's great love-gift to the world, but His heart nevertheless yearns at all times over men everywhere, not desiring the ruin of any. Therefore when "God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that He said that He would do unto them; and He did it not." Even so would it be at the terrible moment in which we live; if any nation that seems doomed to destruction would get down humbly before God, His heavy hand would be lifted, and respite would be graciously granted.

W. Fereday

Editorial

The way that God tests man changes from time to time. These times are called dispensations. This very word is used in the first chapter of Ephesians and verse ten where it speaks of "the dispensation of the fullness of times." The three prominent dispensations we frequently speak of are Law, Grace, and the Kingdom or Millennium.

The dispensation of the Law began when God gave the law to Moses from Mount Sinai with a great outward display of awesome glory. It was only given to one nation, Israel.

The next dispensation called Grace begins in the book of the Acts with the descent of the Holy Spirit and free and full salvation by grace offered to all —to whosoever, not just to one nation.

There is something important for us to notice about this change of dispensations from Law to Grace. It is this: they overlap. This is readily understood from the special book addressed to the Hebrews who were the people to whom God had given the law as a test for them. Chapter 9 and verse 10 speaks of "carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation." The whole of the book of the Acts and still a few more years were the time of reformation. It was about forty years. This is what we speak of as the overlap of these two dispensations of Law and Grace.

Now we ask a question: Will there be a time of overlap between this dispensation of Grace and the soon coming Kingdom? We believe that there will. Another question: Are we now in that brief period of the overlap? There are at this time, signs that God is behind the scenes preparing Israel for her necessary tribulations and then the Kingdom. Many Jews are again gathered in and around Jerusalem where their forefathers rejected and crucified their Messiah and said, "His blood be on us, and on our children." Matt. 27:25. Surely God's dealings with His earthly people are beginning

and yet His heavenly people, the Church, are still here awaiting the rapture which we can rightly expect any day. Meanwhile the gospel of God's grace is still offered to all.

In other words, it is still the time of the dispensation of Grace but behind the scenes God is preparing for the time of the Kingdom. We believe we are in the overlap. Ed.

The Building

It tells us in 1 Peter 2:4-9 of a building that is built with living stones.

"To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as lively [living] stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the Scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on Him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe He is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light."

There never has been a building constructed in this world, other than that mentioned here, which was built with "living stones." This building is built of living stones to show what is going on within. It is to "show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light." Normally when you build a building, it is for the sake of privacy, but here is one that is to show forth the praises of Him who hath called you. It is only by using living stones that this can be done.

As man builds into this building, he makes mistakes and there has been some dead material built into it. But, irrespective of that, God owns that building and He has taken up His abode there through the Spirit.

There is one thing that I would like you to notice, whether we look at it as the body of Christ, the assembly, or as the building, I would like to emphasize the One who is there. When it is a question of looking at it as the body, the Lord Jesus has said, "There am I in the midst." This is said of the body, as the assembly. When it is a question of looking at it as the building, then it is spoken of as the habitation of God through the Spirit. There is a difference between the two. That is, the Lord being in the midst and the Holy Spirit being in the building. The reason I feel pressed to mention these things is that I believe it is often lost sight of.

J.L. Erisman

Security

"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me." "My sheep hear"—they have ears to hear; "They follow Me"—they have feet to walk, and "I give unto them eternal life." Do not think that only means "safety"; it is life forever. "They shall never perish," none shall "pluck them out of My hand," and "My Father, which gave them Me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand" are eternal security. We learn that Father and Son are both engaged in holding us. "I and My Father are one." All this is indeed blessed security. We received life in the beginning when born of God, and now we are believers in Christ.

This life now in us is the same life that is in Christ (John 12:24); it is communicated to us (John 17:3); it is a life by which we can enjoy and know God as our Father. This life "more abundantly" is found in Christ as the fountain, and flows in us as the stream. In John 20:19, Jesus stood in the midst of His disciples and said unto them, "Peace be unto you"; He says it again in verse 21, "Peace be unto you: as My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you." Notice who is breathing on the disciples here; it is the same Jesus, but He has died and risen again here, Head of God's new creation. God breathes into Adam and he becomes a living soul. Through sin he forfeited life, and death enters, but here in this new life, death can never enter. "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Rom. 8:2. The life in Christ Jesus is not only a risen life, but life in the power of the Holy Spirit; I have, and act under the power of the Spirit of God.

Then consider John's Epistle and see the contrast between the unconverted man and the Christian. So much is said here about eternal life. How wonderful to find it in the believer as in Christ, only in us the flesh hinders, while the Lord Jesus did the will of God. In Him this life was seen in all of its perfection. He walked in obedience to God, so the measure in which a Christian walks and allows the divine nature to be seen in him, in that measure is seen the divine life.

We read in 1 John 2:7: "I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning." This is seen in Christ Himself. Notice 1 John 1: "From the beginning," was when Christ was made flesh, as in John 1:14. They saw, handled, and contemplated it in the person of Christ. There is one peculiar thing about the Epistle of John. This life is called a "new commandment." Moses says, "Thou shalt" and "Thou shalt not." 1 John 2:7 gives us no new commandment, not an order to do something, but a life communicated.

The Fight of Faith

It is like the incident at Bethesda's pool, "Rise, take up thy bed and walk." The power came with the word. "When the fight of faith begins, our strength is as our day."

In 1 John 2:7, we have an old commandment—that is Christ—and in verse 8, a new one, because it is in Him and in you as well. The same thing is to be seen in you, only it is hindered by the flesh. In Christ we see a life that delighted to walk with God, and all that pleased God; the life that was in Him is the very same life that is in you. What is to be seen in you, in character, is the same as seen in Him, and you are in a scene where everything is foreign to that life.

We do not need to walk in the old ways, for we have this power within us. By and by this life will have its home in glory; we could not show the right kind of fruit if we did not have this new life. We have love divine. Love is the activity of the divine nature in the believer; if we did not have this nature we could not bring forth the right kind of fruit.

The old trunk being still there, the tree has to be carefully watched. The careful gardener must be there to keep away every little sprig from growing out of the old trunk.

We are made to feel what it is to be pilgrims, so that we cannot be satisfied down here. There is the Father's house made ready for us and we will not be satisfied until there, and He will not be satisfied until we are there; He has not only called us to this new place and portion, out of a ruined scene but has made us to feel that our surroundings are not home. He points us on to a new scene where we will know the Father and the Son, by the Spirit, where nothing can come in to hinder or mar our fellowship, "He that believeth on the Son," etc. You did not know that all these things belong to that, did you? But they do, and this is what makes us different from what we were before.

"Herein is our love made perfect... because as He is, so are we in this world." 1 John 4:17. Look up and see the Lord Jesus, the delight of the Father's heart. If you can tell me how much He loves the Son, I will tell you how much the Father loves you.

Notes—Montreal 1913

Scripture Biography: Timothy

Timothy was the most trusted and the most endeared to the Apostle Paul's heart among all his yoke-fellows. "I have no man like minded" as Timothy. He was a Jew on his mother's side; both she and his grandmother Lois were of that faithful remnant who were waiting, amid the general apostasy of the nation, for the hope of Israel. Had they been resident in Jerusalem, they would have been found like Simeon and Anna, in the temple to await and welcome the infant Savior. They had "unfeigned faith" and accordingly the youthful Timothy was trained up in the knowledge of the Scriptures. "From a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." 2 Tim. 3:15. If this were more perseveringly done by parents, how much more often would the conversion of their children be the reward of their diligence.

It is likely that he received the truth at the first visit of Paul with Barnabas at Lystra and Derbe (Acts 14:6, 20, 21). A youth so trained would imbibe the truth of a crucified Messiah by the mouth of such a one as Paul with great fervor and delight. There was time between Acts 14 and 16, for the word to have taken root, so that the depth and solidity of his character could be witnessed to and be well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium.

The Apostle Paul warned Timothy that a bishop was not to be a novice, lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil. "Young men likewise exhort to be sober-minded." Titus 2:6. Before they go out towards others, they need to be deepened and exercised in their own souls. While in prison at Rome, one of Paul's sorrows arose from those who preached "Christ even of envy and strife." Phil. 1:15.

A Young Man Disappointed as to Barnabas, Paul's heart found a solace in Timothy. The Lord gave him a young man whom he could train after his own thoughts and send forth as his accredited agent upon any mission which required judgment. It may be that his "often infirmities" ballasted the precocity of his mind, and produced in him a depth of reflection, a quietness of manner, and a discrimination of character qualities so often found where there is weakness of body.

The personal affection of the apostle for Timothy breaks out continually. It is really like that of a father for a most loved child who reciprocates that affection. It appears more often in the second epistle. After a long course of fellowship in service, he had proved his worth. (2 Tim. 1:3, 4.) He seems to completely identify himself with Timothy and to suppose that he alone was capable of carrying on the work after his own death.

Paul could introduce him to the churches without fear, as an example, and as one in whom they could confide. Not only in the epistles does his name often appear with Paul's in the address, but he was frequently commending him as having the same single-eyed purpose as himself. Thus, "I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's. But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he

hath served with me in the gospel." Phil. 2:20-22.

This love was not only a liking for the qualities in the man. No, he loved in this way, but he also loved in Christ and he loved too, because their views were thoroughly in accord in the service and faith of Christ. And here it may be well to allude to a guard which he had in the choice of such an instrument as Timothy.

The Human Side

There are always two sides in Scripture—the human and the divine. "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity" is the human side. When Paul went up with Barnabas to the council, they (that is, the brethren) determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about a certain question. This was the human side.

The Divine Side

But Paul had another resource; he went up by revelation and communicated unto them that gospel which he preached among the Gentiles. (Gal. 2:2.) This was the divine side. And so with Timothy, much as he liked him, and preferred him to Titus, Silas, or Luke, yet Paul was divinely bound to employ Timothy. "This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee" 1 Tim. 1:18. Thus it became known in a public way that he was not only the beloved and trusted friend of the apostle, but had a kind of public service committed to him by the voice of prophecy. There could have been no jealousy of his position. Meeting with him at Lystra, Paul makes him the companion of all his purposes and thoughts. "Thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith."

Timothy is with him in all the journey through Phrygia and Galatia, until the vision of Paul at Troas. (Acts 16:9.) Here Timothy appears for the first time to have left him the narrative being taken up by Luke, as we suppose from the first person plural "we." We do not find his name mentioned during Paul's stay at Philippi, where it is possible Luke was left on the departure of Paul. Acts 17 takes the narrative up again in the third person.

At Thessalonica Timothy is again his companion (Acts 17:14), and at Corinth (Acts 18:5), and also at Ephesus (Acts 19:22), from whence he was sent into Macedonia. In Acts 20:4, we find his name among those who accompanied Paul into Asia, and the narrative is resumed by Luke. We have several notices of Timothy during the apostle's detention at Rome, as he is conjoined in the address to the Philippians with the hope, too, of sending him speedily to them. His name also appears in the epistle to the Colossians and to Philemon. He is mentioned to the Hebrews as having been lately loosed from prison, but not at that time with the Apostle Paul.

Impending Apostasy

Many interesting questions arise in connection with the two epistles to Timothy. The date of the first may be put (although on all such points we must speak hesitatingly) soon after Acts 22:1. (Compare 1 Tim. 1:3.) It appears to be a filling up or expansion of that to Titus—there being a greater breadth in the details, but also a new feature in the shape of a warning as to an impending apostasy. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith." It looks very much like Romanism.

There is an injunction to put "the brethren in remembrance of these things." Otherwise there might still be correction, amendment, and growth—the house of God is still recognized as "the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." In the second epistle, the last Paul ever wrote, there had been a present departure as far as the Church went, for he says, "All they which are in Asia [all the recognized teachers] be turned away from me" (2 Tim. 1:15), even though the impending apostasy was more fearful in his apprehension. "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come," and then follows a list of vices identical with those of Rom. 1 with the addition of "a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." The house of 1 Tim. 3 is now likened to a great house, with vessels of wood and of earth. Meanwhile, the Scriptures are given their true and immense value (2 Tim. 3:15, 17), as at all times where there is a failure in living men.

In both epistles it is certain that the apostle puts a just value upon his own position as set for the defense and confirmation of the gospel, but more especially in the second, where his only hope seems to be in the steadfastness of Timothy. "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season.... For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine." 2 Tim. 4:2, 3. He sees that everything had failed or was to fail. He relates his testimony, his treatment, and his prospects to a beloved friend.

A Good Degree—Boldness

Three things are very remarkable as to Timothy's position.

1. "The prophecies which went before on thee." 1 Tim. 1:18.
2. "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on the hands of the presbytery." 1 Tim. 4:14.
3. "I put thee in remembrance, that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands." 2 Tim. 1:6.

Passing over any question of progress in the apostolic powers of Paul, do these notices indicate progress in Timothy's life? Was it principle? "They that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus." 1 Tim. 3:13. Whatever is allowed on such points, one fact is palpable, that gifts are to be waited upon and may be strengthened by use. They are solemn responsibilities. "Say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfill it." Col. 4:17.

The epistles to Timothy and Titus are surely intended to balance the truths in 1 Cor. 12 and 14. Men, since the Reformation and long before, ignored or forgot these two chapters and formed their systems upon Timothy and Titus. Still, let us beware how we make light of this side of the question. Far be it from any to disparage the place which the Holy Spirit authoritatively holds in the Church, but impulse is not the commanding thought of ministry.

"Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." 1 Tim. 4:15, 16. "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." 2 Tim. 2:15.

Nothing is to hinder the free development of life in the body, but also "God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers.... Are all teachers?" 1 Cor. 12:28, 29. The instructions for such permanent gifts [persons], as to their general conduct, behavior, and manner of life are largely found in these Pastoral Epistles.

Bible Challenger-08-August Answers V.02

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the title bestowed upon one who believed God.

1. A characteristic of the reward given by the Chief Shepherd.
2. Something seen in a vision, through an opened door, in sight like unto an emerald.
3. The untrue words of a discouraged prophet as he sat in a cave.
4. A reminder for those who appoint watchmen to guard a city.
5. Someone who became angry upon hearing the prescription for his dread disease.
6. A reason that the word of the gospel becomes choked to those that hear it.
7. That which gives the Lord more delight than burnt offerings and sacrifices.
8. The description of the wounds of a friend.
9. Two things which the high priests of old were ordained to offer for sins.
10. A message to an overworked sister.
11. The condition prevailing before the first divine command.

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

R. Erisman

Bible Challenger-07-July Answers V.02

1. I went out full Ruth 1:20
2. Naomi Ruth 1:21
3. Handfuls of purpose Ruth 2:16
4. Ephah Ruth 2:17
5. Ruth Ruth 1:16
6. I am Ruth thine handmaid Ruth 3:9
7. The Lord be with you Ruth 2:4
8. Amminadab Ruth 4:20,21
9. Nurse Ruth 4:16
10. Confirm all things Ruth 4:7
11. Ephrathites Ruth 1:2

“And the kinsman said, I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I mar mine own INHERITANCE: redeem thou my right to thyself; for I cannot redeem it.” Ruth 4:6.

The Two Tenants

Supposing a landlord has rented his house to a bad tenant, one who drinks, gambles, swears and is a disgrace to the neighborhood and never pays any rent. At last he forgives all the back rent and puts in a new tenant a quiet, respectable, industrious man with authority to keep the bad tenant in custody in one of the rooms. He is never to let him about the house, and above all, never to allow him to open the door.

This is a rough picture of the Christian. His body is the house; his old nature is the bad tenant; his new nature is the good tenant, and God the owner of the property, for our bodies are not our own, but the Lord's. We do not live in our own houses, so to speak, but are merely tenants at will—a solemn and often forgotten truth.

The Comforter—the Holy Spirit

Now there comes a difficulty. The bad tenant is a very strong old man; the new tenant is a weak young man. Though he has full authority, he has no power to carry out the landlord's wishes. He appeals for help and the landlord sends a strong friend from his own house to help him to overcome the old tenant, and to keep him in custody.

This strong friend is the Holy Spirit, "strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man" Eph. 3:16. So we often read of His overcoming the old tenant, rather than of the new tenant's doing so. We must, of course, understand that this friend never interferes unless the new tenant wishes it. See Gal. 5:17, 25, etc.

The Old Man

Suppose I call with some companions at this house to spend a pleasant evening with my old friend who lives there. I hear there has been some change going on at the house, but I do not exactly know what. The door is opened by the old tenant, but he has a cowed look on his face. When I tell him what I have come for, he says, "Well, of course I should like to ask you in, but I cannot because the new tenant would not like it. You see he is responsible now to the landlord for this house, and he is very strict in having it kept quiet and respectable. I'm only out now because he is asleep, but if there was any noise in the house, he would soon shut me up again." It is clear in this case the same man answers whom I have known all along; the only difference being he has had his rent forgiven and that there is a new tenant in the house of whom he is afraid.

Now, suppose that I call again in a few months to try and induce my old friend to come and spend a jolly evening with me. It is quite dark when I knock at the door, so that I cannot see who opens it, but supposing it is my old friend I say, "Come along to the theater with me."

"I never go there," is the reply.

"I know that," I say, "for you are afraid now."

"No, I am not afraid. I do not care for it."

"Come, now," I say, "that won't do; I know you like it well enough, but you are afraid of the new tenant."

"I am the new tenant," answers the voice.

The New Man

In this case, I do not find the old man with his rent forgiven, but a new man altogether, answering all my questions and declaring he does not care for worldly pleasures at all. Here is quite a new thing, but this is also the true Christian position: that is always to let your new nature answer the front door, never the old.

Supposing now, that I continue calling for some months, and invariably get the same answer. No wonder that I think the old man must be dead, for he never answers the door. So he is, as far as any outward expression of his existence is concerned. The new tenant, however, could tell me of many a desperate attempt the old man makes to break loose from his close confinement, when nothing but the strength of the friend prevents him from being as bad as ever. A.T. Scofield

The Night of This World

"It is high time to awake out of sleep; for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed." The night of this world is the absence of the Sun of Righteousness. Let us clearly conceive this. In the busy and pleasure-seeking course of this world, for him who has understanding and to whom Christ is known, it is still night. The gloom of night is over it, but the day has dawned to his faith. The Morning Star has arisen in his heart, but the world is asleep in the still-continuing darkness of night, for indeed the night is far spent, but the world is asleep in the night. The waking soul sees in the horizon, the Morning Star—the dawn along its edge, and waits for day. The heart is in the day, and walks as in the day. As Christians we have done with works of darkness. We are still in conflict, but our armor against evil, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, is the light in which we walk.

The power of light, and truth, and godliness, and judgment of evil, which belongs to that day, is in our heart, and the weapons and snares of darkness are foiled and detected, getting no entrance into, no hold on, the soul. We walk honestly as in the day; we put on in our ways and heart the walk and character of Him who is the true light of it, the Lord Jesus Christ. Having the hope of being like Him there, we purify ourselves as He is pure. We do not provide for the lusts of the nature which belongs to the darkness to satisfy it, but walk as Christ walked. Such is the Christian in view of Christ's coming, and bringing on this dark and benighted world the light and day of God in His effectual power, and are the two springs and characters of Christian conduct—recognition of, and acting up to, every relative duty in love, and knowing the time, the near approach of day to which he belongs. (Compare 1 Thess. 5.) "The night is far spent, the day is at hand." Rom. 13:12.

Remembrance

Grace and Peace

It is exceedingly beautiful to notice the way of the Spirit in addressing believers. Knowing, as He does, all their faults and peculiarities, and having some rebuking things to say to them, yet He opens His remarks with these most precious words, "Grace be unto you, and peace." And who were those persons thus saluted? Were they remarkable for their holiness, for their fidelity, for their love? Doubtless many among them were, but taking them as a whole, were they a very amiable, lovable, consistent people?

First, we notice that no matter what epistle we turn to, with very little variation, and only three exceptions—namely, the Epistle of James, and John's first and third epistles, we find these words addressed to all.

The epistle to the Hebrews may seem different, but if the character of the teaching excludes its use when it opens, the Spirit cannot close—cannot bid farewell, so to speak, to those He so tenderly taught and warned, without using those needed, and well-known words, "Grace be with you all." Amazing grace! Who can comprehend or who can give a reason for it? Only the One who possesses the skill, and ministers the grace can, and, blessed be His name, has made known the wherefore of it all.

Listen to His own words, "That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace, in His kindness toward us, through Christ Jesus." These are words used, doubtless, in connection with a different line of thought, but they include all the dealings of God with our souls, from the beginning of our new being till the time when we shall reach the end in a Father's love without end. Sweet thought! When God breaks the silence between Himself and His people, it is to utter first of all these words, "Grace be unto you, and peace."

Yet when one thinks of it, what other words could our God have used? For was not "grace" reigning? And had not "peace" been made? And as the salutation was from God the Father, and His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, so the grace of the One could reign, because of the righteousness established through the cross of the other. The "peace" had been made by His precious blood.

What a mighty leveler grace is as well as sin! (Compare Rom. 3 and Rom. 10.) "The grace of God" as the "God of grace," needs nothing from any man, acting toward man and upon man, as the sun in the heavens shines equally upon the evil and on the good, the wise and the unwise, the poor and the rich, and makes "no difference" between the dew-drop and the mighty ocean, warming and brightening the one as well as the other!

God, viewing His saints from the "top of the rocks," beholds neither their perverseness nor their iniquity (when the enemy accuses), but the deep, deep need of their souls for what He alone can supply.

Whether they be saints of Rome, of Corinth, of Colossae, or Thessalonica, it does not matter; "Grace to you," "Peace to you," become the common greetings. The Romans were strangers to

Paul, but their faith in Christ was known. Yet, some, abusing their liberty (pleasing themselves, instead of pleasing every one his neighbor), were setting at naught their weak brethren, while those weak and fettered, in place of using the liberty wherewith Christ makes His people free, were judging their more enlightened brethren, taking pride in false ideas of holiness.

Certainly the strong required to enter into the grace that bore with them, as the weak might well avoid their strictures, and thus follow after the things which make for peace.

If they had their schools of opinion, as at Corinth, making Paul, or Apollos, or Christ but leaders of some sect, or their schools of legality as at Galatia, needing to be exposed and closed, if some at Ephesus were asleep, or others at Thessalonica were lazy, the salutation is alike to all. How blessed to have our opinions dispelled, our hard thoughts exposed, our sleep disturbed, and our laziness corrected in such a manner, for it is our Father and our Lord Jesus who are thus dealing with their people's souls.

Some were leaving their early love, others forgetting what they had received and heard; some were forsaking the assembling of themselves together, as others (grown shortsighted) had forgotten the "purging" of their former sins. But, be they love-bearers, grace-neglectors, assembly-forsakers, or cross-forgetters, the unaltered salutation of "Grace be unto you and peace," comes from the unalterable God and Father, and from His beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

May it be granted unto us so to grow in grace that the peace of God, which passes all understanding, may keep our hearts and minds!

Words of Truth

The Spirit and the Word

God has a way in the world where Satan cannot touch us. This is the path where Jesus walked. Satan is the prince of this world, but there is a divine path through it, and there God's power is. The Word is the revelation of it. So the Lord bound the strong man. He acted by the power of the Spirit, and used the Word. The Spirit and the Word cannot be separated without falling into fanaticism on the one hand, or into rationalism on the other—without putting oneself outside the place of dependence upon God, and of His guidance. Mere reason would become the master of some, imagination, of others.

“He Was Moved With Compassion”

“And Jesus, when He came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and He began to teach them many things.” Mark 6:34.

In a world of misery and want, how blessed to know One whose heart feels it all, as it were, makes it His own, and whose emotions of pitying love are so expressed that we can know and see them: “He was moved with compassion.” That blessed face plainly told of the throbbing of divine mercy that worked within. The heart expressed itself before the hand moved to relieve what the eye looked upon. Nor was it a transient feeling, a passing emotion. Human misery has found a home in the heart of Jesus, and He, who is “the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever,” albeit now on the throne of God in glory, is still “moved with compassion,” as He looks out upon, and takes in, all the misery and want that plead incessantly, in accents of ever deepening intensity, at the throne of mercy.

If the Shepherd of Israel was moved with compassion as He looked upon the children of Abraham, “as sheep not having a shepherd,” how deep must be the emotion with which the Lord Jesus now views the children of God again “scattered abroad”! What terrible havoc the “grievous wolves” have made in “the flock of God”! How the speakers of perverse things have led away “disciples after themselves.” What widespread division and offense have they wrought who “serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly”! Surely all this appeals with touching force to Him who “loved the church and gave Himself for it.”

But was it only that Jehovah's people were “as sheep not having a shepherd”? Had they not sinned themselves? Had their hearts been “right with Him”? Had they been “steadfast in His covenant”? Full well He knew it was far otherwise; the long, sad history of that perverse and stiff-necked people was all before Him, “but He, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity.” Psa. 78:38.

And has the Church of the living God suffered only from false teachers and bad guides? Have the children of God a better history than the children of Israel? Have they been less perverse and stiff-necked? Have they altogether kept His word? And have their hearts been right with Him who redeemed them with His own blood? How well He knows that higher privileges and better promises have but brought out deeper sin, and, relatively, less response to His love! Surely every heart knows this. How sweet, then, in our day, to turn to Him whose “compassions fail not,” and who “having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end”!

We do well to be at home with that deeply moved heart of pitying, forgiving love, as it “began to teach them many things.” True enough, He now speaks from heaven, but that heaven is open to us, and there is no distance to faith.

Failure and ignorance are around us on every hand. We can only rightly feel the one, and minister to the other, as we are really with Him who, above all evil, sees it all, only to find in it the occasion

for the ministry of love.

They who would, in any little degree, serve the sheep of Christ in these last and closing days, need much to ponder these words, spoken to one of old, "execute true judgment, and show mercy and compassion every man to his brother," while, above all, they should be much in spirit with that "faithful and merciful high priest," who, Himself un-encompassed by infirmity, yet touched with the feeling of ours, is "able to have compassion on the ignorant and out of the way."

Most merciful High Priest,

Our Savior, Shepherd, Friend,

`Tis in Thy love alone we trust

Until the end.

C. Wolston

God's Delight

There is no light like the cross to show out the real character of human nature, no act man ever did of which God could say, that is what man is, till His Son was put to death, and the light of heaven shone down upon a city of murderers. That cross just showed what we are in nature, and He came there because He is rich in mercy. Who can say anything if God chooses to take up such and give them a new nature, a new life?

Adam's life in Eden was not a life beyond the grave—not that life in which the second Man, the Lord from heaven, ascended up where He was before. As Son of man, Christ could and did die, but He gave up His life and took His life again; that is the life which a man taken out of nature receives. The first Adam could not have had such a life unless imparted by the last Adam; He communicates life—eternal life. There was no living fountain of water flowing down until Christ left the grave and ascended. Nineteen hundred years ago a fountain was opened in heaven.

Parents and Children

In these days there is often lack of communication between parents and their children, their God-given heritage (Psa. 127:3). There are principles in 2 Kings 4 that shed light on our homes.

In this chapter the child was with the father when trouble began, but he did not take time to attend. He only told a servant to take him to the mother. The mother held him on her knees till he died what devotion! Then she (that great woman) went to God through Israel's link at that time, the man of God. Faith cannot be denied since it was God who promised and gave her a son. Gehazi was dispatched with a rod but with no results. Although necessary in its place, how often the rod appears not to produce the desired results. Perhaps because it is not accompanied with the proper love before the rod became necessary.

Elisha's actions present much for meditation. First, he shut the door on them both and prayed. How often this private, personal touch has been the beginning of a breakthrough in problems. Can our children say they have heard us bring them individually before the throne, pleading the help of the God of wisdom in their problems? Are we taking the place of knowing it all or do they see us in confessed weakness before the throne?

Next, Elisha lay upon the child and put his mouth upon his mouth. Do we take time and effort to communicate with those who are young, in a way that they can understand? In Matt. 13:23, it was receiving the word with understanding that produced fruit.

He put his eyes on the child's eyes. How much effort do we take to see things the way a child does? How do our strong reactions appear to them?

Then he put his hands on his hands. What do children do with their hands? Probably more than anything else they play. Does this interest the Lord? Zech. 8:5 indicates that in the millennial day of glory, in Jerusalem the center of government, "the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets." Do we put our hands on their hands and play with them?

"He stretched himself upon the child." It would not be stretching himself out but rather to make himself small as the child. It was in this way that the flesh of the child was warmed. 1 Cor. 15:46, shows us that it is not the spiritual but rather the natural that comes first. If there is the sincere effort (not put on) on our part to stretch ourselves down to them in this practical way, there will be a warmth produced between parent and child.

Results were not immediate—he walked around a bit (verse 35), and then it was all repeated. Life was manifested in an unexpected way, seven sneezes. It was unmistakable, although probably not the expected way of showing that life was there. Parents whose hearts are right will not lay down rules on how that life must manifest itself, yet, they would be alert for the first signs of life.

What joy for the mother as she came to pick up her child alive again. But before she picked him up, she bowed to the ground. Oh, how such a work of life-producing grace in our children should first produce the due praise to Him whose blessing comes because of His sovereign purpose to

bless. "As a dew from the Lord, as the showers upon the grass, that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men." Mic. 5:7. R. Thonney

Diligence of Heart

"Have faith in God," Jesus said to His disciples, and then added, "For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith." Mark 11:22, 23. And how could it be otherwise if there is faith that brings God into the matter? He that created the mountains can surely remove them also if He be pleased to do so. The real question is, Are we walking with Him? Have we the knowledge of His will so that we can act with confidence? Can we bring Him into what we are doing? Are we standing with Him and for Him in the carrying out of His will and His purpose, so that we can connect His name with our service? If this be so, no difficulty can be too great. We can go forward in the name of the Lord with strength and courage of heart, and undismayed by all the power that Satan can raise up against us.

And here let us observe that diligence of heart is needful, and I may add, as of equal importance, prayerful dependence. "Meditating day and night" and "praying always" are what the warriors of Christ are called to. Joshua was to meditate on the words of the law day and night, and the Ephesian saints were to pray always with all prayer and supplication for all saints. Paul says to Timothy, "Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all." Oh, if we were more diligent as to the Word of God and prayer, how different our state would be! What fervency of heart in all our service, and what devotedness to Christ and His people, there would be, and how much greater blessing would be enjoyed!

How much we lack this diligence of heart! How many moments every hour, and hours every day, are wasted—time that might be given up to prayer and meditation on God's blessed Word, 'in which we should find the Holy Ghost refreshing our souls, and filling them with that which flows down from the heart of Christ in glory. Hours spent in foolish talk and idle gossip, grieving the Spirit, blighting spiritual growth, and drying up the springs of divine love in the soul, might be spent in holy, edifying conversation about Christ and His things. "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name." Mal. 3:16. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another." Col. 3:16. In this we need diligence of heart so that the Lord may be honored, and our blessing and the blessing of others secured.

I may add also that strength and courage are needed more in a day of decline than when all is going well. There is an enemy to contend with, and instead of having the support of our brethren, we may meet with that which chills the heart and fills it with sorrow. Here the heart is tested, and God only can sustain.

There is not only conflict with a common enemy, but there is the state of the saints to be borne as a burden on the heart. Will you bear this burden? Will you cleave to the saints in the power of divine love when they turn away from you as all in Asia did from Paul? Will you seek to serve them

when you are misunderstood, misrepresented, or even maligned, as Paul said to the Corinthian saints, "I will very gladly spend and be spent for you: though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved"? The state of the saints with whom we have to do will very often be the means of testing our own hearts. It is easy to love my brethren when they love me and heap their favors upon me. But do I love them just the same when they forsake me?

A.H. Rule

A Good Conscience

We gain a good conscience before God by the blood of the Lamb. By walking with God we maintain it before men and for communion with God, in order to have strength and spiritual understanding, and to have them increasingly. This is the practical strength of good conduct, of a conscience without rebuke. "I exercise myself" always to this, said the Apostle. What integrity in such a walk; what truthfulness of heart when no eye sees us! If we are peremptory with ourselves, with our own hearts, and with regard to our conduct, we can therefore be peaceful in our ways. God also is there. So walk, says the Apostle, and the God of peace shall be with you. If the fruits of righteousness are sown in peace, the path of peace is found in righteousness. If I have a bad conscience, I am vexed with myself and I grow angry with others. When the heart is at peace with God and has nothing to reproach itself with, when the will is held in check, peace reigns in the soul. We walk on the earth, but the heart is above it in communion with better things; we walk in a peaceful spirit with others, and nothing troubles our relations with God. He is the God of peace. Peace, the peace of Jesus, fills the heart. The feet are shod with the gospel of peace and we walk in the spirit of peace.

The Formation of One Body by the Baptism of the Holy Ghost

We have heard of the Lord's promise—"Ye shall be baptized by the Holy Ghost not many days hence"—brought to pass on the day of Pentecost. The little band of disciples—at first about 120 (see Acts 1:15), then about 3,000 (Acts 2:41), increased largely after-wards (Acts 4:4)—were baptized of the Holy Ghost, according to the Lord's promise, but still, this was only the Jewish side of the blessing. In Acts 10, Peter opens the door to the Gentiles. When they of Judea heard of this (see Acts 11), Peter was called to account for what he had done, and he rehearsed the matter from the beginning to them, and declared that the Holy Ghost had acted in a similar manner to that which He had done at the day of Pentecost with the Jews, and the Gentiles too had received the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

Thus we have, in the clearest way, the Jew and Gentile receiving the baptism of the Holy Ghost. (The baptism of the Holy Ghost is only used with reference to the corporate body of saints upon earth. By it individuals are brought into a corporate relation-ship to each other and to Christ.)

We must now turn to Paul, for to him alone of all the apostles was the revelation of the "mystery" committed, of which he speaks in Eph. 3:6, etc., which had heretofore been "hid in God" (v. 9), not even in "Scripture," but "in God"—His eternal purpose. "That the Gentiles should be joint-heirs, and a joint-body (with the Jews), and joint-partakers of His promise in Christ by the gospel." Thus should the passage be read.

Paul describes at length this body in 1 Cor. 12:12-27, where he says, "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is [the] Christ." (This name, 'the Christ,' is here applied to the members and head, as to Adam and his wife jointly, in Gen. 5:2: "He called their name Adam.") "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into [or of] one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many," etc. Here both Jew and Gentile lose their places, as such, and are brought into one body, and united by the Holy Ghost to each other and to Christ, the Head, a Man glorified. (In verse 27, the Apostle recognizes the assembly of God at Corinth as the Body. "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular"; that is, in the principle and ground of their gathering they were the body of Christ.)

Now this body is in the world, as is the Holy Ghost, whose presence constitutes it. It is not in heaven. The Head is in heaven, and the members have a heavenly position by faith, while in fact they are in the world. This body has been passing along through the world, its unity as perfect as the day in which the presence of the Holy Ghost first constituted it. Nothing has ever marred its unity. True, the outward manifestation of this body, by the oneness of those who compose it, is gone; true, that the "house of God" as it first appeared in the world, has drifted into (or become like) a "great house" of 2 Tim. 2:19-22; true, that all that was committed to man's responsibility has, as ever, failed. But the body of Christ was in the world then—was here through the dark middle ages—is now in the world, remaining all through the ruin of the professing church, its unity perfectly maintained by the Holy Ghost, who, by His presence and baptism, constitutes it, for He,

as ever, maintains the unity of the body of Christ!

Let me give an illustration which will convey simply the fact that the entire number of saints in the world at any given time (just as I write these words, for instance), indwelt by the Holy Spirit, is that which is recognized of God as the body of Christ. Let us suppose a regiment of soldiers, a thousand strong, goes to a foreign country and serves there for many years. All those who composed that regiment die off, or are slain in battle, and their places are filled up by others the numerical strength of the regiment is kept up. After years of service the time comes for it to return home. Not a man who went out is in it now, and yet the same regiment returns without change of its number or facings or identity. Thus it is with the body of Christ. Those who composed it in the days of Paul, are not here, yet the body has passed along through the last eighteen centuries, the members of it dying off, and the ranks filled up by others, and now at the end of the journey the body is here—the Holy Ghost, who constitutes its unity, being here— as perfect in its unity as it ever was.

The main point is easily seen to be the present actuality of Christ's body here upon earth. There are many vague notions as to this grand truth in the minds of the saints. Some have thought that the body of Christ is in heaven, some that it is in course of formation since the descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost— a body gradually being formed, part of which is in heaven, part on earth, part (if the Lord tarry) not yet gathered in, that this formation progresses till a certain moment (the Lord's coming), when it is completed, and taken away to be with the Lord.

Now it is quite true that all the saints between those two great events are of the body of Christ, of it in the mind and counsel of God. But those who have died have lost their present, actual connection with the body, having passed away from the sphere where, as to personal place, the Holy Ghost is. They have ceased to be in its unity. The bodies of the dead saints, once the temples of the Holy Ghost, are now in the dust, and their spirits are with the Lord. Their bodies not being yet raised, they do not now enter into account of the body as recognized of God. As those on the retired list of an army, they have passed into the reserve, or freedom from service, as it were, out of the scene now occupied by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. We read, "[I]f one member suffer, all the members suffer with it," etc. (1 Cor. 12:26); the dead do not suffer. The passage speaks of those who are alive here, in a place where they may do so.

Thus, the body of Christ, as now recognized of God, embraces all believers here upon earth, at this moment as at any given moment. 1 Cor. 12 speaks of the Church of God upon earth: healings, etc., are not set in heaven. The difficulty with many is not reading Scripture as God's mind at any given moment speaking of a thing before His eye. The apostles spoke of a thing before their eyes; they never looked for a long continuance of the Church; they looked for the Lord's coming. All was viewed as contemplating this, though prophetically ruin was predicted, and felt as it came in.

F. G. Patterson

Editorial

Bright orange or yellow buses begin their daily circuits this month collecting and delivering their precious, lively cargo to the various schools for learning. Other students arrive on foot, bicycles, skates or even skateboards. Some will say, "Not school again!" and others will say, "Oh, good! At last school is beginning again." A few students really like school, but quite a few do not.

So it is with parents too. Some are relieved that the summer responsibilities with their children all day long are over, and are glad to see them off to school for several hours a day. Many Christian parents, however, are greatly concerned about what their own dear children are taught and exposed to that is erroneous and corrupt. Even violence as well as corruption is an ever-increasing danger in these last days.

Surely it is important to have a godly concern and to do all that responsibility and privilege demand of parents according to their ability while the opportunity exists. Children grow up so quickly and the young and tender years of parental care pass rapidly.

The hours in the home are most important and we, as parents, must diligently use them to instruct, to guide and to bring up those dear children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Eph. 6:4. Much wisdom is needed for both the parents and the children. The source of all is God and if we ask, the answer is, "it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Matt. 7:7. James adds the injunction, "let him ask in faith." James 1:6.

The book of Proverbs accurately exposes and warns about both corruption and violence. It is so very profitable to learn through reading and believing God's

Word by which we may escape much damage and avoid many sad and painful experiences. If just one chapter is read each day, the whole thirty-one chapters will be completed in a thirty-one day month. It would be good to read Proverbs each July, August, October, December, January, March and May. After a while those wholesome verses will become lodged in our mind to come to our memory just when we need them.

We can learn much that is positive from the Proverbs that will increase our joy and bring blessing with it. For instance, notice chapter 3:13, "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding." Verses 16 and 17 add, "Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honor. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace."

Young people, as they make more and more decisions on their own in the higher levels of education, will increasingly need to seek wisdom and direction from God. The Word of God can meet every need and obedience to it will assure happiness. By regular and frequent reading of the Scripture, they learn what God's will is for them.

As the new school year begins, let us each with purpose of heart cleave unto the Lord (Acts 11:23). "The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto [up to] Christ." "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." "By faith ye stand." "We walk by faith, not by sight." Gal. 3:24, 26; 2 Cor. 1:24; 2 Cor. 5:7.

Whether in school or out, let us continuously trust God and confidently pray for help and guidance. We are always in God's school; for the Christian to be out of His school is to be out of this world. Ed. El

Compromise

"A time to love, and a time to hate." Eccl. 3:8.

"He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal." John 12:25.

Compromise here has ruined the testimony of many. Such Christians once made a fair start, but the fear of man, or the love of ease, or of social standing, or of the approval of kindred or acquaintances has come between them and the Lord. It is a poor exchange, but many a one has made it, and adhered to it to the end. It should break our hearts as we think of it, and make us hate the thought of compromise.

Let us trace the way of departure. Family influence is in opposition. Simplicity and faithfulness to Christ are derided, a name of reproach is given to true Christians, and the soul, because it is not abiding in Christ, is caught in the snare. Fearful of reproach or discomfort, the soul gives way and steers a middle course henceforth. Men call it moderation and wisdom, but the soul has been damaged and is adrift.

God is merciful, but the Word and communion with God and with His people are less and less enjoyed and trials and chastening are too much for the heart. The peaceable fruits of righteousness do not follow. A sad witness for Christ! Such bear witness in their family and in the world that godliness is only a name, not a reality, or if not altogether so, still the course is vacillating, and the heart not at rest, and the testimony correspondingly marred.

The fear of man is, however, closely connected with our love of the world in some form. We are un-weaned in some way when the fear of God is displaced by the fear of man, and Satan has power with us. The pride of life how weak our hearts that it should ever ensnare us. Ought not a glance at the life of the Lord to make us ashamed? What pure joy is lost by love of social standing; how withering to the soul is such a preference and such an atmosphere. Self-love and idolatry are thrusting Christ from the heart.

In such cases there is also this grave danger that of the hardening of the heart by the continuance of religious forms and outward service and utterances. But either way, the soul has made an evil choice, and has turned from the narrow way. Jesus is still knocking at the door, standing there, but He has been left outside abandoned for Herod's feast. Friendship with the world is enmity against God.

Christian, let no one come between your soul and Christ, and let nothing turn you aside from the cross. Christ has redeemed you by His blood, and has given you the Holy Spirit. By this great redemption you are separated to God from all worldly friendships and alliances and purposes. Christ has joined you to Himself forever, and He has joined you to His people, for we are members of His Body and members one of another. His sheep can never perish (John 10:27, 28). Let that encourage the heart to rise up and follow Him. He loves His own and loves them to the end (John 13:1). Hence He washes their feet, cleanses away defilements, for if He washes us not, we have no part with Him. So He restores our souls, never forsaking us.

Let us flee, then, from half-heartedness and world-bordering and compromise, in the family, in business, in the inward exercises of the soul. As Christ has died for us, let us live for Him (2 Cor. 5:15), and we shall realize the word, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Rom. 8:31. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?... Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him

that loved us." Rom. 8:35, 37.

"In all these things." In the midst of your fiery trials, Christian, you are "more than conquerors" through Him who loves you.

With such a word, may we forsake all carnal seeking and fleshly shrinking, and go forth upon the water to Him. Go forth to Him without the camp, bearing His reproach. Let us boldly take faith's reckoning.

"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Rom. 8:18.

"By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went... [through faith) not knowing whither he went.... Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the seashore innumerable. These all... confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for He hath prepared for them a city." Heb. 11:8-16. Young Christian

Job-Psalms-Proverbs-Canticles

THE BOOK OF JOB shows the godly man without law in nature, learning what he is in that nature, though a model man in amiability, when he comes near God.

THE BOOK OF PSALMS is the godly man under law, and with the sense of how grievous transgression is, seeking to rise up from his low estate into nearness with God.

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS is the godly man learning wisdom.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON (Canticles) is the heart searching after that rest which can only satisfy true love.

You have the conscience seeking its rest in the Psalms, and the heart in Solomon's Song. Hence, neither of these two books properly applies to us, as Christians. For, as such, our conscience is fully at rest, and we are in the relationship of children in the Father's house. Our heart is at rest as already united to Christ by the Spirit, bone of His bone, and flesh of His flesh. "We are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones." Eph. 5:30.

The earthly Queen, Israel, whose history is presented to us in Solomon's Song, has not yet reached her rest. She comes from earth, and necessarily cannot be Queen at rest until there is a visible King. "The Bride, the Lamb's wife," comes from God; she is never a Queen, and Christ is not the King in His relationship to her. He is King to the earthly Queen. The Church is the Eve, if you will, of the second Adam, for the Paradise of God.

Words of Truth

Prophecy

Prophecy is not the law, but the warning testimony of judgment when the law has been departed from; it is the turning the eye of those who believe to better hopes and foreshown deliverance for the remnant. It supposes apostasy, though it may be in different form or extent. Therefore we have "beginning with Samuel and all the prophets," for then Ichabod was written. The great definite presentation of the place and character of prophecy is in Isa. 6.

The whole head was sick, and the whole heart faint; from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, it was wounds and bruises and putrefying sores. As to the vineyard, it brought forth wild grapes; its wall was to be broken down; it was to be laid waste. This was the state of things as to the rights of that people who formed the object of Jehovah's care, the center of His earthly plans, and the place of Messiah's visitation. But Jehovah was unaltered in character and purpose: in character, and therefore He must throw down, in purpose, and therefore He would not cast away.

His throne was now to be set up as that from which prophecy was to flow; so it is, and His train fills the temple. And a man, though of unclean lips, is sent with lips purged by a coal from the altar, and then willing to go, but still dwelling among a people of unclean lips, having seen what Jehovah was—holy, holy, holy, Jehovah of hosts. His soul is filled with and affected by the contrast, but he, touched with the coal, said, "Here am I: send me." "And He said, Go." But what was His message? "Hearing ye shall hear and shall not under-stand, and seeing ye shall see and shall not perceive. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and blind their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and turn again and be healed"; and this "till cities be wasted without inhabitant, and houses without man, and the ground become all utter desolation, and Jehovah have removed men far away, and the forsaking [or solitude] be great in the midst of the land. But yet in it shall be a tenth, and it shall return and be eaten... the holy seed shall be the substance thereof."

Now Jehovah had long patience; He sent prophets till there was no remedy. He smote Israel and cut them short. He let Judah go captive and restored them again, so that the land was occupied and the temple built. Still the word ran, though the prophet did not live forever. The householder had long patience, till, having yet one Son, He said, "It may be they will reverence My Son," round whose head prophetic testimony and present blessing closed for a crown of glory and of witness. The word of the Lord, and the works of the Lord, the righteousness, and the patience, and the grace alike, with the Father's voice, testified who He was. But the awful knell of God's judgment still filled the unholy air of that favored country, "Make the heart of this people fat." Now it was after long patience and marvelous love that it really came out; the sentence of God's judgment came to the earth, for all the patience of love had been tried. God had nothing more than His Son to be testified of.

"How often would I have gathered!" was now the word of reluctantly departing loving-kindness and favor, but stored in a heart from which it could not be removed, which nothing could reach to alter. If sin could drive love in there and shut it up, there it dwelt untouched in its own blessed and

essential perfectness; no sin or failure could enter there to mar its perfectness or diminish its power. Such is God, such must He be known to us in Christ. If love and favor be driven back by sin, it is but to separate into the power of His own essential and unmingled perfectness, and, there retired, to dwell on and delight in itself. Judgment shall make a way for it to break forth only in its own unhindered excellency, and in unqualified and unrestricted blessing. Such is God, and such is the Lord's way. But it was now only proved by His long patience that, "Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers." Acts 28:25. For in them was fulfilled His prophecy which said, "Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand." Matt. 13:14. For the people's heart had waxed gross, and what Isaiah prophetically announced, when He saw His glory, was now fulfilled when He whose was the glory came (John 12:40, 41).

This, known to the Lord, was communicated by parables in Matt. 13, for then His patience had not had its perfect work. In Matt. 23, it had, and God's dereliction, His going and returning to His place, was publicly announced, and "their house" left to desolation. Then, on this same footing, again prophecy begins (Matt. 24:25). Whether the vineyard or in closer judgment, the house itself, left desolate, the broad foundation is the same, and the remnant understand, believe, and are comforted. Nothing can be more solemn than our blessed Master's word at the close of the previous chapter. How much implies a little word from His mouth! What depth and terribleness the gentlest often conveys! It was not in severest judgment, "Ye have made My Father's house a house of merchandise." He had left it. It was their house; what was it worth? Goodly stones, which a poor heathen would throw down. No self-exaltation, no harsh reproach. His heart, the Lord's heart, yearned over Jerusalem. But so, alas! it was. Terrible might be His judgment on the leaders of this people, who caused them to err, but of them, of the inhabitants of loved Jerusalem, He would only say in tenderness and sorrow, "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 Jehovah." J.N. Darby

Bible Challenger-09-September V.02

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the word telling us what should accompany Christian patience and long-suffering.

1. A pair who withstood a servant of God in a time of captivity.
2. The frequency of ship arrivals bringing apes and peacocks to a famous king.
3. The announced time of healing for a nobleman's son having a high fever.
4. The contrast of presently seeing through a glass darkly.
5. Those specifically charged with turning the grace of God into lasciviousness.
6. The enfeeblement of someone who did eat continually at a king's table.
7. A reminder to Israelites who appeared before the Lord at feast time.
8. That which cometh down from the Father of lights.
9. Something a famous governor hid with his youngest brother's effects.
10. That which is better than laughter< Answers to these questions will be found in the next issue of Christian Treasury.

R. Erisman

Bible Challenger-08-August Answers V.02

1. Fadeth not away 1 Peter 5:4
2. Rainbow round about the throne Rev. 4:3
3. I, even I only, am left 1 Kings 19:10
4. Except the Lord keep the city Psa. 127:1
5. Naaman was wroth 2 Kings 5:11
6. Deceitfulness of riches Matt. 13:22
7. Obeying the voice of the Lord 1 Sam. 15:22
8. Faithful are the wounds of a friend Prov. 27:6
9. Gifts and sacrifices Heb. 5:1

10. One thing is needful Luke 10:42

11. Darkness was upon the face of the deep Gen. 1:2

"And the Scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the FRIEND OF GOD." James 2:23.

No More Conscience of Sins

Liberty of conscience is the very essence of true worship. Not what men call liberty of conscience, but the ability to approach God without any sense of guilt upon the conscience. This, be it observed, is not presuming on innocence, neither is it the profession of unconsciousness of sin—for if "I know nothing by myself, yet am I not hereby justified,"—but it is the fullest consciousness of an acknowledgment of sin, with the profession (let us hold it fast) that it has been forever put away by the one sacrifice of Christ offered once for all.

All the gifts and sacrifices offered by a worshiper under the law "could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience." Heb. 9:9. He might have approached God strictly according to the ritual prescribed, but he must have had a burdened conscience. No conscience can be at ease before God where anything depends on what the person himself is doing or has to do. In fact, the conscience could not be at ease now if it had to depend on what Christ has to do, instead of resting on that which He has already done. The worshiper must be once and forever purged, or he must have conscience of sin. But only let him by faith follow Christ through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building, by which he has entered into the holy place, only let him see that it is "not by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood, that He hath entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption," and where can be the conscience of sin? Christ has not to enter in again; He has no more sacrifice for sin to offer—no other blood to carry in, for where could any be found of like preciousness? All is done once, and once for all, hence the worshiper once purged, and purged by such blood (Heb. 9:14), has no more conscience of sin. He can serve the living God. Nothing now depends on what the worshiper has to do; all hangs on the accomplished sacrifice, the precious blood and permanent priesthood of the Lord Jesus Christ. J.L. Harris

Abiding Joy

However dark the day, the Christian can be happy if he simply walks in the abiding sense of the Father's love. He has given us a life that enables us to enter into His own thoughts, to enjoy what He enjoys and to live in the good of it because of the Spirit's power within.

A Corn of Wheat

In the early pioneer days of Ontario, Canada, a farmer, named David Fife, received a small quantity of seed wheat from a friend in Glasgow. He planted this, but, out of the whole plot, one grain only grew and ripened, producing a handful of hard, red grains. Farmer Fife kept the seeds and planted them the next year. He kept on doing this from year to year until there was enough wheat to use himself and sell to his neighbors. In a few years "Red Fife" wheat was in constant demand.

Within twenty or thirty years from the time when the first kernel was sown, "Red Fife" was grown far and wide in the great plains of the West. Since then, from this seed, has come the finest wheat in the world. Picture miles upon miles of ripening wheat, elevators choked to overflowing with golden grain. In a single year there have been grown, in the Canadian West alone, more than four hundred million bushels of "Marquis" wheat—a product of "Red Fife"!

When Farmer Fife planted the seed wheat over a hundred years ago, he little dreamed that, from a single kernel, there would spring the overflowing harvests that have helped to fill the granaries of the world!

What a wonderful illustration this is of the words of the blessed Lord when He said, "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.

He was the blessed "Corn of Wheat" who died that we might live, and when those myriad voices acclaim Him in the glory voices out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation, this will be the theme, "Thou art worthy... for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood." Rev. 5:9.

Then "He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied." Isa. 53:11.

Young Christian

What Is Truth?

There is something pathetic in Pilate's question to Jesus: "What is truth?" Before him at that moment was the Truth although completely unrecognized by Pilate. He was looking at the one who said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life," and still he knew it not. Another statement of Scripture is, "Thy word is truth." How many of us recognize truth when we see it?

Truth is a declaration of what is and for us to have it written down and available at all times is a most blessed treasure that we should value and cherish above any earthly possession. Truth endures. "The word of God... liveth and abideth forever." 1 Peter 1:23.

Just as when Jesus was here and was recognized by so few for who He was, so today there are also comparatively few who recognize the Word of God for what it is.

Another thing that we have trouble with is the practice of the truth. Actually we only possess and enjoy what we walk in. We must profess the truth first, but if we deny it in practice do we have it? Even the world says, "Actions speak louder than words."

As the Irishman said, "You will never find anything but where it is," so it is with the truth. In other words, nothing but the truth can hold the truth. Are you looking for the truth or have you found it?

Ed.

The Passover

The "Passover" is a memorial—something to remember something by, a memorial of our redemption. In a certain way the Israelites were God's people before He redeemed them, that is, they were His people in purpose, but not in actuality. They were His people in actuality after He had redeemed them, and only so could they be His people. If God is to have a people for Himself, taking them out of the midst of a fallen, ruined, sinful people, it must be upon the ground of redemption.

That is blessed and very important to remember. As the people of God we are a redeemed people: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold... but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." 1 Peter 1:18, 19.

This feast was a memorial of that, and the way in which this first Passover was kept is the way in which God's people always begin the keeping of the Passover. They were in the land of Egypt where the sword of judgment was about to fall. Egypt is a well-known type of the world in power and independency of God; it was not dependent upon the God of heaven for rain. They watered their fields by foot—irrigation. There is a good deal of irrigation today. It tells of man's independency of God.

Though they were there, they were secure from the stroke coming upon the land. God was about to smite. He says, "I will smite the land of Egypt," etc. That is one simple, solemn lesson for the Christian. He is in the world upon which the judgment of God is coming—a very difficult thing to keep in mind, especially in days like these when there is a great amount of human energy, schemes of men and exclusion of God. How much there is in every way to blind the soul to the truth of the real state of things in this world before God.

There they were, and here we are—in the world as much as anyone. I do not mean as to the state of our souls, but as to our bodily presence, in the world, but not of it. We are secure from the stroke that is about to fall. The Israelites also were secure from the stroke of judgment that was about to fall. Their security was just one thing: they were under the shelter of the blood of the lamb. There was just one thing that secured them from judgment and that was not the shed blood, but the sprinkled blood.

God gave the shed blood, but God did not sprinkle the blood! Christ has died for all, and the death of Christ for all is God's provision for all. "Who gave Himself a ransom for all" (1 Tim. 2:6), but it is only those who avail themselves of the provision made who escape the stroke. Further than that we do not go in the 12th of Exodus. We see there security from judgment.

The young Christian begins there as he partakes of the memorial of redemption, called the "Lord's Supper." "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us."

1 Cor. 5:7. The young Christian says, "I am sheltered from the judgment that is coming upon this world by the blood of Christ."

There they are, and we picture to ourselves, as we should, how they kept that Passover. They were under the shelter of blood, secure from judgment, doing just what the Christian ought to be doing: feeding upon the One who secured him from judgment. They were feeding upon Him "with shoes on their feet and staff in their hand." What a peculiar but instructive sight we would have seen if we could have looked into one of those houses where the two side posts and lintel were sprinkled with the blood of the Passover lamb and have seen them keeping the Passover according to instructions! We would not have seen them seated around a table, but standing, their loins girded, their staff in their hand, shoes on their feet and eating in haste! It is a peculiar feast, is it not? All that is solemnly and blessedly typical. How far we are answering to it is another thing! But that is one attitude of the Christian's position in this world.

As they fed, as they ate that lamb, under those circumstances, they were waiting for the signal to move! How solemnly blessed to see God giving us all this in those ages past: waiting for the signal, and that signal was for them to be gone!

The Christian is here in this world, secure by the blood of Christ from the judgment that is coming. The Lord's own word is, "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding.... Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching." Luke 12:35-37. That is a simple, happy picture of the Christian's position. W. Potter

Redemption

Redemption was no afterthought with our God; it was His purpose from the beginning. By the work of redemption He prepared the richest glory for His own blessed name, and the fullest joy for His creatures. "The morning stars sang together," it is true, "and all the sons of God shouted for joy," when the foundations of the earth were laid, but the shouting's of grace when the new creation is finished by the bringing forth of the Head Stone, will be louder still. Never were such music and dancing in the house before, as when the poor prodigal had returned, and been received as one alive from the dead. Never had such affections been awakened within him before. Never had the father's treasures been brought forth till then. Till then the fatted calf, the ring, and the best robe had been laid up, and never had the father himself so full a joy in his child as when he fell on his neck and kissed him. And so is it in the wondrous ways of our God. Creation brought forth the resources of His love, and wisdom, and power, and heaven on high was glad through all its order, and earth smiled beneath, the fair witness of His handiwork. But redemption has drawn forth still richer treasures that were lying hid in God—has awakened still more adoring joy and praise "in the presence of the angels," and has given new and more divine affections to the children of men.

Everything is to stand in grace. Love was of old, because God is love, and love was therefore made known in the work of creation, and that by communicating goodness and blessing. But love has found a fuller scope for expressing itself in the work of redemption in bringing grace and showing mercy, and this is its new character (see 1 John 2:8). Grace, the source and power of redemption, is "the glory that excelleth" the light that shined from heaven in converting grace and power around Saul of Tarsus, was "above the brightness of the sun." Grace is the fullest, and indeed the only worthy expression of the unsearchable riches of divine love. The heavens will rejoice in grace (Rev. 5:11, 12), and Israel, as representing the joy of the earth, will, in the end, triumph in it also (Isa. 60:1; 61:10; Zeph. 3:14, 15).

J.G. Bellett

Editorial

Tens of thousands of migratory birds fly over Israel each spring and fall in their passage to and from Africa. Most of these are birds of prey called raptors, meaning to catch up. (Our word rapture comes from the same root. Soon every true Christian will be raptured, caught up from the earth and so escape the coming judgment.) The same pattern of migration this month of October will be seen in many parts of the world as those many marvelous birds fly southward again.

Men who make metal birds (the airplane), have learned to respect the migration flights of birds and try to avoid the danger and damage collisions cause.

An Israeli pilot flying over Hebron looked down at his map and then remembered nothing more until he regained consciousness in a hospital. One of the raptors (a buzzard) had crashed through the canopy and into the ejection trigger ejecting him from the airplane, and in so doing, probably saved the pilot's life in the horrible crash of his plane.

Solomon, the king in Jerusalem, wrote, "As the bird by wandering, as the swallow by flying, so the curse causeless shall not come." Prov. 26:2. To everything there is a purpose. The swallow is one of the migratory birds and they are noted for returning to their original spot on the very same date each year. Surely creation displays the wisdom and power of the Creator.

The Lord questioned Job, "Doth the hawk fly by thy wisdom, and stretch her wings toward the south? [Notice this for they will be flying south this very month. The hawk is one of the raptors, like birds of prey that migrate over Israel.] Doth the eagle mount up at thy command, and make her nest on high? She dwelleth and abideth on the rock, upon the crag of the rock, and the strong place. From thence she seeketh the prey, and her eyes behold afar off." Job 39:26-29.

Lawrence Jones of Ontario is a true friend of the abundant water fowl that nest and raise their brood in that area. He provides a refuge and food resource of land and lakes for them. He calls them and talks to them as he feeds them. Once when spending the winter in Florida, a flock of geese flew over and a friend said to him, "I wonder if your geese may be some of those." He called his familiar whistle and sure enough, one came right down to him proof of the wonders of God's creation.

When we consider the exact control our Lord God, the Creator, has over His creation and that birds know when and where they should arrive, and that, in obedience to the One who has "put wisdom in the inward parts," they do arrive, can we doubt Him? He has promised us saying, "I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Our Creator, our Redeemer knows when. He will come exactly on time. He also knows who He will "catch up." We know where we are going. Job 38:36; John 14:3. Ed.

Ephesians

This sublime epistle was written by the Holy Ghost through Paul, probably in the year of our Lord, 62. The Apostle had been a prisoner in Rome for at least twelve months and, while there, had been previously led by the Spirit to indict the epistle to Philemon, and the epistle to the Colossians. The account of his remarkable labors in Ephesus, a splendid and renowned city of Asia Minor near the seacoast, is given in the Acts of the Apostles. There we learn that after his stay in Corinth for a year and six months, he visited Ephesus (Acts 18:19-28), and after a brief sojourn took his departure, with the promise of returning. This promise he fulfilled at the beginning of his third missionary journey, and remained "by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks." Acts 19:10.

The effect of his preaching in the power of the Holy Ghost was so great, that the idolatrous worship practiced in the famous temple of Diana was threatened with extinction. One Demetrius, who earned his living by the sale of silver shrines, brought it as a charge against him in a public assembly, "that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands"; "so mightily grew the word of God and prevailed." The uproar that followed caused the Apostle to depart into Macedonia, but on his last visit to Jerusalem, "he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church" to meet him on the coast. The touching farewell address which he delivered to them presents a lovely portrait of a faithful gospel minister, and can scarcely be read at this day by a true Christian without tears (Acts 20:16-38).

Then came the arrest in Jerusalem, the two years' imprisonment in Caesarea, the perilous voyage to Rome, the confinement there for more than a year, awaiting his trial, when his heart was stirred by the Spirit of God to write to the beloved Ephesians in the loftiest strains of divine revelation. In none of his other epistles does he soar to such heights, or make known such wondrous truth, showing that he must have carried their thoughts over a magnificent range in his preaching to them, and that they had been prepared by the diligent study of God's Word for the unfolding of the deep things brought to view in the epistle.

Christ the measure of the believer's standing and blessing, is the general subject, or as it may be put in another form, Christ in the believer, the believer in Christ, and the result manifested in the daily life. The expression, "in Christ," or its equivalent occurs twenty-eight times in the first chapter, and this is the key-note to the epistle, which may be divided as follows. First, God's eternal and electing love to us individually (Ch. 1). Second, what we were when God so loved us (Ch. 2). Third, God's love to us corporately, Christ and the Church (Ch. 3). Fourth, our walk toward the Church in view of this love and unity (Ch. 4:1-16). Fifth, our walk toward Christ, in view of His love and of our union with Him (Ch. 4:17-32; 5:1-21). Sixth, the relative duties of husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, springing out of relation to Him (Ch. 5:22-33; 6:1-9). Seventh, we are to maintain our high standing, clad in the whole armor of God (Ch. 6:10-24).

The thoughts that crowd upon the mind in the perusal of the epistle are altogether too numerous and too great for utterance, and it should be studied verse by verse, and word by word. Thus in the first chapter we have election, redemption, inheritance, the Spirit as the seal, as the earnest, God's calling, the body of Christ; it involves His sovereign choice, adoption, our acceptance, forgiveness, hope, resurrection, and reigning.

In the second chapter we have our death, captivity, misery, guilt, ruin, helplessness, and low estate, set over against life, liberty, God's mercy, grace, love, strength, and our sitting together with Christ in the heavenlies. Gentile sinners are described as uncircumcised, without Christ, aliens, strangers, without hope, without God in the world, but believers are made as nigh by the blood of Christ to God as He is, for He is so entirely our peace, it may be truly said that He brought it, He made it, He preached it, He gives it, He preserves it, He is the source of it, He is the channel by which it is conveyed.

In the third chapter the mystery is not Christ, nor the Church, but Christ and the Church, which leads the Apostle into a contemplation of His love that is like an ocean without a bottom and without a shore. He conducts our thoughts into infinity, and abruptly stops. But such love should make manifest the unity of the saints, secure their personal loyalty and holiness, and dignify and sanctify every relation of life, as set forth in the remainder of the epistle.

It is sad to know that, years afterward, a church honored with such a revelation was rebuked by our Lord, because it had left its first love (Rev. 2:1-7), and started that downward course of the professing Christian body, that is now fast hastening to a shameful and melancholy end. The candlestick has long been removed out of its place in Ephesus, and the most advanced saint will walk in darkness, unless he keeps his eye singly and steadily fixed upon the Lord Jesus Christ.

J. Brookes

Bible Challenger-10-October V.02

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the word that tells what comes with length of days.

1. The title given to one who was ignorantly worshiped by a superstitious people.
2. The site of a standing angel precipitating an unusual conversation between walker and rider.
3. Nourishment periodically requested with divine sanction.
4. That which brought a destroying horde into the land of a much-plagued monarch.
5. The material for a large covering that was dyed red.
6. Something to be desired because it cannot be condemned.
7. The prepayment for the care of a partially dead man.
8. Something not to be removed by second generations.
9. A father's duplicated wedding gift to his daughter who had sought a blessing.
10. Something brought in by false prophets and false teachers.
11. The charge some ancient mariners feared they might incur by bringing about a calmness.
12. A false belief of a biblical sect who also deny the existence of angels.
13. The parental response caused by a wise son.

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

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1. Jannes and Jambres 2 Tim. 3:8
2. Once in three years 1 Kings 10:22
3. Yesterday at the seventh hour John 4:52
4. Face to face 1 Cor. 13:12
5. Ungodly men Jude 4
6. Lamé on both his feet 2 Sam. 9:13
7. None shall appear before Me empty Ex. 23:15
8. Every good gift and every perfect gift James 1:17
9. Silver cup Gen. 44:2
10. Sorrow Ecc. 7:3

“Strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with JOYFULNESS.” Col. 1:11

The City of Light

There's a city of light in a far away land,
Where no death and no sorrow can come,
Where the ransomed of God will eternally dwell,
In the sweet rest and quiet of Home.
In that city of light, with its mansions so fair,
We shall walk with our Savior in white;
Not a pain, not a sigh, not a tear will be shed;
'Tis a city of purest delight.
And the Lamb is The Light of that city of gold;
No darkness will ever be there.
And nothing that ever defiles will be known,
And His loved ones His glories will share.
To that city of light soon the ransomed will go,

When His shout will be heard in the air;
And the living and dead in a moment will rise
And dwell in that city so fair.

The Man Christ Jesus

Luke 24 LUK 24

In this closing chapter of Luke, the Blessed One is seen expounding to those sorrowful travelers, in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.

We are told that their eyes were holden, that they should not know Him. There was a distinct purpose of God in their eyes being holden, as we shall see presently, but the Blessed One is seen here connecting the Scriptures with Himself, and all that happened to Himself.

It is a blessed thing to hold fast to all this grace of the heart of Christ. He will never give up even the feeblest of His own. He does not leave them. He does not say, I leave you now; you have turned away; you have become hard in your hearts. On the contrary, as we have seen, He went after them; He journeyed with them.

What is He doing all this time? Just what He always does. He is making Himself necessary to them, indispensable to them. There is only One that is indispensable to us, and that is Jesus. There is only One worthy of that place in our souls, and that is Christ. There is not a thing in this world we could not do without, but you cannot do without Him. He is truly the indispensable One. We often think we can manage without Him, and then in all His blessed love He allows us to find out our insufficiency, and deals with us in His love, and leads us to discover that we cannot do without Him, and thus we sing

As weaker than a bruised reed,
We cannot do without Thee;
We want Thee here each hour of need,
Shall want Thee too in glory.

A Little Spark a Little Flame

This unfailing love of His is what kindled the fire in their souls, and in addition, there was all the wonderful skill of His love in doing it. Love is the most skillful operator in the world. He draws their hearts out, and He goes with them and lights up this fire. Observe how easy it would have been to extinguish it. I grant it was but a little spark; still, He fans it, ministers to it, adds the fuel of His grace to that little flame which He Himself had kindled.

Then notice what happens. As they journeyed they drew near to the village whither they went, and the evening was upon them. But He (oh, the blessedness of it) had become necessary, so necessary to them. This mysterious Stranger who had walked that road with them, had imprinted Himself upon the fleshy tables of their hearts. He who had walked as the unknown Stranger, as far as they were concerned, had so gotten possession of their affections and souls, that when the moment comes that He would withdraw, when "He made as though He would have gone further," then it was that they "constrained Him." Luke 24:28, 29.

How blessed all this is! The deepest love was manifested in that action of the Blessed One. If you look at it merely from the outside, you would fail to see the blessedness of it. But He drew off that He might draw out. Though He essayed to leave them, His heart was toward them, and He had so gotten into the affections and souls of those poor disciples that they could not go in without Him. "They constrained Him, saying, Abide with us; for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent." v. 29. How gladly He went! That is why He drew off. Forever blessed be His name, He loves to be constrained. He kindled the fire in their souls, and when He had opened the door, He went in to abide. He was constrained.

It is the same in respect to ourselves. By faith we can have Christ with us now. It is an immense thing to have His own blessed person spiritually with us, to have His company, His presence, and to know He is with us according to His word. "I will not leave you comfortless [orphans]: I will come to you." John 14:18. We need the sustainment, comfort and joy of that blessed presence as He conducts us and leads us on step by step. What a blessed reality it all is! It is not that it belongs to a chosen few. Far from it; it is the portion of all His people; it is for you, beloved friends. You may have Him in your home as your companion, your friend, to walk beside you, to solace you, to cheer up the lonely moments of your life. How blessed it is!

"Abide with us; for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent." Do you think it was difficult to constrain Him? Do you suppose He wanted much pressing? He wanted just as much constraining from them as would kindle into a holy flame that ebbing fire in their hearts. Then we are told, "He went in to tarry with them." v. 29. He became their guest, for I have no doubt they entertained Him. Beloved friends, there is nothing that entertains our Lord Jesus Christ more than a weary, desolate heart that turns to Him.

Entertaining the Lord Jesus

You can bring nothing to Him as attractive as a weary, heavy-laden heart. So He was entertained in a double way. He was entertained, no doubt, because of the circumstances. They were broken-hearted, sad, cast down. He accepts the external entertainment set before Him. He went in, and while He sat at meat with them He took the initiative. He can never go into any scene where He is not first and last. But He took, as the head of the house would, the bread into His hands and He broke it and gave to them.

This was not the Lord's Supper. It is most important to have correct thoughts as to the Lord's Supper. It was the ordinary meal they were partaking of here, but nevertheless, it was the breaking of the bread which the Blessed One was pleased to make to their souls, the sign of His death. As He broke that bread before them, the reality of His death on Calvary's cross passed from the symbol in His hands, by His own power in its reality, into their souls. He brought Himself before them, as the One who had been dead.

Jewish Thoughts and Aspirations

Now you see the reason for their eyes being holden until this moment. Had they recognized Him, and accepted Him previously, it would have been a kind of substantiating of all the Jewish thoughts and aspirations which were so alive in their souls. They are to know Him as the One who died, the One who passed through death. And so it was that until now their eyes were holden. Now would come the overthrow of everything that was merely egotistical in Judaism, and it was this very thing that ruled in their breasts at that time. They must now know Him as the One that died and rose again, as the One alive out of death. He broke the bread before their eyes as the risen One, and immediately their eyes were opened. But the moment He, by this symbol, conveyed Himself as the risen One really before their eyes, He vanished out of their sight.

How blessed and how wonderful to think of it! What they had been looking for, what had moved in their souls before, was expressed in their words, "we trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel." v. 21. What had shattered all their living hopes was the fact of His death. It was the death of the heir to them, and their hopes, which centered in earth, were all broken up and scattered to the winds by His death. But now Christ, in His wonderful grace and love, has led them step by step to this point. There He was Himself before them in His death (in symbol), yet as the risen One; their opened eyes rested on Him thus for an instant, and then the Savior vanished out of their sight.

Consequences

Let us now look at the consequences of this for a moment. There are two things that are perfectly beautiful here. "They said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the Scriptures?" v. 32. Now I do not think we ought to depreciate that. We ought not to make little of it, and yet we ought not to make everything of it. What was it that made their heart burn while He talked with them and while He opened the Scriptures to them? Was it not Himself? Do not suppose that anything He does is small or trifling. It was He that did it. It was He that lighted that fire, He that kindled that flame. It was His love that struck, as it were, the match in their souls.

All these exercises, under the Lord's blessed hand, lead to that which next comes before us—communion. But you must have burning to lead to communion; you must have burning of heart to lead to communion of heart. That is the road to communion. The heart is set on fire by the kindling's of the love of Christ; the heart is delighted as the word comes from His own blessed lips, and He leads on to this moment. He Himself is before us, really and literally back from the dead, a living Person. That is just what it was with them. What made all the difference now was that He was there before them. It was not merely Himself in Scripture, although He had been before them in Scripture, in His own interpretation of Moses and the prophets and the Psalms. And what a wonderful interpretation of Scripture that must have been! Not a flaw in it. Oh, what divine harmony and perfectness as He conducted them through the Scriptures, and said, as it were, I am there, and I am there, and I am there! There was not a scene that He did not fill, not an event of which He was not the crowning figure, not a circumstance that did not revolve around Him.

He, in His own blessed person, was now a reality before their eyes. It was more than report, it was reality now. He was there present to the gaze as alive from the dead, alive out of the death which He had undergone in the deep, eternal love of His heart for them. He Himself had changed everything, altered everything, and brought in an entirely new order of things. Then it was they rose up the same hour of the night. Farewell now to weariness! It did not matter that the day was far spent, that the shadows of the evening were cast upon their path: they rose up the same hour to go to the very place to which He was going. That is communion. They have gotten into communion now with His own thoughts. He brings them to the place where He Himself was going.

W. Turpin

John

I have found (besides the smaller divisions) three larger divisions of the first chapter of the Gospel of John helpful in understanding it—first, verses 1-28, What Jesus is in Himself personally, then, second, verses 29-34, What He is for God, and third, verses 35-51, What He is for man.

This chapter gives all the personal titles of our Lord Jesus Christ, from His eternal existence and deity, to His millennial character as Son of Man—God and Man. His relative titles of High Priest, Head of His body the Church, and Messiah, are not introduced. In all, you find fourteen titles: the Word, God, the Life, the Light, the Word made flesh, the only-begotten with the Father, Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, the One on whom the Holy Ghost abides, the Son of God as Man on earth, the Baptizer with the Holy Ghost, the Son of God (as born, Psa. 2), the King of Israel, the Son of Man (Psa. 8).

In the first two verses you find His eternal existence, as the Word, or expression of all that God is: "In the beginning," as far back as our finite minds can conceive, "was the Word," and therefore, before the beginning and eternal. But He was also a distinct person then, the Word was "with God." And more, not only was He with God, but He was "God." Then, lest His personality should be admitted as of time, but not as eternal, it is added, "The same was in the beginning with God." Thus you have, first, His eternal existence; second, His personality; third, His deity, and, fourth, His eternal personality.

Now, not only was He this, but also He created all things, or, as it is more truly said here, "all things came into being by Him." He made them (Heb. 1:2); He created them (Col. 1:16); they came into being by Him (John 1:3).

In verse 4, "In Him was life," and only there. And this life was the light of men—not of angels. Angels are the witnesses of God's sustaining a creature un-fallen; sinners are the witnesses of the redemption of a creature which has fallen. Not a ray of God's nature was to be found in man. He was darkness and walked in darkness, and into such a moral sphere the light shines, but there was no reciprocity for the light, nor receptivity of it. The darkness comprehended it not. Men saw no beauty in Him that they should desire Him.

When man could not see, because he was blind, God acts in grace and sends a man (John Baptist) to tell him that the light is shining! The Sun is shining, and lest you should not be touched in heart, and warmed by His rays, God sends a message to say that He shines (vv. 6-8). When He thus acts in grace, Himself fully revealed, He must go beyond the limits of Judaism, and John bears witness of the Light, that all men through Him may believe.

He returns to the Lord as the true light, "which, coming into the world, lightens every man." v. 9 (JND). It is not the true effect of the light upon men, but He as an object is a light for all, which only those whose eyes are opened can see.

We now have (vv. 10-13) in three parts the result of His coming. One, the world was so estranged from God, that it knew not its Creator. Two, His own people, the Jews, received Him not. Three, But as many as received Him received the right to be the children of God, and this through faith in His name, that is, the revelation of the person of Him who was thus revealed. But if they received Him, it was by being born of God, in sovereign grace. He communicated to them a nature in which they could know God, and enjoy fellowship with the Father and the Son. Natural descent by blood, as children of Abraham, profited nothing. The will of the flesh was only sin, for the carnal mind is enmity to God; it is not subject to Him, neither indeed can be.

F.G. Patterson

Waiting for Him

1 Corinthians 15:51-56 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17 1CO 15:51-56 1TH 4:15-17

There is a great danger in the present day of this most blessed truth "the primary hope of the saints" being practically lost sight of. "We walk by faith and not by sight," says the Apostle, but we reverse God's order, and, too often, walk by sight, and not by faith. The doctrine of the "coming of the Lord" is accepted, but how many believers are living, and contented to live, in a state practically opposed to that which characterized the saints at Thessalonica, who "turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for His Son from heaven." 1 Thess. 1:9, 10.

Before the Lord left the sorrowing disciples, He gave them the promise that He would come again: "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." John 14:3. The disciples were sorrowful because their Lord was going to leave them, but what did the Lord Jesus give them to raise them above their sorrows? He gave them this hope, that He would come again, that He would not always leave them down here in the place of His rejection in the world which had refused Him, their Lord and Master, where they could not expect to be treated any better than their Lord. "If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you," and again, "If ye were of the world the world would love his own, but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."

If all their hopes and expectations, as to the One for whom they had left all had ended here, then they might still have sorrowed, but the Lord revealed to them another thing that He had not left them down here to get on the best way they could, in a scene where everything was against them, and the enemy of their souls opposing them at every step; had this been the case, it would have been a very pitiful one. The Lord told them that it was necessary for them that He should leave them for a time: "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you." John 16:7.

By the Lord's absence we are really gainers, for He has given us blessings that we could never have possessed had He Himself remained with His disciples down here. He is gone to prepare a place for us in the Father's house, and soon He is coming again to take us to be with Himself. How soon we know not, and His desire is that we should be waiting for Him. This is our hope He is coming again. He has left us His word for it, "I will come again."

Are we living in the enjoyment of this? Has this hope any real power over our souls? Or are we practically denying the fact that we are "waiting for God's Son from heaven"? The Corinthian saints came behind in no gift, and were "waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Are we following their example in this? It is a question we need to ask ourselves continually, "Are we waiting for Him?"

There is one thing that will give the soul a deeper longing for the Lord's return, that is, a deepening knowledge of the One who is coming. Who is the One who is coming? What has He done for us? It

is the Son of God who left the glory which He had with the Father from all eternity, and humbled Himself, took upon Him the form of a servant, was seen walking down here as a man, the meek and lowly Jesus, of whom it is recorded, "Lo, I come, to do Thy will, O God"—a life of perfect, unswerving obedience to the will of God. He could say of Himself, and He was the only one that ever could say it, "I do always those things that please Him." And this very obedience to His Father's will brought Him down even into the dust of death.

He was a perfect Man, the only perfect Man that ever trod this earth; He was just, but He suffered for us the unjust; He knew no sin, but He was made sin for us. On the cross He suffered for us when He offered Himself without spot to God: "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree."

Now we can say, "In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins," and we have liberty and boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus. We can find our deepest joy and delight in the presence of God, because His blood cleanseth us from all sin. And, beloved, He has not only given all that He had, all that He possessed, but, blessed be His name, He gave Himself. Could He give more? Impossible! By this He has not only met our need, but He has also glorified God, and brought us into the presence of God, as perfect as He is Himself. We are "holy, and unblameable, and unreprouvable in His sight."

He is now seated in glory at the right hand of the Majesty on high, and He is waiting there for the moment when He shall come, and take us to be forever with Himself to share in His glory. He will not be fully satisfied till we are enjoying His presence, till we are with Him, where He is. He is waiting there, and we are waiting here till we hear that shout, and the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God, when the dead in Christ shall rise, and we shall be changed. Our body of humiliation shall be fashioned like unto His own body of glory, and we shall enjoy Himself and the fullness of His love forever.

Beloved, may the Lord in His grace keep this blessed hope always fresh before our souls, that we may be in communion with Himself while passing through this world, as those not of it, but as those separated to Him, who gave Himself for us, so occupied with Him that we may be really and truly waiting for Him, looking for and expecting to hear His voice, when "this mortal shall put on immortality," and death be "swallowed up in victory."

Oh! May He preserve us, and keep us from being in any degree in the condition of that "evil servant," who says in his heart, "My lord delayeth his coming," so that we may be always watching and waiting for Him.

A little while He'll come again;

Let us the precious hours redeem:

Our only grief to give Him pain,

Our joy to serve and follow Him.

Watching and ready may we be,

As those that wait their Lord to see.

W. Scott

“Until He Find It”

Luke 15:4 LUK 15:4

O, the perseverance of grace! "Until He find it." Never till that moment does the good Shepherd relax His efforts. And how far had He to go after "that which is lost"? To where it was—stripped, and wounded, and half dead. And was this all? Had He not to go into death itself to get the sheep out?

"The good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep." And has He not suffered this for you? "Who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time."

O, the persevering diligence of grace! "What woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it?" v. 8. It is a stupendous fact that there is a divine Person in Christendom—the Holy Ghost—here for the very object of bringing the piercing rays of convicting light to bear upon the hearts and consciences of dead sinners.

The Son must seek the lost. All is founded on His work, therefore it is put in the first place. It maintained God's righteousness, and permits Him to justify him that believeth in Jesus. The Son must seek the lost, the Spirit must quicken the dead, before the Father can receive the repentant sinner.

And when He hath found it, where does He, the good Shepherd, put the sheep? Back with the ninety and nine? Never. "When He cometh home," not till then, does He put the sheep down.

But is there Liu "wilderness" for the believer? Certainly, but he passes through it on the Shepherd's shoulders—the place of strength and of security. There are many who think they would not like to make a profession, lest they should not be able to keep it. They forget that Christ will keep them, if they are believers.

There are those who fear lest they should not "hold on." Do you think the good Shepherd will let go? He says, "None shall pluck them out of My hand." Will He save sinners and lose saints? Never.

"He is able also to save them to the uttermost"—that is all the way through—"that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them."

"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life"—that is, by His living to intercede for us now.

"I have a Friend; O, such a Friend!

So kind, and true, and tender,

So wise a counselor and guide,

So mighty a defender!

From Him who loves me now so well,

What power my soul shall sever?

Shall life or death, shall earth or hell?

No! I am His forever."

Young Christian

“Ministered Unto Him of Their Substance”

Luke 8:1-3 LUK 8:1-3

Jesus, who could supply others by miracles, lived Himself by the providence of God. The Lord of the universe, who at first created the world, and who still by His providence makes the earth fruitful for the supply of man and beast, instead of supplying His wants by immediate creation, drew His supplies from His people. Wonderful humiliation! The Lord of heaven condescends to live on the bounty of those who are supplied by His own providence! Thus He gave the most amazing instance of humility, and afforded an opportunity to His disciples to manifest their faith and love. In this way He still acts. He makes some of His people poor, that others may have an opportunity of ministering to Him by ministering to the saints, for what is done to His people is done to Himself. (Matt. 25:40.)

Righteousness

Solomon is best known for his wisdom. His father connected this divine quality with righteousness. When charging his son respecting certain offenders who had hitherto been spared, David said, "Thou art a wise man, and knowest what thou oughtest to do.... Do therefore according to thy wisdom." 1 Kings 2:9, 6. Righteousness was to be exercised with divine wisdom, thus there would be no mistakes.

Long after Solomon's day, Isaiah wrote, "Behold, a King shall reign in righteousness." Ch. 32:1. That King is Christ. Isaiah's prediction follows several dreary chapters exposing the unrighteousness both of Israel's king and people. He goes on to say, "the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever." Surely our hearts cry, "Lord Jesus, come!" This poor distracted world needs the righteousness and peace that He alone can establish. Jeremiah gives us a similarly delightful word concerning Him: "Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and He shall reign as King and do wisely, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth." Jer. 23:5 (R.V.) The Gospel of Matthew presents to us our Lord as the King, and, remarkably, His first utterance recorded therein contains the word "righteousness." At Jordan, when John was disposed to refuse Him baptism, He said, "Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." Matt. 3:15. Thus He would Himself practice what in the day of His power He will administer to the world as we read in David's great psalm of the King, "Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness." Psalms 45:7. W. Fereday

A Lesson in Arithmetic

The one who by addition grows
And suffers no subtraction,
But multiplies a thing he knows,
And carries every fraction;
Who well divides his precious time,
Each part proportion giving,
To sure success aloft will climb,
Interest compound receiving.

Peter tells us to add, doesn't he? If I remember rightly, he gives us seven things to add. Let us read what he says: "And besides this... add to your faith virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity [which means love]." 2 Peter 1:5-7.

And does it say anything in the Bible about subtraction? Rev. 3, verse 11 tells us, "Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."

This was said to the Christians at Philadelphia, and the same thing was said to the Christians at Thyatira in the second chapter of Revelation.

It isn't much use adding, if we allow Satan to come and subtract, so the Christians in both these places were warned to suffer no subtraction. And one of the best ways to avoid losing what we have gained from God, is to multiply what we have.

Solomon says, "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty," and the Apostle Paul prays that the Colossians may increase in the knowledge of God. You can light thousands of candles from one wick without dimming its light. Each one of us can increase by learning of God, and making the knowledge we have known to others.

Don't waste the fractions. That was a lesson the Lord Jesus taught His disciples when here. "Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost," He said to them after the miracle of the feeding of both the five thousand and the four thousand. The bread of God, which the Lord Jesus Himself had blessed, was too precious for the birds of the air to feed on; it was to be eaten by those for whom Jesus had come to die.

Then, again, to continue our arithmetic lesson, a man of God was to divide well his precious time. Paul tells Timothy some of the things he was to attend to; his time was to be divided in giving attendance to doctrine, to reading God's Word, to exhortation, to instructing those who oppose the truth. He was told to meditate upon these things, so he had no difficulty in knowing how to divide his time.

Peter tells us what the result of diligence will be—it gives us compound interest. He says, "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

Compound interest means that your capital is given back to you, added to your interest. This God will certainly do. He will never be any man's debtor. It is worthwhile to be diligent in the work of the Lord!

"There is no man that hath left... for My sake, and the gospel's, but he shall receive a hundredfold now in this time... and in the world to come eternal life." Mark 10:29, 30.

Young Christian

Trust and Yield

“When cruse and barrel both are dry,

We then will trust in God most high.

“When cruse and barrel both are full,

To God we'll consecrate the whole”

These surely are words in season for rich as well as for poor. To trust in time of need, and to yield ourselves, and all He entrusts us with, to Himself, in time of abundance, are alike the path of faith. Happy those who under all circumstances, are so before the Lord, and constrained by His love, as to be whole-hearted for Him at all times, and under all circumstances!

Goodness and Mercy

Surely it has been "goodness and mercy" with us all the days of our lives. Another has written that it would be difficult to find two other words to describe as accurately as do the two great words of our text the two-fold provision which has been made by our God for believers... Goodness—that is for our need, and corresponds to what the priesthood of Christ provides (see Heb. 4:14-16); Mercy—that is for our failure, and well describes what is secured for us by the advocacy of Christ (1 John 2:1).

Goodness. In Heb. 9:24-28, there are three "Appearings" of Christ spoken of. He hath appeared—as a Sacrifice (verse 26); He now appears—as a Priest (verse 24); He shall appear—as a Savior (verse 28). At the present moment, therefore, He now appears in the presence of God for us (verse 24), and seeing He ever liveth there to make intercession for us (Ch. 7:25), we are instructed to come boldly to the throne of grace that we may find grace to help in time of need (Ch. 4:16).

Mercy. But suppose we fail to avail ourselves of the high-priestly provision which has been made for us—what happens then? Does He cast us off forever? That is what we would deserve, no doubt, but that is not what He does. Writing to Christians, the Apostle John says, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the FATHER"—notice the emphasized word, for it is the key to the understanding of our theme. The grace that makes a man a Christian leaves him still a man. He is not impeccable, for he still has a deceitful heart and a tempting devil to contend with. Hence the force of the word "if any man sin"—the possibility of sinning is admitted, but its necessity is denied. When a Christian does sin, however, he is dealt with not as a convict, but as a son. When your little son disobeys you, you do not send him to the police station to be dealt with. The relationship which you bear to him gives you the right, and lays upon you the responsibility, to deal with him yourself. So it is here. If a believer sins, his Heavenly Father will judge him (see 1 Peter 1:17); he will be chastened by the Lord that he may not be condemned with the world (1 Cor. 11:32). It is impossible for God to treat sin lightly, and His disciplinary chastisement of His people who give way to it will eventually make it impossible for any of them to regard it lightly, either. But if you have been tripped up in an unwatchful moment, remember the word: "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous," and He never loses a case. Satan may accuse (Rev. 12:10), but he cannot condemn (Rom. 8:33, 34); the propitiatory sacrifice of our blessed Lord shall retain its efficacy till every ransomed saint of God be saved to sin no more (1 John 1:7). Whole-hearted confession—which embraces self-judgment and the abhorring and forsaking of that which interrupted communion—is the divinely appointed method of bringing us once again into the enjoyment of that which the advocacy of Christ secures (1 John 1:9).

"Thus 'Goodness' is manifested in the provision of the One who ever lives to intercede, while 'Mercy' follows us to rub out the ugly footprints which we make when, through unwatchfulness, we go astray. There is not a necessity in life unthought of, not a need unprovided for!" J. Smith

The Uncertainty of Riches

On a bright morning some years ago, a young girl of seventeen stood at the gate watching for the postman. There was something of special interest to her in that morning's mail. Her uncle had left her a large sum of money in his will and she expected to hear more fully about it that day. The letter was delivered; the news was confirmed, and Julia became a wealthy heiress.

Her fortune was not an unmixed blessing, nor did it yield her all the happiness she had hoped from it. Riches do not give peace, nor do they brighten the prospect beyond the grave.

Five years later she again stood at the gate watching for the postman, only to have her worst fears confirmed. She had lost all her fortune through the failure of the company in which it was invested and was bereft of all. By the same mail which took the last hope of worldly gain away, there came a letter from a former companion, who had heard of Julia's loss. This friend told her of Christ and His unsearchable riches which never can be lost, and urged her to receive Him as the Savior of her soul, and the comfort of her weary heart. Then and there she trusted Christ and enjoyed His love. Afterward, she assured her friends that she was happier in Christ and with Christ earning her daily bread than she ever had been with all her store of worldly wealth without Him.

Let us not set our hearts upon riches. "Labor not to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom. Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? For riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven" Prov. 23:4, 5.

"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come." 1 Tim. 6:17-19.

J.T. Armet

Love Directs Itself to Its Object

The disciples indeed had their joy in Christ while as yet He was down here, but when they saw Him ascend, He drew their spirit after Him. As the compass needle always points to the North, so love directs itself to its object. We set our minds on things above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God, and where, together with Him, we are partakers of the heavenly calling. When the Lord passed forty days on the earth after His resurrection, the disciples were doubtless often agitated and unsettled, not knowing what He would do, but when He led them out to Bethany, and they saw Him ascending to where He now is—to the presence of the Father—the scene of their joy was plainly in heaven. Knowing what had occurred, they "returned to Jerusalem with great joy." What was the secret of their joy? Was it in anything on earth? No indeed. So now with each one of us.

"The path where our Savior has gone,
Has led up to His Father and God,
To the place where He's now on the throne,
And His strength shall be ours on the road."
J.D.S.

Buy and Sell

Markets or marketplaces are found all around the world today and are very interesting as well as useful and important. Some of them are clean and well-kept and others are just the opposite. In some of the poor lands they are the center of life and the means of sustaining life. Besides food, clothing and furniture, almost every imaginable thing is bought and sold in the marketplace.

The first time we find the word "sell" in the Bible is in connection with Esau's selling his birthright. Gen. 25:29-34. For this, he is called a "profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright." Heb. 12:16. No doubt that was one of the worst sales that has ever been made. In that sale Jacob (later called Israel) was the buyer. In Ex. 4:22 we see that God recognized the transaction for He says: "Israel is My son, even My firstborn." Do you, do I value what God has given to us or do we despise His Word? Esau valued one meal more than all that was his for life. He prized the immediate present more than all the future. Are you thinking only of the present?

One of the things we are told never to sell is, "the truth." Prov. 23:23. "Buy the truth, and sell it not." In the prayer of Jesus to the Father in John 17:17, He says, "Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth." We have the Word of God and we ought to value it above any other possession.

Every Christian has his own duties and responsibilities and each of us buy and sell. Plans and decisions are made in these things regularly. The little practical book of James has good instruction for us in this. We quote:

"Go to now, ye that say, To-day or to-morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that." James 4:13-15.

We must take the Lord into all of our plans and acknowledge Him in everything. He knows all and we know very little. We have needs and He desires our confidence in Him to meet those needs. He delights to bless and we need the blessing. Ed.

The Year of Jubilee

The institution of the Jubilee had a double testimony. It testified of man's confusion, and it testified of God's order. During forty-nine years, many things were allowed to get into disorder under the hand of man. One man got into poverty, another into debt, another into bondage, another into exile. Again, one man, through extravagance, had let his inheritance slip through his hands; another by his shrewdness or penuriousness had added to his.

Thus it happened during man's day, but the trumpet of jubilee changed, in a moment, the entire condition of things. No sooner had that hallowed sound fallen on the ear than the debtor was released, the slave emancipated, and the exile brought back. The jubilee was God's year, and He would have no debtors, no slaves, and no exiles. All should be free and happy, and all abundantly supplied throughout Jehovah's year. When the Lord alone is exalted, all must be right.

It is interesting and very practical to note the various ways in which men would be affected by the approach of the year of jubilee. The man who had lost property would be glad because he would get it back. The man who had gained property would be sorry because he would lose it. But the man who had neither lost nor gained, the right-minded Israelite who had retained his patrimony and was satisfied therewith, this man would regard the jubilee simply as a noble testimony to God's order. He would not regard it with reference to his gains or losses, but as securing the blessing of the entire nation.

Thus it was with the Jew in reference to the jubilee, and thus it should be with the Christian in reference to the glorious appearing of the Son from heaven. We should simply look forward to that blessed event as the moment of Christ's exaltation—the moment of His full investiture with the kingdoms of this world—the moment in which a period shall be put to all man's misrule and confusion. The order of God shall be established for evermore. Blessed, longed-for moment!

The cross is the remedy for all man's confusion, and the basis of God's order. This is strikingly brought out in the ordinance of the jubilee. "Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the Day of Atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land." Lev. 25:9. The trumpet of jubilee and the Day of Atonement were inseparably linked together. The blood of the cross is the foundation of everything. In the times of the restitution of all things, the river of life will proceed out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. (Rev. 22:1.) C.H. Mackintosh

The Pounds

The parable of the pounds in Luke 19, while similar in some respects to that of the talents (Matt. 25:14-30), seems nevertheless to be a distinct utterance. The Lord was approaching Jerusalem for the last time, and the hopes of His disciples ran high. Their thought was that now would be established the glorious kingdom of which prophets and psalmists had spoken for ages. The moral necessity of the cross had not yet become clear to them. They did not yet understand that man's sin required the Savior to accept the cross at His first coming, and to wait for the kingdom until His second coming. So the parable of the pounds was given in which the Lord likens Himself to a nobleman going away to a far country to receive for Himself a kingdom, and to return, entrusting His servants with responsibilities in the meantime. (Luke 19:11-27).

In the interpretation, the servants are those who profess and call themselves Christians; the citizens, who sent the insulting message, "We will not have this man to reign over us," are the Jewish people. At the return of the Lord Jesus, two things will take place: the judgment of His adversaries, and the reward of His servants. In the parable of the talents, the trusts varied according to ability; in the parable of the pounds, each man received alike. Divine sovereignty is the point in the one, human responsibility in the other.

The first man called was able to say, "Lord, Thy pound hath gained ten pounds." Diligence had marked his conduct in relation to his master's trust. His master commended him warmly as a good servant, saying, "Have thou authority over ten cities." What a Lord is ours! Such a recompense for fidelity in so small a matter. His pound was equivalent to \$12 American currency, yet for diligence with this petty sum he was assigned rule over ten cities in the millennial kingdom. No Lord is so easily pleased as the Christ of God, and none rewards devoted service to His name so amply. He whom we serve notices both the quantity and the quality of what is done for Him (Luke 19:15, 1 Cor. 3:13). Thus Rom. 16:12 tells us of Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labored in the Lord, and of the beloved Persis, who labored "much" in the Lord. In like manner Nehemiah 3 tells us of many who helped in the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem, but distinguishes some as working "earnestly." The "much" and the "earnestly" should be pondered by all who would be well-pleasing to the absent Christ.

There is, however, a dark side to this parable. One man returned his pound to the Lord wrapped up in a napkin. In order to excuse his utter indifference to the claims of his absent Master, he slandered His character by saying, "I feared Thee, because Thou art an austere man: Thou takest up that Thou layest not down, and reapest that Thou didst not sow." This wicked servant represents Christendom's nominal professors, who never dream of using their powers and possessions for Him whose name they bear. All such will find themselves rejected in the great day, their judgment being richly deserved if only for their miserable perversion of the character of Him who is infinitely gracious and good. Has He not shed His blood for the perishing, thereby making salvation available to all, apart from works or price? And what does He ask from any but the simple fervent service that naturally flows from appreciation of His love and grace?

W. Fereday

Worldly Prosperity

We believe that one of the greatest hindrances to souls is their being so taken up with the desire for worldly prosperity. The consequence is that the Lord does not have His rightful place in their hearts, and, however many excuses they may make, the question really is, "Amos 1 seeking earthly gain, or the enjoyment of the Lord's presence? Is communion with Him the uppermost desire of my heart?" Perhaps no point is of more importance for us really to settle in the presence of God. If worldly advantage, to say nothing of the accumulation of wealth, has the first consideration, let it not surprise us if those who seek such go further and further away from the Lord. If, however, we are willing to suffer loss, and to lay aside everything that hinders our enjoyment of His sweet company, then we may be sure that He will not forsake us as to food and raiment. We believe the scripture is as true as ever, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." We do well to remember that to the believer it is said, "Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake." Matt. 6:33; Phil. 1:29.

H.H. Snell

Trust: Money

In God we trust, for He has proved

Stability that can't be moved.

Silver and gold which He has made

Remain the basis of our trade.

But people now are being told

That paper is as good as gold,

And adding zeroes on behind

Gives added value to the mind.

With incredulity we see

How gullible we're apt to be.

Say, have you ever thought or heard:

In man we trust and in his word?

Ed.

Editorial

Money or wealth can be looked at in two ways for the Christian—positively or negatively. By it, treasures can be laid up in heaven or by it, self can be gratified with waste and ruin will be the result. The first time money is mentioned in the Bible is in Gen. 17, and the last mention is in Acts 24 where Felix hoped that money would be paid to him as a bribe for Paul's release.

Gen. 23 tells us that Abraham bought a field of Ephron for four hundred shekels of silver, "current money with the merchant." So today we use the word currency to describe effective bills in use at this time.

On the positive side it is a great and wonderful thing that Christians can now lay up treasures in heaven where moth does not corrupt nor thieves break through and steal. The main teaching of Luke 16 is the instruction to use the present wisely in view of the future. A good translation of verse 9 is, "I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends with the mammon of unrighteousness, that, when it fails, ye may be received into the everlasting abodes." It is something like banking in heaven. How very wise this is, for in 1 Tim. 6:7 it says, "we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out." No, we can not take anything with us when we leave, (and leave we all shall) but now through wise use as guided by Scripture, we can store our treasure in heaven.

On the negative side, another verse in 1 Tim. 6 sounds this warning to us, "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition." verse 9. And further on it says, the love of money is a root of all evil. This shows itself in the first two failures that came into the Church. The first was the case of Ananias and Sapphira desiring and keeping back a part of the money (Acts 5). The second was the murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration, (chapter 6). These are very solemn lessons for us and we should learn from them for our profit.

Solomon, a rich man, was much tested and wrote instruction and guidance for our benefit. For us it surely would be good if we would pray his prayer recorded in Prov. 30:8, 9; "Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me: lest I be full, and deny Thee, and say, Who is the Lord? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain."

The value of the money of the nations changes continually. The insecurity of these different currencies provides an object lesson for us almost daily and certainly from year to year. We cite this example: Rather recently a woman from Bolivia said that a few years earlier she bought a new Toyota car for the same price that she now paid for a loaf of bread.

In the last few years Bolivia, Peru and Brazil have each changed the name of their currency and in so doing have dropped several zeros at the end of the figure. For example, 1 now equals what formerly was 1000 or even more.

In the terrible time of the judgments that are coming upon this earth after the Lord has taken all His redeemed out of this world, even silver and gold will lose their value and attraction. Isaiah writes of that day when the Lord arises to shake terribly the earth and says, "In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold... to the moles and to the bats." Isa. 2:20.

Money in this world means power. Wars are fought with money and today's wars cost billions upon billions of dollars. The most powerful nations spend staggering amounts upon defense. Political campaigns cost large amounts of money.

The third world is supported by tremendous loans of which many are never repaid in full. The World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the European Monetary System are grand united financial institutions designed to help control the monetary stability of the various currencies in which world trade is carried on. The immensity of the world's financial transactions boggles the mind and we doubt that even the most astute money moguls understand all of what goes on or even exactly how it works. Referring back again to Luke 16:9, "Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness [money]; that, when [it] fails," we know that one day the whole system will break down. Money will fail.

Power is necessary to sustain the value of any nation's currency. When the nation falls, so does its money. This has been demonstrated many times in history.

We do not pretend to prophesy exact coming events but we, as Christians, do have a certain hope. We expect the Lord to come for us first, and then soon there will be the collapse of the world's grand money systems. Ed.

The Lord Speaking to You

A brother raised an interesting question when he asked, "Have you ever heard the Lord speaking to you?" Yes, the Lord does speak to His own and often for the purpose of strengthening their faith. We believe the precedent for this is found in chapter 6 of John's gospel.

In this chapter, "When Jesus then lifted up His eyes, and saw a great company come unto Him, He saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? And this He said to prove him: for He Himself knew what He would do." vv. 5, 6. Philip was being tested in one of the ordinary matters of life— providing food for the hungry. How would he respond? How do we respond, when questions arise in our lives? Do we rely on human logic or do we sense that the Lord is proving us? His desire is that we involve His infinite wisdom and resources in our responses. Philip failed his test. Yes, Philip the rational, keen-minded apostle failed a simple test.

We first learn about Philip in John chapter one. We read in verse 45: "Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found Him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." Here was quite a detailed answer and we judge Philip to be, as we said, a man with a well-ordered mind; perhaps he was orderly in his habits; knew the shortest distance to go to the marketplace, knew precisely how long the trip would take and was quite organized in all of his ways. He didn't just say, "We have found the Messiah." No, it was detailed, "We have found Him of whom Moses instructed us in the law," etc.

Suddenly Philip is faced with a question that demands an answer, and as we say, he failed the test. Why? Because Philip used only his own reasoning powers. He sizes up that crowd, which we learn elsewhere numbered five thousand men besides women and children. He estimates how many loaves each person might reasonably eat and multiplies by the total number of people in the company, and obtains the total number of loaves required. Then knowing the unit cost of each loaf, he has his answer for the total cost for feeding that multitude. Philip announces his answer to the Lord: "Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little." John 6:7. In other words, it can't be done. The logic was sound, the mathematics were precise, but the answer was wrong.

Andrew in the meantime finds the right answer. We meet Andrew on two or three occasions and what is characteristic of Andrew is that he was one who was always bringing someone to Jesus. The first one he brought was his brother Peter. I sometimes think this, perhaps, was the only chance that Andrew had to outshine his illustrious brother Peter. We know that Peter became the prince of apostles. He was the one that walked on the water; he was the one that was first here, first there. But it was Andrew that brought Peter to Jesus. Peter might be the one who could preach to five thousand and many souls were saved, but who brought him to Jesus? It was Andrew, his brother, and in this, Andrew comes to the fore.

While Philip is calculating in his mind how this is going to work out, what is Andrew doing? He is looking the crowd over, and he brings before the Lord a lad which had five loaves and two small

fishes, and the Lord through them is able to bring a blessing. Out of those five loaves and two small fishes, the crowd of five thousand was fed. The reasoning ability, but because someone trusted in Jesus. Someone brought his lowly means to Jesus and left the outcome to Him.

We might just look in the 12th chapter of John to see one more case where Philip and Andrew came together. "There were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast: the same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus." vv. 20, 21. Now here is a question: Is Philip's logical mind going to find an answer in this case? Perhaps he has learned his lesson, because look at what it says: "Philip cometh and telleth Andrew." Andrew surely will have the answer for this, and so he comes and tells Andrew. These were Gentiles waiting to come to Jesus. Can Gentiles possibly come to Jesus and receive a blessing? How can we answer this? Andrew doesn't know, perhaps, but he does know that if he brings the question to Jesus, it will be answered. And so it says, "Again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus." They bring their question to Jesus and a beautiful answer is given: where the corn of wheat falls into the ground and dies, much blessing is the result, blessing to be enjoyed by Jew and Gentile alike. Well, Andrew is one who answers every question and problem by bringing them to Jesus.

How much we need to do this, don't we? If we can bring the question to Jesus, it will be answered, not from our logical mind bearing on the facts and what we might think of them, but by bringing the problem to Jesus. I'm not much for bumper stickers, but once in a while you see one that has some truth to it. The one that comes to mind is one that says, "I don't know the question, but the answer is love." There is a little truth to this, isn't there? I think Andrew had this in mind: "I don't know what the question will be, but the answer is going to be found with Jesus." R. Erisman

Luke 15 and 16 LUK 15 LUK 16

The grace of God toward us is shown in three parables in chapter 15. In the first and second we have the absolute grace that seeks: Christ the Good Shepherd, and the Holy Ghost lighting up the light of truth. Nothing at all is done by the persons, who are the mere objects of saving grace. The great subject is: grace is God's joy; the shepherd is happy, the woman is happy, and the father is happy. It is God's happiness to have souls back, and He is saying here, "I am going to save sinners, whether you Pharisees like it or not." In the third parable, we have the prodigal's reception by the father when he comes back: first, the working of sin, next the working of grace, and then the father's reception. We have the whole series of gracious dealings, till the man has on the best robe, and is at the father's table.

That is, grace, in chapter 15 has come, and visited man, and takes him out of Judaism and all else (for God will not have the Pharisee), and then we find that man is a steward out of place in chapter 16. In the Jews, the whole thing was tried under the best of circumstances. Man, Adam, was a steward, having the Master's goods under his hand, but he is turned out because he is unfaithful, and then comes this question: How can I—if I have these goods under my hand as steward, and am turned out of place—how can I take the mammon of unrighteousness, and use it to advantage? I do not use it for myself now, but with a view to the future. The steward might have taken all of the funds to spend, but if so, that would not do for the future, and therefore, while he can, he uses it to make friends then and there; that is the aim of it. Just while I am here, I have the mammon of unrighteousness, and, as we have in 1 Tim. 6:17, I am not to trust in the uncertain riches, but so use them as to lay up in store a good foundation against the time to come. I turn this mammon of unrighteousness into friends, that, when it fails, I may be received into everlasting habitations. I am put out of all that man has as man, that I may have it yet for a time; but by use of it, I get reception into everlasting habitation. I use this world for the future. "They shall receive you" is a mere form for "you shall be received." Suppose it is now a person under grace; we find him acting in grace with things here, in view of the future; it is his preference, he would rather look out for the future. "When it fails" is when all this scene is gone, and the life ends; that is, stewardship is over.

Then, in the third case, our Lord draws the veil, and says, "Now look into the everlasting habitations." The poor man Lazarus died, and was carried by the angels into the bosom of Abraham. Here is a rich man using all for himself now, and you see the result; then do not use the world for your present enjoyment, but use it in view of another world. "Remember that thou in thy lifetime received thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented." If we do not use this world's things in grace, after all we cannot keep them, and, therefore, he says, you have the privilege of turning them into friends available for the future. It shows how the other world belies the whole of the present. God's blessing on a Jew was marked by the possession of such things, but the Lord shows the other world to tell him how all these things are changed. J.N. Darby

“Gain to Me”

“But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.” Phil. 3:7. What a marvelous change! Saul had had many sources of gain. He had gathered many honors to his name. He had made progress in Judaism beyond many of his equals. He had achieved a legal righteousness in which no man could find a flaw. His zeal, his knowledge, and his morality, were of the very highest order. But, from the moment that Christ was revealed to him, there was a thorough revolution. Everything was changed. His righteousness, his learning, his morality, all that could in any wise be gain to Paul, became as dung. He does not speak of open sins, but of those things that could justly be esteemed as gain to him. The revelation of the glory of Christ had so completely changed the entire current of Paul's thoughts that the very things which he had once esteemed as positive gain he now regarded as positive loss.

And why? Simply because he had found his all in Christ. That blessed One had supplanted everything in Paul's heart. All that belonged to Paul was displaced by Christ, and hence it would have involved actual loss to possess any righteousness or wisdom, holiness or morality, of his own, seeing that he had found all these, in divine perfectness, in Christ. If Christ is made of God unto me righteousness, is it not a loss to me to have any righteousness of my own? Surely. If I have gotten that which is divine, have I any need of that which is human? Clearly not. The more completely I am stripped and emptied of everything in which “I” could glory, or which would be gain to “me,” the better, inasmuch as it only renders me all the more entitled to a full and all-sufficient Christ. Whatever it be that tends to exalt self, whether it be religiousness, morality, respectability, wealth, glory, personal beauty, intellectuality, or philanthropy so called, it is a positive hindrance to our enjoyment of Christ, first, as the foundation of the conscience, and, secondly, as the object of the heart.

May the Spirit of God make Christ more precious to us!

The Two Worlds

1 Timothy 6:1-6

What an unworldly chapter this is! At the opening of it, believers are taught not to let their condition in the world avail itself, or make profit of, the fact that they are believers, brethren in Christ. The believing servant is instructed to be still a servant in the honor that he owes his master, and not, in anywise, to avail himself of the fact of his brotherhood in Christ with his master. This is an admonition excellent in itself, and worthy indeed, as this chapter speaks, "of God and His doctrine."

Thus, in the progress of this same chapter, those who have, and those who have not, the wealth of this world are, severally, exhorted to be unworldly, letting go this present world and grasping the world to come, or eternal life, by the one class being liberally active, and by the other being thoroughly content. These are good and suited words, admonitions, and exhortations, on the subject of unworldliness. But beside this, or in the midst of this, there is a striking commentary on the two worlds, the present, or man's world, and the future, or Christ's world—and this too, in connection with the Lord Jesus Himself.

In the present world, Timothy is exhorted to fight the good fight of faith, to flee the desire of being rich, and to cherish the graces and tempers of the Christian character, and he is exhorted to keep this commandment as "in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession."

But this exhortation tells us, or reminds us, that Jesus, in this world, was a Confessor. He was such a One in the presence of the Roman Governor. He there disclaimed this world.

This Good Confessor

"My kingdom is not of this world," He said to Pontius Pilate. This was a part of His good confession. He surrendered everything He might have had, or could have had, in man's world. The prince of it had nothing in Him. But God, "who quickeneth all things," has prepared a world for Him. He gave up this present world, and God will make Him His representative in power and majesty in a future world. He Himself, dwelling in light which no man can approach unto, will put forth this good Confessor as the Holder and Representative of His dignities and authority as "the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords."

There is something very excellent in this. The present world was the scene that witnessed a poor, humble Confessor at the peril of His life standing to answer for Himself in the presence of the powers of it the future will be the scene where this humble Confessor shall shine as the glorious reflection of God in majesty and authority all the world over.

This is a great sight to see. But let me speak a little further.

Representative

This same Lord Jesus had already in this present world been a Representative One, a Representative of the Father. "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father"—the Lord has already said, though He has not as yet shone as the image of the Potentate, Kings of kings, and Lord of lords. He has already witnessed grace, but not power—grace in God, but not power in the earth. He has already witnessed righteousness in humiliation and suffering; He is to witness it, by and by, in exaltation and authority. When the day of Rev. 19 comes, we shall have Him as a manifestation of the King of kings and Lord of lords.

And notice one other thing that makes distinctions for our profit, and has practical value in it. Speaking as from the bosom of the Church, or the family of heavenly strangers on the earth, the Spirit will say to us through one apostle, "Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted: but the rich, in that he is made low." James 1:9, 10. But here in 1 Tim. 6:1, speaking as from the place of "God and His doctrine," through another apostle, He will warn the saint not to let his place and relationship in the earth take advantage of his connection with the saints, his brethren in Christ.

How beautiful is everything in its season! How perfect, like gold refined seven times in the fire, is every word that has proceeded out of the mouth of our God! C. H. Mackintosh

Plowing

You can't plow a field by turning it over in your mind. Growth Our Lord is more concerned with our spiritual growth than with our temporal comforts. He will not spare us discomforts or pain if in the end it will mean eternal profit for us.

Bible Challenger-11-November V.02

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the words telling what the gospel of Christ represents to every one that believeth.

1. Something at which an early patriarch staggered not.
2. Something committed to the Jewish people.
3. Something revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness.
4. The sobering relationship of someone who would be a friend of the world.
5. The place where the work of intercession is accomplished.
6. Something said of the powers that be.
7. Something that forgiveness of sins clearly demonstrates.
8. Something that leadeth anyone to repentance.
9. That which is really resisted when anyone resists worldly power or authority.
10. Something adorned by good fidelity in the believer's life.

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

R. Erisman

Bible Challenger-10-October Answers V.02

1. Unknown god Acts 17:23
2. Narrow place Num. 22:26
3. Daily bread Matt. 6:11
4. East wind Ex. 10:13
5. Rams' skins Ex. 26:14
6. Sound speech Titus 2:8
7. Two pence Luke 10:35
8. Ancient landmark Prov. 22:28
9. Nether springs Judg. 1:15
10. Damnable heresies 2 Peter 2:1
11. Innocent blood Jonah 1:14
12. No resurrection Acts 23:8
13. Glad father Prov. 10:1

"With the ancient is wisdom; and in length of days UNDERSTANDING." Job 12:12

The Shout

"For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout." 1 Thess. 4:16.

I want to tell you something very interesting about that word "shout." This is the only place in the New Testament where the Greek word here translated "shout" occurs, and it does not mean a shout of terror, a startling shout; it is a word of encouragement. It is the word that was used in olden times to encourage the rowers... It is the shout of encouragement for the people of God, the word that calls them, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.

The One who loves us, who has done so much for us, will be there on the threshold of the glory and will take us in... What a scene that will be!

Who Is on the Throne?

The great tendency is to be so self-satisfied with the truth that we possess that we neglect the need to conform our outward lives to these convictions. Too often our habits and tastes remain unaltered, rather than conforming to the desires of the inner, or new, man. The light is in the pitcher, but the pitcher is opaque!

Human self-improvement is directed to the habits—the external. It does not aim to impart a principle within. The Lord's education of us, however, is that the external, the body, should be the expression of His own life which He has put within us. We are not to be indifferent as to our actions because of this assured life within, for unless we are governed by it, there cannot be testimony.

What a person is, is judged by what he does. If he tells us what he is, we look to his ways to see if the evidence substantiates his claims. It is useless for a man to tell us he is humble in heart, if he is proud in manner. It is vain for a man to say that Christ is his one object if his habits and lifestyle mimic those who are without Christ.

It is true that there is often the desire to be more devoted, and to be more like Christ, before one's acts and manner conform to the desire and make it a fact. And yet the more the desires which grace has generated in the heart are given a place, the sooner they will become facts. The more Christ has His throne within me, the more I will rejoice in Him, and have no confidence in the flesh.

Getting Ready to Move

The owner of the tenement which I have occupied for many years has given notice that he will furnish little or nothing more for repairs. I am advised to be ready to move.

At first this was not a very welcome notice. The surroundings here are in many respects very pleasant, and were it not for the evidence of decay, I should consider the old house good enough. But, even a light wind causes it to tremble and all the braces are not sufficient to make it really secure. So I am getting ready to move.

It is strange how quickly one's interest is transferred to the prospective home. I have been consulting maps of the new country and reading descriptions of its inhabitants. One who visited it has returned, and from him I learn that it is beautiful beyond description—language breaks down in attempting to tell of what he heard while there. He says that, in order to make an investment there, he has suffered the loss of all things that he owned here, and even rejoices in what others would call "making a sacrifice."

Another, whose love to me has been proved by the greatest possible test, is now there. He has sent me several clusters of the most delicious fruits. After tasting them, all food here in comparison is insipid.

Two or three times I have been down by the border of the river that forms the boundary, and could almost wish myself among those on the other side. Won't it be fine to live where "we shall know even as we are known" with nothing to hide, no doubts, no misunderstandings, just Love, Fellowship, and Service, "pleasures forevermore"?

Many of my friends have moved there. I have seen the smile upon their faces, as they passed out of sight. Here the really satisfying joys of life—its loves and fellowships—have always been hampered by the limitations of time, days, seasons, engagements, happenings, but there—"no night," and "time shall be no more."

Often I am asked to make further material investments here, but really many of those I have made are more worrisome than satisfying. On the contrary those which I have made on the other side have given great joy and peace. As our hearts go with our treasures, I am therefore positively declining so-called "good investments," for most sincerely, I feel that I should be getting ready to move. The Steward

'The Vocation

Ephesians 2:11-22 EPH 2:11-22

This scripture gives us quite a good part of the vocation wherewith we are called (Eph. 4:1). Nearness to God is a part of it; "Ye who sometime were far off are made nigh," and the means of it is the blood of Christ. Here it is individual; down towards the end of the chapter it is collective. We are not speaking of the relationship, but of the effect, and it is nearness to God in Christ. "Through Him [Christ] we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." (verse 18.) This is new ground, and has changed our relationship entirely, as being in Adam. Now we are in our new creation place, "in Christ." It is a wonderful thing to recognize that we are dead in Christ, 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).

Rom. 8:1 gives us what there is not for those who are in Christ Jesus, but does not give us what there is, and 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? There is nearness to God in new creation. Then, Rom. 8:2 adds to that, for there we get the power of the new state. The Holy Spirit dwells in us—the power of that new life: "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 farther down. You get the Spirit as life, and then the Spirit later in the chapter means the power of the life. It is difficult to separate, but they can be distinguished, down to the 13th verse. After that it is the personal Spirit, distinct from the new life, but to the 13th verse the two go together; the Spirit is the power of that new life.

In John 20:22, He breathed into them, and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." The two go together—the life, and the power. There He was the head of a new creation, and breathed into them that life in new creation, of which the Spirit is the power.

The Holy Spirit dwelling in us also is union with Christ in glory, not only the life now, for John could go that length, giving us oneness of life, but union with Christ is by the Spirit of Christ dwelling in us. Every one that is sealed by the Spirit is also united to Christ the Head in glory, and thus are members of His body. In the end of Eph. 2, we have the relationship to God as His house, and that is quite a different thing from union with Christ, but that is part of the vocation.

What two wonderful verses are Eph. 2:10, 13: "We are His workmanship," and what a word that is— God's workmanship—"created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Then, "But now, in Christ Jesus, ye who sometime were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." That is also part of the vocation.

We can expect to see in believers something like a reflection of Christ Himself—a reproduction of Christ in us, however small it may be. The more we live in the Spirit, and in the power of the Spirit, the more it is produced in us. Having our eyes on Christ, with Him before our souls, produces it. We can't produce it ourselves. That is being transformed—changed from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord (2 Cor. 3:18). It is to have Christ before us. All power, wisdom and grace comes from Christ. He is the Head and Fountain.

The Spirit of God will minister Christ to us, that in our walk and our ways there might be a faint reflection, at any rate, of what He is. The way in which He walked is the standard for our walk down here. "He that saith he abideth in Him, ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked." That is accomplished by God working in our souls; it is wrought in us by the Spirit of God and the Word of God, and it comes out in our walk and ways. God always begins inside.

In Eph. 2:19, we find God has a family, and we are all of the household of God. In the next chapter we have heirship, but that too is only a part of the calling wherewith we are called. I have noticed that we find many of God's people, and we thank God for it, who go as far as "that He might gather into one the children of God which are scattered abroad." That is John's line of things, but when we come to Paul's line, it is Christ, the Center, and the Head of the body, and all linked up with Him, in union, by the Spirit of God. The unity of the body, and the unity of the family are distinct and separate lines of truth, and have their corresponding responsibilities and affections.

Here it is brought out that God has a family, and that is the most intimate relationship into which it is possible for God to bring us. But Christ has a body, and we are part of that. We have those two things in this epistle. The household of God is viewed from another standpoint, and discipline is connected with it, but not with the body of Christ. All this comes in with the vocation wherewith we are called.

We are also sealed by the Spirit of God; God now by the Spirit claims our bodies as His temple individually. So "grieve not the Holy Spirit" comes in this epistle also, as an important thing for our souls. The Holy Spirit dwells in us. We have a relationship to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

Then there is a certain state of soul much needed in order to respond, to walk worthy of this vocation.

What is that state of soul, heart, and mind? "With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, for-bearing one another." This is what is needful, whether it be our relationship to God as His children, or our relationship to Christ as members of His body; this we would call the "Spirit of Christ." The result of the Spirit of God dwelling in us is the Spirit of Christ manifested in our walk and ways. You will find the two spoken of in Rom. 8:9. If the Spirit of God does not dwell in us, the Spirit of Christ cannot shine out from us. A man today who is not sealed by the Holy Spirit would not be of Him. The believer has the Holy Spirit dwelling in him, has the character of Christ, has the Spirit of Christ, coming out. W. Potter

Affliction

Though on a bed of suffering
I'm called a while to stay,
My spirit looks with pleasure
To that long-promised day,
When free from sin and sorrow
I'm evermore to be
With Him who died to save me,
The Man of Calvary.
My weary days of suffering
Will soon have passed away,
And rest will seem the sweeter
In heaven's eternal day;
So with this hope before me,
In patience I would be
Sustained in my affliction
Until Thy face I see.

The Church and the Tribulation

Perhaps no erroneous doctrine has been more detrimental to the souls of God's children than that those who compose the Church of God will have to pass through "the great tribulation." Such a statement subverts God's revelation of the Church as the body and Bride of Christ. It reduces the heavenly people to Jewish associations, and robs them of the watching and waiting attitude for Christ to come at any time. Such, more or less, merge into a political view of the Lord's coming by looking for events instead of Himself, or for antichrist instead of Christ. Thus the affections, conscience, and hope of the soul become seriously damaged by it.

Nothing can be clearer in the Lord's farewell address to His disciples before going to the Father, than that He left them by giving them the blessed expectation of soon seeing Him again. Between the coming of the Holy Spirit and His return from heaven, He did not put a series of events to be fulfilled. So we are told that the early Christians waited for God's Son from heaven.

The part of Scripture that has been perverted to give a color to the doctrine is Matt. 24. But a brief glance at it will show that the "coming" referred to by the disciples, in their questions to the Lord, was not His coming for us, but His coming to Jerusalem when we come with Him, and every eye shall see Him coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. (See Matt. 23:39; 24:3.) Those who are mentioned there will go through the tribulation. They are "His elect" which is a term applied by Isaiah to the blest remnant of the Jews.

The reference to the following things clearly marks it out as the time of "Jacob's trouble" that he will have to pass through and out of which he be brought.

1. "The Sabbath day"
2. "Judea"
3. "Fleeing to the mountains"
4. "Flesh saved"
5. "The abomination spoken of by Daniel the prophet"
6. "The great tribulation such as was not... no, nor ever shall be." It is preceded by the preaching of "the gospel of the kingdom of God," not of the grace of God as now preached. It is "the hour of temptation" coming upon all the world, from which the Lord promises to save us. "Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, I also will keep thee from (out of) the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." Rev. 3:10.

It is interesting to observe that when our Lord referred to His rejection by the Jews—Judah and Benjamin, the two tribes—He said, "I am come in My Father's name, and ye receive Me not: if another shall come in his own name, [the antichrist] him ye will receive." John 5:43. This we know from other scriptures is how the unparalleled tribulation will be brought about, and in retributive justice, the very tribes which rejected the Messiah will go through it. The ten tribes will not be

gathered together till after this, when the Lord actually comes out of heaven. (Matt. 24:31.)

C.H. Mackintosh

The Laborers in the Vineyard

Matthew 20:1-16MAT 20:1-16

There is absolutely nothing in this parable about the salvation of the soul. Salvation is altogether the fruit of sovereign grace, bestowed upon the unworthy on the basis of the blood of Jesus, the thought of wages or reward being utterly foreign to it. But every saved one is a servant, responsible in all things to his Lord. It is of this that our parable speaks.

Peter's remark in Matt. 19:27 called it forth. "Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed Thee; what shall we have therefore?" In reply he was told that faithful service will in no wise go unrewarded, and that as regards the apostles, special honor is reserved for them in the golden era when the Son of man will sit upon His throne. But perceiving in Peter's remark a tendency to exalt human doings and sacrifices unduly, the Lord added the parable of the laborers in the vineyard.

The penny (or denarius) which the householder agreed to pay his first batch of workers was the usual laborer's wage in that day. The agreement was thus equitable to all parties. At pay time a difficulty arose concerning some whom the master found unemployed at the eleventh hour, and sent into the vineyard. In their case no wage was fixed; they were simply told, "Whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive." They trusted to the master's goodness—a safe principle where God is concerned. At pay time these eleventh-hour laborers were recompensed first, and each received a penny. When those who were engaged in the morning came before the steward, they supposed they would receive more, and they did not hesitate to complain to the master because no more than a penny was given to them. The master remonstrated with the ringleader: "Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny? Take that thine is, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good?"

The point of the parable is the absolute right of the Lord of all to do as He pleases in His own realm—a right which no reverent mind would contest for a moment. Human pettiness, even in true saints, is apt to appraise its own service and to magnify its own labors in the Lord's vineyard. But all such notions are rebuked by the recollection of what each soul owes to its Redeemer. At infinite cost, amidst circumstances of unparalleled grief and shame, He secured our salvation at the cross of Calvary. From the moment that this immense fact is apprehended, devoted service becomes the happy occupation of him who has received so inestimable a blessing. Love is the only true motive, every Scripture statement concerning ultimate reward being given as encouragement. When our noblest doings are compared with what Christ has done for us, we feel constrained to put our hand upon our mouth, and cast ourselves adoringly at His feet. He will delight to commend and reward even a cup of cold water given for His sake, but far be it from us to utter one word about the best we have done. It is grace alone which has put us into the path of Christ; the same grace sustains us therein, and grace will not fail to crown it munificently when the end is reached.

W. Fereday

The Triumph of Weakness

Do not Esther and her "seven maidens" excel over all other remnant activity in Israel's history? Her heart went out after all the people of God in those days. And she was the means of saving all. According to Biblical chronology, she was received into the royal house of Artaxerxes just after Ezra and his band started for Jerusalem. (Compare Ezra 7:8, with Esther 2:16.) If this be so, little did Ezra and his company know that the intercessions of weakness were going on, not alone for him and his band, but for all the people of the Jews. The flesh, set at work by Satan, through Haman, scorned to do only a small work of malice (Esther 3:6), so all the people of Jehovah must be aimed at—destroyed by him. Perhaps Ezra knew nothing of this terrible intention. However this may be, weakness learned the secret from Mordecai. Death was hanging over Ezra and all his and Esther's people. Is it fighting and military prowess that is to triumph? No; "she that tarried at home" will gain a wondrous victory. Is not Esther greater than a Deborah?

Then notice the place into which she goes. Haman may enter "the outward court." He is covered with outward glory, too—like the coming apostate (Esther 6:4). But Esther enters "the inner court of the king's house." (See Esther 5:1, and Psa. 45—upon Shoshannim, verses 13 and 14). It was death or full blessing to go thither (Esther 4:11). If the king "delighted" still in her (see Esther 2:14; Psa. 37:1-7), what wondrous grace (truly sovereign) would be shown her, and how widespread the blessing that should follow. Unlike a Ruth or a Hannah, she is too weak to fight, but she is not too weak to reach the heart of the monarch of unlimited power. To "touch the golden scepter"—that would do all. That could only be done by entering his presence in the inner court.

Notice too, the greatness of her faith in her lord. She prepares a banquet for him, and does so before she presents her request. She let him see she expected him to come. Was this a trespass on his grace? No, it was a trial of his love to her, and all must share the blessing or none. It was either utter destruction or magnificent deliverance in royal bounty. Either Haman is to triumph supremely, or utter weakness is to bring in sovereign grace, joy and gladness, to all the people of God.

Notice, too, how Haman is allowed to go on to a moment in which he is just about to place the crown, as it were, on his own head. But, like "the chief baker," in Gen. 40, he is hanged. Such will be the end of "that wicked one" presently. But I am only illustrating the way flesh boasting at any time may come down in a moment. What a trial for faith to both Esther within and Mordecai in sackcloth without. She feasts within as he fasts without, for she must come as becomes the Queen of Ahasuerus when she enters there (see also Ruth 3.1-3).

This place of utter weakness is certainly a blessed one. If we feel we do not "delight in war," we may, surely, delight ourselves in Him who is "the Faithful and True Witness." Here is the golden scepter as it were, for us to touch. Really, all depends on Him now. But we must let our thoughts go out to all the people of God if we are coming towards "the inner court" in the time of the flesh's boastfulness and pride. If the flesh can boast of its success, still the moral truth of Psa. 17:15 is there for us now. "As for me," is the expression of weakness amid many foes around. May it be

ours. Divine righteousness can do wonders in the face of the enemy. "Grace reigns through righteousness" now.

It was not only the valiant ones—the mighty men—who got the joy and gladness and feasting. All got it—the undeserving, the weak, the outcasts, all in "the kindness of God." I think we see this largeness of blessing in Rev. 22:17, and in the words, "If any man hear My voice," in chapter 3 verse 20. Jacob had this sovereign bounty shown to him when he was carried on the wagons which Joseph provided to feast on the corn in Egypt, while all Egypt felt the fullness of the savior of the world then. What a glory of grace. When all is in utter failure—death suspended over all, as far as our responsibility is concerned— what a moment for "rebels" to be gathered round "the well of Beer," that God may be sanctified in them, sanctified in the sight of His own enemies. (See Num. 21:13-16; Ezek. 20:41.) "Gather the people together and I will give." Thus the Holy One of Jacob beholds those that erred in spirit coming to understanding, and those that murmured learning doctrine (Isa. 29). This is deliverance and blessing according to His righteousness worthy of the Holy and the True, and "the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God." W. Reid

Editorial

Shipwrecks are sensational catastrophes that always make the headlines in the news. There have been many through the centuries and some, like the sinking of the Titanic in 1912, still attract attention.

An enormous amount of wealth has gone to the sea floor in these sunken vessels and today some of the gold and silver and valuable artifacts are being recovered.

The Apostle Paul wrote, "Thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day have I been in the deep." After he wrote this he was shipwrecked again and much detail is given about it in Acts 27.

Last month we wrote about money and this month we take up a similar subject. We call it commerce. The world is full of it. It is the exchange or buying and selling of commodities on a large scale between different places. Necessarily, the transportation of this merchandise is a large part of this commerce. Through the years ships have been the major means of transporting the bulk of this business.

At this time the importance of ships stands out as the United States begins to protect the oil tankers in the Persian Gulf. Trade must go on in order for men to live the comfortable life they so much desire.

In the prophecy concerning commerce and its end, God likens it to the sinking of a ship. We will take this up, but first we must introduce a few things to explain and lead up to that great catastrophe that will cause such a great lamentation to the earth-dwellers in that day.

The government in the earth since the days of Nebuchadnezzar has been given by the God of heaven into the hands of the Gentiles. The book of Daniel tells us much concerning these times of the Gentiles and the four successive empires. In chapter 7 and verse 2 it says, "The four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea." The winds are various disturbing influences, ordered of God in a providential way as He accomplishes His purposes in the government of the earth. The winds of heaven tell us the source from which they are directed.

The change in the alignment of nations even now is manifesting itself, we believe, in France's breaking its relations with Iran. Iran (Persia) will doubtless be aligned with Russia at the end. France will become a part of the revived Roman Empire.

World commerce in prophecy is somewhat separate from, but still connected with, and running parallel to the development of Babylon and the judgments that are foretold in Daniel and Revelation.

The ship of commerce and its sinking are found in Ezek. 27 under the symbol of Tyrus. Another has ably written about this and we quote from William Bothwell.

"This chapter figuratively reviews the glories of Tyrus, its merchant marine and city garrison, its international trade and accumulated wealth. Suddenly, like a ship caught in a storm, it vanishes into the depths of the sea and all with it.

"Ezek. 27:1-7: Tyrus viewed as a ship.

"The prophet takes up a lament for Tyrus. Situated in a harbor at the entry of the sea, she is a merchant vessel for the people of the isles, beautifully designed for maritime service (verses 1-3).

"Tyros sails where there are no restrictive borders. Its builders have perfected it, part by part, to sail into wide and deep waters. The ship's double planking is made of fir from Senir, which is located at Mount Hermon (Deut. 3:9). The masts are of cedar from Mount Lebanon, between Mount Hermon on the east and Sidon on the west. The ships' oars are of oak from Bashan, which is immediately south of Mount Hermon. The deck is of ivory, inlaid in boxwood (larch) obtained from Cyprus (Chittim). Byssus, the fine linen of Egypt, forms the sails; for banners and awnings the blue and purple fabric comes from the isles of Elishah. Elishah was the son of Javan and the grandson of Japheth.

"The ships of Tarshish are the caravans of the sea and Tyrus, dependent on ship and sea, was highly honored by the multitude of trade, so much so, that Tyrus is the symbol in Scripture of the commercial world in all its earthly glory.

"Ezek. 27:26-36: The ship Tyrus is broken by the east wind and sinks into the depths of the sea.

"In verse 5, Tyrus is likened to a ship, and in verses 26 and 27 the vessel, brought into great waters, is broken by the east wind. The east wind is a figure of speech and represents Nebuchadnezzar and his Chaldean army coming from the East and destroying Tyrus and its mercantile system. The ship's company, mariners, pilots and caulkers, men of war, and merchants and their merchandise vanish into the sea as the ship founders in the storm (verses 26, 27). The pilots cry aloud in grief: they failed to guide the ship through the storm (verse 28).

"Ships' crews stand upon the land and mourn over Tyrus. Their sense of loss is so keen that the most distraught behavior is their only means of expressing the pent-up bitterness of their souls. The hubbub of the market place and the noise of the traffickers is reduced to silence and every countenance is troubled. The peoples of the isles are amazed and the kings afraid. Tyrus is a terror to their minds.

“The prophet received word from the Lord in a progressive way. More and more is revealed to the prophet concerning Tyrus until its presumptuous impiety to reign supreme is exposed. World commerce will receive shock after shock until its complete collapse, until the days just prior to the Lord's appearing (Isa. 23). Tyrus is a figure of the commercial world's terror at such a calamity, as Babylon, by a similar figure, foretells the collapse of the religious world (Rev. 18). One is a prince, the other is a queen in the earth.”

The great markets of the world and the mass of commodities that are bought and sold and transported to all parts of this globe are the very life-sustaining channels that supply most of this world's vast population. What will it be like when the ship sinks?

Ed.

Watchman, What of the Night?

Another year of the long-suffering of God has nearly come to a close. "Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night? The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will inquire, inquire ye: return, come." Isa. 21:11, 12.

Let us meditate a little on the year that is passed, a measured portion of "the night," the long, dark night of man's rejection of Christ. God has His own, those whom He has chosen out of the world who are not of it, but given to Christ. But let us not shut our eyes to the awful fact that this world has rejected and killed the Son of God, and still rejects Him. Satan, the great enemy of man, is the god of this world and nowhere does Satan display more enmity against Christ than in the professing Church. Is not Christendom a caricature of the Church of God, as seen in Scripture in the beginning?

How rapidly infidelity is increasing everywhere, and if not infidelity, the grossest idolatry. As a Hindu idolater said to a professed Christian: "We have no idolatry like yours. We worship an idol, as representing God; but you bake a god, worship it as God, and then eat it." Surely this is the lowest depth of dark idolatry. And Satan calls this wickedness "holy communion"! Watchman, what of the night? Is it not getting darker and darker, ripening for the terrible judgment? And what is the state of the world around? Violence and lawlessness, dishonesty publicly defended. There never was a time when Christians needed more to cry to God to preserve the members of the government.

Further Shocks

Yes, the long night of man's rejection of Christ grows darker and darker. Soon men's hearts will fail them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. Is it not even so now in measure? Are not the powers that be, which are ordained of God, being rudely shaken? Who can say what further shocks may be felt before this year is out?

"Watchman, what of the night? The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night." In the watchman's reply there are two facts brought before us, and then he says, "If ye will inquire, inquire ye: return, come." Let us at the close of this year of the dark night, return and inquire concerning these two things:

First, "The morning cometh."

Second, "And also the night."

Oh, happy morn! the Lord will come,

And take His waiting people home,

Beyond the reach of care:

O morn, too bright for mortal eyes,
When all the ransomed Church shall rise,
And wing their way to yonder skies
Called up with Christ to reign.

"The morning cometh." "Behold the Bridegroom." "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

New Year of Years

For Jesus says, "Surely I come quickly." This coming morning is our new year of years, our morn of morns, our entire future, our every desire, our hope, our joy! We have read, heard, and thought of that bright morning without a cloud, but now it comes. Oh, bride of the Lamb, awaken; the morning breaks— it comes. Let every child of God awaken. The next event is "The morning cometh." "The night is far spent, the day is at hand."

What is your real state at the end of another year? Now, we tell you the watchman says, "The morning cometh." We are about to be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, but first the dead in Christ will be raised. If you could see those so dear to you—it may be a loved child, or a long-departed parent—raised in glory like the glorified Lord, if you could see those who are alive and remain, in that moment, are changed also into His likeness (for you will see us in the unclouded glory and welcome presence of our blessed Lord,) would you not give worlds rather than be left behind? Is Satan tempting you to refuse the present, great salvation for the pleasures and sins of this evil world? Now look at all that he can give you; it is only for this brief moment before the "morning" comes.

Has Sin Satisfied You?

Another year is nearly gone; how have you spent it? Has Satan satisfied your heart? Has sin satisfied you? Are you happy, shutting God out of your thoughts? Can you refuse Christ, and be satisfied with anything under the sun? He waits to be gracious; yes, after all, God still is love. Will you longer put off the concerns of your soul? How can you, how dare you, since the "morning cometh"? The door will soon be shut and it will be forever too late. Do you say, "I long, I thirst to be saved?"

Jesus says to you, "I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." "And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Oh, precious, infinite grace! Every sinner that reads these lines and thirsts to be saved, is surely welcomed by the Lord Jesus Christ.

Fellow-Christians, are we longing for the morning that is coming? Does the thought thrill our souls that we are now going to see and be like our risen Lord? Oh, how that morning without a cloud occupies His heart He who loved the Church, and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word is He not waiting for that morning when He shall present it to Himself glorious, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy, and without blemish? Yes, the Holy Spirit says to the waiting Man in the glory, and to us waiting here below, "The morning cometh."

May the words of the Lord cheer our hearts until we see His face. "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. 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." John 14:1-3. Sweet, then, the words of the watchman to us, "The morning cometh." But what does he say after this bright and blessed morning? "And also the night." Sad and dark has been the history of this long night of man's rejection of Christ, and the testimony of the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven. What will that period of darkness be like when the Church shall have been taken at the morning that is coming? Then comes also the night.

Ancient Babylon and the Apostate Church

Which of these will be your future—the morning of unclouded joy and ever lasting brightness, or the night of darkness, sorrow, and judgment? What was true of ancient Babylon will then soon be true as to the Babylon of the apostate Church. The watchman answered and said, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen; and all the graven images of her gods He hath broken unto the ground. O my threshing, and the corn of my floor: that which I have heard of the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, have I declared unto you." Isa. 21:9, 10.

Boastful, modern Babylon, drunk with the blood of the saints, rejoicing in pride, sits as a queen. What have we heard of the Lord of hosts concerning this great ripening, rich, apostate Christendom? What has He spoken concerning those who have not received the love of the truth that they might be saved? He has said, "For this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." 2 Thess. 2:11, 12. The morning comes and also the night. Has He said what He will do with the false, boasting, but lukewarm Christendom, rich and increased in goods? Yes, He will utterly throw it off as a testimony. The Lord has spoken. He said, "I will spew thee out of My mouth."

Has God revealed the character of that dark, dark night that is fast approaching, after the bright morning of the Church? Yes, peace shall be taken from the earth; they shall kill one another.

Break up of Social Order

There shall be famine and pestilence, the sword, hunger, and death; there will be the terrible breakup of all social order, like an earth-quake and men shall flee into dens and caves of the earth. (Rev. 6.) The most terrible, scorching judgments shall fall upon the circumstances, and then on the persons of men. (Rev. 8, 9.) God has revealed these judgments, and they will surely come to pass. "And also the night." Satan will then lead men in open hostility against God. The terrible Roman Empire, in its fearful Satanic, destructive form will suddenly reappear. Men will worship Satan. The malignant passions of devils and men will be let loose in that terrible night of darkness. (Rev. 13.) Then shall the great whore of apostate Christendom appear in all her abominations, until the infidel kingdoms rise up and destroy her. (Rev. 17.)

May the children of God hear His words, "Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins." Yes, that night of tribulation will come, such as never was and never shall be again—closing in the personal coming of the Lord Jesus to judge the wicked, living nations and set up His blessed kingdom on earth.

The watchman then brings these two things before us: "The morning cometh, and also the night." If then, we should close this year on earth, may the watchman's words be our motto: "The morning cometh." May this be the deep, settled hope of our hearts, for "we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." As we shall be like Him then, so may we more and more seek to walk as He walked, until we are forever with and like the Lord. Our Watchman never slumbers; may we also be awake and hear His words. Surely the Holy Spirit speaks to us: "The morning cometh, and also the night."

Things New and Old

Courage to Stand in Remnant Days

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, and 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 Shalmanezar, 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. But 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 charges 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 gets 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.

But there are those the Lord owns, and of whom He can say, Thou "hast kept My word, and hast not denied My name," 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 be alone. There was a time when no man stood with Paul. But the Lord stood with him, and the testimony was given, and 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

Bible Challenger-00-December V.02

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the words identifying that which the Word of God is able to divide asunder.

1. The description of the Christian hope which serves as an effective anchor.
2. Animals which were tithed by Hezekiah's subjects during his good reign.
3. The mystical items, originally worn in the priest's breastplate, that were missing in Nehemiah's day.
4. Something heard in Rama as a result of an ill-advised decree.
5. Titles given to Christ Jesus, which holy brethren do well to consider.
6. The actual conditions of all things to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.
7. Places of refuge to a faithful group who wandered in the midst of those not worthy of their company.
8. The things graciously remembered no more.
9. Specific things once offered up with strong crying and tears in the days of flesh.
10. Wicked things that some Israelites set up in every high hill and under every green tree.
11. Something to avoid if we would walk honestly as in the day.
12. A means of communicating that gave place to speaking face to face.
13. Things that the Word of God discerns in every heart.

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

R. Erisman

Bible Challenger-11-November Answers V.02

1. Promise of God Rom. 4:20
2. Oracles of God Rom. 3:2
3. Wrath of God Rom. 1:18
4. Enemy of God James 4:4
5. Right hand of God Rom. 8:34
6. Ordained of God Rom. 13:1
7. Forbearance of God Rom. 3:25
8. Goodness of God Rom. 2:4
9. Ordinance of God Rom. 13:2
10. Doctrine of God Titus 2:10

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the POWER OF GOO unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." Rom. 1:16. R. Erisman

John Newton

John Newton, in commenting upon Paul's 'statement to the Corinthians concerning himself ;,(1 Cor. 15:10), said: "I am not what I ought to be; I am; not what I wish to be; I am not what I hope to be. Yet! Though I am not what I ought to be, nor what I wish to' be, nor what I hope to be, I am not what I once was, and 'by the grace of God I am what I am.'" How, much of truth, thought, and experience is in these few words!

The Advocate

The Advocate does two things: He pleads with the Father for us and He applies the Word to us. The one maintains our cause if we sin, before the Father, against the accuser; the other brings up our practical state to our standing, which is always maintained without sin by the righteous Advocate, who has made propitiation. The failure in our practical state is from the fact of our having two natures in one person. "With the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." Rom. 7:25. And though by faith, and in spirit, we are no longer in the flesh, yet actually it is in us (though by faith we reckon it dead), hence the failure. There is no excuse, but the fact is, we fail. Our standing as children ever remains the same, even though we sin, owing to the righteous Advocate who has made propitiation.

"If any man sin, we have an advocate." But we have failed in our practical state—we are defiled. Our bodies are washed with pure water, that is true (Heb. 10:22); we have had once the washing of regeneration (Titus 3:5); we are born again (John 3:3); we need not then be put into the bath over again. (John 13:10. Literally, "He that is put into the bath needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.")

But we have sinned, we have gotten our feet defiled, as it were, in passing through this sin-defiling world. This will not do for the Father's presence. What does the Advocate do? He applies the Word to us, washes our feet, and leads us to confession and self-judgment. The remembrance of our Advocate, who made propitiation, leads us back on our knees to our Father, who forgives us, and cleanses us from all our unrighteousness. We are cleansed according to what He is as the righteous One in the Father's presence. This is cleansing by the water of the Word, not by blood, which is never repeated. It is the application of the death of Christ, through the Word, to moral defilement from the root of sin. Thus the blessed work of the Advocate is, on the one hand, to plead for the children before the Father if they sin, on the other hand, to wash their feet with the Word, to bring their practical walk and state up to their standing before Him.

How happy for us to be associated with the blessed Advocate—on the one hand pleading for our brethren if they sin, on the other hand carrying the Word to them and washing their feet. May the Lord grant that the saints may see their blessed privilege of using love to cover sins (Prov. 10:12). May they plead for their brethren if they sin, and act in faithfulness to them in carrying the Word to them and washing their feet so that they may be cleansed from the defilement. They will then overcome the accuser by the blood of the Lamb, on the one hand, if their brethren sin, and on the

other hand, openly resist him by the word of their testimony, like the blessed Lord Jesus Himself. He answered the devil when tempting Him to sin, by, "It is written." So should we. If we sin, thank God we can always answer him by the blood of the Lamb, which is the balm for every wound.

The blood of the Lamb and the Word, the sword of the Spirit, are our instruments against the devil down here, while the Advocate maintains our cause before the Father up in heaven. Thus in every case we are maintained, and are overcomers, "more than conquerors through Him that loved us."
A.P. Cecil

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