

CHRISTIAN TREASURY VOLUME 3

by Unknown

A collection of articles and writings from Christian Treasury Volume 3, covering various biblical topics and Christian teaching.

268 Chapters

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Christian Treasury Volume 3

Genesis

There is a sweet simplicity in the narratives of this first book that is very attractive to little children, and there is a depth in them that lies beyond the reach of the profoundest minds. It forms the preface of the entire Bible, for it contains the germ of all subsequent revelations, until we reach the Apocalypse, which is the equally striking conclusion of the inspired Scriptures. Hence, there is a remarkable correspondence between the two books: the paradise of God, the tree of life, the river, the crown of sovereignty upon man's brow are seen in the former, reappearing in the latter, and the blessings lost in the first Adam are restored in the last Adam in the very, order in which they disappeared. Thus the Holy Ghost at once exhibits the perfect unity of His Word, and teaches us not only to "search the scriptures." but to search them until Christ is revealed to the heart in all the glory of His divine person, and in all the value of His finished work.

His opening book was called by the Jews Bereshith, "in the beginning." but by the translators of the Septuagint Version Genesis: "Generation or Origination." It gives us the only true history of man for at least 2,300 years, and it centers about seven prominent persons in pairs, as types of the whole human race. First, we have Adam in connection with Eve, or human nature innocent, fallen, helpless, when the Lord God clothed them with coats of skins which He made; they are types of Christ and the Church. Second, we find Cain in connection with Abel, or the religion of culture opposed to redemption through the blood. Third, Enoch is connected with Noah, the former the type of the heavenly people translated before the judgments of the last days, the latter the type of the earthly saved remnant passing through the judgments. Fourth, we see Abraham in connection with Lot, or walking by faith, and walking by sight. Fifth, we read of Ishmael and Isaac, or he that was born of the flesh persecuting him who was born of the Spirit, with Isaac setting forth sonship. Sixth, in Esau and Jacob, the flesh is disowned and hated, while he who was elected by God's sovereign grace represents service and discipline. Seventh, Joseph, rejected by his brethren, tells of suffering followed by glory in resurrection power, when the "Savior of the world," as his Egyptian name signifies, received his Gentile bride, whose name means "Beauty."

J. Brookes

The Rest of the Time

1 Peter 4:1-9

The Spirit of God brings before us a pure Object for our minds and hearts. That is the Lord Jesus. It does not matter how young we are, nor does it matter how old we are: we have the same Object for our hearts, because Christ is the only One who can fill and satisfy our hearts. If we are not satisfied, we might have to pass through experiences of trial.

As Peter is presenting to us the wilderness pathway, he looks back and sees the Lord Jesus here in this wilderness, and how He suffered in the flesh. What does it mean, atonement? No, that is not what Peter means here. He is speaking of what Christ suffered, going through this world. "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind." The Lord Jesus suffered to the extent that He died on the cross, but the side of it here is, "Arm yourselves likewise with the same mind."

We could not go into atonement; no man can by any means redeem his brother, for whom God alone gave a ransom. But the Lord Jesus suffered in the world in two ways: He suffered for the people, and He also suffered with the people of God. He has left us an example that we should follow in His steps. A little boy might follow his father's steps, placing his feet right into them, but they would not fit very well. Just the same, he follows in his steps, and that is the way we have the Lord Jesus as our Object, though we know we do not measure up to it.

The Lord Jesus suffered in the flesh, surrounded by evil which opposed Him at every turn. Even though we are believers and have the new nature, we still have the old nature and must arm ourselves against it.

Do you remember Amalek of the Old Testament? There was war with him from generation to generation. And there was supposed to be, for Amalek is a picture of the flesh. He was the one who slew the hindermost, the stragglers. In the North Country where the deer range in the winter, the wolves follow and attack the stragglers. Applying this to our case, what is the picture we have? If we do not keep close to the Leader and have our hearts upon Him, we are going to be stragglers, and the enemy is going to get hold of us to bring us down. Therefore Peter says, "Arm yourselves likewise."

As a Man here in this world, the Lord Jesus had one thing before Him, and that was to please the Father. Thus you and I must have that one thing before us. "He that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin." He is through with the old path. Would that not be good for us at the beginning of this year? The world makes resolutions which they cannot keep more than a short while, for there is no power in the flesh to keep them, but you and I, if we are born anew, have the power of the Spirit of God. It is not as though we were making resolutions, but we are simply stepping into line in our proper path.

Let us have the determination to no longer live the rest of our time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God. How much time do we have? It may be an hour, a day, a month, or ten years, yet we do not know, cannot see how it could be that long. May it be our desire that when the Lord Jesus comes He may find us walking in the path in which He walked—the path of faith.

The desire of the new nature is toward holiness, and if we are in communion, that will characterize our lives. Holiness is the character which was seen in the Lord Jesus as a Man down here in this world, manifesting the Father.

“For the time past of our life may suffice us.” Peter says, “It is enough.” We know what we have been in the past; it is enough. What are we going to do the rest of the time? Are we going to live the rest of the time to the lust of the flesh, or to the will of God? Of course we are in the world and they think it strange that we do not run with them to the same excess of riot, but the Scripture speaks of temperance in all things. Many things are necessary down here, and let us not be indifferent. Let us find a balance in Scripture for our lives, not going from one extreme to another. Let us just follow in the path.

In verse 5, we have the Judge before us. Peter reminds us of the end of the road, saying that we “shall give account to Him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead.”

There are four judgments in Scripture. The first is the judgment which Christ bore for us which is all past. “There is therefore now no condemnation [or judgment] to them which are in Christ Jesus.” Rom. 8:1. Next, in 2 Cor. 5 as well as Rom. 14:10, we have the judgment seat of Christ, although in Romans it is the judgment seat of God, but it is the same judgment seat.

The other two judgments are that of the “quick,” or the living, and the judgment of the “dead.” In Matt. 25, “these shall go away [not enter death] into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal” refers to the judgment on the living nations who will refuse the gospel of the kingdom, not on the dead.

The last judgment is in Rev. 20. It is on those, even from Adam's day, who through their lifetime have disobeyed God's testimony, and they are going to come into judgment for it. They are dead. The graves will be opened, and they will all stand before God to be judged and sent on to punishment. Two books will be opened, the book of life to show that their names are not there, and the book of works so they can be judged righteously for what they have done. We would not like to be in the company of the dead of Rev. 20. The wilderness will prove what we are inside. What are we going to do with the rest of our time? Will we live it to the lust of the flesh, or to the will of God? We can start every morning on our knees to ask the Lord to help us, and then we will live to the will of God. We have the Word of God, the whole mind of God. “Hold fast the form of sound words.” 2 Tim. 1:13. C. Lunden

Exodus 16:14

There was no strength necessary in gathering the manna. A strong right arm was of no use—the thing was too delicate for man's strength to come in and destroy. To gather it delicately, with the weakness of man, was needed, so that the soul can say. That which I have gathered up of Christ today, I found it to be strength made perfect in my weakness. It was, "when I am weak, then am I strong."

His Coming

His cross speaks of grace, His coming of glory, and both tell a story of love. Perhaps there is nothing that more definitely marks the present "blessed hope" in the hearts of the children of God.

In the early part of this dispensation it was this blessed hope that gave character to their entire walk. It shaped and formed their path from the thorns and the burden of the cross, and cast the light of the coming glory across the "little while." Then "they went forth to meet the bridegroom." The Thessalonians were converted "to wait for His Son from heaven." It was as much a part of their Christianity as to believe that He had delivered them from the wrath to come, or that He had been raised from the dead. In writing to the Philippians, Paul says, "Our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ." Where now are eyes looking for Him? Where now are hearts loving His appearing? Where now are lips saying, "Even so?"

Three Hundred Times

In reading the New Testament we meet three all-important and precious truths. First, God's Son has been here in this very scene; second, God the Holy Spirit is here now; third, that same blessed One who was here more than nineteen hundred years ago, is coming again. If I believe one, I must believe the other. If I accept one, I must accept the other, for all rest upon precisely the same basis, namely, the Word of God. Here in the New Testament the Lord's second coming is mentioned some three hundred times, and surely if the Spirit has given prominence and importance to it here. He will also give prominence and importance to it in our hearts, if not hindered.

One cardinal difficulty to our apprehending and entering into the Lord's coming has been in our failing to distinguish between His coming for His saints and His coming with them. His coming for His saints in blessing is found in John 14:1-3; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Thess. 4:13-15. His coming with them in judgment is found in Col. 3:4; Jude 14, 15; Rev. 19:7-14. As there were different stages in His first advent, so there are different stages in His second. In His first advent we have His birth, then His baptism, then His cross. In His second advent, His descent into the air for His saints is in 1 Thess. 4:16, 17. His coming to the earth with them is found in Zech. 14:1-9. Then we read of the eternal state in Rev. 21.

Let us look a little at some of these Scriptures. He gave this word to His own just before His departure

to heaven, where He now lives for us as believers, our Priest and Advocate.

Grave Empty Throne Filled

"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." Well we know that He is gone. Yes, the cross is empty, the grave is empty, and the throne is filled. His word is "if I go... I will come," not "if I go... you will come, you will follow Me," but He says, "I will come again." What a bright, blessed prospect, His literal, personal return. Not death; His coming in the New Testament never means death, but exactly the opposite.

In John 21, "Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou Me. Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die." When Jesus spoke here of John's tarrying till He come, was it death that entered their minds? No, it excluded the very thought of death to them, and the saying went abroad among them that he should not die. In death the body is "put off" (2 Cor. 5:8; 2 Peter 1:14). At His coming, the body is "changed" (1 Cor. 15:51; Phil. 3:20, 21). In death I depart to go to Him (Phil. 1:23), whereas at His return, He comes for me (John 14:1-3). At death, I go into His presence a disembodied spirit. At His coming, I go into His presence with a body like His own. I assure you, beloved Christian, there is no coffin, no shroud, no grave in the Christian's "hope," but a descending Jesus, an ascending bride, bodies of glory and eternal rapture. Oh, what a blessed transporting!

Love is not satisfied apart from its object, and we cannot do without Him, and He will not do without us. For us His blood was spilled, on us His heart is set, and with us He will share His glory. Yes, He will come for us; His own blessed lips have said it and shall we distrust Him? May we look and watch and wait. The "little while" is fast wearing away; we may be in the last year, the last month, the last week, the last day. Do we realize it? Is it vividly before our hearts? Is it a living expectation and desire? Let Satan crowd nothing between your heart and this blessed hope; indulge, cherish and foster it. It will give brightness to your way, lightness to your feet, and more, it will delight His heart.

Four Exceptions

But you might ask: "Is it not appointed unto men once to die?" Yes, this is the general appointment of God, but I find four exceptions to the law of death in the Word of God: Enoch, Elijah, Jesus, and the Church. Enoch and Elijah escaped death, Jesus overcame it, and the saints who are alive at His return will triumph over it, making the very heavens ring with that anthem, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" We may die, fall asleep, but even then death is not to be looked at as a necessity but as a gracious provision. That blessed One has robbed it of its terror, extracted its sting, and made it a door into His presence. But remember, death is not our hope, but His coming.

We have been looking at the fact of His coming; let us look at the manner of it. "And when He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, 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." This same Jesus! What a word for those hearts that have had born in them true bridal affection for Himself. What tidings of joy to the widowed heart and how real it is.

Bridal Affection

That One who talked with the woman at Jacob's well, that One who raised the widow's son at the gate of the city of Nain; He who found part with Martha, her sister and Lazarus and loved them is the One for whom we wait. He who passed through this scene, the holy, lowly, gracious Man, binding up broken hearts, and filling empty ones, He who passed out of it by the cross and tomb, He is coming—Jesus is coming again! Does not your heart long to see Him? F.C. Blount

Law—Grace—Truth

"The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." John 1:17. The law told man what he ought to be. It did not tell him what he was. It told him of life if he obeyed, of a curse if he disobeyed, but it did not tell him that God was love. It spoke of responsibility; it said, "Do this, and live." All this was perfect in its place, but it told neither what man was nor what God was; that remained concealed, but that is the truth. The truth is not what ought to be, but what is—the reality of all relationships as they are, and the revelation of Him who, if there are any, must be the center of them. Sin, grace, God Himself, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are revealed as they are. What man is in perfection in relationship with God, man's alienation from God, obedience, disobedience, sin, God Himself, heaven and earth—everything finds itself placed where it is in reference to God, and with the fullest revelation of Himself—while His counsels even are brought out, of which Christ is the center.

Questions and Answers

QUES. Why is it that healing as recorded in James 5:14 is not practiced more today? Is it a reflection on the state of assemblies?

Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. James 5:14, 15.

ANS. First, we notice that the one who initiates any practice of the promise to save the sick in James 5, is the sick one himself. He must then call the elders of the Church. It may be difficult to know who these elders are in the divided and weak state of the Church. Prominently, faith must be there, first in the one who calls and then in those who, as overseers or elders, have a responsibility to discern the case and whether to act or not to act. The promise is that the prayer of faith will save the sick. The power is from the prayer and not any miraculous gift of healing given to any persons.

As to the second question we say, yes, it is a reflection on the state of the assembly. Also perhaps there are few who have faith to act according to this provision.

Ed.

Editorial

Dispensational truth is very important to learn in order to understand the Bible clearly. The centerfold of this January 1988 issue has a dispensation times chart. In reading God's Word we need to carefully notice to whom God is speaking and about whom He is speaking. Of course, all Scripture is for us but not all is about us nor expressed directly to us.

One unique feature of this chart is that when it is folded the Old Testament times are before our eyes and uninterruptedly connected with the part that is still future. To see this plainly is a great help in understanding the prophetic teachings of much of the Old Testament.

Notice especially how the word ISRAEL fits together and also EARTHLY PEOPLE are then connected. When the chart is opened, they are separated and show this present period when God is not dealing directly with Israel. But the gifts and calling of God are without repentance and He will, in His own time, fulfill all His promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham will reign in righteousness for 1000 years.

Time is like a parenthesis in eternity. The line from one arc to the other arc shows time past and time ahead. The circle is the present interval of grace when a heavenly people are being called out and prophetic time is not calculated.

Proceeding on the line from left to right: Innocence was the first test of man; Conscience came in with the fall and serves as a check against sin. With no other restraint though, "the wickedness of man was very great in the earth," and because "the earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence," God judged it with a flood.

Next, upon the cleansed earth God put authority or government into the hands of man. This is a further check on evil and, along with conscience, still goes on. If we think of these two as dispensations, we have to say that they began but they have not stopped.

Promise was given to one man, Abraham, and his descendants through Israel. Promise is not yet completed but will be in the millennium.

The law is clearly a dispensation that involved one nation and began with Moses and ended with Christ on the cross. He fulfilled the law but died under it and now that test of man in the flesh is over. (Rom. 10:4.)

The present nearly 2000 years we speak of as the dispensation of grace. Today God is not requiring something from man but rather offering free and full salvation to man in pure sovereign grace.

The last and coming dispensation is the millennial kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Each successive dispensation becomes more favorable to man as a test. That is, conscience received was a help to man to guide and check his behavior. In addition when government or authority came it was a further help. When law was given, Israel had a perfect rule of life in

addition to conscience and government. During the present dispensation, salvation is known and received by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit is given to indwell the believer. Also we have the complete Word of God and the Lord Jesus as our faithful and merciful High Priest interceding for us at God's right hand.

Still beyond this, the people on earth in the next dispensation will have a perfect, righteous government under Christ as King. Also Satan will be bound and so not able to tempt man in the flesh. Truly this long series of tests under which God has placed man shows His patience and long-suffering mercy toward us. We learn that He has purposed in Himself, "that in the dispensation of the fullness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him." Eph. 1:10. Ed

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!

Dispensations—Man Under Trial

Innocence

Definition

A dispensation may be defined as a period in time in which God manifests Himself in some particular relationship to man, having reference in all cases to the trial of the human race.

What is Innocence?

What is a state of innocence? It is not a condition of ignorance, because Adam had knowledge, and what knowledge it was, to be able to name all of God's creatures: "Whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof." Gen. 2:19. One sometimes hears the thoughtless query: Why could not God have created man incapable of sinning? Had He done so, man would have been a mere automaton, incapable of responding to the divine mind, incapable of virtue; in a word, he would not have been a moral being at all, but a mere creature void of personality. Innocence therefore is not a state of virtue, but a state of never having fallen. It is not a goal of attainment, but virtue, purity, righteousness, holiness, are objects which the Christian in his practical life seeks to exhibit. "Not as though I had already attained," says the apostle, "but... I press toward the mark." Phil. 3:12-14. Adam was created innocent but not holy.

The Fall—Innocence Lost

He forfeits all committed to him. Innocence is lost. This state is forever gone. The knowledge of good and evil comes in its place.

Conscience

Responsibility

Man tried under conscience is the subject of the next age. The sense of responsibility is coupled with the knowledge of good and evil which man got by the fall. Responsibility is not a mode of thought, but the very basis of all morality.

Accusing or Excusing Monitor

We have no prohibition now as in the former age, but instead a living monitor, conscience, "accusing" or else "excusing," but never acquitting.

Government

Added to conscience, which ever remains, we now have government. The transition is marked by the establishment of God's covenant with creation: "I do set My bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between Me and the earth." Gen. 9:13.

Inflexible Principle of Government

Government, or magistracy, is now introduced, the inflexible principles of which are laid down in Ex. 34:7. Let man hear this divine pronouncement: "Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation." The sword of justice, as a means of restraint upon fallen humanity, is put into the hands of Noah. This principle soon develops into what we know as civil government.

Adam held sway over the lower creation and Noah over man, as well as over the animal creation. Gen. 9:6 now becomes the penal code for the punishment of human violence: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed."

Calling and Promise

The first rays of a new light, that is, sovereign election, unconditional grace, are the next unfoldings of the heart of God to man. God begins another character of trial of the race.

Abraham

Abraham comes before us as the first heir of promise. "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out... obeyed." Heb. 11:8. But very soon we see these promised blessings lost to Abraham's children for over four hundred years while they groan under the taskmasters of Egypt. This, however, did not abrogate the divine covenant, although so far as testing was concerned, the age ended when the people surrendered grace for law at Sinai (see Ex. 19:8). A dispensation has to do with testing, a covenant with the unchangeable, eternal purposes.

Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph

This dispensation, with these added unfoldings of God's ways, extends from Gen. 12:1 to Ex. 19:8, a period of 430 years, more or less. In this period we get the history of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph, whose lives furnish us with many beautiful types.

Law

Grace Surrendered for Law

At Sinai, Israel voluntarily accepted the law and surrendered unconditional favor, divine grace. But God does not fail His failing people. He ever has a resource at hand. The law did not abrogate the Abrahamic covenant and so Israel is still "beloved for the fathers' sakes." The law came in as a disciplinary measure, until the "Seed" should come. It was our "schoolmaster" until Christ. "It was added because of transgressions." Gal. 3:19.

This dispensation now under review is a very long one, covering a period of approximately 1491 years. It extends from Exodus chapter 19 to the end of Malachi.

From Law at Sinai to the Incarnation

There are some 1091 years of the inspired record, added to which we have the 400 silent years and this brings us right up to the incarnation. It is an account of God's dealings with His people Israel, the then depositaries of His counsels. Trial in a' new relationship is now begun with an especially favored nation in view. In Ex. 19:5, we have the first "if" in God's relationship with His people. Pure grace, without the admixture of law, was now over. Conscience and government still go on but with man under added responsibility. Israel (not the heathen), a favored nation, comes under law.

Age Closes in Judgment

Coming then to the incarnation, the public ministry and rejection of Messiah the Son of God, we find that God closes the long period of "Law," in judgment. "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.... Ye shall not see Me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." Matt. 23:38, 39.

Grace

Incarnation

The New Testament begins with that inscrutable mystery, the Incarnation. "Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh." 1 Tim. 3:16. "The Word was made [became] flesh, and dwelt among us." John 1:14. "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.)" 1 John 1:1, 2.

The Eternal Son, Born in Time

The Son of God, begotten in time, is a fact and a truth aside from, or rather let us say, additional to, His eternal relationship with the Father before any work of creation was wrought. "This is My beloved Son,"—the eternal Son is owned and sealed also as Son of man (see Matt. 3:16, 17).

New Testament—Display of Grace

The New Testament then is the opening of that period which we speak of as the dispensation of the grace of God: His clemency toward sinners. Indeed, it is more than this, for the history of man's responsibility was closed at the cross, and we now come in on the ground of sovereign grace. God allowed ages to pass (the different, distinct periods in which man has in divers ways been put to the test, and in which he has had time to show what he is) without yet accomplishing His work of grace.

Trial of Man

This trial of man has served to show that he is bad in nature and in will. The multiplication of means only made it more evident that he was essentially bad at heart, for he availed himself of none of them to draw near to God. On the contrary, his enmity against God was fully manifested.

Kingdom

The fifth kingdom: the millennium begins. It supersedes the four Gentile dominions. It is the kingdom age, when righteousness reigns. "Thy people also shall be all righteous." Isa. 60:21. Undoubtedly the nucleus with which this period begins, by reason of the outpoured Spirit, will be characterized by genuine conversion (see Isa. 4:3; Ezek. 36:24-27). The long-looked-for age in which the "God of heaven" sets up a kingdom, at last arrives.

Creation Delivered

Creation "shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption." Rom. 8:21. It will be the rest that remaineth for the people of God (see Heb. 4:9), the fullness of which will be enjoyed in eternity. The seventy-second Psalm forecasts this peaceful time. Satan lies bound in the bottomless pit.

Reign of Righteousness

A King, David's Son and David's Lord, reigns over the scene in righteousness. The kingdom shall never be moved nor given to another people, but shall endure so long as kingdoms exist.

Righteous Government

The millennium is the last dispensation. It is the final trial of man in responsibility, under the rule of perfect righteousness, for then "a King shall reign in righteousness." Isa. 32:1. R. B. Wallace

The Great Distinctive Periods of Scripture History

1. From the Fall of Adam till the Judgment of the Flood—1656 years. For this long period of sixteen centuries and a half, God Left man to himself, conscience supplying the place of law. Man, unrestrained by God, filled the earth with violence and corruption, and God in judgment had to drown man and creation with a flood—a remnant only being preserved.

Distinctive character of this period: Man acting in proud self-will, or the age of lawlessness.

2. From the Judgment of the Flood till the Call of Abram—427 years. This important period is occupied with numerous grave events, which are but briefly touched upon in the sacred pages. The most important of these are the institution of civil government, the peopling of the earth consequent upon the impious Babel confederacy, and the introduction of idolatry. But three chapters in the Bible record the history of these interesting ages—Genesis chapters 9-11.

Distinctive character of this period: God dealing publicly and governmentally with man.

3. From the Call of Abram till Moses, the Lawgiver and Mediator—430 years. Abram called out by the God of Glory to tread the earth as a stranger— pilgrim, and worshiper. was a most blessed intervention of grace, and the divine remedy for the then-prevailing idolatry. Man was placed for the first time on the ground of promise (Gal. 3:16). Abram also became the head of the family of faith, and of the circumcision (Rom. 4), besides forming the root and source of the "olive tree" of responsibility (Rom. 11).

Distinctive character of this period: The grace of promise and the responsibility of testimony.

4. From Moses by whom the Law was given, till Christ with whom came Grace and Truth—1491 years. "The law was our schoolmaster... unto Christ." Gal. 3:24. The law as a recognized ground of dealing with the covenant people ceased at the coming of Christ; for its lawful use now, see 1 Tim. 1:8,10 etc. During this period, kingly power was committed to Israel (1 Sam. 8), who sinned it away; royal government on the earth was then transferred to the heathen (Dan. 2), and the people placed under Gentile subjection till the year 70 A.D., when Jerusalem was totally destroyed by the Romans.

Distinctive character of this period: Law from Moses and kingly government from Saul.

5. From Christ till the Translation of the Saints of God to Heaven. This is the blessed time when a world-wide testimony to the risen Son of God is being proclaimed; it is the season too when the heirs of God and Christ's joint heirs are being gathered by the effectual testimony of God's Word and Spirit.

Distinctive character of this period: God's long-suffering grace.

6. From the Rapture of the Church (1 Thess. 4) till the Descent from Heaven with the Lord (Rev. 19). The short period lying between these events—the rapture of the Church to heaven and her subsequent descent from heaven—is a solemn and deeply impressive one, and is crowded with

weighty and startling occurrences.

Distinctive character of this period: The coming crisis and Satan's rule.

7. From the Introduction and Establishment of the Kingdom or Millennium till its Close—1000 years.

The prophetic scriptures, especially of the Old Testament, are remarkably full and copious on this delightful era, which will shortly dawn upon this world.

Distinctive character of this period: The reign of righteousness, blessing, and glory.

After this succeeds, the eternal rest of God, into which believers enter. (Heb. 4:1; Rev. 21:1-5.)

W. Scott

The City of Light

There's a city of light in a faraway 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.

Bible Challenger-01-January V.03

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the word describing the relationship to be avoided when anger is present.

1. Something to be washed, thereby concealing a secret.
2. What a grandfather used to foretell a younger brother's greater blessing.-
3. A strange characteristic found with: teachers of unsound doctrine.
4. The place where a severely tried man thought a fearful shadow rested on him.
5. Something giving an unmistakable sign when wrung overmuch.
6. Something with which the disciples were accused of eating.
7. Something which may be willing, but can be restrained by that which is weak.
8. Something within which may be sorrowful even when outward appearances are otherwise.
9. Something enabling a visionary beast to devour in a dreadful manner.
10. Something believers are said to have but may, on occasion, need to be stirred.

Answers to these questions may be found in the next issue of the Christian Treasury. R. Erisman

Bible Challenger-00-December Answers to V.02

1. Sure and steadfast Heb. 6:19
2. Oxen and sheep 2 Citron. 31:6
3. Urim and Thummim Neh. 7:65
4. Lamentation and weeping Matt. 2:18
5. Apostle and High Priest Heb. 3:1
6. Naked and opened Heb. 4:13
7. Dens and caves Heb. 11:38
8. Sins and iniquities Heb. 10:17
9. Prayers and supplications Heb. 5:7
10. Images and groves 2 Kings 17:10
11. Rioting and drunkenness Rom. 13:13
12. Ink and pen 3 John 13.14
13. Thoughts and intents Heb. 4:12

"For the word of God is quick, and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of SOUL AND SPIRIT and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Heb. 4:12.

Scripture Quotation

"BUT ZION SAID, THE LORD HATH FORSAKEN ME, AND MY LORD HATH FORGOTTEN ME. CAN A WOMAN FORGET HER SUCKING CHILD, THAT SHE SHOULD NOT HAVE COMPASSION ON THE SON OF HER WOMB? YEA, THEY MAY FORGET, YET WILL I NOT FORGET THEE. BEHOLD, I HAVE GRAVEN THEE UPON THE PALMS OF MY HANDS."

Isa. 49:14-16.

The Day of the Lord and Events Which Succeed It

PETER, in his second epistle. (chapter 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 which," (not at its first approach, but) "in 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 and 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.

The Way Through

It is very natural for people to look upon their own sorrow and affliction as greater than that of almost anyone else, and to think that God can help and deliver others easily, but their own snarled skein of trouble and care they doubt whether even the Almighty can straighten out so that the thread of life shall unwind beautifully and evenly in the order of the Lord. It often happens that the childish, the inexperienced hands, so willing to do the work, tangle the skein dreadfully, and then they cry, "O Father!" and in still trying to fix it themselves, the threads are broken, and the unseemly knots come in that mar the symmetry and beauty of Christian character so much. Then the cry comes up again, "O Father!"

We remember, in childhood, how quickly a patient mother's hands straightened the skein, and a smile encouraged our work. "All we want is a little more faith." But we still keep trying, and God lets us, and the more we try the worse things are, till our strength fails, and we have no wisdom, and we can do nothing, and we get the experience of those who "have no confidence in the flesh." Then we look to God, and keep still. "Therefore have I cried concerning this. Their strength is to sit still." Isa. 30:7.

Now, God comes in with a miracle of love. He does not upbraid; He does not condemn. His patient hand, His wise hand, His willing hand, straightens all the threads, for He hath promised (Psa. 50:15), and,

"No word He hath spoken

Hath ever been broken—

The Lord will provide."

So we learn a lesson we could not learn in any other way. It is not taught by flesh and blood.

H. Crouch

The Nail

There is one Nail fastened in a sure place, and there the flagons hang and the cups too. "Oh." says one of the little cups. "I am so little and so black, suppose I should drop." The flagon says, "I am so heavy, so weighty, suppose I should drop." One cup says, "Oh, if felt like that golden cup. I should never fear falling." And the gold cup answers, "It is not my being a gold cup keeps me, but it is all by the Nail! If the Nail comes down, we all go! The cup may be gold or pewter, but so long as the Nail remains, the cups all hang safely." (See Isa. 22:23, 24.)

“As Many As I Love I Rebuke and Chasten”

It is still true. "As many as I love I rebuke and chasten." You may be quite sure you needed all you have passed through, for He loved you too well to let you suffer more than needful, or less than was for your good. When we reach home we shall look back and see how perfectly wisdom and love worked together in allowing all that happened to us on the way. But it is well for us not to leave the unraveling of the "why" and "wherefore" till "that day," for it is meant for our present profit. I believe we may save ourselves from many a sore trial by more readiness to learn the lesson and yield to the discipline.

There are two things that help us to discern what our Father is doing. One thing is the knowledge of ourselves; for instance, if I am of a grasping, covetous disposition, I may for a long time be deceiving myself by thinking it is prudence and thrift, and so never discover that He who loves me and knows me so well is seeking to bring me to judge this covetous disposition. But as soon as I have my eyes open to the truth about myself, I see what my Father is about with me. The other thing is a knowledge of Christ, and that all God's ways with us are forwarding the one end, to conform us to Christ, and we may be sure that all in us contrary to Christ or unlike Him will not be allowed to pass; there will be patience and long-suffering, but no indifference on these points. So, the more we learn of Christ, the wiser we shall be as to God's dealings with us.

Then there is another thing we might mention: the thorough surrender of our wills. We are slower to do this than we think we are. We are given to all kinds of shifts and schemes to have our own way without seeming to go against God's will. We deceive ourselves in this but we cannot deceive Him. So He is ever teaching us that His will alone is the "good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God." G. G.

“Is It Possible to Communicate With Departed Spirits?”

As to people receiving replies from departed friends, we believe it to be the direct agency of wicked spirits, who are allowed of God, in His judicial dealings, to deceive those whose hearts are turned away from the teaching and authority of His Word and the ministry of His Holy Spirit. Luke 16:26 teaches us that none of those who die in their Sins can come back, and as to those who sleep in Jesus, the teaching of the entire New Testament goes to prove that they would not come back to this earth to communicate with those who, not content with God's Word and Spirit, turn to demons in order to hear things which God never intended them to know. In short, we believe the whole thing to be an awful delusion and deceit of the devil, and we would most solemnly warn our readers to have nothing whatever to do with it. We cannot believe that anyone having the fear of God in his heart could have anything to do with such downright wickedness. It stands on the same platform with witchcraft, traffic with familiar spirits, and the heathen oracles. Let Christians beware how they tamper with the works of Satan! C.H. Mackintosh)

Drugs—Modern and Ancient

During the turbulent nineteen sixties, great promises were made by some in high places that mankind was on the threshold of a new age of experience and enlightenment. This was to be made possible by the use of drugs that could expand the mind to higher realms of thought and perception. The new enlightenment was even projected to have religious significance.

This promise of increased perception was not just the claim of the drug pusher on the streets of the city, but of the learned men in high places. Two psychology professors from the great Harvard University, Dr. Timothy Leary and Dr. Richard Alpert, were among those in learned places who were experimenting with what was thought to be a very promising, mind-expanding drug, LSD. Students exposed to this drug were experiencing more vivid perception of colors and sounds and sometimes what seemed to be an experience of religious significance. Some experiences appeared to be pleasant and enlightening and others were nightmarish and frightening.

In the winter of 1962-1963, President Pusey of Harvard fired Dr. Leary and Dr. Alpert for their dangerous experiments with drugs saving. "You may be making Buddhas out of everyone, but that's not what we're trying to do." However, Leary and Alpert continued their experimenting outside the university. The stories of so-called expanded-mind-drug experience became known to the public and many started experimenting with LSD in all sorts of ways that often led to disastrous results. The only legal manufacturer of the drug, Sandoz Pharmaceuticals, stopped making it because of the many tragedies associated with its use. It had hoped that uses for it could be found in treating people with mental disorders. The harm caused to people by this drug is now well-known and its use has waned in recent years because of the violent side effects. However, the search goes on for the ideal drug that gives "expanded minds." The use of mind-expanding ("hallucinogenic") and other drugs is not really new. Timothy Leary linked the LSD experience with that described in the Tibetan Book of the Dead.

Drugs Used in Old Testament Times

The Greek word for sorcery in the New Testament is pharmakia and signifies the use of medicines, drugs and spells for evil purposes. Going back to Old Testament times, it is believed that the word "sorceries" also includes the use of drugs for evil purposes. In Ex. 7, Moses and Aaron had a confrontation with the sorcerers (magicians) of Egypt. In order to show the power of the Lord behind the request that Pharaoh let Israel go, the Lord gave Moses and Aaron the miraculous power to transform Aaron's rod into a serpent. The magicians responded by producing serpents from their own rods.

But Aaron's rod swallowed up the magicians' rods. The serpents produced by the magicians must not have been living as the magicians could not produce lice when Aaron brought forth lice in a later plague. The magicians could not produce life (lice) and acknowledged that this was the "finger of God." But they were imitating the miracles that the Lord gave Moses and Aaron to do. They were able to make it appear. at least, that they were doing the same miraculous deeds, but were powerless to create life. And then the magicians suffered pain under the next plague (boils) and could not stand before Moses. They were not able to protect themselves. In 2 Tim. 3:8. these magicians are referred to and identified as Jannes and Jambres.

Occult Practices

It is stated that the truth will be resisted in the last days in the same manner that these withstood Moses. This is by imitation and often through occult practices. It is significant that the meanings of their names (perhaps titles) are the "foamy healer" and "the oppressor." The foamy healing and oppression are altogether the effects produced by drugs as well as other occult practices. Still men in our day are searching for and claiming to get religious experience through drugs. But the effects are "foamy" and "oppressive." Those who claim religious experience through drugs are thus fulfilling prophecy. Their minds are described as "corrupt" (2 Tim. 3:8). A current expression is "blown minds." On drugs, some users think they are so great they can step out of a ten-story building and then on another occasion so small that they cannot step up a curbing. Their minds have been corrupted.

The word "witchcraft" used in the Old Testament included drug usage and is severely condemned. "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live. Ex. 22:18. In Nah. 3:4, the word "witchcraft" carries the same meaning and is given as the cause for the destruction of Nineveh. The ancients derived drugs from natural sources. Natural products and chemically modified, natural products are used in our day.

It may not be realized by all Christians now but drugs were a problem in the early Church. In A.D. 315, a council of churches was held in Ancyra to forbid the use of all "pharmakia" in the church. We are considering an old problem, one of the enticements of Satan to lead men to destruction.

Continued drug usage opens up the mind to demon possession. The man in Luke 8 had the characteristics of a man under the influence of drugs. He was driven into the wilderness as men on drugs are driven into a wilderness of mental confusion and living conditions. He lived among the tombs. They and their friends come to an early death. He broke the chains. Men on PCP ("angel dust." but what kind of angels?) break handcuffs. He was afraid of torment. Drug addicts are in torment until they get another dose to last a while. He wore no clothes, symbolizing the moral condition of these people.

The man in Luke 8 fell down at Jesus' feet and acknowledged Him to be the Son of God. This is the only hope for drug addicts, as well as anyone else. He begged Jesus not to torment him. So Jesus delivered him from the torment that he was in and then he sat at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind.

The Only Hope for Drug Addicts

He wanted to be with Jesus. This will be his happy lot in eternity, but for that time Jesus told him to be a witness to his own house of the great things that Jesus had done unto him. He did this and, as a result, when Jesus returned (He will return soon) the people were all waiting for Him. The demoniac got the blessing for his repentance and acknowledgment of Jesus as the Son of God. But the "drugs-for-religion" promoters of our day think that they can rise to the heights and have an experience with God and in this position be "as God." This was the promise that Satan made to Eve in Gen. 3. The experience, though, is with a demon, one of Satan's ministers, and not the true God.

Religious Experiences

The Late Aldous Huxley, the grandson of Thomas Huxley of evolutionary fame, wrote a book titled *Doors of Perception* in which he proposed that drugs may be the way for man to get superior perception, reality, and religious experience. A good drug trip is "heaven" and a bad one is "hell" to him. He rates marijuana as bad but the mescaline of the peyote plant that the American Indians used as more indicative of what might be achieved in the way of drug usage for religious experiences. He and others claim the side effects of mescaline are not too bad. But people who have lived around Indians who have used mescaline know very well the damage that it does to their thinking and the violent crimes that they commit under its influence.

Aldous Huxley tried to link the drug experience with descriptions given in the Bible. He cited Ezek. 28 as one description of the drug experience and claimed that it is a religious experience of Biblical content. He cited the precious stones For covering, the anointed cherub, the stones of lire, the brilliance mentioned in Ezek. 28 as the experience of one on drugs and thus "truly religious." But the true and faithful Christian scholar recognizes the description in Ezek. 28 to be descriptive of Satan. Huxley apparently did not recognize this, but supplied the information to connect the drug experience with satanic activity. Here Satan most precisely fits the description of an "angel of light."

After the "light" the drug experience may become "dark" and filled with terror and lead to violent and destructive action, which is in the end Satan's object. So it is well known today that mental problems, murder, suicide and crime are often a result of drug taking.

The word "witchcraft" in Gal. 5:20 definitely refers to the taking of drugs as one of the works of the flesh. The same is true of Rev. 9:21. Even after one-third of the people of the earth are killed, those who remain will not repent of the sorceries (pharmakia) nor of the fornication, nor their thefts, nor murders. The drug taking is very expensive and some engage in fornication, robbery, and sometimes murder to get the money to purchase the drugs. This is a well-known association in our day. Huxley, Leary and others have proclaimed that drugs will be the religion of the future in spite of the setbacks.

Search for the Ideal

They are hoping to find an ideal drug that will give them a "religious" experience without the negative effects produced by the presently known drugs. The field in which to search for this drug is indeed vast. There are over four million organic chemical compounds that have been cataloged. Only one is needed to give man this "religious" experience. It may be that God will allow this for a season in the apostate church after the Lord comes. For when the apostate church of Babylon is destroyed (in Rev. 18), the stated reason given is "for by thy sorceries (pharmakias) were all nations deceived."

Eastern mystics have used drugs for centuries and have of late been introducing them into the Christian world. The door for this goes back to higher criticism. Higher criticism, denying inspiration and the supernatural content of the Scriptures, left man cold and in doubt. Rationalism did not give joy or hope, so men turned back to religion but would not admit their error and accept that the Bible was indeed the truth, inspired of God. They were looking for a religious experience, not just faith and hope and the witness of the Holy Spirit within. This search for experience opened up the door to the Eastern Mystics, who promised experiences through meditation, drugs, etc.

The "good" religious experience commonly reported under the influence of drugs causes a melting into unity of all difficulties and conflicts. The person thinks that all is well and there is no basic problem of the human race.

Be Reconciled to God

This is deceiving and causes the person to forget the Biblical truth that man is a sinner and an enemy of God, in need of repentance and reconciliation to God through the atoning sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ. The drug taker thinks that he is part of that great unity of which God is part.

He has no felt need of repentance. The Bible teaches that the repentant sinner is reconciled to God by His grace and then He blesses him with all spiritual blessing in heavenly places (Eph. 1:3). But we are then told that we are in a conflict with "wicked spirits in heavenly places" (Eph. 6:12 marginal reading). The "religious" drug taker too thinks that he is in heavenly places. But his experience is really with a demon (wicked spirit) in heavenly places. Often the experience of a drug taker is with an evil, fearful, destructive demon. He goes into this state to join with the wicked spirits that the Bible tells the Christian that he is in conflict with. So the drug taker or transcendental meditator has put himself in a dangerous position. The mental problems and suicide, murders, etc., committed by people on drugs are ample proof of the influence of the "wicked spirits in heavenly places." So the claims of "religious experience" by the drug taker may be true, but it is a bad one with destructive demons with which the Christian is warned that he is in conflict. There may be times when the religious experience is pleasant, but this is Satan's way of luring one into deeper involvement. There are two masters, two ways, two destinies. The Devil would fool people to make them think that all is merged into one great unity which is God. But we must make a choice.

Two Destinies

The Scripture tells us that Satan and his followers will be cast into the lake of fire for eternity.

So far, our subject of discussion has been drugs that affect the mind (and soul and spirit in the end).

Drugs as Mercies

On the other hand there are legitimate drugs for the healing of many bodily pains (i.e. aspirin) and ailments (antibiotics).

The point of contention is not with these. Their usage is regulated by government agencies such as the Food and Drug Administration of the Federal Government and can be accepted as a mercy of the Lord to alleviate the suffering of mankind. It is those drugs that are claimed to be superior stimulants, depressants or are claimed to give an expanded mind or a religious experience that are dangerous and should be firmly rejected by the Christian.

The use of tranquilizers has greatly increased in late years. Great quantities of these are prescribed by doctors and some are sold over the counter. In small, regulated dosages these are perhaps not harmful, but the Christian needs to be careful not to become dependent upon them, for a condition of such dependence interferes with the appreciation of spiritual things. The Christian needs to live in the conscious appreciation of the Scriptures such as the 23rd Psalm:

The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. J. Wilhelm

Sorcery—Drugs

In the Acts we find a damsel possessed with a spirit of divination, or Python. This was the prophetic oracle at Delphi, held to be the center and focus of Gentile divination. An evil spirit connected with that oracle possessed this young woman.

The testimony of the evil spirit to the servants of the most high God is remarkable. It may have been compelled to speak thus when brought face to face with the power of God (as the demons owned Christ), but the apostle could not tolerate commendation from such a source—the spirit was cast out by a superior power. Her soothsaying or divination was stopped, and her master lost the source of his evil gains. (Acts 16:16-19.)

In the New Testament, besides the case referred to of the damsel possessed by a spirit of Python, we read of others: Simon who used sorcery and bewitched the people of Samaria for a long time (Acts 8:9-11); Elymas, the sorcerer, a Jew whom they met in Cyprus, perverted the right ways of the Lord. (Acts 13:6-11.) These used magical arts (called curious arts in Acts 19:19) and bewitched the people. Another word is used in the Greek for sorceries in Revelation which refers to drugs (to stupefy with drugs) and then for any system of sorcery by incantations. (Rev. 9:21: 18:23: 21:8: 22:15.) Sorcery is classed with the grossest of sins, and is also applied to the professing church in mystical Babylon. The same word is translated "witchcraft" in Gal. 5:20.

The above is a brief glance at the subtle power of Satan in the unseen world, by which he deludes mankind, at least where man is the willing victim. Is it not clear that divination should not be confounded with mere jugglery? However much that may be associated with it, the real power of Satan is behind it. Some sorcerers converted in modern times in various parts of the world have confessed that they were controlled by a power beyond their own, but that it ceased entirely on their believing and confessing Christ.

It is important to see that this power is of Satan because of the great increase in the present day of attempting to have communications with the spirits of the dead to which even Christians may be and have been drawn, out of mere curiosity. "Let no man beguile you of your reward... intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind." Col. 2:18.

The Conflict

"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil. 2:12)-not your own forgiveness but your own salvation. It is said to those who were already forgiven. Salvation, in the sense spoken of here, implies the whole conflict we are passing through with the power of evil. We know that we contend with the common enemy, but God is at work in us, both to will and to do of His good pleasure (Phil. 2:13). We know the deep concern and regard God feels for us as committed to this conflict. We are fighting under His orders-doing His will in that thing as well as in others. God is so far from leaving us in any way, that He assures our soul He is pledged to see us through to the end, but He will have us pass through this scene with a solemn sense of the war with Satan in which we are engaged. W.K.

Editorial

Snow is beautiful. Everyone seems to agree with this statement although many want to stay inside where it is warm and look outside to see it. Others just revel in it, especially the children and young people. Its properties of lightness, whiteness and slipperiness make it wonderful for skiing and sledding and using snowmobiles.

Where does snow come from? Let us see what Scripture says.

For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: so shall My word be that goeth forth out of My mouth: it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. Isa. 55:10, 11.

Whatever comes from heaven is good for the earth sooner or later. Water is absolutely essential for life. Snow is water in a different form and wherever it falls it reflects the light so efficiently that even in the middle of the night there is enough light to see the way. Also a covering of snow is a wonderful insulation to protect whatever life is below it. Snow also deposits some nitrogen for plants to feed on.

The Word of God which likewise has come down from God out of heaven is of far greater value. In Isa. 1:18 it says, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." New birth and growth for the new life are by the Word of God. Frequently, when the Lord is described in Scripture, snow is used to show His purity, brightness and glory. We cite the following examples:

I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like the pure wool: His throne was like the fiery flame, and His wheels as burning fire. Dan. 7:9.

His raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them. Mark 9:3.

His head and His hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and His eyes were as a flame of fire. Rev. 1:14.

The writer of the Proverbs speaks of snow as refreshment saying, "As the cold of snow in the time of harvest, so is a faithful messenger to them that send him: for he refresheth the soul of his masters." Prov. 25:13.

Job also tells us where the snow comes from in chapter 37, verses 5 and 6: "God thundereth marvelously with His voice; great things doeth He, which we cannot comprehend. For He saith to the snow, Be thou on the earth; likewise to the small rain, and to the great rain of His strength." How wonderful to know that our God is in full control of all the elements. For the Christian, nothing happens by chance but instead. "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." Rom. 8:28.

Men are sure that snow always appears as tiny six-sided crystals. Why is this? Ed.

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!

Everything

"In everything"—not only when you know the will of God—"make known your requests." It is not a question of intelligence, but of confidence in God. "And the peace of God...shall keep your hearts and minds." Phil. 4.

Resource and Strength

Philippians 4

What a blessed reality it is to know and to have the peace of God which passeth all understanding keeping the heart and mind through Christ Jesus.

Now observe how we must be in spirit in the sphere of the peace, in order to have our heart and mind kept. Our poor hearts and minds could never keep the peace of God. The best illustration I know of the peace of God is that magnificent declaration of Psa. 29:10. "The Lord sitteth upon the flood; yea, the Lord sitteth King forever." It is striking, too, that the word rendered "flood" is elsewhere applied only to the deluge of Noah. Thus, above all the desolations of Garth, in the serenity of His own majesty the Lord sits as King. Notice the verse that follows this: "The Lord will give strength unto His people; the Lord will bless His people with peace." In a higher and fuller way the apostle tells us that the peace of God which passeth every understanding shall keep (as in a garrison) your hearts (that is the affections, which the word "hearts" refers to,) and minds (the motive power of the man).

There is nothing so often disturbed as our minds, especially if activity characterizes them. But if our God puts His own peace as a garrison to guard the heart and mind, all quiet and rest is secured in the stronghold of that divine fortification. This is the only way we can enter into the deep meaning of how our strength is to sit still.

When the Israelites stood on the shore of the Red Sea, with its waters as yet unopened before them and the fear of the enemy behind them, the word to them was, "stand still and see." In like manner we see, as it were, a divine transaction for us, but in accomplishing which we had no part. Now as garrisoned by the peace of God we learn the blessedness of the word, "Be still and know that I am God."

The Apostle Paul gives himself as an example in verse 12, "I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need." Thus he tells us how he had passed through all the circumstances. How often have we heard the remark: "You know nothing about it, for you are not in it." Now, it is well to remember that one needs to be out of trial, as having passed through it in order to sympathize with one in it. Then it is that we can witness to the grace, peace and power which sustained us. We can say in some sense, "I have found Him to be all I needed and more, thank God."

It is very interesting to see how the apostle was passed through all the exigencies of human life, so as to be in his own person the witness to the truth we have before us. One of the distinctive marks of Christianity is the resource and power which belong to it, and these are brought to light by the difficulties through which the people of God pass in the wilderness way. In another day when the sight of the land tested Israel, Joshua and Caleb could say, "The people of the land are bread for us." The Israelites were afraid of being devoured by giants at that moment!

The apostle says in verse 19, "my God." Why does he not say, "your God?" Was He not the God of the Philippians as much as of Paul? Assuredly He was. But he was speaking of God as he himself knew Him, or as we might say, experimentally: the apostle had proved Him as his God. He says, as it were, "I have been the world over and He has never failed me." "My God shall supply all your need." I can count on Him for myself and also for you. Neither your need nor mine can measure what is in Him. What is the measure? "According to His riches in glory." How blessed and how infinite! May our hearts and minds be thus kept in this divine fortification continuously. W. Turpin

Consumption of Offerings by Fire from Heaven

The first of four instances where offerings were consumed by fire from heaven is found in Lev. 9:22-24. The occasion was the institution of the Levitical order of things at the commencement of the wilderness journey under Moses and the law. The second instance occurs in 1 Chron. 21:25-30, where David has numbered the people and the judgment of God is visited upon them. He buys Oman's threshing floor and builds an altar there. He offers a burnt offering and peace offerings on that altar, and the Lord answers with fire from heaven, commanding the angel to sheath his sword. Upon this display of God's mercy and grace, David becomes afraid to approach the Lord any more on legal ground at the tabernacle which Moses had made in the wilderness. He continues, therefore, to present himself and his sacrifices at the altar which is located at Oman's threshing floor.

The third instance is found in 2 Chron. 7:1, 3. The temple has been built and is being dedicated by King Solomon. When he is finished with his prayer, fire comes down from heaven and consumes the burnt offering, and the temple is filled with the glory of the Lord. The final instance is in 1 Kings 18:36-39. Elijah has built an altar of twelve stones and saturated the altar, the wood, and the sacrifice with water. Then, he calls on the Lord to show that He is God and to turn the heart of the people again to Himself.

Each of these four instances seems to mark the beginning of something new. The passage in Lev. 9 seems to mark the beginning of the legal dispensation, while the passage in 1 Chronicles seems to mark the end of that order of things and the commencement of the present dispensation typically. Then, the passage in 2 Chronicles would seem to represent the beginning of the earthly kingdom with Christ as the King of Peace. Finally, the passage in 1 Kings speaks of the restoration of hearts to the Lord and, therefore, the commencement of renewed communion when it has been broken by other objects coming in. It is an individual kind of thing and might be our experience again and again. All these beginnings look forward to that work of Christ on the cross, which would constitute the foundation of all beginnings with God. D. Graham

Bible Challenger-02-February V.03

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the word describing the unique place Epenetus held among the believers in Christ at Achaia.

1. One of three who, by his coming, brought gladness to an apostle.
2. The name given to a child after a threefold tragedy befell the mother.
3. A woman who advised two fugitives to hide three days to escape their pursuers.
4. A man who caught three hundred foxes.
5. Someone who represented the third generation whose faith was deemed unfeigned.
6. Someone who trembled as three salient features of a gospel message were preached.
7. Someone who received three kinds of gifts as an inducement to enter into a marriage contract.
8. The father of three sons named Mishael, Elzaphan and Zithri.
9. Someone who gave names to the three wells that he dug.
10. The disciple whose timid question evinced a threefold response as to the valid approach to God the Father.
11. One of three who arrived early at her destination with sweet spices.

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

R. Erisman

Bible Challenger-01-January Answers V.03

1. Face Matt. 6:17
2. Right hand Gen. 48:14
3. Itching ears 2 Tim. 4:3
4. Eyelids Job 16:16
5. Nose Prov. 30:33
6. Defiled hands Mark 7:2
7. Spirit Matt. 26:41
8. Heart Prov. 14; 13
9. Iron teeth Dan. 7:7
10. Pure minds 2 Peter 3:1

"Make no FRIENDSHIP with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go." Prov. 22:24.

R. Erisman

“Thine Heart Was Tender”

It was a great moment in the spiritual history of Josiah when his Secretary of State brought in the book of the law and read it before him. How good if we could hear of similar doings in high places in this twentieth century!

Josiah had never seen the sacred scroll before, nor had he heard it read. How different from ourselves who possess the complete Word of God, and who may read it as often as our hearts desire! The book of the law had a great effect upon Josiah. He realized, as never before, how unfaithful Israel had been and how seriously the commandments of the Lord had been neglected. And even worse, they had been openly defied! "It came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the law, that he rent his clothes." 2 Chron. 34:19. He did still more he wept.

These particulars are recorded in both the Kings and Chronicles accounts of Josiah's reign, proving how acceptable to God was the humiliation of His servant. (Not every detail of Josiah's doings is written in both books.) Yet this king was no mere sentimentalist. He was a strong character, at that moment in the prime of life, and he was despotic in rule, accustomed to carrying all before him, happily in the right direction. High station and the possession of power tend to puff up poor flesh and make it indisposed to listen to rebuke, even though it may come from the Creator Himself.

It is said of the first Napoleon that on one occasion when he was speaking of his ambitious plans to a group of his marshals, one of them gravely remarked, "Sire, man proposes, but God disposes." Napoleon retorted, "I propose and I dispose." But he finished in St. Helena, in spite of all his boastful pride. In contrast, Josiah, like Hezekiah before him, was child-like before his God—delightful examples for all of us to follow.

The Lord appreciated the attitude of Josiah. In answer to his anxious inquiry He said, "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel concerning the words which thou has heard; because thine heart was tender, and thou didst humble thyself before God, when thou heardest His words... and humblest thyself before Me, and didst rend thy clothes, and weep before Me; I have even heard thee also, saith the Lord." 2 Chron. 34:26, 27.

The heart of man is naturally hard in relation to God. Note the apostle's words in Eph. 4:18: "Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart." The Lord Jesus, in His parable of the sower, spoke of the good seed of the Word falling by the wayside (Matt. 13:4). What could be harder, or less likely to be productive?

In contrast with this, Josiah's heart was impressionable, surely a gracious work of the Holy Spirit of God. The divine Word is likened to a hammer in Jer. 23:29: "Is not My word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" The Philippian jailer needed the hammer when Paul and Silas first had to do with him. Not so King Josiah. His heart was already tender. W. Fereday

Together

How sweet is the meditation on the word together found in the sacred pages of Scripture, and revealed by the Holy Spirit to our hearts.

The Apostle Paul reminds us in the Epistle to the Ephesians of this "togetherness." We are "quickened...together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ."

Thus we are "fitly framed together" and grow "unto a holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit." Eph. 2:5, 6, 21, 22.

In addition to being "a holy temple in the Lord" we are also "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together." Rom. 8:17.

There is a beautiful, prophetic promise in Psa. 50:5, "Gather My saints together unto Me; those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice." Furthermore, our Lord's sweet promise is: "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." Matt. 18:20. Our risen Lord is the object of our worship the center of our gathering and the great Master Builder. Through His sacrificial death and resurrection He will gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad. (John 11:52.)

So we wait for His glorious appearing and the reunion of loved ones gone before when we 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." 1 Thess. 4:17. See also Eph. 1:10.

In the light of these precious promises, what a joy it is to be workers together with the Lord, and we are reminded in John 4:36, "Both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together."

"Ye also helping together by prayer for us" (2 Cor. 1:11) so that our "hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love." Col. 2:2. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" Psa. 133:1. H. Spence

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 intercourse with better things; we walk in 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 Center of Rest

God Himself is the only center of rest.

In all creation there is movement.

The face of the world changes—*islands are formed and other islands sink beneath the ocean's waves. An earthquake hurls to the ground buildings which were thought well-founded. A volcanic eruption covers a district with destruction. Spring, summer autumn, winter, come in their rotation with seedtime and harvest. The rivers flow to the sea, and evaporation carries their waters back to the mountain tops. A child is born, grows, reaches maturity, and then his life declines and he passes away. Another succeeds and pursues the same course. As the wise man said of old, "All things are full of labor. Where shall we find rest?"*

If we take a wider view and stand in thought in the midst of the universe, we find every planet and star in movement too rapid for the human mind to grasp. We consider the moon in its orbit around the earth, the earth and its attendant moon around the sun, the sun and the earth and its moon, and the other planets of the solar system and their moons, and all the stars of heaven circling in their orbits. The mind is lost in the vastness of the heavenly mechanism, and bewildered, asks where rest can be found.

The answer is in God, in God alone.

He is the great Author of all, who caused all to exist and causes all to subsist. He is the center of rest. Stupendous, Incalculable, overwhelming power is with Him. His eternal power and Godhead are displayed, but He is past finding out. Augustine Of old cried, "O God, Thou hast made us for Thyself and our hearts are weary till we rest in Thee." God is the center of rest and in Him alone is rest found.

But He who is invisible in His essential glory, "Whom no man hath seen or men see," has been pleased to reveal Himself in the Son. And He, in His days of manhood here, cried to the weary of the world, to the restless, sinful sons of fallen Adam, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

He found for Himself perfect rest in the knowledge of the wisdom and power and love of the Father, and in the midst of the turmoil and trouble on every hand, called the laboring and heavy laden to Himself, that there in His bosom they might be in repose near His heart of love.

"I will give you rest," Yes! In the quieting calm of His presence the heart is stilled.

"I will rest you;" has been given as the idea of the promise, as a mother comforts her child—not at a distance from herself, but near to her beating heart, so our Lord rests His own in the knowledge of His all sufficiency for all circumstances and all times.

"Calm amid tumultuous motion." Like an island of rock amid the tossing of the ocean waves, so is the believer who relies upon his all-powerful, all-loving Lord and Savior.

Young Christian

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.

Profitable for Correction

All Scripture is profitable, and not only for doctrine but also for reproof, for correction and for instruction in righteousness. One thing that we naturally do not like is to be corrected. But this is so necessary and helpful in the end. Correction is for purifying and for our profit.

There is another related thing and that is training or discipline. Discipline will keep us for future exaltation, but makes us low now in this present world. It is productive, a fruitful field for the soul. Discipline comes to us from a God and Father who loves us as children. It comes in His faithfulness to us very often because we have not heeded His Word. How much better for us it would be if we obeyed the Scriptures. We would not need so much correction, and training would be easier for us.

One of the remarkable scriptures that instructs us and gives an object lesson in these things is Ezek. 17. The first ten verses of this chapter are a parable. The key, or unfolding of the parable, follows in verses 11 to 21. The last three verses are prophetic as to Christ the Nazarene, and then the millennial King. In the parable, the cedar is Judah, or the house of David. The two eagles are the king of Babylon and the king of Egypt. The cedar has merited the discipline of the Lord and the Lord uses one of the eagles, the king of Babylon, as the rod in His hand for correction. The house of David is humbled but preserved because correction is for purifying and not for destruction.

Jehoiachin, who was of this cedar, humbled himself under this eagle, the king of Babylon (the rod of the Lord for correction), and he was preserved although "base" for a season. For thirty-six years he was hid in Babylon and then exalted. For him this was a "fruitful field" (2 Kings 24, 25).

Zedekiah, his successor, was different. He disobeyed the word of the Lord and broke his own promise. He "bent" toward the other eagle, the king of Egypt, and lost everything. Such is the result of rebellion against the Lord and His rod. Instead of discipline, he gets judgment. It is happy for us if we bow to the correction of God. It is the place of blessing. First we must be broken, then blessed. Discipline keeps us for future exaltation, but leaves us base in this world. Although we may not like it, yet it is a "fruitful field" for the soul.

We find in the last three verses that the Lord Jesus, the Messiah, is the cedar of this parable in His day. He is the Heir of the house of David. The Lord Jesus humbled Himself. He took His place with the remnant that repented at the preaching of John the Baptist. The Heir to the throne was a carpenter.

Ed.

An Analysis into the Inspiration of the Scriptures

There are many fields of communication, the most important of which is God's Word handed down to us over many generations in the written form of the Bible. In this day and age, Higher Criticism, Modernism, and Infidelity are making great strides and inroads into the schools, and into the young minds of America. As a result, the Bible is being given up as the inspired Word of God. In the following paragraphs, the defense of the Scriptures will be taken up, and proofs will be given to establish the Bible as the infallible Word of God. Yet, there is not much the writer can do to defend the Book, because the Bible defends itself. The external evidence of the divine authenticity of the Scriptures is very weighty. As H.H. Snell points out so very clearly in his book, *On the Inspiration of the Scriptures*:

The attempt to prove by human reasoning and external evidence that the Scripture is God's Word would be just as absurd as lighting a candle to look at the sun. Everyone knows, except he be blind, that the sun gives light and heat. We know nothing of the sun without these effects. So every honest mind that has ears to hear and gets before God, finds Scripture so searching that it commends itself to his conscience as being the Word of God.

"The Word of God is quick [living], and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword." Heb. 4:12. As a test for good cooking is in the eating, so, the test for the Scriptures is in the reading of them intelligently. Before the surface of our subject is scratched, a workable definition of inspiration must be given. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God [literally, God-breathed], and is profitable for doctrine [teaching], for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." 2 Tim. 3:16. This verse places all Scripture on one basis as to inspiration, whether it be historical, doctrinal, or prophetic. We learn from this passage that not simply the persons who wrote were divinely motivated, but the writings themselves were divinely inspired. All writings are composed of words, and if these writings are God-breathed, the words are inspired. This is what is commonly called verbal inspiration.

Many of the attacks made upon the Book of books are not directed at verbal inspiration, but the difficulty arises as to what has been called the human element in inspiration. If the words of Scripture are inspired, it has been asked, how is it that the style of the writer is so manifest? The Apostle John's style, for instance, is clearly distinguishable from that of the Apostle Paul. The simple answer is that it is as if one used, so to speak, different kinds of pens to write with. God made the mind of man as well as his body, and was surely able to use the mind of each of the writers He employed, and yet cause him to write exactly what He wished.

Today, many people believe only those Scriptures which were spoken by the Lord Himself to be inspired. This is not the case. In the Gospel of John, it is recorded that our Lord recognized certain writings which He called Scriptures, and which testified of Himself. Again, according to H.H. Snell:

The Lord quoted from them constantly and especially taught that Moses wrote of Him. But more than that, He also recognized that Moses wrote them not by his own will, but by the Holy Spirit,

and that He ranked Moses' writings as of equal authority with His own words.

"If ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe My words?" John 5:47.

Our Lord, however, does not stop at the book of Moses, but goes on further to recognize the rest of the Old Testament. "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." Luke 24:27. Later in the same chapter, He said, "All things must be fulfilled, which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning Me." Luke 24:44. R.A. Torrey states that, "The Jews divided the Old Testament into three parts—the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms—and Christ takes up each of these parts and sets His stamp of authority upon it." John N. Darby said, "Christ owned, then, what we call the Old Testament, and owned it as we and the Jews have it." Taking a quote from W. Kelly, we see that, "divine authority belongs equally to both the Old and New Testaments. Its authority is because God speaks in both through His instruments."

You may ask, what composes the Scriptures? Our English Bible is composed of sixty-six books, thirty-nine of the Old Testament, and twenty-seven comprising the New. Although the Bible was written by many different writers (some thirty in number), and at different times, it is complete in the full sense of the word. The life span of many writers did not reach into that of another. Some books were written hundreds of years apart. Yet, the plan, unity, theme, completeness, and freshness of Scripture are clearly seen.

It must be acknowledged that the order in which the books appear in our Bible is very remarkable. Some regard it as having been divinely overruled, for there seem to be distinct traces of design in the arrangement, which it is not only impossible to ignore, but which is in itself a constant source of admiration and wonder to the thoughtful Bible student. Sidney Collet testifies that, "the more the Scriptures are studied, the more one is convinced that they are self-contained and absolutely complete, revealing a perfect plan throughout." Mr. Collet also goes on to say that:

The Bible is certainly a complete organism. For on a careful study it is found to contain in itself a well considered plan throughout, showing that each part belongs to, and contributes toward the beauty and perfection of the whole, the correspondence of its various parts, each to the other being strikingly apparent, the whole being pervaded in every part by the Spirit of Life, and manifesting in itself such completeness, that no single part can be dispensed with while there is neither need nor room for any additional part or parts.

In fact, it is most significant that the Bible contains three solemn warnings against any attempt to add or detract from the words of God, and this significance is greatly enhanced by the fact that the first of such warnings was written by the first of all writers of the Scripture. The second warning is found near the middle of the Book, while the third was written by the last of the writers. These references are important and worth looking at. "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it." Deut. 4:2. "Add thou not unto His words, lest He reprove thee." Prov. 30:6. "I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." Rev. 22:18, 19.

Upon further discovery, the Holy Scriptures are found to have a theme. What is its theme? Mr. Snell says. "The one grand absorbing and paramount subject throughout is Jesus, the Son of God, who is Lord of all and the Savior of sinners that believe." He goes on to say:

The bright line which runs from Genesis to Revelation, and gives the whole Book a unity which nothing else could, is its testimony to infinite glory of the Person of the Son, the eternal efficacy of His one sacrifice for sin, His moral worth and excellency beyond all thought, and the glorious offices in our account He now sustains, as well as His glories yet to be revealed.

A. J. Pollock goes on further to state in his book, *Why I Believe the Bible*:

The whole of the Scriptures revolve around the Person of the Son of God. The Pentateuch gives us the figures of Christ, the Psalms, the feelings of Christ, the Prophets, the foretellings of Christ, the Gospels, the facts of Christ, the Epistles, the fruits of Christ, and Revelation, the final judgment of Christ.

Indeed, when we come to see that the Book testifies of this wonderful Person, and the Person testifies of the Book, and that these testimonies stand or fall together, it must be concluded that we either must receive both the Book and the Person, or refuse both the Book and the Person. There is not any middle ground. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." John 1:1. It is shown in this verse that both the Book and the Person are interwoven, as they are one.

The pages of this wonderful book are alive and fresh. Scripture though old, is always new. It carries with it a freshness and power to the heart and conscience as no other book does. All the changes in the world and in mankind never seem to affect it. This is surely not true of any other book. The Bible is the only book that we do not judge; it judges us. If this book were written by man, it certainly would not condemn mankind, but tend to exalt the human race.

You may ask, "If the Bible is God's book, why didn't He write it in plain language so an ordinary person could understand it"? According to H.E. Hayhoe, "There is nothing in Scripture contrary to reason, yet it does contain what is beyond reason, and must necessarily do so, because it comes from God." The Bible is the only book that the natural man cannot understand. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." 1 Cor. 2:14. Again quoting from H.E. Hayhoe, "This book teaches a religion of faith, not reason, for reason can never travel beyond the realm of ideas—facts are always the fruit of testimony or experience." The Apostle Paul could say with certainty, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day." 2 Tim. 1:12. It presents the truth of salvation simply enough for a child, yet contains heights and depths for the meditation and instruction of the most spiritual believer. "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Matt. 18:3.

It has been said that the Old Testament is the New Testament concealed, and the New Testament is the Old revealed. A quote from A. J. Pollock will bear this out:

So it is with the Old Testament in relation to the New. For instance, the prophecies of the Old Testament in relation to the coming of Christ into the world, the place and manner of His birth, His

life, His death, His resurrection, are all answered in the New Testament, with their fulfillment to the very letter. Again the sacrifices, sin offerings, burnt offerings and peace offerings, offered century after century on Jewish altars were prophetic in their character. They emphasized that there is no approach to God except through the offering up of the life of a victim, spotless and without blemish.

"Without shedding of blood is no remission." Heb. 9:22. "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." 1 John 1:7. Again and again, New Testament scriptures fulfill Old Testament scriptures.

Prophecy is a very deep and complicated subject, and it is not the writer's purpose to enter into it very deeply in this paper, but only to cite those events which stand out.

He was to be born in Bethlehem (Mic. 5:2.) Fulfillment: Luke 2:4-6.

He was to be sold for thirty pieces of silver (Zech. 11:12.) Fulfillment: Matt. 26:14,15.

He was to be born of a virgin (Isa. 7:14.) Fulfillment: Matt. 1:18-25.

His hands and His feet were to be pierced (Psa. 22:16.) Fulfillment: John 20:24-29.

His side was to be pierced (Zech. 12:10.) Fulfillment: John 19:34-37.

His garments were to be divided among the soldiers who crucified Him, and for His vesture they cast lots (Psa. 22:18.) Fulfillment: John 19:23, 24.

They were to give Him gall and vinegar as He hung on the cross (Psa. 69:21.) Fulfillment: Matt. 27:34.

He was to be buried in a rich man's tomb (Isa. 53:9.) Fulfillment: Matt. 27:57-60.

Today, the Scriptures have been translated into thousands of languages and are being carried to every corner of the globe. All types and conditions of men come under its influence; men of high degree and lowly birth, men whose skin is white or brown or black—all come under the mighty influence of the Book of books. No other book in the world can boast of an influence like this.

Scripture itself furnishes a test from which it emerges triumphant. In the Gospel of Matthew we read of this test:

Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. Matt. 7:17-20.

There could be no finer test than this. The fruit of the Bible is good and only good, for wherever a life is molded by the Word of God you get purity, honesty, truthfulness, goodness, and kindness.

Words carry a peculiar weight when an opponent of Christianity pays tribute to the Bible. The late Professor Thomas W. Huxley, a declared agnostic said:

I have always been strongly in favor of secular education without theology, but I must confess that I have been no less seriously perplexed to know by what practical measures the religious feeling

which is the essential basis of moral conduct, is to be kept up in the utterly chaotic state of opinion on these matters without the use of the Bible.

What a tribute to the Book of books! When an enemy of Christianity can write like this, it constitutes a more powerful testimony to the Bible than could be rendered by even the best of its friends.

Is there still a question in the mind of the reader as to whether or not the Bible is without doubt the Word of God? Surely, if we have not the words of God, we have no basis for faith, and must therefore, be tossed about with irremediable uncertainty. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." Rom. 10:17. But we are not left in this state; having divinely given communications, we have on their authority divinely given certainty as to eternal salvation. By it also we have present assurance, founded on the redemptive work of our Lord Jesus Christ, that our sins are forgiven, that we have eternal life, that we are the children of God, and that we shall not come into judgment.

"To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins." Acts 10:43. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." John 3:36. "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." Gal. 3:26. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." Rom. 8:1.

What precious promises these are, and the reader may now, too, know that he has the present assurance of eternal life. If you have never read the Bible before, you have surely missed much. It would greatly enrich you to unfold its pages and discover its many hidden treasures. "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." 2 Cor. 4:3, 4. As was previously mentioned, as the proof of good cooking is in its eating, so the proof of the Bible is in the reading of it, and that in a spirit of submission. Oh that you, too, may be able to say as the Psalmist of old, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart." Psa. 119:11. You may now be able to trace out the subject further for yourself, and thus discover whether what has been stated is according to the Word of God. "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." 1 Thess. 5:21. B. Christensen

"We Know" — "We Know Not"

One is deeply struck with the divine certainty with which God has certified to us, and revealed what is beyond this life, while at the same time He has hidden all that is of the path that is before us here. He has given us to say in words of His own providing, "We know" as to all beyond. He has also said for us (though it is only individual faith that accepts it and knows it; one cannot know it for another), "We know not what shall be on the morrow." The next half-hour is not sure to any of us—nor is anything here below. The next world (as men say) is as sure as His love can make and has made it. Our place with Christ, to see Him and behold His glory, and all that shall be our portion forever, is sure. He has graciously drawn a veil over the future of this scene—only folding it back as each step requires, and as each moment passes— while He has unveiled all that is beyond, making it a present reality, whether to faith in His people, or to the sinner who only lives for the present, while that solemn future exists for him.

Inspiration of the Scriptures

The Bible—Its Unity

If a friend handed to us a ponderous volume consisting of sixty-six books, written by thirty or forty persons, and at different times extending over fifteen hundred years, would we not be astonished? Notwithstanding all their differences, there is a remarkable unity throughout. As a matter of fact, there is no book like the Bible in this respect, nor could there be, unless all the writings it contained had been under the guidance of One mind, and its communications throughout given by the One Spirit.

One thing which would be likely to strike some persons in considering the principle of unity in a book would be to compare the end with the beginning and see if there were any connection as to similarity or contrast. In the Bible it is written, "Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world." Acts 15:18. Let us examine a few scriptures as to this.

The first words we find in the Bible are, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." As a matter of fact, much of the Bible is about God's heavenly and earthly people. It also concerns things in connection with the present heaven and earth, and in the end of the Book we read of "a new heaven and a new earth." (Gen. 1:1; Rev. 21:1.) In the beginning of the Book it is said, "Let there be light: and there was light." Afterward we are told that Christ is "the light of the world" and in the end of the Book we read that "the Lamb is the light thereof." In the beginning, we read of a tree of life in the Garden of Eden, from which man was afterward excluded through his sin. In the end we find "the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits," and are taught that the faithful will "eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." (Gen. 2:9; Rev. 22:2; 2:7.)

The Beginning and the End

A river, too, was in Eden, and at the end of Revelation we read of "a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." (Gen. 2:10; Rev. 22:1.) In Genesis we see the first man (figure of Him that was to come) and his help-meet, of whom he could say, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh." In Revelation we have presented to us "the bride, the Lamb's wife.... having the glory of God" of whom it has been said, that He "nourisheth and cherisheth it," and that "we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones." (Gen. 2:23; Rev. 21:9, 11; Eph. 5:29, 30.)

Liberty of Glory

In the earthly paradise, man was in dominion over the fish of the sea, the fowl of the air, and every creeping thing. Man gave to every living creature its name. Toward the end of the Book the Lord Jesus, the last Adam, will bring this groaning creation into the liberty of the glory of the children of God, and have His rightful place as Lord of all, having subdued all things unto Himself. (Gen. 1:28; 2:19; Psa. 8; Phil. 2:10, 11; 3:21.)

In the beginning we have Satan tempting, then sin and the curse, and in the end we see Satan in the lake of fire, sin taken away and righteousness dwelling and no more curse. In the beginning there is sorrow and death; in the end we find, "no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." (Gen. 3; Rev. 20:10; 2 Peter 3:13; Rev. 21:1-4.)

Surely, then, we find a remarkable unity of thought in the beginning and ending of the Bible, though the contrasts are most striking. The Son of God had come meanwhile to:

- Accomplish redemption.
- Destroy the works of the devil.
- Take away sins.
- Make good the promises.
- Vindicate God in all His ways.
- Honor Him in perfect obedience as Man.
- Glorify God in clearing us from all iniquity, and bringing us to God to share the inheritance with Him who is Heir of all things.

Another mark of unity is found in the truth it sets forth throughout. If early in the Old Testament it is said of man, "every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually," it is said in the New Testament that "the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." (Gen. 6:5; Rom. 8:7.)

A prophet of long ago said, "All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field....The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand forever." An apostle, seven hundred years after, writes the same only adding, "the word of the Lord endureth forever.

And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." (Isa. 40:6-8; 1 Peter 1:24, 25.)

If the Psalmist exclaimed, "Forever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in heaven," our Lord said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away." (Psa. 119:89; Matt. 24:35.) If the testimony of a prophet was, "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts,"

an apostle informs us that "the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." (Zech. 4:6; 1 Cor. 2:11.)

Moses was inspired to write, "It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." We read in Hebrews, that "without shedding of blood is no remission." (Lev. 17:11; Heb. 9:22.) An Old Testament writer warned the people not to "add unto the word" which he commanded them, "neither shall ye diminish aught from it." The ancient writings are not closed without enforcing the exhortation by saying, "Add thou not unto His words, lest He reprove thee, and thou be found a liar." Nor can the canon of Scripture be concluded without the last of Revelation giving us the most solemn warning concerning it. (Deut. 4:2; Prov. 30:6; Rev. 22:18, 19.)

Take another subject. All through the entire Volume, from Genesis to Revelation, we find that since man became a sinner, he has been accounted righteous before God on the principle of faith and never on the principle of works, a fundamental truth of vital importance.

Nakedness Covered

We read that God clothed Adam and Eve with coats of skins. That is, their nakedness could only be truly covered up from the eye of God through the benefit derived from the death of a sacrifice. Abel's offering shows out the same.

Also in Gen. 15 we read, Abram "believed in the Lord: and He counted it to him for righteousness." David, who lived nine hundred years after, described the blessedness of the man to whom the Lord imputed righteousness without works, saying, "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity." Psa. 32:1, 2. These scriptures are quoted by the Apostle Paul (Rom. 4:6-8) to make clear to us that the principle on which all are justified from all things, is that of faith without the deeds of the law. Hence, "the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe." Rom. 3:22, 28.

The typical instruction in the Old Testament having its accomplishment in the New Testament, gives a remarkable complexion of unity to the whole Bible. Take, for instance, Abraham's offering up his loved and only son, Isaac. What an accurate fulfillment of this type we have in God's delivering up His only begotten Son as a sacrifice for us! In this one instance we have shadowed forth divine love and grace in laying our iniquity on Him, divine righteousness in judging unsparingly our sins on Him instead of on us, and divine power toward us in raising Him up from the dead and giving us risen life in association with Him.

Covered Union

Believers are now, by the Holy Spirit, in union with Christ ascended, for "by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." "He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit." All this most blessed workmanship of the Holy Spirit, His present ministry through gifts bestowed by Christ ascended, all the affection and care of Christ for His assembly, the perfection of the Father's love to His children, loving them as He loved His Son, are richly and blessedly brought to us through the apostolic writings. This is especially true of the writings of Paul who was emphatically a minister of the Church or assembly (Col. 1:23). This, therefore, gives them a unique charm to the believer, and through faith they necessarily produce a walk of separation and devotedness to the Lord. The important question for us is, am I living in the enjoyment of communion with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ? How can this be if His Word is not loved, received, and meditated on by us as the treasury of His thoughts, affections, purposes and ways? Jesus said, "If a man love Me, he will keep My words.... He that loveth Me not keepeth not My sayings: and the word which ye hear is not Mine, but the Father's which sent Me." John 14:23, 24.

Young Christian

Editorial

Money is a powerful motive for most people. In these modern times we see God allowing even this motive to cause a grand distribution of the oldest book in the world. Men are using the Harvard Business School approach to marketing in this decade, to produce major changes in the 200 million dollar a year retail market for Bibles.

Both the Protestant and Catholic translations are selling well. More Bibles are in more people's hands than ever before. This surely is something to be thankful about. Now, if only the possessors of these Bibles will read them, we can be assured of much blessing. Yes, there is money in selling Bibles, but there is enduring wealth beyond measure from the infinite blessing found in that precious Word of God.

Jeremiah wrote, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart." Jer. 15:16. We too, shall find it to be the very same if we just take it in and assimilate it—think upon God's Word.

Paul, who dearly loved the gospel, wrote, "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." Eph. 3:8. He tells us still more in Col. 1:25-27: "I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfill [or fill full] the Word of God; even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to His saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."

Another marvel about the Bible is its permanence. The enemy has tried for centuries to get rid of it but could not and never shall. "The Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever" and "Forever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in heaven," are two scriptures that attest to its enduring character.

The first writing that Scripture records is in Ex. 17. Before that God spoke orally to His people. Since that time, about 3500 years ago, God has by His written Word communicated more and more through the law of Moses, and in the prophets and in the psalms. Lastly, the New Testament was given and as we have already quoted from Col. 1:25, we now have all God has to communicate to us. The Word is complete, that is, filled full.

Besides all the Bibles in print today, we are thankful that also many copies are on tapes that can be listened to and so reach the hearts and consciences through the ear as well as the eye. "The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the Lord hath made even both of them." Prov. 20:12. These two avenues to the soul God desires to use to speak to us. Do we want to hear and to see? Ed.

Treasure

In the fifteenth chapter of Proverbs and the sixth verse, we read, "In the house of the righteous is much treasure." An aged Christian had an old Bible, which he kept with great care in a corner of a chest of drawers. A visitor observed him, one day, putting his Bible away, and said to him, "Now I know where your treasure is, and, yet," said he, "how strange it is, that, much as you value that book, no thief would think it worth his while to rob you of it, were he to search your home." God must be known before His Word can be valued by the soul. Now, I would ask my reader two questions: First, How much did your Bible cost? Second, How much is it worth? It may have only cost a dollar or two, but, if you love the Lord, and prize His Word, you will, like the Psalmist, say, "The law of Thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver." Psa. 119:72.

The Lord give both to reader and writer a growing desire for and delight in His blessed Word.

Bible Challenger-03-March V.03

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the word used to describe what pleasant words are likened to.

1. Something the word of the Lord is likened to because of its ability to demolish.
2. A possible prayer by those who desire the way of the Lord, and not iniquity, to have dominion in their lives.
3. The reason given why no profit came to some at the preaching of the Word.
4. A characteristic of the word of the Lord in marked contrast to the frailty of things in nature.
5. An indefinite time frame during which no rain or dew could be expected, except by the word of a prophet.
6. Something possible to do to the Word of God, when Christ is not preached in sincerity.
7. A label that should not be hastily applied to someone for speaking a word unwisely.
8. A form of nourishment the Word is likened to because of its growth potential.
9. Something the Word of God will not be when proper decorum is in evidence.

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

R. Erisman

Bible Challenger-02-February Answers V.03

1. Fortunatus 1 Cor. 16:17
2. Ichabod 1 Sam. 4:21
3. Rahab Josh. 2:1, 16
4. Samson Judg. 15:4
5. Timothy 2 Tim. 1:5
6. Felix Acts 24:25
7. Rebekah Gen. 24:53
8. Uzziel Ex. 6:22
9. Isaac Gen. 26:17-22
10. Thomas John 14:6
11. Salome Mark 16:1, 2

"Salute my well-beloved Epenetus, who is the FIRSTFRUITS of Achaia unto Christ." Rom. 16:5.

Ancient Worthies and Today

We are in danger of regarding the worthies of old time—especially those whose records are given us in Holy Scripture—in a false light. To the commonplace people of the twentieth century those characters seem to have walked upon heights inaccessible to us. We look with awe at Abraham, Moses, Elijah, and Paul (to name only a few), and perhaps we feel that we can never hope to walk as they walked, and serve as they served. The ancient worthies thus become almost unreal to us.

Now the Holy Spirit has expressly guarded against this in the case of Elijah. In James 5:17, we are told that he "was a man subject to like passions as we are." This meant that this remarkable man of God, whose name will never perish, was not essentially different from any present-day Christian. He was bold, certainly, but he could also be moody, nervous, and self-centered. Unlike human biographers, the Holy Spirit tells us the whole truth about the characters of whom He writes.

We must never forget that Old Testament believers were not favored as we are. They knew God as the Almighty, and as Jehovah, but not as Father, for the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, had not yet come to earth to declare Him (John 1:18). Moreover, as they lived on the other side of the cross, they knew nothing of the privileges, blessings, and intimate relationships which are unfolded in the apostolical epistles. Also, the Holy Spirit had not been given, as a divine favor of love; this could not be until the risen Christ took His seat on high on the ground of accomplished redemption (John 7:39). No doubt, there were from time to time special gifts with the Holy Spirit's power for particular service, but that is not the same thing as the Holy Spirit given to abide with the saints forever (John 14:16). Thus we are more favored, and have more at our command, than the prophet.

What made Elijah the mighty man he was? Prayer, preceded by deep exercise concerning the condition of things around him. He walked in conscious dependence upon God. He was his strength and stay. This surely is open to believers in any age. Sometimes we excuse our non-success in service by saying that it is a "day of small things" Zech. 4:10. Another has suggested that we had far better say, "It is a day of small men!" But why should we be small men? Why should we not be filled with zeal for the glory of God, as Elijah was? Our work will, of course, differ from his in character. Every crisis has its own needs, and God knows where to find His suited instruments. But why should not the reader say, "Here am I; send me." Isa. 6:8. W. Fereday

Thoughts

The expression of a thought always tells what the holder of it is.

God, Satan, and man, may express each one his thoughts upon a given subject. Each of them would, as certainly as the thought was expressed, reveal himself in the thought so expressed, and not only the measure (correct or incorrect) of that about which the expression is.

We see God's, Satan's, and men's thoughts about Job, in the book of that name, and Job's own, too, about himself. God's alone were according to truth, and infallible, and all the rest were wrong, or only partially right. But God's thoughts revealed the character of the speaker, as much as did Satan's his character, and of men, each his own.

Moses gave his thoughts about Israel, once and again. So did God give his, and Satan his, and Israel its own. Each speaker, at least showed out himself -though only one told the truth perfectly, according to divine light.

What a different thing in each case a saint is, as thought of by Christ, by Satan, by the world or by himself.

And what a contrast between John 17 and Rev. 12, in this connection, Christ is talking to His Father about His disciples, and Satan is accusing the brethren! G.V. Wigram

The Artist's Boy

Some years ago a great artist in mosaics lived and worked in Italy. His skill was wonderful. With bits of glass and stone he could produce the most striking works of art, works that were valued at thousands of pounds. In his workshop was a poor little boy whose business it was to clean up the floor and tidy up the room after the day's work was done. He was a quiet little fellow, and always did his work well. That was all the artist knew about him.

One day he came to his master and asked timidly: "Please, Master, may I have for my own the bits of glass you throw upon the floor?"

"Why, yes," said the artist. "The bits are good for nothing. Do as you please with them."

Day after day, then, the child might have been seen studying the broken pieces on the floor, laying some on one side, and throwing others away. He was a faithful little servant, and so year by year went by and he remained in the workshop.

One day his master entered a storeroom which was seldom used, and in looking around came upon a piece of work carefully hidden behind the rubbish. He brought it to light, and to his surprise found it to be a noble work of art nearly finished. He gazed at it in speechless amazement.

"What great artist can have hidden his work in my study?" he cried.

At that moment the young servant entered the door. He stopped short on seeing his master, and when he saw the work in the artist's hands he blushed guiltily.

"What is this?" cried the artist. "Tell me what great artist has hidden his masterpiece here!"

"Oh, Master! faltered the astonished boy, "it is only my poor work. You know you said I might have the broken bits you threw away."

The child with the artistic soul had gathered up the fragments, and patiently, lovingly wrought them into a wonderful work of art.

Do you understand the allegory? Gather up the bits of time and opportunity lying about and patiently work out your life mosaic—a masterpiece by the grace of God. God does not give many of us great things to do, but it is the odds and ends of everyday life which He sets us to pick up and make morally beautiful and glorious.

"Gather up the fragments...that nothing be lost." John 6:12.

Are we doing it, day by day? When we stand before the judgment seat of Christ, to give an account of what we did with our life here what answer shall we be able to give if He asks us: "How many baskets full of fragments took YE up?" Mark 8:20.

W. E. S.

“Consider Him”

“Meditate upon these things.” 1 Tim. 4:15.

While walking through an oat field I saw an artist painting some sheaves of oats. He had just begun, and I noticed with great surprise that instead of painting the oats yellow and the shadows gray, he was laying on blue, green and red, though I could not see a trace of any of these colors in the object.

“How is it.” I remarked, “that you use so many colors for such a simple thing? There is no blue, or green, or red, in those sheaves.”

“Indeed there is.” he replied, “and many more colors, too, but I dare say you cannot see them.”

“No, I can see nothing but yellow and a little gray.”

“That may be true.” he said. “for I painted for a long time, and only saw what you do. But by constant practice and study, I noticed many colors which I did not at the first. In that sheaf now there is a red mingling with the yellow, and in the gray shadows I see a blue most distinctly. I know it is there, because, if I were to paint my picture all yellow and gray, you would tell me it was a bad painting, very flat and dead, whereas, now, if I finish it successfully, you will say it looks life-like. Anyone can see the general colors, but the tints that give a picture life and reality, and the object all its beauty, are only seen by close and constant observers.”

Well, I thought, I never knew before how much in painting depended on close and accurate observation! No doubt I had seen as many sheaves of oats as my friend, but I had not observed them, for I had no interest in them.

That evening I read a chapter in one of the gospels. Being very tired, although the chapter was a favorite one, I am sorry to say it did not interest me much, and I felt disappointed. Ah! I thought, I must take a lesson from the artist. The reason I see so little beauty in Jesus, so little to attract me in a chapter that is full of Him, is because my eye is not educated.

Dear friends, this is the secret of finding beauty to satisfy the heart in Christ. We must have two things —interest and close study. As the painter said so truly, “Anyone can see the general colors, but the tints that give the object all its beauty, are only seen by close and constant observers.”

“Consider,” says Paul, “the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.”

It is only as we consider Him, that we find how He grows upon the soul, till soon His beauty seems too much for our hearts, His glories more than our aching eyes can bear. Young Christian

The Voice and the Ear

Psalm 16; John 10

The sheep hear His voice, and they know His voice. How wonderfully simple this is, and it not only establishes, but it keeps the soul from all danger.

It is association with the Lord here on earth, though the voice comes from heaven. It is a blessed thing to know you cannot expect less. If you enter into this line of things you cannot mix it with anything else; it excludes all human wisdom. You could not allow anything to intrude with the voice of God, and the ear that is accustomed to it is on the lookout for it. If our ear is open we are sure to hear it. Everybody has a path in this world, although it is a wilderness. Yet there is a path. The Lord Jesus did not require a path down here; he was Himself "the way."

The eastern custom is that the sheep follow the shepherd; he goes before them (they are not driven with a dog as we drive them here). They hear his voice; they know it, and follow him; they will not follow a stranger. Do you think they are going to follow a stranger? They do not raise the question, but they do not doubt the voice of the shepherd; they yield themselves to the voice they know.

"Preserve me, O God: for in Thee do I put my trust." We see here that the Lord Himself was dependent—as man He trusted in God.

The shepherd marks the way, and you have nothing to do but to follow. It is the simplest thing possible; a little child can do it. Christ did not need the way tracked out for Him, but He became flesh, became a man, and that is the reason He had all thrown upon Him by man that He had. Think of all the scorn He suffered which would never have happened if He had not become a man. He was the perfect Man, a contrast to the ruin on the earth, and He suffered for the ruin. It is a wondrous thing that we are allowed to stand with this Man; God sets us along with this Man, so that we are associated with God, and hence this Psalm can be also applied to us.

How wonderful it is to think that God and man are together on this earth. He puts us here to stand together against Satan. The place the Lord takes is being preserved.

Do you love the saints because you see this or that in them that you like or because they are God's? Do not be afraid to be found with the saints, for it is in them He takes His delights. "In whom is all my delight." As for the saints, their life exists in resurrection, where in His presence they have fullness of joy for evermore. The Lord give us to know more and more of these blessed things that we may enjoy them more for our own souls. W.F. B.

My Path

"He knoweth the way that I take: when He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." Job 23:10.

Strange and difficult indeed

We may find it,

But the blessing that we need

Is behind it.

The Light of His Presence

A Christian who has settled peace with God and walks uprightly before Him, though conscious of his many failures, loves the light of His Presence, instead of dreading it. He knows God's perfect grace in Christ Jesus. He wishes the light to shine into every corner of his heart, and into every crevice of his soul.

He may say with the Psalmist, though in a far higher, deeper and fuller sense: "Search me. O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way (way of pain or grief] in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Psa. 139:23, 24. He says so. not merely because he has been searched by the Lord and His Word, and has found how vain is the attempt of fleeing from His Presence, or of concealing or covering anything before Him, but knowing that perfect grace which makes the heart true (Heb. 10:22), he seeks those courts of light instead of fleeing from them.

Let not the Christian reader forget that it is not only now that we are to be in the light of His Presence, to judge everything that is not consistent with it, but that we all must (as a future thing) "appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." 2 Cor. 5:10. Notice the words may receive. There is the thought of retribution, not condemnation or judgment on persons, in this passage. As to the condemnation or judgment, Christ has borne that. But there is retribution: the reward for those that have done good and loss for the evil that has been done in the body.

We must take care not to go beyond the solid ground of Scripture lest we should get into swamps. Therefore, we need to remind ourselves that this debated passage, instead of weakening the sense and assurance of the believer's relationship in settled peace through and in Christ, only serves to consolidate that sense of our relationship. This can only be valued and fully realized by those who have settled peace.

The Greek word used by the Holy Spirit in this passage, and rendered in our common version by "receive" means: to carry off for my own use something which has become mine, either by promise, present, reward, or under any other lawful title. This is the original meaning of the word in Greek. Then in a general sense, it is used for, to receive, or to obtain something. Thus the word evidently conveys to us the idea of one who receives praise and reward or suffers loss, as the case may be, for the way in which he has accomplished his work.

Every good thing that a Christian may have done while in his body here below, is only through the gift and grace of God and His Spirit; still it will, through divine grace, be accounted to him as if it were all his own work. He will hear the "Well done!" from the blessed lips of his Master. He will not only receive the mark of approval from the Lord, but also the corresponding reward. This will be in the place that will be assigned to him in the millennial glory during the kingdom (not on the earth) and when we shall reign with Christ over the earth.

There are different rewards. In Matt. 25, it is a question of being faithful, during the Master's absence, with the talents He may have committed to us, without speaking of the degree of faithfulness. Thus, each of the faithful servants receives the same reward; that of being ruler over many things and entering into the joy of his Lord. In Luke 19, each of the ten servants receives the same amount, but not the same reward. The difference there, is to the degree of the faithfulness of each servant, consequently their reward is different, according to the different degree of faithfulness.

The one who has gained ten pounds, receives authority over ten cities, the one who has gained five pounds, over five cities. The reward corresponds exactly with their faithfulness. So there evidently will be a difference of reward. One star will differ from another star in glory, not as to the degree of glory in our resurrection bodies, but as to the places that we shall receive during the millennial kingdom when reigning with Christ over the earth. There will be not only the approval, but also the reward or the loss. What a solemn thought for each of us.

In the light of the judgment seat of Christ, "Who will make manifest the counsels of the hearts," everything inconsistent with that light that has been permitted in us while in our bodies, will be fully exposed and judged by ourselves. Because, being then in glory and in glorious bodies like Christ, it is the light of His Presence that will manifest everything. Flesh and self will no longer be there to deceive or to blind us. As having the mind of Christ, which we have now, only impeded so often by self and flesh, and in the perfect light of His Presence, as having bodies like His own glorious body, there will be nothing to hinder the perfect judgment, on our own part, of everything that has prevented the intended fruits of light and of His Spirit from appearing in us, when in our earthly bodies.

His judgment of approval, as to anything good done in the body, we shall receive under the deep and perfect sense of that divine grace. That is the grace to which we owe everything that is good in us, as being saved by grace through faith, which is the gift of God. "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Eph. 2:10.

As to the evil done when in our bodies, we shall judge it ourselves as God would judge it. There can be no question of personal judgment by Christ at that time for the evil done in our bodies. As to condemnation, it is a thing of the past, for Christ has borne the judgment due us. Judgment in the sense of chastisement (God's love in correcting us), where this was necessary because we did not judge ourselves by His Spirit and under His Word, will then be a thing of the past. Chastisement has to do with our present state, while we are on earth in these frail bodies of ours. There cannot be any question of personal judgment of the saints by Christ at that time, because then we shall be with Him in glorious bodies, in which there will be nothing to be judged. Thus, no sin can reappear and arise against us there as to judgment, whether it be condemnation or chastisement.

What does the apostle mean by saying, "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ?" It does not mean that the judgment seat of Christ would or could have anything to say in the way of judgment to His saints personally, for the reasons mentioned above. It does not say that we shall all be judged, but that we shall all appear (be made manifest) before the judgment seat of Christ because the saints are included.

In order to relieve, as much as possible, the last difficulty from the mind of any of us, I will give here the word of an eminent servant of Christ, which will serve the purpose better than anything I could say. The subject is of great importance for the spiritual health of every Christian, and so he says:

However great the happiness of being in the perfect light—and this happiness is complete and divine in its character—it is on the side of conscience that the subject is here presented. God maintains His majesty by the judgment which He executes, as it is written: "The Lord is known by the judgment which He executeth." Psa. 9:16. I believe that it is very profitable for the soul to have the judgment of God present in our minds, and a sense of the unchangeable majesty of God maintained in the conscience by this means. If we were not under grace, it would be—it ought to be—insupportable, but the maintenance of this sentiment does not contradict grace. It is only under grace that it can be maintained in its truth, for who otherwise could bear the thought for an instant of receiving that which he had done in the body? None but he who is completely blinded. The authority, the holy authority of God, which asserts itself in judgment, forms a part of our relationship with Him. The maintenance of this sentiment, associated with the full enjoyment of grace, forms a part of our holy spiritual affections, It is in this sense that: "happy is he that feareth always." It is the "fear of the Lord."

J. Von Poseck

“What Shall We Do Then?”

Luke 3:10

How much there is that is striking in the chapter from which the above text is taken, as well as in the chapter preceding it. The Lord's land was parceled out among Gentiles: the rightful Heir to it had just been born and placed in a manger, and an anomalous condition existed in the religious polity of Israel— two high priests. Then a voice breaks in on this state of things, but it is not the Ram's-horn trumpets of Joshua's day, claiming the land for the Lord. That would not have been confessing the ruined condition and the sins of Israel. John is not driving back the waters of Jordan to prepare the way of the Lord, but he is calling a people down here to confess their sins. It is taking the true place before the Lord of utter failure, and Jesus joins this remnant. He can attach Himself in grace to such, and when taking that position He was sealed by the Holy Ghost, and owned by the Father's voice. How good it is to be in the secret of the Lord! (See Psa. 25:14.) In later days He writes the name of His God, and the name of the city of His God, and His own new name, on the lowly remnant who hold fast His word and do not deny His name. "HE THAT HATH EARS TO HEAR, LET HIM HEAR."

Between the Two Evenings

Ex. 12:6; Matt. 26:17 -27:61; Mark 14:12-15:47; Luke 22:7-23:56: John 13:1-19:42.

"The evening and the morning were the first day." Gen. 1:5 tells us. and this mode of reckoning time prevails throughout the Old Testament, and retains its place in the New also, as the above passages plainly indicate to us. From twelve to twelve is how we reckon our time. The Jewish day was from six to six of our time, and commenced at six p.m.

This prefatory observation is the key to the order of events that took place on the most eventful day that this world ever saw or will see.

It was "the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the Passover," that Christ our Passover sat down "at even" with His disciples. The day had commenced and the memorial of Israel's redemption from Egypt was partaken of by Him who effected that redemption. Before many hours were over, in His own person. He was to fulfill the act which that redemption had so long and plainly pointed to. It doubtless took some time to prepare the meal and after it was partaken of, (supper being ended, John 13:2,) the washing of the disciples' feet took place. We learn this from John 13. Therefore, we are not surprised to find that night had set in when Judas left the supper room (verse 30.).

The blessed instruction of John 13:31 to 14:31 follows. Then "arise, let us go hence," tells us that the supper room was left by all, and on the way the truths of chapters 15 to 17 are unfolded. Thus the night wore on, and now the Mount of Olives was reached; Jesus prayed while the sorrowful disciples slept. "What, could ye not watch with Me one hour?" gives us a clue to the duration of the prince of this world's temptation, though those words were uttered after the Lord's first return to His disciples. Presently the "lanterns and torches" tell us that darkness still prevailed.

He took the martyr's place, presently to exchange it for the victim's, and as a lamb to the slaughter He was led into the high priest's house. Here He was for some time detained; because "about the space of one hour" elapsed between the last two occasions when Peter's faith was tested (Luke 22:59). But at length the crow of the cock that awakened poor Peter's conscience bore its testimony that the morning was approaching. "As soon as it was day" He was arraigned before the chief priests and elders.

Brief indeed was their mock trial, for "when the morning was come" He was brought before Pontius Pilate the governor. With sad rapidity He was tried, sent to Herod, returned, tried again, and condemned to death. At the third hour (Mark 15:25)—nine o'clock our time—He was nailed to the accursed tree. Till twelve noon, by our reckoning, He occupied the martyr's place, and then became the victim. How blessedly able He was thus to sympathize with those who are made conformable to His death! "When the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour." Nature veiled her face in sympathy. God and Jesus must go into the question of sin alone. The doom of the earth was sealed. This darkness tells us these things.

“And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama Sabachthani, which is, being interpreted, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?” All was now over. The cup of wrath was drained to the dregs, and Jesus passed into Paradise, to be with His Father until the moment for His resurrection arrived.

Yet three hours of this eventful day remained for the interment of His body. "When the even was come" (Mark 15:42), Joseph of Arimathea begged the body from the governor, and laid Him in the sepulcher. Thus these twenty-four hours of unequalled importance closed, and the Sabbath day followed. Well may we pause and worship as again and again we trace its eventful history! D. Grimston

Extract

There is a routine of things and duties connected with earth which sometimes catches hold of us and draws us down; even necessary care for relations may get to occupy the mind so as to hinder the outflow of a heavenly walk. Oh, to be rather occupied with Christ!

Jesus As Center

In connection with position, getting onto the ground, etc., it seems the truth must have a kind of cumulative effect. It is usually after many presentations that results come in this way. "Ye seek Jesus" (not as Savior, but as Center) describes a state of soul rarely met with in these days, such is the confusion of Christendom, such is our indifference to His presence "in the midst." "There shall they see Me." is His response to this desire. Those who have gone, how sweetly true they have found it. Conforming to Jesus' appointment "they saw Him," and "they worshiped Him." Then they received that soul-sustaining word that, notwithstanding the difficulties and the darkness that would ensue, they should have Him "in the midst" — how long? Even unto the end of the age.

Nothing can lose to us this unspeakable privilege. It holds good "to the end," for those who answer to His

appointment. (Matt. 28.) Compare Matthew 1:23 and 18:20. One feels the need to inquire, with deep heart

searching, before the Lord, how far are we up to this privilege in the state of our souls: how far have we the subduing sense of His presence, so that we can say as worshipers, as those on the inside with deep and

solemn joy —"Surely the Lord is in this place." Those to whom "the meeting is dry," and "disappointing,"

belong to the class of whom it is said "some doubted." May the Lord maintain in us a vigorous faith, and the ravishing sense of His presence. Does this not antedate heaven, which that blessed One is pleased to define as, "Where I am." F.C. Blount

Editorial

People naturally are worshipers of something. Jesus said to the woman at Jacob's well in Samaria, "Ye worship ye know not what." Such is also most surely the case with many people today. Do you know what you worship? The town clerk states clearly in Acts 19:35 what the Ephesians were worshiping in these words, "Ye men of Ephesus, what man is there that knoweth not how that the city of the Ephesians is a worshipper of the great goddess Diana, and of the image which fell down from Jupiter?"

Under the elaborate system of mythology of the Greeks and Romans, they knew what they worshiped as images and idols, but they did not know who was behind those idols. This is made known in 1 Cor. 10:20. "But I say, that the things which the Gentiles [Greeks or nations] sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God."

We learn that Israel had been guilty of this in Deut. 32:15-17. "Jeshurun [Israel]... forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation. They provoked Him to jealousy with strange gods, with abominations provoked they Him to anger. They sacrificed unto devils, not

to God.”

Our highest privilege as Christians is worship. The recipe for true worship is very clearly given in John 4:23. There are two definite requirements. They are: 1. in spirit, 2. in truth. Only those who know God can worship God. Such have the Spirit and know God as their Father. It is the Father who seeks worshipers to worship Him. He desires persons before Him in this attitude. "Thy word is truth." Worship then must be according to the Word of God. There is only one way of approach to God and that is Christ. He is all, the door, the altar, the sacrifice, the light, the Word, the frankincense and Priest.

The essence of worship is that the Holy Spirit can take up our praises and prayers to God in perfect association with Christ. Our place of worship is in the holiest where all the value of Christ Himself is put to us. Worship is the return of the heart to God, known as Father, for all His blessings to us in Christ.

The first of the Ten Commandments is: "I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before Me." Ex. 20:2.3. It is interesting and instructive as to its importance that in the last chapter in the Bible is this commandment: "Worship God." Rev. 22:9.

Another very wonderful thing to realize is that in worship we are put in the more blessed place. In worship we are giving to God and the Lord said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Acts 20:35.

Love seeks worshipers under that tender name of Father, the name which signifies relationship. Christ and the work of the cross filling the heart produce, by the Spirit, a voluntary outflow of song and praise that ascends back to God who gave it, as David says in 1 Chron. 29:14, "For all things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee."

In 1 Cor. 10:22 a serious question is asked, "Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy?" Heresy or evil attached to the place of worship provokes the Lord. He must be worshiped "in spirit and in truth." John 4:24.

Ed.

Worship

When Christ was in this world, He made known to us His Father as our Father, His God as our God, as the One to whom He would draw out the worship of His people. We get that blessed subject of worship brought before us, in type, by the Spirit of God in Ex. 30.

Section One—Golden Altar

This chapter is divided into sections. In the first section we get details of a special altar, not the altar of burnt offering, but the golden altar made of shittim wood and overlaid with pure gold. This is the altar upon which, as we read in the eighth verse, the perpetual incense was to be burned before the Lord. The perpetual incense is a type of the worship of God's people. That worship was to be maintained before Himself on that golden altar. "Thou shalt put it before the veil that is by the ark of the testimony, before the mercy seat that is over the testimony, where I will meet with thee." It was to be in the presence of God, but you will notice that the veil was between. Except for once in a year on that great Day of Atonement, the priest of God as representing the people and leading their worship, was never allowed to go within the veil.

What a difference is this present dispensation, when through the grace of God we know that as a result of the wondrous work of Christ on the cross, when He said "It is finished," God rent the veil of the temple from the top to the bottom, never to be put up again. The way into the holiest was laid open for us through the blood of Jesus, so that we can draw near within the veil, having boldness to enter into the holiest. The priest went once a year into the holiest place in the tabernacle. Through the grace of God as worshipers, we can draw near at all times into the holiest of all.

Within the holiest of all,

Cleansed by His precious blood,

Before the throne we prostrate fall,

And worship Thee, O God!

This golden altar was placed before the mercy seat, over against the ark of the testimony where God could meet with them. Here we get a wonderful figure of the place of worship of the believer, where God meets us. We draw near, through the merits of the blood of Jesus, to God Himself.

"And having a high priest over the house of God; let us draw near." Do not let us be afraid, for the very One who has gone into death for us is in the presence of God for us to present our praises in such a way that they are acceptable to Himself.

To all our prayers and praises

Christ adds His sweet perfume.

Knowing how feeble and often mixed with impurity our worship is, we might well hesitate to present it before Him, the holy God, were it not for the presence of our great High Priest before Him. Our great High Priest bears upon His miter that plate with "Holiness to the Lord" on it. The priest was to bear the iniquity of their holy things so their holy things might be acceptable before God. And so in the midst of these impurities and imperfections in our worship before Him, we remember that our Lord Jesus Christ, our High Priest is in the presence of God. Because He

wears that miter where holiness shines bright, our worship is acceptable to God.

Section Two—Half Shekel

The 11th verse begins another section. The children of Israel were to take a half shekel of the sanctuary; the rich were not to give more and the poor were not to give less. That brings before us the worshipers themselves who are fitted to draw near before God. The Israelites could only draw near to God through the priest. The veil was still up and Israel was represented before God by the priestly family whom He had appointed for that purpose. Today each believer in the Lord Jesus Christ is redeemed with His precious blood and fitted by the Spirit of God to be a worshiper of God the Father.

Half a shekel of silver for each Israelite was the price of redemption. But now we are redeemed, not with corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, the Lamb without blemish and without spot. Unless we are redeemed in this way, we cannot worship God. The half shekel of the sanctuary had to be paid for each one. The rich were to have no better standing before God in worship than the poor brother. The poor brother was not to give less than the rich one. The price of redemption of each cannot be more or less than the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

How precious is this redemption ground on which we draw near before the Lord Jesus Christ. Redeemed ones are those privileged to draw near before God as worshipers. We have the case of a poor worshiper in the woman of Samaria in John 4. This speaks to our hearts of what we were when the Lord took us up and the blood of Jesus redeemed us, and now we are able to draw near into His presence without a qualm of conscience because the blood of Christ has answered for our sin before God. Rich or poor, learned or knowing little, blessed be God each has the same foundation: the perfect work and the precious blood of Christ.

Although that is our place before God, the perfect ground of redemption, do we not feel as we pass through this world how much comes in to hinder us from drawing near in worship to God? We are passing through a defiling scene; the evil nature in us so answers to what is around us. The enemy is ever seeking to trip up the feet of God's saints and to defile them. How then can we draw near to God?

Section Three—Laver of Brass

In verse 17, we have the beginning of another section. "Thou shalt also make a laver of brass." Before the priests could draw near as the representatives of God's earthly people to worship God, to execute the office of their priesthood, defilement must be taken away. There was a laver of brass. Brass in the Word of God signifies divine righteousness in the judgment of evil. You will remember that in Rev. 1, our Lord Jesus Christ in the midst of the golden candlesticks had His eyes like unto a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass. His feet trod out everything opposed to God. He had eyes like a flame of fire detecting everything contrary to God, and feet like fine brass to judge it. In the seven churches the Spirit of God pointed out what was contrary to God.

In everything we need self-judgment with purification, and that is typified in the laver, the water of the Word. Our blessed Lord, in John 13, brought that before us when He took the water and washed His disciples' feet. That lowly Savior took that place to serve His beloved people. This is the same One who made known to the poor woman the desire of the Father's heart that we might worship in spirit and in truth, He, knowing the defilement of the way, washed the disciples' feet, Peter could not bear to see Him taking that low place. How often we need to put our feet in the hands of the Lord.

Our communion with the Father and Himself is interrupted if the defilement is not met by the washing of the water of the Word. Our worship is hindered and it is solemn for us to go into the Lord's presence when there has been defilement in our pathway. Do not let us sit down there as if it did not matter. If one of the saints of God comes with unwashed feet, it will be a hindrance to the whole assembly.

You may say, "I had better not come. I have allowed this or that, which is contrary to the Lord, and I do not want to hinder other people." If you and I have contracted defilement by the way, are we to stay away? In 1 Corinthians where sin had come in, they had to judge themselves. They had to get into the presence of God, and so eat of that bread and drink of that cup. There is the precious cleansing of the Word of God to cleanse that defilement away.

The Lord Jesus Christ is alive in the presence of God for us today. We read in Eph. 5 that Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it that He might sanctify and cleanse it by the washing of water by the Word. By that Word, the Lord would cleanse our feet that we might not stay away. The water of the Word has met the defilement and maintains us in the presence of God as worshipers.

Section Four—Anointing

Oil

Another section begins in verse 22. "Moreover the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Take thou also... of oil olive an hin... it shall be a holy anointing oil." We have here the holy anointing oil. The holy sanctuary and also Aaron and his sons who were the ministers in that sanctuary, had to be anointed with the holy anointing oil. It typifies the anointing of God's Holy Spirit. In that lovely Psa. 133, it says, "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments."

It is not only some of us that are anointed with that precious anointing oil, but all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ have received the Holy Spirit of God. So we may draw near before God with holy boldness for the Spirit is the power to worship in spirit and in truth. It is the Spirit that fills the heart with Christ and causes our worship to rise up to God our Father, the source of all blessing. The Spirit is thus the power of our worship in the presence of God.

Section Five—Sweet Spices

We come now to a new section in verse 34: "Take unto thee sweet spices." The Spirit of God presents what is precious to God in the thought of worship. We have come to that hymn:

The Person of the Christ,
Enfolding every grace,
Once slain, but now alive again,
In heaven demands our praise.

All the graces that meet in the Lord Jesus Christ were there in perfect balance. I believe the sweet ointment brings before us the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ. Israel was not to make the like of this sweet incense, the fragrance of which rose to God. God alone could appreciate that incense. It was for Him, although the Person of the Christ is precious to each one of us. When we think of His preciousness to God, we are in communion with God our Father concerning all the perfections of that One, who was full of grace and truth. We lack much, but in meditating on the Person of the Christ we enter into God's thoughts.

Some of the incense was to be beaten small. It was there for the fire to be put upon it. Was not that blessed Savior as He passed through the world, beaten small? He met with the opposition of Satan and the hatred of men, but it brought out nothing but good in Him. Satan tempted Him in the wilderness. What came of it? He replied in perfect dependence on the Word of God in such a way that Satan was met and defeated.

When Peter would seek to turn Him aside from the path of obedience saying, "Be it far from Thee, Lord," the Lord said, "Get thee behind Me, Satan: thou art an offense unto Me: for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." Though the voice of Satan came through Peter, He would have none of it. What a savor to God! Let us trace that blessed pathway further. He met with the hatred of man, and utter poverty. "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head." All the pressing and all the beating small only brought out what was sweet to God. But there was more than that. It was not merely the life of the Lord Jesus Christ which was to be a savor to God; the fire had to be applied to it. The incense was beaten small and then it was laid up before God. When the moment came, the priest took the incense, and when tested by the fire the sweet savor came out to God's delight. When the One who had been tested in every way during His life presented Himself to God, the fire of God's holy judgment came upon Him and brought out in full perfection all that was in Christ for the heart of God.

W. Fosbery

Bible Challenger-04-April V.03

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the word describing a class of people who, because of their activity, are called the children of God.

1. What Christian grace displayed in our lives will have a perfect work?
2. Whose work will be made manifest in a day of declaration?
3. What is it that works for good to those who are called, according to God's purpose?
4. What mental exercise might well cause us to marvel at the power displayed in the Creator's fingers?
5. What word describes the works of those who hate the Lord Jesus?
6. From where does the work come that fashions that which can neither see nor hear?
7. Something a workman who is dividing the word of truth rightly, never needs to be.
8. The implied deficiency of those who are workers of iniquity.
9. The name given to one engaged in a Christian endeavor whose work a young man was encouraged to undertake.
10. What category of our works is plainly stated to have nil merit for soul salvation.
11. What word describes the work and act of the Lord in the coming judgment of Israel?

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

R. Erisman

Bible Challenger-03-March Answers V.03

1. Hammer Jer. 23:29
 2. Order my steps Psa. 119:133
 3. Not being mixed with faith Heb. 4:2
 4. Endureth forever 1 Peter 1:25
 5. Years 1 Kings 17:1
 6. Corrupt 2 Cor. 2:17
 7. Offender Isa. 29:21
 8. Milk 1 Peter 2:2
 9. Blasphemed Titus 2:5
- “Pleasant words are as a HONEYCOMB, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones. Pro. 16:24.
- R. Erisman

John's Epistles

The house of the elect lady was the sanctuary of the truth, and had to keep outside all that was not of it, all those who did not bring the doctrine of Christ with them. The house of Gaius on the contrary, was the guest chamber of the truth, and had to open itself to the witnesses of it. She was to be the guardian of this mystery he, the fellow helper of it.

The atmosphere within God's house should be so full of the fragrance of the name of Christ, that all who are of a contrary part should be forced out (1 John 2:19): the door at the entrance should be so closed, that the same should know that they would be kept out (2 John 10), but the welcome should be so clear and fervent, that all who savor and witness of that name, should feel themselves at home in it. (3 John 8.) Shall we not all join, beloved, in such services as these? Surely all this is Kohathite service—this is business with the ark itself. Oxen and wagons could not aid in it. (Sec Num. 7.) The material of the service is too delicate for such help. The shoulders of the Levites must do the service, and even their hands must reverently and only reverently handle the sacred deposit committed to them.

NOTE—"The doctrine of Christ" is the confession of the truth as to His blessed Person—the Christ of God as revealed in Scripture. "This is the true God and eternal life. Little children keep yourselves from idols." Words of Truth

Setting the Sails

When the famous missionary, Hudson Taylor, first went to China, it was in a sailing vessel. Near the Cannibal Islands the ship was becalmed and was slowly drifting shoreward. Savages were eagerly anticipating a feast. The captain sought out Mr. Taylor and begged him to pray for the help of God.

"I will," said Mr. Taylor, "provided you will set the sails to catch the breeze."

The captain hesitated, for he did not want to make himself a laughing-stock by unfurling in a dead calm. However, Mr. Taylor would not pray until the sails were up. It was done, and the missionary knelt and prayed earnestly for divine intervention.

A little later, while Mr. Taylor was still engaged in prayer, there was a knock at his stateroom door. It was the captain. Greatly excited, he told him to stop praying. "There's more wind than we can manage," he said.

It turned out that they had drifted to within a hundred yards from shore when a strong wind suddenly struck the sails. It was God's answer to His child's faith. Mr. Taylor could not have taken such a course had he not been abiding in Christ and ready to obey the leading of the Spirit. "Faith sees the heavenly legions, where doubt sees naught but foes."

"The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him, to all that call upon Him in truth." Psa. 145:18.

Obedience without Reasoning

"For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." 2 Cor. 11:2, 3.

What does that mean? It means to obey without reasoning. Way back in the garden of Eden, that the Apostle refers to here, when Eve was tempted, the serpent got her to reasoning instead of obeying. She looked at that tree, and it looked pleasant to the eye. That was perfectly true. It was good for food, and that was perfectly true. It was a tree to be desired to make one wise; that had its truth in it, too. But what did the serpent hide from Eve? That the act would be disobedience, and the fruit would be death. In other words, Eve began to reason instead of obeying.

Remember always, beloved Christian, that the Word of God is given to us for the obedience of faith. That is said twice in the epistle to the Romans—in the first chapter, and in the last chapter. It is given to us for the obedience of faith. H.E. Hayhoe

Sifted As Wheat

It was after reminding Peter of the utter incapacity of the flesh, that the Lord confided His sheep to him: "Feed My sheep"—and it was not till then that he could strengthen his brethren.

The flesh has a certain confidence in the flesh, and this is often the folly into which we fall. It is then necessary for us to learn ourselves by conflict with Satan; every Christian has to learn what he is through the circumstances in which he is placed. God leaves us there to be sifted by Satan, that we may learn our own hearts. Had we enough humility and faithfulness to say, I can do nothing without Thee. God would not leave us to this sad experience of our infirmity. When we are really weak, God never leaves us, but, when unconscious of our infirmities, we have to learn them by experience.

If a Christian does not walk under a constant sense of his infirmity, God leaves him in the presence of Satan, that he may there be taught it. It is then also that he commits faults which are often irreparable, and it is this which is the most sorrowful part of all.

Jacob halted all his life. Why was this? It was because he had halted, morally, during twenty-one years. He wrestled mightily, yet he must have been conscious what a feeble creature he was in the flesh, although God did not leave him to struggle with Esau. We need never be surprised if the Lord leaves us in difficulty; it is because there is something in us to be broken down, and which we need to be made sensible of, but grace is always behind all this. Christ is all grace, and if He sometimes appears to leave us to learn our weakness, still He is grace, perfect grace, towards us.

It was not when Peter turned his eyes towards the Lord that Jesus showed Himself to him; as to communion, indeed, this is true, but it was before his fall that Jesus had said, "I have prayed for thee," for it is always grace which anticipates us. Jesus sees what Satan desires, and leaves us to that desire, but He takes care that we should be kept. It was not when Peter looked at Jesus, but when Jesus looked on Peter, that the latter wept bitterly. The love of Christ always precedes His own; it accompanies us, precedes us in our difficulties, and carries us through all obstacles. While it leaves us in Satan's hands, that we may learn experimentally what we are, it is always near to us, and knows how to guard us from the wiles of the enemy. Here we see the perfect goodness and grace of the One who loves us, not only when our hearts are turned towards Him, but who adapts Himself to every fault in our characters, that we may be fully and completely blessed according to the counsels of God.

All this should teach us to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt us in due season. When I feel cast down and grieved in thinking of myself after a fall, I ought not then to seek comfort, however natural that may be. No, it is not that which I am to seek, but rather, and first of all, the Christ who is there; I have to learn the lesson which God has traced for me.

If, in the midst of painful circumstances, you say that you cannot understand the teaching, God knows what it is, and He leaves you there to be sifted, in order to bring you by this means to a deeper knowledge of Him and yourself; He wishes to show you all He has Himself seen in you, so

that we ought not to shrink from this sifting, but rather to seek to receive the precious teaching which the Lord offers us through it, and thus we shall obtain a much deeper knowledge of what He is for us.

We must learn to yield ourselves to His mighty hand, till He exalts us. May God give us to know Him alone! If we had only to learn what we are, we should be cast down, and sink into despondency, but His object in giving us a knowledge of ourselves and of His grace, is to give us an expected end.

One can say then, "Surely goodness and mercy shalt follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." J.N.D.

Priesthood and Advocacy

Priesthood is the divine provision of grace to sustain those who have been set in God's righteousness before Him in Christ. It reconciles the condition of a poor, feeble creature on earth, liable to fall at any moment, with the glorious position which is his in Christ.

Hebrews is that complement of the epistle to the Romans—the one sets us, through redemption, before God in Christ; the other maintains us there. In its prime aspect it is preventive and sustaining. "Hold Thou me up, and I shall be safe." You find at the end of Heb. 4 the provisions made in order that we may not fall in the wilderness—the detective power of the Word of God to deal with the will, the supporting priesthood of Christ to support us in our weakness. So we are to go boldly to the "throne of grace and find timely help" to sustain, that we may not fail.

Priesthood, then, branches out in the other activities of Christ for us into two great divisions: advocacy, and washing of water by the Word (1 John 2 and John 13). The former is for absolute falls. "If any man sin, we have an advocate." He is engaged before and with the Father for us, and the result of His advocacy is to turn the Word, by the Spirit, in its convicting power, on the conscience, and then, when confession is produced, the soul having bowed under His action, restoration follows. A double action takes place—conviction for the failure, and, on confession, restored communion.

In Num. 18, you have priestly service in grace to maintain communion. In chapter 19, there is the provision, not of maintaining communion by priestly grace, but for the restoration of communion individually when lost—the double application of the ashes and water on the third and seventh days answering to that of advocacy—the third day showing what sin is in respect of grace—the seventh what grace is in respect of sin. The ashes and water used here point, the first to the impossibility of the sin being imputed, as the victim on whom they were was wholly burnt—the latter to the Word of God in its convicting and restoring power by the Holy Ghost. This answers now to the thought of advocacy.

I do not like the word, One-who-manages-your—affairs it is too long. Solicitor, though good, is not suitable, from its associations in common use—(advocate is the same word in Greek as comforter, in John 14)—but, One who manages your affairs is the thought. F.G. Patterson

Samuel's Sons

It is deeply sorrowful to discover failure in Samuel, especially when we remember the terrible object lesson which had come before him in Eli and his sons. But where is there not failure in poor, frail flesh? Only in Christ has God seen from first to last that which has given joy to His heart, and blessed be His name, in Him will lie gathered up all the broken threads of human history at the finish. All that Adam, Noah, Moses, Aaron, David, etc., should have been, and were not (even though they were all types of Christ) will be realized at the end in God's Second Man and Last Adam, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Samuel, beginning to feel the weight of his years, "made his sons judges over Israel." 1 Sam. 8:1. There is no mention of any word from Jehovah, and no record of any prayer on the part of the prophet! Yet this was the man who was conspicuous in his day for his powerful intercession! But why appoint his sons? Moses did not do so. When he felt that his term of service was drawing to a close, he said. "Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation, which may go out before them and which may go in before them, and which may lead them out, and which may bring them in: that the congregation of the Lord be not as sheep which have no shepherd." Num. 27:16, 17. This is beautiful, and it shows that a true shepherd's heart was found in Moses. But he did not venture to appoint anyone, neither did he suggest his own sons for the service. Indeed, he willingly acquiesced in Jehovah's choice of Joshua.

Why Family Succession

Why did the thought of family succession enter the mind of Samuel? Had not the sovereignty of God been strikingly manifested in his own case when the Successional priesthood was in utter failure? In the Book of Acts, the principle of Divine sovereignty in our own era is repeatedly shown. Stephen and Philip were chosen by the assembly in Jerusalem to look after widows, and were quickly called of God into the very forefront of the testimony, the one in Jerusalem, and the other in Samaria; Barnabas and Saul were selected by the Holy Spirit from amongst a group of prophets and teachers in Antioch to go forth and evangelize the Gentile world. Apollos was abruptly brought upon the scene quite apart from all other laborers, and so on. This is the way of the Spirit of God, but how feebly has Christendom understood it! Successional order has been the established ecclesiastical principle, to the damage of God's saints and to the hindrance of the work of God.

Yet Samuel's institution of his sons into the judgeship was well meant. His one desire was to make adequate provision for God's people when he himself could serve them no longer.

The People Belong to God

But did not Jehovah know the age of His servant? And did He not care for His people? Let us remember that the people belonged to God, not to Samuel. Do we sometimes feel anxious about the future of those amongst whom we labor? Are we disposed to make provision for them according to our own thoughts? Let us learn the lesson of Samuel's blunder. Creature hands need not be stretched out to support the ark: God is quite able to take care of it Himself (2 Sam. 6:6), Remarkably, the man who spoke of getting old, lived nearly fifty years longer. He lived to see his sons run their course, and pass into obscurity: he saw Saul rise and fall: he anointed David to be king in his (Saul's) place, and he afterward sheltered him when driven from home by his would-be destroyer. It is important to emphasize these facts.

It is sorrowful to learn that Samuel's sons "walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment." 1 Sam. 8:3. One wonders that the sons of one so preeminently godly should be so evil. With the lessons of Eli and his sons before him, Samuel surely sought that his own household should be a true testimony for God. Is it possible that his going on circuit from year to year explains the breakdown? May God have mercy upon the families of those who, in our own day, are called to travel hither and thither proclaiming the Word of God.

Make Us a King

The elders of Israel now wailed upon Samuel in Ramah, and said unto him. "Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations." The bearing of the man of God at this moment was delightful. There was no word of resentment at the charges made against his sons, neither was there any effort put forth to bolster up the order that he had so mistakenly established. "Samuel prayed unto Jehovah." How different everything would have been had he prayed before he made his sons judges. Brethren, is it our holy habit to take everything to God in prayer? Have we really learned that we are utterly dependent upon Him for every step?

The hand of Satan is surely discernible in Israel's demand for a king, and especially in the willfulness with which they persisted in the demand after the seriousness of it was pointed out to them. The malignant adversary is ever seeking to forestall God—for mischief, of course. The divine purpose concerning a king had now been revealed; Satan would then furnish a king. In like manner he will bring forward the beast of Rev. 13:1, just before God's time comes to bring out His King of kings and Lord of lords. But whatever the measure of forbearance, God always has His way at the last, and every purpose of His love for His own glory, and for the blessing of men is carried into full effect. What rest it is to the heart to be assured of this.

W. Fereday

Joseph

The interesting history of Joseph is well known, and attention should be given to the many respects in which Joseph was a striking type of the Lord Jesus. He was the beloved one of his father; this combined with the intimations given to him of his future position, destined for him by God in the midst of his family, stirred up the envy of his brethren and resulted in his being sold to the Gentiles, as the Lord was hated by His brethren the Jews, and sold by one of them. Joseph was accounted as dead. He was brought very low, being cast into prison, under a false accusation against him because he would not sin; his feet were "made fast in the stocks." and the iron entered his soul: in all these circumstances he was foreshadowing the Lord in His humiliation.

On the elevation of Joseph to power he was unknown to his brethren, as the Lord in exaltation is now to His brethren after the flesh. During this time he had a Gentile wife and children and became "fruitful;" so while the Lord is rejected by the Jews, God is gathering from the nations a people for His name. Joseph ruled over the Gentiles, as the Lord will do. Then all Joseph's brethren bowed down to him, as eventually all the twelve tribes will bow down to the Lord. This is followed by all the descendants of Jacob being placed in a fruitful part of the country, as the nation will be gathered to the pleasant land in the millennium.

The beautiful and touching way in which Joseph dealt with his brethren, will be repeated in a magnified way by the Lord's tender and loving dealing with the remnant of Judah when they come to speak to Him about the wounds in His hands, and to mourn over the way He was treated by them. They will then see that, notwithstanding their hatred, He laid the foundation in His death for their future blessing.

When Jacob prophetically blessed his sons, Joseph had a prominent place. (Gen. 49:22-26.) He was to be very fruitful, with branches running over the wall; likewise the blessing of Israel through Christ extends to the Gentiles. He was sorely grieved, hated, and shot at, as was the Lord, but his bow abode in strength, and from him was the shepherd, the stone of Israel (two titles of the Lord). Then the blessings of heaven and of the deep, of the breasts and of the womb, are multiplied on the head and on the crown of Joseph, as the one separated from his brethren, all foreshadowing, though to be far exceeded by, the many crowns and the glory in heaven and on earth of the true Nazarite, now sanctified in heavenly glory, the Lord Jesus. C. B. D.

How Are We Building in the House of God?

The Church, as the house of God, is a spiritual house built upon that Rock of Ages, the Lord Jesus Christ, and each believer in the Lord Jesus is looked at as a living stone in that house. "I will build My Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Matt. 16:18. When the Lord Jesus is the builder, there is no false material in that building.

This is a beautiful thing to enjoy and we need to enjoy it more in the depths of our souls that the Lord Jesus through all these ages has been building His Church and He continues to build it. It is not a human organization. It is His Church and He builds it through the sovereign work of His Holy Spirit; calling sinners to repentance, calling them to faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and when a sinner comes to the Lord in simple faith he is then added to His Church. There is nothing in Scripture about joining a church. No, when a person receives the Lord Jesus Christ as his Savior, he is joined to God's Church the moment he believes.

In Scripture it is also looked at in another way. It is looked at as a house of Christian profession. And in this way man is looked at as the builder. Every true believer, every person that professes the name of the Lord Jesus is looked at as a builder in this building.

In 1 Cor. 3:1-18. Paul is writing to the Corinthian people; Greeks were the most renowned for human, earthly wisdom of that time. But the Church is not based on man's wisdom; it is based on the divine revelation that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God.

We find that these Corinthian people were carnal. In what way were they carnal or fleshly? It was in having before them a certain person, a human vessel. It may have been Paul or Apollos. It was not spiritual mindedness to prefer one person, even one who was an instrument of God. No, Paul says, What are we? We are only ministers and that according to what God has given us. Paul may have planted and Apollos watered, but after all the planting and the watering is done, there is no fruit except God give the increase. So the work is of God whether He uses one instrument or another.

It is so natural to our human hearts to look at, or follow persons down here. We have to confess, there are certain people that we like to listen to more than others. The Scripture says, "Despise not prophesying. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." So God may use an instrument that you may not like to listen to very much. They may say something that is really for your good so you should listen. There may be things that are said that are not correct, as well. That does not mean you have to accept that, but prove it and hold fast that which is good.

Jesus Only

Consider what happened in Matthew seventeen; the Lord Jesus went up to the mount of transfiguration and He was transfigured before the Apostles Peter, James and John. There as they witnessed this glorious event, the Lord Jesus' face became shining as the sun and His raiment became white as the light. It was a preview of that coming kingdom of our Lord in the future day. Suddenly Peter, James and John noticed that there were two others standing up there, Moses and Elijah. They had never seen these tremendous figures, those men of God that were used so mightily in the Old Testament. Moses led the children of Israel from the land of Egypt to the borders of the land of Canaan and Elijah in one afternoon converted the whole of Israel back to Jehovah, the God of Israel. Mighty men of God!

There they were talking with the Lord Jesus. And Peter, without realizing what he was doing, took his vision off the Lord and started looking at Moses and Elijah. Then he got an idea. Ideas we produce when we do not have the Person of our Lord Jesus before our eyes, may be mistaken. And Peter started talking about his idea. He said, "Lord, it is good for us to be here: if Thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles." A tabernacle was a little booth. "One for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias." He put the Lord right on the same level with Moses and Elijah—a terrible mistake.

Immediately a cloud came and covered the whole scene and Moses and Elijah disappeared. When they lifted up their eyes they see only Jesus. Then a voice out of that cloud said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him." God is jealous of His glory and He is not going to allow any person to be put at the same level as the glorious Person of our Lord Jesus Christ.

How important it is not to be occupied with men. Thank God for the gifts that God has given to be a help to us, but we do not follow men. We ought to be followers of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Building of God

The Corinthian people, in talking about Paul and Apollos, were saying, "I am of Paul; I belong over here." And another was saying, "I am of Apollos; I belong over there." That was carnality and not what God intended to be in God's Church. No, it was the Lord Jesus who was to have the supremacy. But notice in 1 Cor. 3:9, "Ye are God's building." Here we have the building of God again. It is not a physical building but a spiritual building. It is a collective thing and every believer in the Lord Jesus who professes that glorious name is part of that building.

"According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master-builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon." 1 Cor. 3:10. Paul says that he was especially given the truth and was the wise master-builder and laid the foundation. Notice in Eph. 2, it speaks of the foundation and says it is of the apostles and prophets— plural. So in a certain sense there are principles that we use throughout the whole New Testament, and upon those principles the Church is based. It is built on that foundation work which the apostles and prophets have laid, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone. If we want to build according to God's thoughts, we cannot ignore the directions that we have in Paul's writings.

"Let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon." Here is an individual responsibility to everyone who is a believer in the Lord Jesus, to take heed how he is building thereon. Some real believer might think, "I'm not really a builder. Those people who get up and preach are the builders." Perhaps in a more public sense, yes, but I say everyone is a builder in one way or another. The youngest boy or girl is building, if they are a believer in the Lord Jesus.

Where to Build

There are two things that I would like to draw attention to in 1 Cor. 3. First, where to build and second, what you build into that building. It is important to keep that building on the foundation. "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." All building that is done outside of that foundation will not last. Human ideas often appear good, but how important to test everything by the plumb line of Holy Scripture.

What to Build

"Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." 1 Cor. 3:12, 13. Here we have six materials that we find are built into this building. They are figurative, but I think we can see very clearly the first three are durable things: gold, silver and precious stones. You are not going to be able to get much of a mound of gold and silver and precious stones if you work your whole life. Still, when you take a match and light it and then put in that gold, silver and precious stones it does not do a thing to it. It lasts! It is not quantity that is so important here, it is the quality of the work. So when that fire is put to those materials, they last.

But there are three other materials—wood, hay and stubble. I think it would not take too long to build a good-sized pile of wood, hay and stubble, or straw. But what happens when you put the fire to that? It isn't long before the whole thing is reduced to ashes, and the wind comes along and blows the ashes away and there is absolutely nothing to show for it. These are figures that Scripture uses to show what our lives are going to be in that future day before the judgment seat of Christ.

It is not a question of judgment of our persons. It is a question of our works that are going to be proved in that day by the fire of God's judgment. Each one of us! It is a serious, solemn thing to think of how much may go up in smoke in that day. It is a challenge. Are you making your life count for eternity's day? Are you trying to make some impressive mound down here? We need to look at things in relation to how they will stand in that day when the fire is going to do the work of proving what kind of work it is.

Three Kinds of Workmen

In 1 Cor. 3, verses 14, 15, and 17, there are three kinds of workmen. We all fit in here in one way or another. "If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward." Here is the workman who works and his work abides in that day. It is gold, silver and precious stones, those things that are according to God's mind, according to His precious Word. Not only does his work abide, but on top of that he gets a reward. Isn't that an encouragement to us to try to work according to the way that God has laid down in His Word?

A Workman

"If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire." It is not a question of salvation here. This man is saved, but his work is lost. I think I can say though, according to 1 Cor. 4:5, speaking of that same Day of Judgment, "and then shall every man have praise of God." For every true believer there will be something that will abide for that day. I really believe it, even as it applies to that thief who died on the cross beside the Lord Jesus. His hands were fastened to that cross; he could do nothing, but still he had a tongue that was loose and he confessed that Jesus was Lord. He said, "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom."

How many souls have been saved through the testimony of that dying thief. There was something in his dying moments that is going to last through all eternity. So I really think we can say there is going to be something that will remain for every believer. But it is something to exercise us that our lives be spent on things that will not go up in smoke in that day.

Another Kind of Workman

We have a different type of worker in that temple, this house. "If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." Here is a person who has never really truly accepted the Lord Jesus as his own personal Savior. Yes, he says he is a Christian. Maybe he is a preacher or has some degree, but he has not known the Lord Jesus as his Savior. He is defiling God's temple, and it says God shall destroy him. It is a solemn thing to think that there are so-called Christian workers who are not real true believers in the Lord Jesus. The Lord grant that we may build according to His own precious Word so that there will be that which remains for eternity's day.

R. Thonney

Editorial

This month of May, 1988, has a special significance for the nation of Israel and for the entire world interested in, and affected by Israel. It was just forty years ago that the present nation came into existence. Since then the tiny, weak and struggling country has gained in strength and prominence as a power on the earth to be reckoned with.

From the earliest time of Israel's history as a separate people delivered out of Egypt, the number forty has been frequently displayed as dating a time of testing or trial. The book of Numbers records the account of the spies being sent to search out the land of promise for forty days. As a result of the evil report and unbelief in Jehovah, there was a judgment of forty years' wandering in the desert placed upon them. (See Num. 14:34.)

Many other testing times of forty years are found in the history of Israel. King Saul, the people's choice, reigned forty years. Then King David, the victorious conqueror, the man after God's heart reigned forty years. Next Solomon in peace and glory likewise was on the throne for forty years.

One of the noteworthy periods of about forty years not found in Scripture is the time from the cross to the destruction of the temple and the city of Jerusalem. However, Luke 21 prophetically tells of this time.

Considering these things it is easy to raise the question of the forty years that are about to be fulfilled now concerning the present nation of Israel. If God bore with the nation for forty years after the cross, is He now giving another like time for them before He brings in the time of "Jacob's trouble"? (Jer. 30:7.)

We do not know the answer and hasten to say that God is not bound by men's thoughts nor calendars. What we do know is that the Lord's coming for His purchased possession is before the time of "Jacob's trouble" or the tribulation period of seven years.

Another thing that we are sure about we find 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." The very long period of this day of grace still going on shows this. Truly we who are seeing such stirring events at this late date in the history of this world as well as of Israel, ought to look up in expectation. "The coming of the Lord draweth nigh." James 5:8. "And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed." Rom. 13:11. Ed.

Questions and Answers

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

Answer: 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 principle of law is that God's thoughts and dealings depend upon what I am and have done. In grace my thoughts and actions flow from God's thoughts and dealings towards me.

In Christ, and the Flesh in Us

Nothing can be found more clearly taught in Scripture than that the believer is "in Christ," who is his life, and one with Christ by the Holy Spirit. At the same time "the flesh" is in every believer. He is, therefore, a compound of two natures; with one he serves God's law; with the other, the flesh, he serves sin's law. The indwelling Spirit strengthens the new nature and keeps us occupied with Christ, our righteousness and strength, so that we may reckon ourselves to have died unto sin. Thus, practically, we hold as dead the budding forth of "the flesh." May the Lord graciously help us more and more in this!

It is important, however, to remember that the knowledge of having "the flesh" in us is of itself no hindrance to our fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ, but allowing it to come out practically does hinder it. We do not have a bad conscience from its existence in us, because we know that the flesh, or the old man, has been judicially dealt with in the death of Christ. Neither need the believer sin. He is charged not to sin and he has no excuse for sinning. "These things write I unto you that ye sin not."

It is not correct for a believer to say that sin is not in him, for "if we say we have no sin [not sins, but sin, the corrupt nature or old man], we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." If, however, the believer does sin, (does commit sins, the fruit of the Adam nature) his conscience should be troubled and his communion with the Father and the Son will be interrupted. It is a question of communion, not of salvation.

Provision has graciously been made for this; Christ is our advocate with the Father concerning it. Self-examination, self-judgment, repentance, and confession are wrought in our souls by the Spirit and by the application of the Word, "the washing of water by the Word," and we become restored. The advocacy of Christ is based upon propitiation for our sins having been made, and He who takes up our cause is the perfectly righteous One. Hence it is written, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." 1 John 2:1, 2.

On confessing, we are cleansed perfectly, forgiven in righteousness, on the ground of the sacrifice once offered. We are told, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9. It is not the believer taking the place of a miserable sinner, but a believer taking the place before God of an offending, naughty child, counting on divine faithfulness and justice to forgive his sins. All this is because of the sacrifice of Christ, to cleanse him, and thus to restore him to happy communion.

This is the true way of restoring an erring child of God. He may be the weakest and faultiest of God's children; still he is a child to whom the Lord does not impute sin. He never again can be, strictly speaking, a miserable sinner, even when feeling the dreadful character of his sin, before God in confession. Happy indeed are those who are occupied with the personal glory and excellencies, finished work, and offices of our Lord Jesus Christ. They can always have, by the

Spirit, the comfort of the Father's love and the joy of security and completeness in Christ while waiting for His coming! They also can truly say, Our fellowship [or communion] is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ."

H. Snell

Three Appearings of Christ

The Past

1. Once in the end of the world hash. 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 he 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. 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

2. 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. The Man Christ Jesus now appears in the heavens. 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

3. Unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without 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 salvation in him. 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!

1. Christ has put away our sins by the sacrifice of Himself.
2. Christ lives in God's presence for us and bears us up through this life's journey.
3. Christ will come and take us home forever. Young Christian

Bible Challenger-05-May V.03

The first letters of the following responses will form the missing word to the question. "What is thine —?" asked of an errant prophet.

1. The profession of Tertullus.
2. The profession of Cornelius.
3. The profession of Naaman.
4. The name of one in the soldiering profession whose death was desired by his own commander-in-chief.
5. The profession of Huldah.
6. The imitated profession of those who by false pretenses made a league with a conquering army.
7. The profession of Simon of Joppa.
8. The profession of Tubal-cain.
9. The profession of Potiphar.
10. The name of the first man in the hunting profession.

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

R. Erisman

Gone—Forever!

The Bible speaks of our sins as forgiven, forgotten, cleansed, gone, atoned for, covered, ransomed, paid, removed as far as the east is from the west, cast behind God's back, remembered against us no more forever, cast into the depths of the sea, imputed to the account of Christ. Do not permit Satan to bring them to your remembrance when the Savior God Himself will remember them no more.

Bible Challenger-04-April Answers V.03

1. Patience James 1:4
2. Every mares 1 Cor. 3:13
3. All things Rom. 8:28
4. Consider Thy heavens Psa. 8:3
5. Evil John 7:7
6. Men's hands Deut. 4:28
7. Ashamed 2 Tim. 2:15
8. Knowledge Psa. 14:4
- 9 Evangelist 2 Tim. 4:5
10. Righteousness Titus 3:5
11. Strange Isa. 28:21

"Blessed are the PEACEMAKERS: for they shall be called the children of God." Matt. 5:9

On the Mount with God

Moses and Elijah had each been forty days on Mount Horeb. Moses stood there without fear, (the only one who had ever done so), and when the glory passed, his face shone. He did not know it, but the people saw it and were afraid, so that Moses had to put on a veil. Moses there heard God's voice in answer to his pleading for the people.

Elijah, on the other hand, remained in his cave, fearing to obey the word to "go forth," all the while that God was making His power known, and when the "still small voice" was heard. Elijah was too far off to catch what the voice said. Unlike Moses, he pleads against the people, but God answers. "I have reserved 7,000 men," etc. Elijah could not stand with God in the storm, nor was he allowed to go on with his testimony. He was taken away and Elisha succeeded him.

On the mount of transfiguration, however, both he and Moses are seen talking with Jesus. There is no word of reproof, no mark of distinction. God called Elijah out of the cave, but he never got beyond the entrance, even when the still, small voice aroused him. Moses on the contrary went boldly up to the very "top of the rock." where there was no shelter, and God put him in a cleft of the rock and covered him with His hand, when the glory passed, and he was near enough to hear the wondrous words proclaimed.

Still it is blessed and comforting to find how the failure of even the best of men serves to set grace in relief. Elijah got discouraged after his most remarkable testimony, and requested for himself that he might die, but God took him up by a whirlwind into heaven (1 Kings 19:4; 2 Kings 2:1-11), seemingly to reserve him for the transfiguration scene. where he was to appear with Moses.

Why Miracles?

We are living in a skeptical age. Men say they no longer believe in miracles. Not only in heathendom is this said, but in Christendom, where the light of the gospel shines. There is only one more step to take in this unbelief—the repudiation of God Himself. This step will be taken shortly. MAN will deify himself in the son of perdition the Antichrist of Scripture (2 Thess. 2:3, 4). When this happens, no more place will be found for God and His Son. Remarkably, when this state of things comes about, men will believe in miracles once more. "Signs and lying wonders" will appear, and be credited. Hell produces its marvels as well as heaven. This was witnessed in Moses' day, and it will be witnessed again in the day of Antichrist.

Infidelity, religious and otherwise, may carp at the records of our Lord's miracles, but the miracles were wrought, nevertheless. The fact that at least three of the gospels were published within a few years of our Lord's ascension, when falsehoods could easily have been disproved, is sufficient to establish their credibility, even on the most human principles. But when we take into account the majestic fact (which every reverent soul believes) that the Spirit of God is the author of the gospels, every query is hushed to rest.

But why were the miracles wrought? The Savior Himself tells us, the "works that I do, bear witness of Me, that the Father hath sent Me." John 5:36; 10:25.) They were thus graciously granted as aids to faith in His person and mission. Hence the rebuke to Philip, "Believe Me for the very works' sake." Hence, too, the Savior's lament in John 15:24: "If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now they have both seen and hated both Me and My Father." Because the miracles were aids to faith they were all, with one exception, acts of mercy—acts which should have appealed to the sensibilities of all concerned as showing out the divine heart towards man.

It would be as foolish to over-state the value of miracles, as it is to affect contempt for them. Aids to faith must not be confounded with the ground of faith. Faith founded on miracles is of so little worth that the Savior, when surrounded by believers of this sort, refused to commit Himself unto them (John 2:23-25). True faith is founded on the Word of God (Rom. 10:17). Simon Magus was attracted by miracles, and proved a fraud; Sergius Paulus desired to hear the Word of God, and so became a true disciple (Acts 8:13; 13:7, 12). W. Fereday

Faithful Messengers

We have read of the wonderful little bird—the carrier pigeon—which, when sent on an errand, keeps steadily about its business, from which nothing can tempt it to turn aside. Straight home it flies, and neither man nor circumstance can deflect it from its course.

One of these birds, sent on a journey, stopped to rest on a windowsill a few moments, and the little silver band on his foot showed that he was bound for New York. The owner of the house tried to coax the faithful little creature with all sorts of dainties to stay awhile, but in vain. Its course lay ahead and nothing could entice it from the journey to be taken.

Christians should have some of the characteristics of this little messenger so true to its duty, and, like Paul, should say, "This one thing I do," but we halt for this little pleasure, and go aside for that indulgence, wandering here and there and everywhere, almost forgetting the point we set out for, and causing the world to think our business unimportant.

The King's business demands haste, and, like the carrier pigeon, we should not let man nor circumstance entice us from our course.

"This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Phil. 3:13, 14.

Young Christian

Humility

There is a difference between being humble before God, and being humbled before God. I am humbled before God, because I have not been humble. I am humbled, because of my sin. If I had been humble, I should have had grace given me to prevent it. For "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble."

The only humble place is the presence of God. It is when I get out of His presence that I am in danger of being lifted up. People say it is dangerous to be too often on the mountain. Now I do not think that it is when we are on the mountain that we are in danger, but when we come down from it. It is when we come down from the mountain that we begin to think that we have been there. Then pride comes in. I do not think that Paul needed a thorn when he was in the third heaven. It was after he had come down that he was in danger of being exalted above measure—from thinking that he had been where no one else had been.

I do not believe that to think badly of ourselves is true humility. True humility is never to think of ourselves at all and that is so hard to come to. It is constantly, I, I, I.

What hearts we have. "I will search the heart." Who but God can know them? People who think they search their hearts and are quick to tell what they find there, do not really know their hearts, nor are they truly humble. The fact is, they must be talking of themselves, and their pride is nourished even by telling of how evil they are.

The Voice of God

God never intended Scripture to be taken apart from Himself; over and above the Bible is God Himself. Not that God can ever be against His Word, but He is the only power of entering into the application of it. For the Bible is not only for me to look down into; I must look up to God. I am not intended to read it merely as a book of true stories or good sermons, still less of enigmas to solve by wit or learning, but as the voice of the living God to my soul. When one reads it in true subjection to Him, the relation and attitude of the soul are totally changed; you are delivered from the danger of bending the Word of God to your own mind and will. Whereas, when the Word leads you out in prayer to God, then it is neither the Word without prayer, nor prayer without the Word, both of which are exceedingly dangerous, one leading to rationalism, as the other does to fanaticism. Hence, says the Apostle, "I commend you to God, and to the word of His grace." We need to wait upon God that we may gather profit from His Word, and ever lean on Him for His grace that we may with simplicity and faithfulness carry it out in the Spirit.

W. Kelly

Order

How strikingly was this invariable principle of order expressed and acted upon by that obedient, yet always gracious and loving One, who was the express image of His Father, As man on earth. He was always to be found in His proper place, always knowing His time and His hour. From the beginning at Cana, when He rejoiced with them that rejoiced, to the end at Bethany when He wept with them that wept, or even after the end of His life on earth, at His resurrection, in the folded condition of His grave clothes, this order was manifested.

The Syrophenician woman, when applying to the Lord, at first takes Jewish ground, and addresses Him as "Son of David." No answer. He was not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. She then comes and worships Him, saying: "Lord, help me." She only meets with a still more humiliating, crushing refusal: "It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs." For such was then her place as that of the Gentiles generally. She had stepped out of her place, and had to be reminded of it. It is only when she takes her true place that her request is granted.

More Than Crumbs

We were once in the same place (Eph. 2). According to the unsearchable riches of God's sovereign grace we have received blessings which are something more than crumbs falling from the table, even "all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ": infinitely higher and richer than even the meat on the table. Has God's principle of order been set aside or relaxed, on account of those immeasurably higher places and blessings which His grace has assigned to us? Far from it! On the contrary, the highness of our vocation and place, and the nearness of our heavenly relationship are the very reasons why that great principle or order insisted upon and should be observed by us all the more. May it be so in our houses, or in the Church which is the house of the living God.

If a good and great king demands order to rule throughout the realms and unto the uttermost borders of his kingdom, he will certainly and most particularly insist on order in his family, and at his court. Do you think that the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom every family in heaven and earth is named, in His heavenly courts above and in His Church, could tolerate that which would be inconsistent with His holiness and derogatory to His majesty? Was His great apostle of the Gentiles and of the Church indifferent to the confusion and disorder in the church at Corinth? He told them that God is not a God of confusion but of peace, and of that order without which there can be no true peace.

Symbol of Authority

It is on the same principle that the inspired apostle commands Christian women in the assembly to have a covering (the symbol of subjection to another's authority) on their heads. It is on account of the angels, because they are accustomed to seeing, in the heavenly courts above, everything, and everyone in their proper places.

Therefore they would be grieved if they saw a woman without that symbol of authority on her head in the Church, where those heavenly principalities study the wisdom of God.

In that most solemn closing epistle of Jude, we find the violation of this all-pervading divine principle of order visited with the most terrible judgments. The awful solemnity shows how God from His throne of holiness and majesty looks at the daring transgressors of the divine law of order, when speaking of certain who had crept into the Church unawares. "Ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." We are reminded there of those "everlasting chains," in which those angels, who "kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation," are reserved "under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." Also we read of Sodom and Gomorrah and their neighboring cities, who suffered the vengeance of eternal fire, (notice the word eternal) for giving themselves over to fornication and going after strange flesh.

We are further reminded of that awful moment when the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up Core and those with him, for their rebellious contempt of the authorities of divine order, instituted by God. Jude refers also to those, who "despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.... To whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever."

There are two evil extremes in that solemn epistle, against which we have to be equally on our guard, in these days more than ever. They are: despising dominion and speaking evil of its dignities, and having men's persons in admiration.

As to the heavenly courts above, we find in those passages of the Old and New Testament in which the

Perfect Order

Holy Spirit draws aside the curtain to permit us a glimpse into those heavenly scenes, perfect order pervading the whole. Everything and everyone is in their appointed place, and moving in their appointed sphere and time. They are in perfect harmony of action, whether in divine government in the Old Testament, or in connection with redemption in the New Testament. Even Satan with his wicked spirits must submit to that order, whenever they are permitted to make their appearance there. In regards to this notice that in Job 1:6 we have order as to time, in 1 Kings 22:19 order as to place, and in Isa. 6. Ezek. 1, and Rev. 4 and 5, we see order in both heavenly and earthly scenes. This shows how God wills His own immutable principle of divine order to dominate throughout the whole of His creation, from the highest down to the lowest.

Things and in Persons in Place

By the word order we mean a condition of things and persons where everything and everybody is found and moves or acts in the proper appointed place, sphere, and time.

Even the children of this world agree that order is one of the essential requisites for human happiness, prosperity, and success. "A place for everything (and everybody) and everything (and everybody) in its place" is a well-known adage. the truth of which is generally owned and acted upon, from the chief executive down to the lowest employee. How very important (because divinely required) is the principle of order for the relationships of the Christian, both in the Church and in the family. How much more ought order to characterize everything in the individual believer's life and action.

J. Von Poseck

A Living Commentary

Remember the word unto Thy servant, upon which Thou hast caused me to hope. Psa. 119:49.

God keeps writing a commentary on His Word in the volume of our own experience, that is, insofar as we put that volume into His hands, and do not think to fill it with our own scribble. We are not to undervalue or neglect this commentary, but to use it as John Newton did, when he wrote.

His love in times past forbids me to think

He'll leave me at last in trouble to sink:

Each sweet 'Ebenezer' I have in review

Confirms His good pleasure to help me quite through.

Every record of love bears the great signature. "I am the Lord. I change not": "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever." Every "hitherto" of grace and help is a "henceforth" of more grace and more help. Every experience of the realities of faith widens the horizon of the possibilities of faith. Every realized promise is the stepping-stone to one yet unrealized.

Hitherto the Lord hath helped us, guiding all the way; Henceforth let us trust Him fully, trust Him all the day.

Hitherto the Lord hath loved us, caring for His own; Henceforth let us love Him, better, live for Him alone.

Extract

Much self-judgment makes a man slow to judge others, and the very gentleness of such a one gives a keen edge to his rebukes.

Public Assembly and Hearing God's Word

It does not matter in the least what difficulties or dangers may lie before us; our God is amply sufficient for all, if only we have the sense of the Lord's presence with us, and the authority of His Word for the work in which we are engaged, we may move on with joyful confidence, in spite of ten thousand difficulties and hostile influences.

Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi, which bare the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, and unto all the elders of Israel. And Moses commanded them, saying, At the end of every seven years, in the solemnity of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles, when all Israel is come to appear before the Lord thy God in the place which He shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing. Gather the people together, men and women, and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the words of this law: and that their children, which have not known anything, may hear, and learn to fear the Lord your God, as long as ye live in the land whither ye go over Jordan to possess it. Deut. 31:9-13.

Two things in the foregoing passage claim our special attention. First, there is the fact that the Lord attached the most solemn importance to the public assembly of His people for the purpose of hearing His Word. All Israel—men, women, children and the stranger who had cast in his lot among them, were commanded to assemble themselves together to hear the reading of the book of the law of God, that all might learn His holy will and their duty. Each member of the assembly, from the eldest to the youngest, was to be brought into direct personal contact with the revealed will of the Lord, that each one might know his solemn responsibility.

Oratory Music

Secondly we have to weigh the fact that the children were to be gathered before the Lord to hearken to His Word. Both of these facts are full of weighty instruction for all the members of the Church of God— instruction urgently called for on all sides. There is a most deplorable amount of failure as to these two points. We sadly neglect the assembling of ourselves together for the simple reading of the Holy Scriptures. There does not seem to be sufficient attraction in the Word of God itself to bring us together. There is an unhealthy craving for other things. Human oratory, music, religious excitement of some kind or other seems needful to bring people together—anything and everything but the precious Word of God.

It will perhaps be said that people have the Word of God in their homes, and that it is quite different now from what it was with Israel; everyone can read the Scriptures at home, and there is not the same necessity for the public reading. Such a plea will not stand the test of truth for a moment. We may rest assured, if the Word of God were loved and prized and studied in private and in the family, it would be loved and prized and studied in public. We should delight to gather together around the fountain of Holy Scripture, to drink in happy fellowship of the living water for our common refreshment and blessing.

Imposing Ceremonies

But it is not always so. The Word of God is not loved and studied in many homes, either privately or publicly. Trashy literature is often devoured in private, and music, ritualistic services, and imposing ceremonies are eagerly sought after in public. Thousands will flock to hear music, and pay for admission, but how few care for a meeting to read the Scriptures! There is a growing thirst for religious excitement, and a growing distaste for the calm study of Scripture and the spiritual exercises of the Christian assembly. It is perfectly useless to deny it nor can we shut our eyes to it. The evidence of it meets us on every hand. Thank God there are a few here and there who really love the Word of God and delight to meet in holy fellowship for the study of its precious truths. May the Lord increase the number of such and bless them abundantly. May our lot be cast with them "till traveling days are done." They are but an obscure and feeble remnant everywhere, but they love Christ and cleave to His Word. Their richest enjoyment is to get together and think and speak and sing of Him. God bless them and keep them. May He deepen His precious work in their souls, and bind them more closely to Himself and one another and thus prepare them, in the state of their affections, for the appearing of "the Bright and Morning Star."

C.H. Mackintosh

Editorial

The current problems of Israel with the Palestinians are a re-hash of their old troubles with the Philistines. From the time of Joshua to King David, the Philistines were the enemies of God's people

from Within. Typically they are the thorns of Satan's power where he has not been driven out.

What can Israel do at present with such a large number of displaced people? And the number increases instead of diminishing. So far the wisest and most well-meaning of the leaders of the world have not come up with a solution.

Defense minister Yitzhak Rabin concedes that the present turmoil amongst the Palestinians reflects their despair and frustration. About deportation, he goes on to say that this is the only effective method to help us maintain peace and order.

Back in the days of Joshua, the Israelites should have taken the promised land from the Philistines but they failed to do so. The Philistines represent the pretension and intrusion of man in the flesh into that which belongs to God King Saul who was head and shoulders above the rest as a man in the flesh could not dispossess the Philistines, but instead he was afraid of them. King David in contrast, as a type of Christ, conquered their champion and went on to gain the victory over the Philistines so that in Solomon's time they were tributary and peace reigned.

There are lessons for us as Christians to learn from these things. We, too, have failed to possess practically all that is promised to us. The truth of our heavenly calling and citizenship is often

forgotten or not appreciated. We only possess the truth that we walk in. All the blessings in heavenly places are ours. They belong to us, but how much do we know and enjoy them? Do we put on the whole armor of God, that we "may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil"? Eph. 6:11.

Great David's greater Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ has completely conquered Satan. We now are told to "resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you" James 4:7, 8. Our weapon of offense is the Word of God. For David to defeat Goliath, it took only one of the five stones. For Christ to vanquish the devil's temptations He used words only from the book of Deuteronomy.

It is not, then, strength in the flesh that can defeat the enemy at our side, but it is dependence upon and confidence in God and in His Word that practically gain the victory. Surely the solution to all the turmoil and unrighteousness in this world is Christ received as Savior. He will take His own out of the world before He cleanses it in judgment. Then His righteous reign, and that alone, can and will correct all and settle the nations around Israel, bringing in peace and blessing on the earth. Ed.

Extract

It is not by change of circumstances that we can be made happy, but by submission to the will of God.

The Stroke

Men's threats are sometimes mere idle words or empty bombast; not so the predicted judgments of God. At no stage in the world's history has the Creator threatened judgments which He had no intention of executing. There have been occasions when His hand has been averted by the repentance of the people. The sparing of Nineveh in the time of Jonah is an example of this. It is part of the declared ways of God to withdraw sentence when men humble themselves before Him. Jeremiah, verses 7 and 8, show this plainly. It is also true that He is "slow to anger," leaving until the last an open door for repentance, but even the long-suffering of God has its limits. This was solemnly proved by the defiant Egyptians in the days of Moses.

At the commencement of Moses' mission, Jehovah said to Pharaoh: "Israel is My son, even My firstborn: and I say unto thee. Let My son go, that he may serve Me: and if thou refuse to let him go, behold. I will slay thy son, even thy firstborn." Ex. 4:22, 23. The patience of God being now exhausted after various appeals and preliminary judgments, this dread sentence took effect on the night of Israel's Passover. It came to pass, that at midnight the Lord smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon: and all the firstborn of cattle. And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt: for there was not a house where there was not one dead." Ex. 12:29, 30. There was thus no respect of persons. The royal palace, in every country shielded to the utmost from the calamities which befall the lowly, was no more immune that night than the prison cell or the stable. The king's heart was torn with anguish as well as that of the lowest of his subjects. Truly, it is a terrible thing to defy the God of judgment!

Yet while desolation thus spread itself throughout the land of Egypt, the houses of the Israelites were absolutely unharmed. This was due solely to the fact that they obeyed Jehovah in faith, and sprinkled the blood of the slain lamb on the outside of their dwellings. Neither good conduct nor religious orthodoxy saved them that night, but the blood of the lamb alone. Under the shelter of this they could eat and drink in peace, with girded loins and staff in hand, prepared to march out of a scene which was in no sense their home.

We are ourselves living in a solemn moment in the world's history. The gospel day is ending, with all its opportunities of eternal blessing. The hour for God's judgments to begin will shortly strike. Then the once crucified Lord will arise from the throne on which He is seated, and will come forth in His might as the divinely appointed Judge of the quick and the dead. First He will deal with the quick (i.e. the living), destroying His enemies before Him like the driven snow; later, when His millennial reign is ended, He will summon the dead from their tombs to stand before the great white throne. These are tremendous considerations, which it is folly and madness for any to ignore. Happy is the man who, as a confessedly guilty sinner, worthy only of eternal wrath, has fled to the Savior for refuge, trusting wholly and solely in His precious atoning blood. Such a one is eternally secure—as secure as a righteous God can make him.

"For a Memorial"

That night in Egypt was to be kept in perpetual remembrance by the people of Israel. That it might never be forgotten, the Passover was to be observed annually as a feast to Jehovah throughout their generations. "Ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance forever." Ex. 12:14. There is a dangerous tendency in the human heart to forget, particularly in matters relating to God.

The Lord's Supper comes to mind here. The Savior was on the eve of death when He instituted it. His wonderful course on earth was ending, and He was about to undergo the supreme anguish of Calvary. Only by His death could atonement be effected and salvation be made possible for sinful men. Yet even One so divinely unique as He, and a sacrifice so stupendous as the sacrifice of Himself, would be in danger of being forgotten by His own. Accordingly He gave to His disciples first the bread, and then the cup, saying, "This do in remembrance of Me." Luke 22:19, 20.

Years after His return to heaven's glory, the Holy Spirit reiterated His words in 1 Cor. 11:23-25, adding.

"as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come." Thus during the whole period of His absence on high, the Lord's Supper remains with the Church as the memorial of her once-slain Lord and Savior. The absurdity of encouraging any to partake thereof who have no saving knowledge of Christ should be apparent, for how can I recall to remembrance a person I have never known?

W. Fereday

Operations of the Spirit of God

The resurrection had marked out Jesus to be the Son of God, according to the Spirit of holiness, tie might be of the seed of David according to the flesh, but He was the Son of God according to entirely another life, spirit, and energy. Of this, His resurrection was at once the proof and the glorious character. for it was triumph over death, of which, according to that life and holiness which was in Him, if was not possible (though He might imputatively take sin) that He could be holden. In this resurrection and power of accomplished and triumphant liberty—liberty of perfectness and sanctification of man to God in a new state of life, in which man had never been—He became the Head of a new family, the Firstborn from the dead, the Head of the body, the Church, having in all things the preeminence, and the Son, taking His place now, as such, in resurrection. Thus our justification became in fact identified with our position as sons, and as risen (i.e. with holiness, according to its character in resurrection) before God as children. Therefore it was that, if the Apostle had known Christ Jesus after the flesh, henceforth he knew Him no more. He now knew Him in this character of resurrection, the Head of the new creation—the new family of God—the Second Man, and so to us the quickening Spirit, when our living souls had spiritually died in the first Adam in sin—the head of a new family of men, with whom, in the close, the tabernacle of God should be.

The justification of the Church having been first reasoned out by the Spirit, the Apostle turns to this: first, as regards death and resurrection, in Rom. 6; then, as regards the law, chapter 7; that is, first, "nature" or "the flesh" in se, then the operation of the law on the question into which spiritual understanding and a new will brought the conscience. In chapter 8, he takes up the presence of the Spirit in moral operation and witness. Having stated the source of this mighty change and holy liberty, in "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (the breath of life to our souls being the very same power in which Christ was raised from the dead, and our partaking in all the consequences of that resurrection, God having done what the law could not do, that is, condemned sin in the flesh, and that in atonement, in grace to us), the Apostle proceeds to instruct us what the power and the character of the Spirit in this new nature is.

It is the Spirit of God, as contrasted with man in the flesh. It is the Spirit of Christ, in respect of the form and character of this new man. It is the Spirit of Him that raised up Christ from the dead, according to the power and energy in which it works full deliverance as a result. Thus its moral character and operation were unfolded, as a Spirit of power and deliverance and character in us, in answer to the question. Who shall deliver us from the body of this death?

But there was also the doctrine of the relationship which we have in the new man, as well as moral character and power. As many as are led of it are sons; sons, and therefore "heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together." And here the groaning is not the question of what we are as to God's judgment of evil in us, a spirit of bondage to fear, but our own judgment of it in its effects because we are sons, and are certain that we are, and know that we are heirs. We take up the groaning of the whole creation, of which

we are part, as in the body, and express it to God in sympathy, in the sense of the blessedness of the glorious inheritance when the creation shall be delivered. Suffering with Christ in the present sorrow by His Spirit, we express it in the Spirit of God. even though we have no intelligence to ask for any actual remedy. In this, then, the Spirit has a double office: the witness with us, for joy, that we are sons and heirs, and helping us in the infirmities lying on creation and on us in the body. When He, the Holy Spirit, acting in us in sympathy thus groans in us, expressive of the sorrow, He who searches the hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for us according to God.

J.N. Darby

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.

The History of the Church

As Christians responsible for our part of the Church's history today, let us ask ourselves: are we leaving all behind, counting all but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord? Have His charms, His beauties and excellencies led captive our affections? Are we pressing on through the wilderness with hearts throbbing with glad anticipation of that nuptial day when we shall be joined to Him in holy wedlock forever?

The Church, that which is called by Christ's name, has sadly failed and made a dismal descent from those early, bright days of her pristine fairness before she left her first love. But how early she is called back "I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent." Rev. 2:4, 5.

The terrors of Nero to Diocletian follow, marking as in Smyrna, the second stage of the Church's history. But the heart once estranged, though checked by this chastening, is but one stage later found dwelling where Satan's throne is, having lost in her soul the sense of her high, holy and heavenly calling. (Phil. 3:14: 2 Tim. 1:9: Heb. 3:1.) She becomes a part of the world's system, a religious part lobe sure, but none the less the world. And why not, since Satan is both "god" and "prince" of it?

Religious Political

With the term "god" you get the idea of something religious: with the term "prince" the idea of what is political; thus he is the religious and political head of this world. Satan makes no war against religion; he is willing that men should be religious. It is the displacement of Christ he seeks, or if allowed. He must be a cross-less Christ. As the flesh stands opposed to the Spirit, and the world to the Father (speaking characteristically), so Satan stands opposed to Christ and the Church.

Satan is intolerant of Christ, the precious Christ of God, dead, risen and now Man in glory. This is what he will not have, since His cross severs us from the world as an evil system. Christ's place on high determines Ours. The Jewish system was essentially earthly, her place and portion being here within the precincts of time. The Church is a heavenly thing with a heavenly place, a heavenly portion, and a heavenly prospect. Her course through this world should be that of a stranger here.

The World's Sun Set

The children of Israel were instructed to wear a ribbon of blue (heavenly color) upon the fringe of the borders of their garments, (Num. 15:38) down where their garments touched the earth. So we should carry our heavenly principles down to where we come in contact with this work, maintaining separation from it refusing its objects, principles and associations. "The whole world lieth in wickedness" and "now is the judgment of this world." 1 John 5:19; John 12:31. It is not what it seems to be, but what the cross of Christ has made it. God is not trying to improve it, but Christ is choosing people out of it. When Lord Byron died, Sir Walter Scott, his contemporary, upon hearing it exclaimed. "It's as though the sun had gone out." This is what took place when Jesus, the light of the world died on the cross. This world's sun set there, and ever since, this world has been a dark place, the valley of the shadow of death. (His death: compare Psa. 22 and 23.)

That which professes His name has gone in the way of Cain, and the way of Cain is the course of this world. Cain slew his brother, then went out and built cities and Red the earth with music and song. Has that which professes Christ's name the character of one betrothed to a man who hung on a cross? The Apostle reproaches the saints of Corinth for "reigning as kings." To what indictment should we be subject? Have we mourned His absence yet? Have we walked with a widowed heart? Have we cast our lot in with Him at cost and loss anti suffering and shame? Have we walked with Him in white? (Rev. 3:4.) Have we, like Rebekah, gone forth leaving all behind, to cross a trackless waste, inspired by the blessed prospect of seeing Him face to face, of being clasped to His heart, never to part?

No Welcome Too Large

To see and be with Him who "loved the Church and gave Himself for it" to be consciously His loved one should disengage our hearts from what is here. What relationship, portion, place, rank or station could compare with being His bride, sharing His glories, entering the joy of His presence, with no cloud above, no spot within. There is no welcome too large, no scene too bright, no place too high for those espoused to Christ, for those for whom Jesus died. But the last utterance of that which professes His name, while being false to His love "glorifying herself and living deliciously." where He received a cross and crown of thorns, is "I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow." For her description and doom read Rev. 17, 18 and the first verses of 19. It is the judgment of this faithless spouse, those left after the real Bride has been caught up. This introduces us to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

You will remember that He appeared in the midst of the golden candlesticks in the character of fudge, girt about the breasts with a golden girdle. (This is before His coming, so contemplates the mixed mass of true and false.) He loved her still, but such was her state that His affections must be righteously girded in. Peter had already said, "The time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God." Such was the state of the profession before the canon of Scripture was complete.

God's reality, those who have been subjects of His regenerating saving grace, though flecked with much defacing and throwing but a feeble flickering ray, have left a trail of light down through the ages, the only light of this dark place.

A Trail of Light

There are those who may be obscure contributing nothing to this world's history, better known up there than down here, who having caught the radiance from the face of that blessed One in glory, have shined it out again. This is true, in measure, of all who have accepted the gospel of the glory of Christ. It is God who said that out of darkness light should shine who has shone in our hearts, for the shining forth of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

F.C. Blount

Remarks on the Epistle of Jude

We get the character of antichrist in the epistles of John, but the opposite element in Jude. "They went out from us" is open apostasy. Denying the Father and the Son is antichristian and denying that Jesus is the Christ. (1 John 2:22) is apostate Judaism.

That is not the case with Jude. There we get, not the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, but Christendom —Christians looked at as general profession and the corruption that is in that. It is "crept in" in verse 4. not "went out" as in 1 John 2:19. They did not deny the Lord but they turned His grace into lasciviousness.

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

Denying the only Lord God (v. 4) is the comparison of a master and 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 is ecclesiastical corruption; Core is 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" in verse 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 we feel that we belong to a system that has all gone wrong, we feel ourselves 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 we 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, but we must be looking on to the end, when things will be right. But now things have gone so wrong that we need mercy at every step. One single beautiful word I would add. "God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law." Christ has come of a woman and come under law; He has come into a place of ruin where the law has made transgressors. He has come "to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons" Gal. 4:4, 5.

F.G. Patterson

Bible Challenger-06-June V.03

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the word that is the characteristic of material riches, thereby explaining the unfruitfulness of that which has been sowed.

1. A suited prayer for any that recognize the spiritual danger from deceitful and unjust men.
2. One of the things in which we were living when we, too, were sometimes disobedient and deceived.
3. The Christian's proper assessment of the old nature's desire for deceitful lusts.
4. The true character of one who makes an outward show of affection, but which is in reality deceitful.
5. What sonic will actually say in a coming day that shall deceive many.
6. Something that must be bridled lest we deceive our own hearts.
7. A lactic often used to deceive the hearts of the simple.
8. Something that will characterize the deceivableness of the man of sin.
9. That which proceedeth from the mouth of a deceitful witness.
10. What is it that if we say we have, we deceive ourselves?
11. Something that corrupts good manners and will deceive all who fail to recognize this relationship.
12. The temporary flavor to anyone eating the bread of deceit.
13. Something the tongue is likened to, if used to work deceitfully.

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

R. Erisman

Bible Challenger-05-May Answers V.03

1. Orator Acts 24:1
2. Centurion Acts 10:1
3. Captain 2 Kings 5:1
4. Halt 2 Sam. 11:15
5. Prophetess 2 Kings 22:14
6. Ambassadors Josh. 9:4
7. Tanner Acts 9:43
8. Instructor Gen. 4:22
9. Officer Gen. 37:36
10. Nimrod Gen. 10:9

"Then said they unto him, Tell us, we pray thee, for whose cause this evil is upon us; What is thine OCCUPATION? and whence contest thou? what is thy country? and of what people art thou?"
Jonah 1:8.

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 all the redeemed: all that are Christ's at His coming. Thus, the type of the four and twenty courses of priesthood is fulfilled. 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.

Psalm 23

"The Lord is My shepherd: I shall not want...

I shall not want REST.

"He maketh me in lie down in green pastures."

I shall not want REFRESHMENT.

"He leadeth me beside the still waters."

I shall not want REVIVING.

"He restoreth no, soul."

I shall not want GUIDANCE.

He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake."

I shall not want COMPANIONSHIP.

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death. I will fear no evil
for Thou art with me."

I shall not want COMFORT.

"Thy rod and Thy, staff thee comfort me."

I shall not want SUSTENANCE.

"Thou prepares: a table before me in the presence of mine enemies."

I shall not want JOY.

"Thou anointest my head with oil."

I shall not want ANYTHING.

My cup runneth over."

I shall not want ANYTHING IN THIS LIFE.

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life."

I shall not want ANYTHING IN ETERNITY.

"And I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever'.

What Is a Christian?

According to the Word of God, a Christian is one who, as a sinner in the presence of God, has learned and bowed to the truth of his lost condition by nature and by practice, but who has also learned and believed through grace that his sins are forever blotted out through the blood of Christ. They are never to be remembered. He is reconciled to God, justified from all things, cleared from every charge, and now made meet for glory.

Having met God in Christ, the Christian is at peace with God, and happy in His presence and is no longer looked upon as being in the flesh, but in the Spirit. He is sealed with the, Holy Spirit, a member of Christ's body, a child of God, an heir of God, and joint heir with Christ. And having died with Christ, he is brought into present association with Him, risen in glory, now in possession of a life (eternal life) secure and beyond the reach of every hostile power.

The Christian is a priest separated unto God to serve now as a worshiper in the heavenly sanctuary, which the Lord has pitched and not man. Delivered from the world, to be separated practically from it, he is a citizen of and belonging to heaven. He has a bright future—eternal glory with God's Son. The present object of his heart is Christ in glory, the purpose of his present life, Christ; his present hope is waiting for Him, soon to see Him and to be like Him.

Is it not a wonderful thing to be a Christian? And is it not a poor thing to be anything else, even in this world? But then, "what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" 2 Peter 3:11.

Grumbling

A certain man at one time, unknown to himself, had a piece of garlic in his clothes. Wherever he went he smelled garlic.

"Everybody," he said, "seems to have been near garlic. Finally, to his disgust, he found out that he himself was guilty of the obnoxious odor. In the folds of his garments was the cause of his complaints!

Now I do not mean that you should carry real garlic about with you, yet be sure of this: if you find everything and everybody wrong, your brethren all wrong, and the prayers all wrong, then carefully look over your own garments, as it were, for as sure as you are reading these lines, the garlic is there. He who grumbles at everyone has in himself the cause of discontent.

"Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another."

Rom. 12:10.

Communion

"There I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee." Ex. 25:22.

The point especially to be noticed in this scripture is communion. Enoch had walked with God, and others had believed God, but here God is showing how He can meet man, and have to do with him in a way suitable to His own infinitely holy nature. He had talked to Adam in the garden. He had made Himself known to Abram as the Almighty and had come near to him so as not to hide from him the things that He would do.

When He called the children of Israel out of Egypt, He revealed Himself to them as Jehovah. He sheltered them from destruction by the blood of the lamb, brought them through the Red Sea of death and judgment, and thus perfectly delivered them from their enemies, whom they saw dead upon the seashore.

Delivered, Separated and Redeemed

In this way God had a people (through the flesh) separated unto Himself by election, by blood, and redeemed by power so that He could now dwell among them. We read, therefore, in this chapter, "Let them make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them." (v. 8.) Again, when the priests were consecrated, the Lord said, "This shall he a continual burnt offering throughout your generations at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the Lord, where I will meet you, to speak there unto thee. And there I will meet with the children of Israel.... And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God." And again, "I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be My people." (Ex. 29:42-45: Lev. 26:12.)

Thus Israel is chosen, separated from every other people, redeemed, and blessed with the Lord in their midst. And now we read of His meeting with Moses and with the children of Israel. Communion then flows out of established relationships founded on redemption accomplished, and through God's dwelling with His people by His Spirit. All this is clearly set forth in this typical people which God brought out of Egypt, most of whom fell in the wilderness because of their unbelief.

With us, all these blessings are of eternal value. By one offering we are "perfected forever." The redemption obtained for us is "eternal." We are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. We are children of God and have received the Holy Spirit to abide with us and in us forever.

God Desired Communion

We are, therefore, "called unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus." In the verses we have referred to, we find the Lord teaching what His mind is as to communion.

He desired communion with His people—"There I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee." He also teaches on what ground He can meet them.

It was not long before these precious words were communicated to Moses, that mount Sinai had been altogether in a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire. Then the people were commanded to keep off and not to come near. There was thunder and lightning, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud, and so terrible was the sight that Moses said, "I exceedingly fear and quake." Bounds were set about the mountain so that the people might not break through. It was said, "Whosoever toucheth the mount shall be surely put to death: there shall not a hand touch it, but he shall surely be stoned, or shot through; whether it be beast or man, it shall not live." Ex. 19:12, 13. But why all of this? Because the Lord came down upon mount Sinai and demanded righteousness from man in the way of works. He gave a law proper to man as a child of Adam on earth. Holy, just, and good as it was, it was the ministration of death because it was the ministration of righteousness. It demanded righteousness from man to God on the principle of works. Such was the law. But how different are the words written soon after—"There I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee."

The Way of Grace

It is because God, knowing what was in man, that he would be un-subject and a lawbreaker, was here setting forth what was in His heart toward him, for though on the principle of law or works, man must always be at a distance from God. Yet His own wise and gracious heart could devise the way whereby men on earth and Himself could not only meet together, but have communion. An altar of burnt offering was at the door of the tabernacle. All our blessings are founded on the sacrifice of Christ. These are some of the beginnings of the unfoldings of Scripture as to the way of grace.

Law, then, is not grace. They stand in widest contrast with each other. The principles of grace and works are never commingled in Scripture for justification in the sight of God. So we read: "If by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work." Rom. 11:6.

The symbol of the mercy seat was the intimation that God would come out in grace, and that even to lawbreakers. This we know has since been freely done, for God has made the way of approach to Himself in the person and work of His own Son, both according to His own holiness and the need of the sinner. The Son of God has come; He has declared the Father. It is well to observe that the ark was the first vessel of the tabernacle which God commanded to be made, and the place assigned to it was inside the veil. It therefore sets forth Christ in heaven.

The two qualities of material of which the ark was composed, shittim wood and gold, set forth Christ as the perfect man, and also truly God.

Wood and Gold

Being made flesh and dwelling among us. He nevertheless was the eternal Son—God and Man in one person. In this ark, or chest, were put the tables of testimony on which the Ten Commandments were written.

The whole was covered by a lid of pure gold, pure gold meaning divine righteousness. Out of the ends of this lid, or mercy seat, were beaten cherubim made to overshadow the mercy seat and to look toward each other and to the mercy seat.

All this clearly sets forth that "grace reigns through righteousness." It foreshadows the precious fact that though man was a sinner, and thus justly exposed to the wrath of God, yet Jesus had glorified God concerning the law. He fulfilled the law as well as bearing its curse by His death on the cross to redeem those who had broken it. Moreover, He magnified the law and made it honorable and could truly say, "Thy law is within My heart." With Him not one jot or tittle of the law failed. He was obedient in all things. His meat and drink were to do the will of Him that sent Him, and to finish His work. This He did perfectly. He could therefore say at the close, "I have glorified Thee on the earth: I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do." John 17:4.

The believer who has been under the law is thus redeemed from the curse of the law. Having died to it in Jesus his Substitute, he is brought to know God in Christ as the giver of both grace and glory. Like the apostle, he can now say, "I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God." It is precious to know that Jesus the Son of God, now in the heavens, is the One who has glorified God as to the Law of Moses and is the true mercy seat. Thus we see Jesus. It is now a fact that an incarnate Savior, Law-fulfiller, and Curse-bearer, crucified, risen, ascended and glorified is known in the presence of God. A Man raised from among the dead, and gone into heaven itself by His own blood, is now seen there.

We See Jesus

"We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor." Heb. 2:9. What a wonder of divine grace that God should thus devise a way whereby His banished ones might return in perfect consistency with His own holy and righteous demands. It was the Lord who said, "There I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel." Ex. 25:22.

By communion we understand fellowship, or joint participation. Communion and fellowship are generally the same word in the original. Communion, as we have said, must flow out of established peace and relationship, and its measure must be according to the character in which God is known. We do not read of communion with God in the epistles, because God is now revealed as Father, "The only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." Every believer now is born of God and knows the Father. The Holy Spirit has come down and has been given as the Spirit of adoption.

Every Believer Knows the Father

"Because ye are sons. God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." Gal. 4:6. Thus it is that "our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ." 1 John 1:3.

The Holy Spirit is the power of this fellowship, hence we read of "the communion of the Holy Ghost." Now in our measure, we can enter into the Father's love, counsels, delight and rest in regard to the Son and to all His children. We can also enter into the Son's love, delight and rest concerning the Father, and concerning every member of His body. Into this new order of things we have been introduced through grace, and by the fellowship of the Spirit. It is most wonderful to contemplate, and yet we can easily see that nothing less could suit the Father. Nothing less could be suited to the infinite worth of the eternal redemption accomplished by the Son, and nothing less could be wrought in us as children of God by the indwelling Spirit. It is no wonder that the apostle added, "And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full." As we have before observed, it is the peace made, the relationships established, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit which give character to the communion from which true service flows. Peace, communion, and service are therefore the divine order. What rest, joy, and power for service and testimony are connected with the realization of this present order of fellowship! It is most important that our souls really enter into it, so that we may be consciously before God our Father inside the rent veil.

Peace Communion Service

Jesus our life and righteousness is there, where perfect peace and perfect love are unchangeably known. The blood ever speaks of our title to be there. There we worship the Father, rejoicing in Christ Jesus without a cloud and without a fear, having no confidence in the flesh. There we are ever learning divine goodness, and increasingly delighting in the Father who loves us as He loved His Son, and delighting in the Son of God who also loves us and gave Himself for us. Such are some of the blessings of present fellowship with the Father and with the Son.

Communion, then, is the Christian's watchword. Our blessed Lord would have us share with Himself "the words" the divine communications which the Father gave Him. (John 17:8.) He also gives us His own peace, that calm, unperturbed state which ever flowed from confidence in the Father's love. He would have us to be without troubled hearts or fear during the whole time of His absence. He said, "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you.... Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." John 14:27. He would have us also share His joy. He said. "These things I speak in the world, that they might have My joy fulfilled in themselves." John 17:13. As to love, His desire is that we should know that the Father loves us as He loved Him. (John 17:23, 26.) And to crown the whole, He will share His glory with us. "The glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them." John 17:22. Oh, to be kept in the constant enjoyment of this sweet communion! H. Snell

Perfect Work

How perfectly the Son does His work in John's gospel. He takes up one sinner after another from chapter 1 through 10, and does not leave them for the hand of any other. He Himself perfects one and all giving them the sense of this, that upon leaving His physical person they had already found all of their needs as sinners fully met. No ordinance, no apostle, no church was needed to improve their state.

He takes up each of His saints in chapter 13, and washes them "clean every whit." fully ready, like accepted guests, to enter the house in a way worthy of it.

He takes up the house itself in chapter 14, prepares it for them—does this service all Himself—and then He takes up His saints all together, returning and receiving them unto Himself, to the house thus prepared for them.

There is a completeness and a singleness in all these operations. He does each service Himself alone, and does it perfecto, like the Son of God.

Three Descents from Windows

Perhaps one of the greatest snares for the human heart is to seek a place of prominence. Pride has marked the course of man ever since he heeded the voice of the tempter in the garden in desiring to be "as gods." (Gen. 3:5.) His moral history will culminate in worship to a man, the beast, who not only accepts the place which belongs to God alone, but blasphemes God and all that is of God. (Rev. 13:4, 6; 19:10: 22:8, 9.) What a blessed contrast is the Lord of glory who humbled Himself, coming from highest glory to take the lowest place, not only in life, but also in death. (Phil. 2:5-8.)

The believer is instructed to let this same mind be in him, that is, to go on in a path of descension and humility. Surely this is unnatural for any, although the believer now has the life of Christ and delights to follow in the steps of his blessed Lord.

Three times in Scripture we read of persons descending from windows. As a door is the usual means of entrance and exit, departing through a window is immediately seen to be something out of the ordinary. Descending in humiliation is something that is out of the ordinary as well.

Paul warns the Colossians against a voluntary humility which is nothing more than pride in a subtle cloak of feigned abasement. This is not to be tolerated.

In the three instances alluded to, Josh. 2:15, 1 Sam. 19:12 and Acts 9:25, those who descended through windows were all preserved from imminent death. Likewise, humbling ourselves is a means of preserving our lives for the glory of God.

While the details differ in each case, certain features are prominent. In connection with the two spies who descended from Rahab's window, the scarlet cord by which they escaped is a most significant distinction. Scarlet speaks of the sufferings of Christ as well as earthly glory. If in any measure we lay hold of the sufferings and death of Christ for us, it will result in true humility, for it was our sins that caused Him to suffer. "Yet in sight of Calvary, contrite should my spirit be." The scarlet line was hung on the outside of the city wall. So Jesus suffered without the gate that our affections and feet might follow Him in a path of rejection and separation, not a path of popularity and honor.

David fled by means of the window and his wife misrepresented him by placing an idol in his bed. While Michal is to be commended for her efforts to save David, often people misrepresent others for the purpose of causing them pain and embarrassment. Michal's misrepresentation of David was used to give him time to escape. Perhaps the Lord has allowed us to be slandered or misrepresented in order that we will not be puffed up with pride and thus be preserved from a serious fall. "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." Prov. 16:18. "Before destruction the heart of man is haughty; and before honor is humility." Prov. 18:12. David's day of honor was just ahead.

David fled to Ramah (the high places) instead of becoming self-righteous and indignant about false charges. May God give us grace to flee to the high places—the enjoyment of Christ in glory and our heavenly blessings in Him. The situation was out of David's control and his enemies found out the truth soon enough. How much there has been with each of us that if exposed would put us to shame. So, we need not be unduly ruffled if we are put in a bad light—it could easily be so. Soon all will be revealed with our Lord's own estimate. May this cause us to walk humbly before Him.

Paul was let down at night in a basket by His brethren at the outset of his public testimony. He was entirely dependent on his brethren. How important it is for the Lord's servant to realize that though the Lord Himself sends, directs, supports and is the One to whom he is ultimately accountable, he cannot take a place of independence from his brethren as though he did not need them. If this example were laid to heart, it would preserve us each from taking an assumed superior position over our brethren. How happy it is too, for the saints of God to work together for the support and protection of the Lord's servants as well as for the defense of Paul's doctrine of which Paul is a type.

With his brethren above him, Paul descended in a basket. Under the Law of Moses, the offering of first fruits, that which was wholly for God, was brought to the place of God's appointment in a basket (Deut. 26:2). Paul's life was characterized by complete devotedness to God. In his last days he said, "I am now ready to be offered." 2 Tim. 4:6. He ended his course as he had begun, with devotion and humility. As the sense of importance begins to swell within us, how good to contemplate our part in the sufferings of Christ, to acknowledge that our entire history is known of God, and to remember we are simply members one of another.

W. Brockmeier

Editorial

A remark of Henry Kissinger some years ago has already proved to be true. Concerning war against Israel he said. "No [successful] war is possible without Egypt, and no peace is possible without Syria." The long and continuing struggle for peace is just that a struggle, and Syria has been the spoiler much of the time.

Each president of the United States for these last forty years has been seriously occupied along with his Secretary of State in trying to establish peace in the Middle East. Renewed efforts are in process again this year. Syrian President Hafez Assad has proven himself to be completely unpredictable. In his dealings he has sided sometimes for and at other times against all his neighboring nations and the Palestinians too. He knows that if he should even recognize Israel's right to exist, he could end up like Anwar Sadat of Egypt did—that is, dead.

Syria's place among the world's nations, then, is as a spoiler of any peace plan suggested. The nation of Jordan is sixty percent Palestinian and with many of them connected with their own people in the West Bank, they are a continuing problem which neither they nor other powers can solve. Syria cannot have her own way, which would be to annihilate Israel, nor will she let others force their way of solution.

These conditions that prevail should not surprise Christians living at this time, but rather encourage us to look for our Savior. First, He will come for His redeemed people and then after cleansing judgments upon the earth. He will come with His wife to reign in peace for a thousand years.

Joseph is a beautiful type of this. In Gen. 41, he is given the name Zaphnath-paaneah. In Coptic, this signifies "revealer of secrets," and in Chaldee, it means "the savior of the world." In the same verse, Joseph gets a wife and goes out over all the land of Egypt, which in Scripture is a type of the world.

Peace, then, for this world and particularly for Israel and the present nations around her, is not to be expected now. Having cast out the Prince of Peace when He came the first time in grace, this world cannot have peace until He comes in power. Ed.

Extract

If we could put down self in every way and entirely, we should find rest in all circumstances. If we walked as Christ did, we should see God and our Father in everything. Privations, temptations, difficulties —God and our Father is in all.

Subjection to His Word in everything, saying, "It is written," makes the most bitter thing sweet. Christ Himself has promised that we shall have rest. He reveals the Father to us and that is the blessing He has given us. All blessing comes from Christ teaching us every day to find rest by seeing God and our Father in everything.

The Church and the Kingdom

The eternal purpose of God embraces Christ and the Church. Election secures the persons who were individually chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4.) Predestination connects itself with the character of and makes sure of the blessing (Eph. 1:5.) Thus the eternal blessedness and glory of the saints in association with Christ are divinely pledged. As they formed the subject of purpose long before creation, so the full and final result of that purpose will only be fully displayed in the eternal state after the existing heaven and earth have passed away.

In the fullest Scripture upon the eternal condition (Rev. 21:1-5,) we have the relation of the Church to the Lamb as His wife, and to God as His tabernacle among men. Israel and the nations, as such, have no distinctive place, but all who are then living on the new earth (except the Bride) are merged in the expression "His people."

Ephesians develops the Church's unique place of blessing, privilege, glory and responsibility. Colossians unfolds the pre-eminent glory of Christ, the Church's head, in the spheres of creation, providence, resurrection and redemption.

The time purposes of God refer to Christ and Israel, and subordinately the nations. Israel's place of blessing on the earth was the subject of counsel from the foundation of the world and not, as with the Church, before the foundation of the world. God in creating and arranging the mountains and valleys, the seas and rivers, did so in special reference to His ultimate design—to make His people and His land the center of all His earthly dealings. (Deut. 7:6.)

When the sons of Adam were separated and formed into families and then into nations (Gen. 10), their inheritance was not to be won by strength or numbers or power of the sword, but was carefully allotted according to the number of the children of Israel (Deut. 32:8.) When the great assize of the nations takes place, introductory to millennial blessedness, "Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Matt. 25:34. In this blessed kingdom, prepared from the founding of the world, the Israelites will occupy the chief place, then the saved Gentiles, as it is written, "Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with His people." Rom. 15:10. The new birth is an absolute necessity for all who would enter the kingdom in its reality, whether in its heavenly or earthly departments (John 10.) The Church united to Christ in heaven and Israel blessed under Messiah on earth, form the great centers of all God's dealings with man. Oh, it is blessed to discover the glory of Christ in every page of the Word of God. Church glory, Israelitish glory, creation glory, redemption glory, all unite in having Him as their one blessed center. W. Scott

Grace with Salt

"Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt. that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man." Col. 4:6.

Our words should be always with grace, and prove themselves such by ministering good to others, "grace unto the hearers" (Eph. 4:29). This, however, will be many times in the pungency of admonition or rebuke, and at other times with severity or decision, or even with indignation and zeal. In this character they will be seasoned with salt. And having these fine qualities, being gracious and yet salted, they will be such as will bear their own virtues, that we may know how to answer every man.

The Lord Jesus, among all others, illustrated this form of moral perfection. He knew how to answer every man with words which always were with grace or to the sours profit, but at times seasoned, or seasoned highly, with salt.

In answering inquiries, He did not so much aim at satisfying them, as at reaching the conscience or the condition of those who asked them.

In His silence as well as in His words, when He had to stand before the Jew or the Gentile and at the last before the Priests or Nate or Herod, we can trace full moral beauty and perfection. He was One among the sons of men who knew when to keep silent and when to speak.

Great variety in His style presents itself to us in all this. Sometimes He is gentle, sometimes peremptory, sometimes He reasons, sometimes He rebukes at once, and sometimes conducts calm reasoning up to the heated point of awful condemnation and judgment.

He knows the moral of the scene before Him. "By Him actions were weighed" in their value as before God, and His words as well as His doings answer them accordingly.

Matt. 15 is a chapter in which this perfection is specially shown us. In the course of the action there, the Lord is called to answer Pharisees, the multitude, Peter, the Syrophenician, and the disciples again and again in their mistakes, and stupidity and selfishness. His tone of rebuke and of reasoning, of calm, patient teaching, of deep, wise and gracious training of the soul are all precious and admirable in their place and occasion.

And let me ask, is there not a fitness in its not being said of the Lord in Luke 2 that He was either teaching or learning, though it is said that He was hearing and asking questions? It seems that there is. To have taught would not have been in season. To have learned, would not have been in full fidelity to the light, the eminent and brighter light which He knew He carried in Himself, for He was wiser than His teachers, and had more understanding than the ancients. We may surely say of Him, I do not mean as God but as man, He was One "filled with wisdom."

But here again we get the grace of which that Scripture speaks, "Let your speech be always with grace." For of this child, in the temple with the doctors, we read that He was "strong in spirit, filled

with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him." In perfection of grace, He knew how to use the fullness of wisdom that was in Him. He is, therefore, not presented to us as either teaching or learning. Elihu, the young man in the book of Job, comes to remembrance here. Elihu was silent while "years"

were before him, and while "multitude of days" was speaking. But he knew that he had the Spirit of God, and he must assert the truth through the Spirit, though he waited until the proper time to present it.

Words of Truth

Delight in Christ

There was not one thing in the world of which God could say. "I am well pleased." but of Christ. What a support this is to the heart, exercised about good and evil, and learning what there is in man. In Christ we see the good come where the evil is, and God is well pleased with Him, and, as taught of God, one can say, "God is well pleased with Him, and so am I." What rejoicing this is to the heart! If we look at saints we get heartbroken. Even where blessing is, we know Satan tries to spoil it all, but if the eye be turned to Christ, the heart has rest where God's heart has His.

There is complete satisfaction in the object revealed, and how near He has come to us! He has dwelt among us, full of grace and truth. He has accomplished a work on Calvary's cross to make us His own.

"Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Titus 2:14.

"Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father." Gal. 1:4

Bible Challenger-07-July V.03

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the word that describes what the Lord does for the hungry soul.

1. What relationship does Jesus possess that enables Him to be a great High Priest for every believer?
2. What title was given to Christ after He was made perfect through obedience to the Father's will?
3. What is one of the credentials belonging to Jesus Christ that is cited to testify against those who are neither cold nor hot?
4. What is the appearance of the One in whom we have redemption?
5. What title did Jesus claim in referring to Himself as the One who came to seek and to save?
6. What title did Jesus Christ use to dispel fear in a prostrate apostle?
7. What was the name given to the Lord when His miraculous birth was prophesied?
8. What was the title given to Jesus Christ which was really an attribute of God the Father?
9. What is the title associated with Jesus Christ, which only those who are in Him can really understand?
10. What is the title given to Christ which assures the completeness of every believer?

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

R. Erisman

Bible Challenger-06-June Answers V.03

1. Deliver me Psa. 43:1
2. Envy Titus 3:3
3. Corrupt Eph. 4:22
4. Enemy Prov. 27:6
5. I am Christ Matt. 24:5
6. Tongue James 1:26
7. Fair speeches Rom. 16:18
8. Unrighteousness 2 Thess. 2:10
9. Lies Prov. 14:25
10. No sin 1 John 1:8
11. Evil communications 1 Cor. 15:33
12. Sweet Prov. 20:17
13. Sharp razor Psa. 52:2

"He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the DECEITFULNESS of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful." Matt. 13:22.

Certainties

When the great scientist, Michael Faraday, lay dying, some journalists questioned him as to his speculations concerning the soul and death.

"Speculation?" exclaimed the dying man in astonishment. "I know nothing about speculations! I am resting on CERTAINTIES!"

Faraday then quoted from Paul's letter to Timothy: "I KNOW whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day." 2 Tim. 1:12.

Jesus, the Lord

Jesus is the pre-announced name of the Son of God as man. It signifies "Jehovah the Savior." (Matt. 1:21.) What is revealed of Him historically may be divided as follows:

1. Begotten by the power of the Holy Spirit, He was born of the virgin Mary, as predicted in Isa. 7:14. The details of this wonderful event are given in the gospels of Matthew and Luke. The former records the accomplishment of the prophetic word that God would be present with His people, signified by the name Emmanuel. "God with us." The latter that the babe born of Mary was "that holy thing." called "the Son of God." For thirty years He led a life of lowly retirement, but the references of Scripture to this period show that He grew up under the eye of God in the perfection of manhood, yet in conscious Sonship to the Father, the vessel of the grace and wisdom of God.

2. At thirty years or age He took His place in Jordan with the repentant remnant of Israel, entering in by the door according to divine appointment, and He fulfilled righteousness in being baptized of John. He was at once owned of God by being sealed with the Holy Spirit, as distinct from all the others baptized, a voice from heaven declaring "Thou art My beloved Son: in Thee I am well pleased." The Gospel of John at this moment, shows the momentous issues which hung upon the truth of His person: the taking away of the sin of the world by the Lamb of God, the baptizing with the Holy Spirit and Himself as the powerful attraction and commanding object for repentant sinners. The gospels of Matthew and Luke here record His being led of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. It was necessary that the tempter of man should be overcome by man, and Jesus overcame all the wiles of Satan by the spiritual power of the Word of God. Thus vanquished, the devil left Him for a season.

3. In the power of the Spirit (John the Baptist's preparatory ministry having closed through his imprisonment by Herod), He now commenced the marvelous ministry of divine words and works of grace and power which is presented to us in the four gospels.

In Matthew we see Him as the Messiah, the Seed of promise, the Son of Abraham, and as the Son of David, the Heir of the throne of the Lord in Israel. He is also Emmanuel, the Jehovah of Israel.

In Mark He is viewed as the Son and Servant of God, acting and speaking for God in the midst of the circumstances of sin and sorrow into which He had entered.

In Luke He is Son of man, yet altogether of a new order of manhood, the vessel of grace for man in the like circumstances of sin and sorrow.

In John He is the Son of God, the Word, the Light and Revelation of God, but He became flesh and dwelt here, full of grace and truth. As the only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, He fully declared God whom no man had seen at any time. It is said of Him that He "went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil." He relieved man of every pressure which sin had brought upon him. He preached glad tidings to the poor, and brought to man the light of another sphere—the kingdom of God.

It is also said of Him that "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses." He refused to judge, for He came to save. He perfectly set forth God to men, and in Him as Man, God found His delight. His words were the words of God (John 3:34), and the Father who dwelt in Him did the works (John 14:10). His presence among men exposed men and revealed the thoughts of many hearts, and divine wisdom in Him detected the hollow religiousness, the infidelity, and the worldliness of the heart of man. As sent to do the will of God, He received all that came to Him, drawn by the grace of the Father. He led them and went before them as the Good Shepherd, held them in His hand, securing them thus for eternal life, and finally laid down His life for the sheep. In death He wrought redemption and by that work gave effect to His ministry.

4. From the first He was refused by the leaders of Israel and "the world knew Him not." From the mount of transfiguration where God gave Him honor and glory, He descended to suffer at the hands of men, though His death was according to "the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God." Because of this enmity of man, He retired beyond Jordan till the time came for the counsels of God to be accomplished in His death. During that period He visited Bethany to raise Lazarus, but again retired into the wilderness till six days before the Passover. He then presented Himself to Zion as her King, cleansed the temple of God, and judged with divine wisdom all the questions by which they sought to entrap Him.

As the hour of man and of the power of darkness approached, Jesus, knowing this hour was at hand, ate the last Passover with His disciples and instituted the Lord's supper. Then He crossed the Kidron valley into the garden of Gethsemane. There His soul was exceeding sorrowful even unto death in the anticipation of the cup which He had to drink, but in the submission which flowed from His perfect accord with the Father's will, He received the cup from the Father's hands and went forth to drink it. On the cross the judgment of God as to sin was fully executed; God was glorified as to it and redemption was accomplished. Hence, a dying malefactor who turned to Jesus could that day be with him in paradise. He gave up His life, and the blood and water which flowed from His dead side witnessed that expiation and cleansing for man are alone found in His death. His death also laid the righteous ground for God to accomplish His counsels with regard to man, and to fulfill His promises.

5. Though rejected here by men, He was "raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father," and "God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Phil. 2:9-11. As Lord, He administers everything for God according to the redemption He has accomplished, and the place He has taken in resurrection life and glory. He is there as the last Adam and the second Man, the Head and Pattern of a new race of men. He is also the Advocate, Intercessor, and High Priest on behalf of those who believe on Him, who are still in weakness on earth and need His support and aid.

He is sitting at the right hand of God until His enemies are made His footstool. It is revealed that He will descend from heaven into the clouds to receive His own to Himself; the living changed and the dead raised in glory will be caught up to meet Him in the air. He will come with all His saints to reign where once He was rejected. He will purge out of His kingdom all evil and reign in

righteousness as King of Righteousness and King of Peace. He will finally, having put down all enemies, deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father. As the Son who has assumed manhood. He will take the place of subjection to Him who put all things under Him that God may be all in all—supreme in a vast universe of bliss, the Son being the Head and Pattern of the whole redeemed and blessed race of man.

He is Judge of living and dead, and all who have done evil, He will exclude from the presence of God, in the hopeless and helpless misery prepared for the devil and his angels. He will thus have brought to an issue the whole question of good and evil. God will be forever secured, and evil will be in its own place of powerless misery. Concise Bible Dictionary

Questions and Answers

Ques. What is the lawful use of the law that is spoken of in 1 Tim. 1:8?

Ans. The lawful use of the law is that for which it was intended, as a rule for man

in the flesh. The result of the test of man under the law demonstrated that he could not keep it. The Christian is not under the law. To try to put him under it is not a lawful use of the law. Yet the Christian is to walk in the spirit of it and even far beyond it. (Matt. 5, etc.)

C. Buchanan

Wars

War is the natural consequence of sin being in the world, and men and nations coveting the possessions of others. (James 4:1-3.) The principal wars recorded in Scripture are, however, different; they are those of Israel in taking possession of Canaan for Jehovah as the Lord's host, and in maintaining their position in His land, for which they had divine instruction. Their warfare is typical of the conflict of Christians against principalities, powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this world and against spiritual wickedness in the heavenlies. (Eph. 6:12.) There are also the wars against Israel, when God used other nations to punish them. But God always maintained His rights in His own people and in His own land.

When Jehovah destroyed the army of Pharaoh in the Red Sea, He was called "a man of war," and this and other victories were recorded in "the book of the wars of Jehovah." (Ex. 15:3; Num. 21:14.) David could say of God. "He teacheth my hands to war." 2 Sam. 22:35; Psa. 18:34.

There are still wars on the earth, for sin is here, and nation rises against nation, and when Israel is again in the land, they will be persecuted by their enemies. The kings of the habitable world will be gathered at Armageddon to the battle of that great day of God the Almighty. (Rev. 16:14, 16.) The Lord must reign until He hath put all enemies under His feet. This will be followed by a time when they "shall learn war no more." when warlike weapons will be beaten into agricultural instruments, and the Prince of Peace will reign over the whole earth.

Sympathy

Sympathy means that I feel what you feel. A real characteristic of Christ's sympathy is that He always presents Himself in the character that suits the person with whom He sympathizes. Trial often does not sorters people: sympathy does. In Heb. 4 we learn the character of Christ's support to us here on the earth. It is no question of sin. Priesthood is for me, a poor, feeble person down here. We are going on to the rest, and how are we to get on by the way? Chapter four tells us how Christ supplies us as we pass on through this world. The first thing is the Word of God: the second, the sympathy of Christ. We could not be sustained here, where Christ is not, except by the grace of Christ. We have His sympathy.

Weakness is not sinfulness. If a thing is wrong Christ does not sympathize with us in it, nevertheless, His love never ceases. He says: "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Heb. 13:5. But He does not show sympathy to a person who is perverse. The Word of God must deal with that person.

I often ask myself. "Does the Lord sympathize with me in this?" The first ministry of His grace brings the soul to understand. "I have considered for you." Is the Lord thinking about me? Yes, what I want is the Lord's grace. I know Him, belong to Him and I feed on the manna. Christ on earth.

If we do not have the sense that the Lord sympathizes with us, that He is looking after our affairs, we cannot turn around and think of His affairs. If we can, "the God of peace shall be with you."

"Whatsoever things are true... think on these things." If I am not going in company with the Lord, I am worried about my own affairs, but if I have the sympathy of Christ. I shall not be worried; I know that He is thinking about my affairs and I leave them all to Him. The Lord grant that each of us may know better His sympathy as we walk through this evil world. Young Christian

Grace of God

There is no fault in our character that the grace of God cannot cure.

Our Vocation

Paul unfolds the vocation, and then calls on us to walk worthy of it, in the first part of Eph. 4. The necessary effect of being brought so close to God as we are is lowliness and meekness. How can it be otherwise? The greatness of the grace makes nothing of self. This is not easy. In Christ's life you see it plainly enough and in Philippians also. Then the effect of lowliness and meekness is to manifest the unity of the Spirit. "With lowliness and meekness:" that is what we ought to be before God. Then the effect towards others will be longsuffering; others may not be lowly and meek. Practically this brings God in and self is gone. The power of love walking with God brings in longsuffering towards others. Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace as servants of Christ, and self being gone, we are looking at others. "Yea, and if I be offered [poured as a libation] upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all, says Paul.

The mere fact of there being Jews and Gentiles in the Church, and the constant tendency among the Jews to think little of the Gentiles, made this needed—"endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit." not the unity of the body; God keeps that. Then it comes-to be jealousy for Christ's glory. What comes from the Spirit is always one; why are we not all agreed? Because our minds work; if we had only what we have learned from Scripture, we should be all the same. The body is one that cannot be kept by our endeavors, but all this is the practical realization of what is in the purpose of God. J.N. Darby.

Christ as Priest

The Aaronic priesthood is characterized by atonement and intercession: that of Melchizedek is characterized by power and Messing. Christ is "the high priest of our profession." as Christians. He will be, as a result, "priest of the Most High God" God's millennial name.

The order of His priesthood is that of Melchizedek. Its exercise at present is after the pattern or character of Aaron, that is, intercessional. He was "called" to the priesthood by the word of Him that said unto Him, "Thou art My Son, to-day have I begotten Thee." Heb. 5:5. This has reference to His being the Son of God. as horn of a woman, and born in time on earth. Compare Psa. 2:7 and Luke 1:35. This is distinct from His being God's eternal Son.

He is installed in His priesthood after the order of Melchizedek as having gone on high when He had been rejected on earth, had died and risen, and had ascended to heaven. Compare Heb. 5:6 and Psa. 1

He was perfected for His priesthood (especially for its present exercise), "in the days of His flesh." through strong crying and tears, and His pathway of sorrow and suffering. Then He went on high. (Heb. 5:7-9: Mar. 14:33-40: Luke 22:40-53.) Having gone through all this, He was "called of God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek" (Heb. 5:10), when He ascended into the heavens. There and then He first practically exercised His priesthood. When He comes forth again He will exercise it after its true order, as Melchizedek. F.G. Patterson

A Contrast—Law and Grace

Exo. 34:2 2 Cor. 3

It is important to see that there were two distinct occasions in which we find tables of stone committed to man according to God's command. On the first occasion there was total ruin, and when God uttered His commands, there was no shining of the face whatever—no Moses transfigured by the power of glory. The law never made the face of man to shine: it is not the intention of the law, nor is it the result of the law. The law is characterized by darkness and tempest, by thunder and lightning, by the voice of God dealing with the guilty. And so it was on the first occasion when the law was announced by God Himself and the tables were broken by the indignant lawgiver before they ever reached man.

(In the second occasion, when the tables of stone are made, what a difference there is The lawgiver was called into the presence of God who was pleased to give a mingling of mercy along with the law. There was a covenant expressly made of this combined composite character—not law alone, and not grace alone, but rather the mingling of grace along with law. It would have been perfectly impossible for God to have carried on dealings with Israel, or to have brought them even into the land, unless there had been this mingling of grace and mercy with law.

Mingling of Grace and Mercy with Law

Consequently, the law was still committed to man, but it was shut up in the ark, not displayed with all its terrors before the eyes of men; it was enclosed in the testimony.

There are many, even of God's children, who think that such is exactly the tenor of the dealings of God with us now; that is, law and grace mingled—grace hindering the action of law—the law bringing us in guilty, but grace interposing to screen the guilty according to the words we read in the early part of Ex. 34. There Jehovah proclaims Himself in the character of lawgiver, though He declares His long-suffering and mercy, as it is said: "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering... forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin." But it is also added: "And that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation." Now, you will observe that while such is the principle of God's dealings—that it is not law alone, nor grace alone, but the two together—while this is the case, whenever the mediator comes forward to speak to the people, he has to put a veil upon his face. When he goes into the presence of God the veil is taken off; in the presence of glory there is no veil. But as long as man had to do with the law, even though there was mercy and grace mingled with it, the veil must be put on when he spoke with the people.

In contrast, our position is neither having to do with law alone, nor with law mingled with grace.

Grace and Glory without Law

We are in the presence of grace and glory without law at all. The Apostle shows this in 2 Cor. 3. Here he does not refer to the contrast of Ex. 19 or 20, but solely to the occasion of mingled law and grace in Ex. 34 and he lets us see that the ministration on that day was one of death and condemnation. The reason is this: if the law enters in at all, I have to do with it as that which governs me and under which I am subject, then the more mercy that is shown, the guiltier I am, and He will by no means clear the guilty.

The all-condemning character of the law did not come out while God was dealing with men before Christ. When Christ came God fully manifested Himself and His principles. In Christ there was One who could solve all difficulties, meet all need, and deliver from all distress and danger. It was because the Son of God was now become the Son of man, and the Son of man was willing to suffer on the cross.

Hence, our position is put in distinct and positive contrast with one under law.

Draw Near Into the Presence of God

The Apostle says: "If the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away; how shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory." 2 Cor. 3:7-9. He does not put us in the place of the children of Israel, but he shows our place to be like that of Moses when he drew near into the presence of God without a veil. This is our position now, and not as that of the children of Israel. In short, it is not the man veiled, and the children of Israel afraid of him because of the glory of his countenance which they could not look upon, but the man unveiled in the presence of God, when he turns, not to the people with a veil upon his face, but to God in glory without the veil.

Such is our position now; such is the position of all Christians if they only knew it. This comes out fully when Paul writes, "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." 2 Cor. 3:18. "We all" is in contrast with the one man, Moses—not with all Israel. The position of the Christian is typified by Moses in the presence of God, not by the children of Israel in the presence of Moses veiled. It is "We all" —for God makes not the smallest difference in this respect: the weakest Christian has exactly the same position before God.

The Same Position before God

Whenever it is a question of position or the simple result of what the Lord Jesus has accomplished and given to us by grace, there is no difference whatever.

When it is a question of spiritual power, there is a difference and all possible room for variety. Just as in the first Adam there is no difference in the general fact that nil have sinned, yet, when you look at the extent to which people have gone in sin, there are differences.

The second Man, the last Adam, has brought all who belong to Him now into this common place of blessing. We are all with open, or unveiled face (for this is the true force of it) beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord. This was what Moses saw, and only Moses, and he merely for a moment, whereas it is our constant position. A Christian, all the time he is here below, is, as far as the work of Christ is concerned, entitled to draw near to God, to look up into the glory, and to be there himself. The veil is gone; Christ is without a veil. There was a veil, but it is rent. Now there is none—none on the heart of the believer—none on the face of Christ, or on our faces. It is completely gone. "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

What the Holy Spirit now ministers to us is not merely a Savior who came down into our woe and misery to bear our iniquities and sins, but that same Savior after the work of grace is done, when He is gone up as the witness of its perfection into the presence of God. We are invited by the Holy Spirit to keep our eye fixed upon Him there, glorified according to the excellency of redemption.

A Savior Who Came Down and Is Gone up

That will not make His grace in coming down here to be less precious, nor will it make redemption to be prized less, but, rather, much more. It will imprint a heavenly character upon all our ways, and this, nothing less, is our place. "As is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly," and, "As we have borne the image of the heavenly." Then it will be perfect; now is it only partial, and according to the measure in which self is judged.

It is the un-judged activity of our nature that hinders the practical effect of heavenly power's being reflected from us. Do we not know it? When is it that we do wrong? When is it that we form mistaken judgments and become careless and worldly? It is when we take our eyes off Christ as He is now in glory. I grant you that Christ anywhere before the soul is a means of preservation. Nevertheless, there is no power like occupation with Christ in the glory for overcoming the seductions of the world and for discerning the evil in that which looks fair and religious in the world. As far as leading out our souls in love and devotedness is concerned, Christ here below will do it.

But Christ in glory extinguishes the light of earth's best religion and makes it appear pale and tawdry by the side of His surpassing brightness.

Earth's Best Religion

We are invited; we are called upon as Christians, to behold Him in that glory continually now. The Lord give us so to walk, and we shall find the fruit of it, "changed into the same image from glory to glory."

One word more: there is nothing so dangerous as to trifle with the truth; there is nothing more ruinous than for men to use the brightest truth and to be careless about the matters of everyday life. I beseech you to remember this. There is something even of a disgusting character about it when we fail in ordinary duties and yet are at the same time talking about resurrection and glory—life and all the special blessedness of the Christian position. I beseech you, my brethren and sisters, especially those of you who are young (though indeed it is a snare for old as well as young) to think seriously of this. It is the natural snare of those who are accustomed to an atmosphere of truth, where the words of God are (so to speak) the common household bread. It is a danger because the eye and heart are not on Jesus. Where there is simplicity with self-judgment there will be power. It will be found nowhere else. W. Kelly

Dead to Sin—Alive to God

As Christians, we learn that not only are our sins put away, but we, ourselves, are put away. Some say, "I am not what I should be." If you are a believer, you are what you should be. It would be better to say, you don't do as you should your ways, your acts are not as they should be. You are a temple of the Holy Ghost, a child of God, a member of Christ. You cannot improve the old nature, but God has shown how to keep it in its proper place—the place of death. Let me tell you, dear child of God, you cannot improve it. If God could not find any good in it, you cannot. "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. 6:11. Now what is your occupation? Self? Oh, no! Christ. You need Him as the object for your heart, and you should learn the application of the truth; you are not going to be the servants of sin any longer, but hold sin as a judged thing. Seek the things of the Lord; set your mind on things above. If you could get satisfaction in your own life, you would only be pleased with yourself, and this God does not want; He wants us to find our pleasure in Christ. Paul says, "By the grace of God I am what I am," (1 Cor. 15:10)—not, I do what I should. A man in Christ should look at himself as brought into that new place, and we do that, if faith takes in that blessed truth.

Saying "No"

"And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith. I am not, Art thou that Prophet? And he answered, No." John 1:21.

What a world of trouble this plain answer saved. It might not raise John's position in the eyes of the people, but it clearly showed his moral dignity.

It often requires great courage to say, "No." But by being able promptly, on occasion, to utter this little monosyllable, you may save yourself a great deal of trouble.

If Eve had known how to say no, she might have saved herself and her posterity from ruin. And many of her children, who have lost their character and their all, might have been saved if they had only had courage promptly to say no. Your safety and happiness depend upon it.

You may be urged by some of your companions to engage in some amusement, or to go to some place which you know to be wrong. If you resolutely and promptly say no at the outset, that is the end of it. But if you hesitate, you will be urged and pressed until probably you will yield, and having given up your own judgment and violated your conscience, you will lose your power of resistance, and yield to every enticement.

Take, for instance, a young man. He never hesitates a moment when anything wrong is proposed: he rejects it instantly. The consequence is, his companions never think of coming to him with any proposals of a questionable nature. They do not want to hear his prompt and decisive no. He can be trusted anywhere.

Take the case, say of a young girl who wants to please everybody, and therefore has not the courage to say no to any. She seems to have no power to resist temptation. So she is always getting into difficulties, always doing something that she ought not, or going to some improper place, or engaging in some improper diversions through the enticement of her passions. Her parents scarcely dare trust her out of their sight, they are so fearful that she will be led astray. She is a source of great anxiety to them, and all because she cannot say "NO."

Let me beg of you to learn to say no. If you find any difficulty in uttering it, if your tongue will not pronounce it, or if you find something in your throat that obstructs your speech, go by yourself and practice saying, no, no, no! until you can say it clearly and without hesitation. Have it always ready at the end of your tongue to utter with emphasis to every man, woman, or evil spirit that presumes to propose to you to do anything that is wrong. Only be careful to say it respectfully and courteously, with the usual prefixes and affixes which properly belong to the persons to whom you are speaking. The short sentence, "I belong to Christ," will end many difficulties. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law doth he meditate day and night." Psa. 1:1, 2. Young Christian

Editorial

Peter "became very hungry." Acts 10:10. Each one of us knows what that kind of feeling is: that knowing deep inside that craves for something to eat. But have you ever experienced being very hungry and not being able to find anything to eat?

In much of the world food is plentiful, and yet in some places it is not and even death by starvation takes away many lives. It is perhaps true that the greatest fear in the world is the fear of hunger. This is true particularly in parts of Africa and Asia.

Hunger is no respecter of persons. The king himself is served by the land. Rich and poor, old and young are all alike sustained and satisfied by food.

At that time when Peter was very hungry, God displayed before him four-footed beasts, wild beasts, creeping things and fowls of the air and then said to Peter, "Rise, Peter; kill, and eat." When Peter objected, God said. "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common."

More instruction is given to us in 1 Tim. 4, verses 4 and 5. "For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer."

Pain relieved is pleasure and each of us is careful to quickly, if possible, satisfy those inward hunger pangs with something to eat.

Now what about another kind of hunger? We refer to a desire for righteousness. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness." Matt. 5:6. Along with the blessing attached to this kind of hunger, there is also the promise of fulfillment—complete satisfaction.

"The righteous Lord loveth righteousness." Psa. 11:7. This tells us the character of our Lord who promises the blessing and the reward to those who hunger and thirst after righteousness. Do you, do I know this kind of hunger? Where is righteousness to be found today? Righteousness in the person of the Lord Jesus has gone up to the Father. (John 16:10.) But also even now the moral qualities of the kingdom of God can be seen although the kingdom of God cannot yet be seen. Rom. 14:17 tells us: "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink: but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." In Christ's coming kingdom righteousness will reign. We should earnestly desire, hunger and thirst for this time when our Lord and Savior shall be exalted and "the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever"! Isa. 32:17. Ed.

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.

The Assembly of Christ

God created all things for His glory when He called into existence this world and the vast system of the universe. His object was that unto the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, or angelic hosts. He should make known by means of the Church what the Apostle calls "His manifold [all-various] wisdom." (Eph. 3.) In other words, He reserved in His own bosom this master-piece of divine wisdom— this chiefest of all revelations. This Church shows His all-various wisdom which comprises without distinction, poor sinners, associating them with Himself, and attaching them to the Lord Jesus Christ in a living, organic, intimate unity. The saints on the earth become linked up and one with the glorified Christ, the head of the mystic object.

In Matthew's gospel we find the first historical mention of this wonderful truth. It is not given to us in Mark, Luke, or John. I think it appropriate that it should be so, because in Matthew we have the dispensational character of truth.

Dispensational Truth

Christ is presented as the King, as the Son of David and of Abraham. The Evangelist Matthew presents the person of the Lord Jesus Christ to us as the One who was brought before His people Israel in responsibility to be accepted or rejected by them. The culminating point is in the 12th chapter, and the deliberate choice is made by those who professed to have their eyes opened. They attribute the works of God to the power of Beelzebub in loosing poor souls from the power of Satan. For this character of wickedness, for this blindness, there can be no forgiveness, either in that age or in the age to come.

We find therefore, the 13th chapter marking a new commencement and opening with the parable of the sower. He brings before His disciples what He is pleased to call the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, when the nation openly refuses to receive Him as their King. He brings before them things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world, and tells them what character the kingdom of heaven would assume.

Those beautiful parables—the treasure hid in the field and the merchantman seeking goodly pearls, occur in this 13th chapter of Matthew. In these parables, the Lord is alluding to the blessed truth on which He elaborates in Matt. 16. The previous chapters, from the 13th on, give us His progress in different parts of the Holy Land, until we find Him in the coasts of Tiro and Sidon.

Goodly Pearls

There, being still followed by great crowds, He escapes from them to the neighborhood of Caesarea Philippi—built by Herod Philip for his own self-glorification. The Lord brings the disciples here in order that they might have more freedom and privacy for their own communion. The Lord wanted to be alone with them. There are times when the Lord works with us in the crowded streets and there are times when He likes to meet us alone. Yet it is always for blessing, and always with a deep sense of His love in our souls.

From the map in the back of your Bible you will see that this city, Caesarea Philippi, is very near the ancient city of Dan. We see from 2 Kings that Dan was the place that Jeroboam chose to be his capital, in which he erected an altar to divert the hearts of the people from that which was the true place where Israel ought to worship. God sets His mark on what it was in His eyes, because He always says in connection with that man. "He made My people to sin." Here the city was in ruins, crumbling into dust a picture of the works of man.

An Object Lesson

The Lord uses this as an object lesson for His disciples, contrasting it to the revelation He was about to make, which should stand forever, and against which the gates of Hades would be powerless. The Lord begins by asking in Matt. 16 verse 13, "Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am?" The disciples answer that some said one thing, some another, but all were wrong. You will find no definite certainty in the thoughts of man, only probabilities. It is only God who can present things as they are, with the truth. He has done so in a Person, in His own beloved Son, the One who could say, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." So much for the vanity of men's opinions. The Lord dismisses them without any comment whatever, and puts this searching question to the disciples.

If you could see Him standing here and from His own lips hear this question, "Whom say ye that I am?" could you answer as Peter did? Can you say, as the Apostle John could: "We know that the Son of God has come, and He has given us an understanding that we may know Him that is true; and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son, Jesus Christ"?

A Perfect Library

Your mind may be a perfect library of the opinions of men, and you will still be no nearer the truth than were those wise men among Israel. They were all wrong. "Whom say ye that I am?" In this your salvation rests—not in your acquaintance with the opinions of men.

"Whom say ye that I am?" Peter answers. "Thou art the Christ." We know from the Gospel of John that it was this that first engaged the heart of Peter. Philip says. "We have found Him. of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." John 1:45. He was the fulfiller of 311 God's promises, the anointed One, the Messiah.

John refers to this as being the cardinal point with the soul that knows God when he says. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God."

John 5:1. You may believe many things about Him. but unless you believe Him to be the fulfiller of all God's promises in connection with His people, and the anointed One of the Holy Spirit whom God proclaimed to be His own Son, then you are not born of God, however upright and good you may be. The spark is absent from your soul, which makes all the difference between those who are dead in trespasses and sins, and those who are alive in Him.

Peter had heard of the Father's own message concerning His Son at the waters of Jordan.

The Spokesman

Now, becoming the spokesman of the other disciples, he makes the confession "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Then the Lord says to Him, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona." How one admires the perfect wisdom of the blessed One in so addressing His own servant. He takes Peter back into his past; he was Simon Bar-jona. And you and I, who know our sins forgiven for His name's sake, what are we? Each one of us knows that in himself he is nothing but Simon Bar-jona still, It is only the Lord Jesus who can change our name. "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven." Those people were wise in their guesses about who He was, hut we have divine certainty. It is the word of the Father to draw to the Lord, and when we are drawn, it is the work of the Holy Spirit to make that work effective in our hearts.

"And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church." We all know how, from an error in translation, an entirely false impression has been given here. The Lord's meaning was to put a pointed contrast between His servant and that which He speaks of as being the foundation. "Thou art Peter," the stone. The Lord contrasts our old name with this new name He has given us.

Contrast of Names

We are "Peters"—each a stone in this wonderful edifice, mid built upon a rock or foundation of the same material. Now what is this rock? It is primarily Christ Himself. He becomes the foundation of a new thing. He says, "I will build." Not a single stone had been laid in position at that moment. The saints in the Old Testament, glorious us they are, do not form a part of this. The Lord does not say, "I have built," but "upon this rock [Himself! I will build.]"

In Eph. 2:20 it says, "and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone." While the Lord is the foundation of all blessing, yet in responsibility and in administration of this wonderful thing, it is built practically on the confession by man of the Person of Christ.

It is unfortunate that the word "church" has, by usage, become associated with a material thing. a building erected by man. The word "assembly" conveys the thought here more accurately. The Lord was going to erect a spiritual building. "And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." While Dan was in ruins and Caesarea Philippi destined for a similar fate, yet nothing could prevail against this wonderful thing connected with the source of eternal life and the Son of the living God.

In connection with the 19th verse of Matthew chapter 16, we know that there has been most unhappy confusion between the Lord's words "My Church" and His words here "the kingdom of heaven."

Revisit His People

John the Baptist preached the immediate coming of "the kingdom of the heavens" revealed in the person of Christ. God had always maintained His kingly claims, and was about to revisit His people. The kingdom of the heavens had drawn near. This is very different from the Church. You don't build with keys. Yet such is man's ignorance, and it is commonly thought that Peter is given a couple of keys to do it with. Peter does not have the keys of the Church, but the Lord has given him the keys of the kingdom. The "kingdom" includes professing Christians: the Church is composed of living stones only. Christ builds His living stones on a living foundation, and no man has any power to undo Christ's work. But Christ has given Peter the keys of the kingdom of the heavens. In the Acts we see him use them in administering blessing to Jew and Gentile.

It is very precious to note how God has so controlled His servants, that each of them presents to us different aspects of the same truths. Peter speaks of newborn babes who desire the sincere milk of the Word. (1 Peter 2:2-5.) The Prophet Jeremiah could say. "Thy words were found, and I did eat them." We want to receive God's Word in our hearts just as little children take unquestioningly of the milk which is their natural food.

In 1 Peter 2, Peter goes on: "To whom coming, as unto a living stone. disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house." How precious that God should plan and prepare all these living stones in the past eternity for His glory. Like the stones that Solomon prepared for the temple, there was no noise of ax or hammer when that great edifice was erected.

No Noise

Every stone was prepared by the workmen, ready to be put in its allotted place when brought to the Lord's house.

We come to Christ, who is the foundation, and are joined with Him in this wonderful spiritual house.

In one sense we are the house, and in another sense we minister in the house. "A holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices." What precious words to apply practically to our hearts, contemplating the Lord's overflowing mercy, grace and loving-kindness! He has brought us to Himself. He has built us on Himself as living stones, with the same material, spiritually, as the foundation itself. We have a life hid in Christ with God, and we have a holy priesthood and are to offer up spiritual sacrifices. This alone is acceptable to God, because it is presented in that same name He delights in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. May the Lord enable us to know how to take our places as living stones on this glorious foundation, to know what it is, as holy priests, to worship God in spirit and in truth, as He desires that His saints should worship Him. F. Lavington

The Lord's Resurrection in Matthew

The resurrection of the Lord is a grand central mystery, indicating the end of the old creation and beginning the sure, immovable foundations of the new. It has, however, its various results. Some of its power will display itself in heavenly places, some in earthly; some will be known in the power that sets the enemy aside and some in the grace that saves the lost and brings them to God forever.

It is differently presented at the close of each of the gospels. In Matt. 28 we have the resurrection in its power over the adversary. The sealed stone and the set watch represent the power and enmity of the world, but the angel that witnessed the risen Jesus, as it were, laughs them to scorn. The angel puts the sentence of death upon them, letting them know that it was hard for them to kick against the pricks and self-destruction for them to resist the Son of God in power.

This is one great result of the resurrection. It is judgment against the world. It shows that there is direct collision between God and the world, and that God is the stronger. The world had put Jesus to death, and God had raised Him from the dead. These two simple facts indicate the entire collision between God and man, and the strength and victory were with God; the result of these facts must be the judgment or doom of the world. Such judgment is here expressed by the angel's rolling away the sealed stone, and putting the sentence of death on the keepers of it.

This same chapter 28 shows the resurrection in its results on earth. It puts Jesus in possession of all power, and gives Him a claim upon the discipleship and obedience of all the nations. This claim I know is not now made good, nor is this power now exercised. But they are His and in the coming millennial days of the kingdom they will be realized. Power which is His by right as the risen One will be exercised by His hand then, and the nations of the earth from the rising to the setting sun will own Him. This is very distinct and very characteristic of Matthew's gospel, so perfect are the oracles of God in their variance as in their unity. But here we have nothing of the effects of the resurrection upon heaven, no peopling of heavenly places with the redemption and grace which the resurrection has scaled and accomplished.

J.G. Bellett

Do All

"Would you not recommend young Christians to do something for the Lord?" was the question asked of an old preacher.

"No. I would not," was the unexpected reply.

"Then what would you do?"

"I would recommend them to do all things for the Lord."

It is good for all Christians, young and old, to keep their Lord and Master ever in view, and to do everything for Him.

"Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him." Col. 3:17.

Bible Challenger-08-August V.03

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the word that is used with "understanding". to help us understand the true meaning of life.

1. Something a son-in-law complained about because of too many changes.
2. Something used to indicate perpetual servitude.
3. Something seen in a dream with two-way angelic traffic.
4. Something held in the left hand that contributed to the routing of an enemy host.
5. Something used as an undergarment by a king in a time of famine.
6. The special room where a future king was invited to eat a special portion.
7. Something to consider as an example of those receiving God's providential care.
8. The place where a half-dead man was brought.
9. Something containing 153 fishes.
10. Something to hate for the promise of life. Answers to these questions will be found in the next issue of Christian Treasury.

R. Erisman

Extract

The searching eye of God not only reads the heart and lays everything bare in the light, but the searching eye of God also looks on the believer with all the affection with which He looks on Christ.

Bible Challenger-07-July Answers V.03

1. Son of God Heb. 4:14
2. Author of eternal salvation Heb. 5:9
3. True witness Rev. 3:14
4. Image of the invisible God Col. 1:15
5. son of man Luke 19:10
6. First and last Rev. 1:17
7. Immanuel Isa. 7:14
8. Eternal life 1 John 1:2
9. True God 1 John 5:20
10. Head of all principality and power Col. 2:10

"For He SATISFIETH the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness." Psa. 107:9

The Acts

The fifth hook in the New Testament is called The Acts of the Apostles. More appropriately it is the acts of the Holy Spirit. From the very early chapters and right on through the whole book, this is readily seen. The Spirit of God came down on the day of Pentecost and formed a new group on the earth for His dwelling place. It is the Church, called the house of God in 1 Tim. 3:15 and a habitation of God through the Spirit in Eph 2:22. That same Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth, has remained on the earth in His dwelling place, the Church, ever since.

The actions, or the acts of the Spirit of God, continue. The close of the book of The Acts is very remarkable and is different from any other book and for this reason: the book abruptly stops without any salutation, signature or amen. It ends with preaching and teaching. It is just as though the Holy Spirit is saying to us. "This is all of My acts that I here record, but My acts will go on. I will remain among you."

So it is and has been ever since. God continues His work and that through His own children in whom the Spirit of God dwells. The preaching and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ are still going on.

Although the history given in the Bible ended, we can be sure that God has recorded all the acts and all will be manifested some day. Job tells us, "Behold, my witness is in heaven, and my record is on high." Job 16:19. "Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world." Acts 15:18. What a great comfort and encouragement it is then, as Christians living today, to know that the Spirit of God is still here and still working. The preaching of the gospel of the grace of God is reaching far and wide and souls are being saved. Christ is magnified and exalted in praise and worship. There is a testimony to the truth. All is weak on man's part but there is no lack of the power of the Spirit of God. C. Buchanan

The Holy Scriptures

The Lord Jesus used the Old Testament Scriptures in several different ways.

- 1) He observed them obediently, ordering His life and forming His character, as 1 may speak, according to them.
- 2) He used them as weapons of war, or a shield of defense, when assailed by the tempter or by the world.
- 3) He treated them as authority when teaching or reasoning.
- 4) He avowed and affirmed their divine origin and their indestructible character, and that in every "jot and tittle."
- 5) He fulfilled them, not withdrawing Himself from His place of service and of suffering until He could survey the whole of Scripture (as far as His service and suffering had respect to it) as realized, verified, and accomplished.

In such ways as these, and it may be in others, the Lord honored the Scriptures. What a sight! What a precious fact! How blessed to see Him in such relationship to the Word of God—that Word which is the ground and witness of all the confidence and liberty and peace we know before God.

Then when the ministry of the Lord is over, when the Son has returned to heaven and the Spirit comes down, He appears (as in the apostles whom He inspired to write the epistles) doing the same service for us. For in the epistles we get quotations from the writings of the Old Testament.

And there is no limit to this. These quotations are found in every part of the New Testament, and are taken from every part of the Old, from Genesis to Malachi—and that very largely. So we have in the structure of the divine volume nothing less than the closest, fullest, and most intricate interweaving of all parts of it together, the end returning to the beginning, and the beginning anticipating the end. In a certain sense, we are in all parts of the volume when we are in any part of it, though the variety of communications in disclosing the dispensations of God is infinite.

These qualities of the holy Book are in the highest sense divine. Its contents or material have in them a comprehension and display of moral glories in all unsullied excellency which in the clearest manner speak of God unmistakably to heart and conscience.

J.G. Bellett

A One Minute Message

There are sunny days; there are cloudy days; there are days of gladness and days of sadness, but the day in which we can rejoice is the day that the Lord has made.

We read in Psa. 118:22-24 that the stone which the builders rejected has become the head stone of the corner. The Lord Jesus, rejected by His own people Israel, becomes the foundation stone of all our faith and hope of eternal life. Crucified and slain, He arose triumphant over His foes and to all who believe in Him, He gives eternal life.

Salvation is the work of the Lord and His glorious work from beginning to end. To those who have received the Lord Jesus into their hearts, it is a precious thing that the Lord gave Himself a ransom for us that He might take us to be with Himself for all eternity.

The day that the Lord has made is the whole age of grace. There is no more keeping the law with its rites and ceremonies, no more fear of judgment. We are saved by His work and the commandment He has given is to love Him and to love one another. It is not a day wherein we dread to leave this life but a day that gives us the blessed hope of seeing Him face to face and to be with Him for all eternity. There never was a day like this nor will there ever be again. We have our hopes set on things above, not on things of the earth. Our affections are towards Him; we do not look for earthly blessings for He has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ. Truly it is a day wherein we can rejoice and be glad.

W. Stevens

God Himself

Under the gospel dispensation, God has taken to Himself the attitude and title of "God our Savior," towards a world of poor, fallen sinners, displaying His grace in the salvation of the lost, on the ground, and through the virtues of the sacrifice of His Son. He is not willing that any should perish. His desire is, that all should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth. God Himself—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—are workers together to this end. Surely it is blessed to be in ever so feeble a manner, in the channel of divine thoughts and workings. All this, too, is for Christ's glory—this is the ultimate aim and object of the divine mind.

The knowledge of God Himself is the highest attainment to which the soul can aim. It is this by which the saints grow and increase so that they become, if learning, fathers in Christ, for they "know Him who was from the beginning." That is, they know Him who has revealed to us the heart and nature of God.

Everything

"In everything"—not only when you know the will of God—make known your requests, it is not a question of intelligence, but of confidence in God. "And the peace of God...shall keep your hearts and minds." Phil. 4.

Communion

What precious thoughts come before our hearts as we contemplate the word "communion" as it relates to our personal contact with our loving God and Father. "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ." 1 John 1:3.

Is it not marvelous that now, in virtue of our new birth into God's family and our being indwelt by the Holy Spirit, we can have and enjoy God's thoughts, all centering around His beloved Son? Before our salvation it could not be, because "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ." 1 Cor. 2:14,16. "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." 1 John 2:20.

How good it is when you and I discover that our gracious Father wants us, yes, longs for us to enter into His thoughts and to share His delights. Have we discovered something of what David experienced when he wrote: "How precious also are Thy thoughts unto me. O God! how great is the sum of them"? Psa. 139:17. "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make our abode with him." The Holy Spirit would always direct our hearts to our precious Savior, our Lord Jesus Christ, the perfect example of blessed uninterrupted communion with His Father, that we might learn the precious secrets of what communion is, and how it is to be maintained.

If we consider the perfect Man, we see that two lovely things characterized Him perfect obedience and perfect communion. "I delight to do Thy will, O my God: yea, Thy law is within my heart." Psa. 40:8. (See also Psa. 1.) "For the end of that man is peace." Psa. 37:37. Is not His communion with His Father sweetly implied in the Lord's own words when He said, "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid", also, "These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." (John 14:27 and 15:11)?

It must follow then, that if we are to know more of this blessed communion with our heavenly Father, there must be simple obedience and submission to the will of God in our daily lives. As the precious Word of God grips our hearts and directs our feet, we commence to have and enjoy His thoughts and in the same proportion we go on our way rejoicing (Acts 8:39).

We have a fine example of communion in the most happy experiences of Abraham's servant in Gen. 24. We must say that this touching story furnishes a beautiful type of the Father sending forth the Holy Spirit to fetch a bride for His beloved Son, the Lord Jesus. The activities of this dear servant seem to set forth many divine principles that should characterize the man of communion! They are as follows: (1) Availability (2) Submission (3) Obedience (4) Prayer (5) Worship (6) Testimony (7) Continuance.

Availability

This faithful servant in Abraham's house was held in honor and trust. The word "servant" appears fourteen times in this chapter. It is obvious that he was near and ready to receive communications from his master. "Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors." Prov. 8:34. How good to be available when the blessed Lord would speak to us. Does He not have much to tell us? Are we so distracted by this world and our getting through it that the Lord Jesus cannot get our attention? It was not so with Abraham's servant. He listened carefully to every word and then submitted to Abraham's plan.

Submission

"The servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and swore to him concerning that matter." Oh the importance of quiet, full submission to the expressed will of God. All this leads to the servant's unquestioned obedience as seen in verse 10. "And the servant took ten camels of the camels of his master, and departed; for all the goods of his master were in his hand."

Obedience

"He arose, and went to Mesopotamia, unto the city of Nahor." All indeed is put into action by obedience and is there anything better than obedience? "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." 1 Sam. 15:22.

Prayer—Worship

One of the most vital elements to communion with God is prayer. As our God would speak to us, He looks for our response and this indeed is prayer. How many times in this chapter do we witness this dear servant's head bowed, either in prayer or worship (vv. 12, 13, 14, 26, 27, 52). With a deep sense in his heart of the Lord's special undertaking, he exclaims, "Blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of His mercy and His truth: I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren." Can we not say that this lovely statement defines well our word communion?

How precious to our Father's heart is our worship ascending up to Him as we discover His infinite love and perfect grace to us. We may well say over and over, "Great is Thy faithfulness." Worship to God had become a vital part in the life of this dear servant. Perhaps he had learned much by observing his master Abraham and his altar.

Testimony

Let us observe still another outstanding feature about this man—that is, his testimony. He speaks well and frequently of his master and his master's son. This is very blessed! (See vv. 12, 14, 27, 35, 36) Sharing our joy in the Lord with others will certainly deepen our own joys in fellowship with Him. "The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself." Prov. 11:25.

Continuance

We also notice that Abraham's servant was resolute. There was a fine continuance about him. He began his commission well and would not be turned aside until he had completed the task. With so many divine indications of the Lord's undertaking for him, surely it was his special joy to present this beautiful woman to his master's son at the end!

I wonder if, after hearing of the gracious way the Lord dealt with his servant, that Abraham may have smiled and said, "Well done thou good and faithful servant." Oh, may we seek to know more of this sweet communion with our Father day by day and covet His well done" in that coming day. May that still small voice find us available, subject, obedient, prayerful, praiseful, witnessing a good confession and continuing on until that blessed moment when we hear Him say, "Come up hither!" "Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Rev. 22:20.

W. O'Brien

Clear Views

Christian reader, beware of being satisfied with "clear views." It is, no doubt, most needful to "hold fast the form of sound words," but then, a form of sound words, without realized companionship with Christ, will leave the heart as cold as an icicle. We must remember that, in nature, the clearest nights are often the coldest. Thus it is with professing Christians. A sound creed in the head, without Christ in the heart, is a poor, cold, dead, worthless, soul-deceiving thing.

The true way of obtaining clear views of the gospel, is to look "in the face of Jesus Christ." The true way to attain a knowledge of sound doctrine, is to feel, by the touch of faith, the very pulsations of the heart of Jesus. One reason why so many Christians lack abiding peace is that they make peace their object, instead of cultivating a closer walk with God. It is impossible to be in the presence of God and not have peace, because perfect love makes everyone within its range feel perfectly at home. This is one of the precious effects of love.

"Clear views" may leave the heart barren and void. We want to enjoy the companionship of One in whom we can fully confide. The heart needs to be refreshed by the dew of true sympathy. We need to be sharpened by "the countenance of a man." Where can we find all these, but in Jesus? Every other heart but His will disappoint us at times.

Earthly friends may fail or leave us,

One day soothe, the next day grieve us;

But this Friend will ne'er deceive us;

Oh! how He loves!

Let us seek a closer, deeper, more personal walk with God. It is our privilege to enjoy this. Jesus died, "the just for the unjust." not merely to give us "clear views." nor yet to bring us into a good place, but "to bring us to God." We are brought to God now. We are brought to Him in heart, in conscience, in understanding, in order that we may enjoy Him, according to the mode in which He has revealed Himself. And how are we to enjoy Him? By the Word. If we attempt to think of God, apart from Christ, or to think of Christ, apart from the Word, or to think of the Word, apart from the Holy Ghost, all is mist, confusion. or cold speculation, whereas a single line or clause of Scripture will bring God into the soul, with unspeakable sweetness and power.

This makes all very simple. We have received a new nature and have been brought into a new position. But this is not all. We have been brought to a Person. This is what we want. This is what the heart can understand. The human heart would rather have a cottage with companionship, than a palace in solitude. Things New and Old, Vol. 1

Communion with Christ

Communion with Christ can only be kept up by constant watchfulness.

His Way

He went his way." Luke 22:4

What a statement in these four words. Judas, who had followed with the Lord for three years or so, now chooses to go his own way, for that is the sense of the verse. We think of scriptures like: "The way of transgressors is hard." Pray. 13:15. "The way of Cain." Jude 11. This is the way that is opposite to the way of God. It is a way of self-pleasing, a way of self-indulgence, a way that ends in sorrow and death, a way of separation from light and love.

The Lord was on His way to the cross. His disciples were with Him and enjoying His company for the last time before He died. Judas leaves this happy scene to go his own way. Money was the attraction— that force that would pull him away from the source of eternal riches. O, that we might beware. Does our way take us away from His presence? Do we ask ourselves the question, "If I take this way will the Lord be with me or will I leave Him behind?" It says in John 13:30 of Judas that "he went immediately out: and it was night." Physically, of course, it was night. But spiritually, too, he went out into the night and stayed there. The light was gone left behind. He deliberately turned his back on that true Light from heaven and was in darkness from that moment on.

"He Went on His Way" Acts 8:39

There is one word extra in this phrase compared to the one in Luke 22, the word "on." The Ethiopian continued in the way that he began. That was his quest to find the truth. Philip was used to bring the truth of the gospel to this searching soul. As a result the eunuch believed, was baptized, and went on his way rejoicing.

What a difference from Judas. Here is one whose heart is filled with the Lord, one who can go back to his home knowing that what he went searching for he had found, one who had passed out of "darkness into His marvelous light;" one who was rejoicing. Judas eventually went out and hanged himself—death is the end of choosing one's own way. The Ethiopian went on his way rejoicing. Going in His way (the Lord's way) brings joy. Going in our own way brings sadness, loneliness, regret, and, with Judas, remorse and death.

The Lord watches every step we take, every way in which we go. Does the smile of His approval shine on our way? May it be our earnest striving to keep in His way for the little while that remains.

"He knoweth the way that I take." Job

23:10 "As for God, His way is perfect."

2 Sam. 22:31 "His way have I kept, and not declined." Job 23:11

P. Pascoe

The Spirit of Obedience

The wisdom of God is far superior to man's, and a little boy or girl, however young, can be kept from all the evil that is in the world on the simple principle of subjection and obedience to the Word of God. You don't need to know all the evil that is in the world. You don't need to plan against some clever enemy. You just walk in obedience to the Word of God, and I am sure you are going to be kept, no matter how dark the day, no matter how difficult the path. There is just one simple principle that will keep you faithful to the end; that is, the spirit of obedience. H. E. Hayhoe

Editorial

The European Community (E. C.) this year has finally compromised on farm subsidies. The negotiating sessions were furious with much name-calling and yet Europe is inexorably getting together. Language is still a major barrier. The twelve nations use twelve different currencies and speak nine different languages.

The aim of the E. C. is to have open borders by 1992. In order to break down the various trade barriers, they have already enacted three hundred new rules. Multinational companies with their large resources and expertise are already showing the way to operate successfully in Europe as it is now an amalgamation of nations. They are ready for the various parts to become one.

Will this be the revived Roman Empire? It is easy to look back in history and see that the breakup of the old Roman Empire formed a cluster of kingdoms in Europe. The Latin language stamped its trace on all the European languages. Outwardly, the Empire vanished. It will appear again. Rev. 17 speaks of the beast that was, and is not, and yet is (or shall be present). That time for its reappearance to us seems to be drawing near. As believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, we do not really expect to see this renewed Roman Empire. The rapture of those that are Christ's will take place before the judgments begin to fall to accomplish the prophecies of the book of Revelation from chapter 6 on through the book.

We know from Rev. 17:12 that there will be ten kings that will receive power as kings for one hour with the beast. These, in unity, will give their power and strength unto the beast. Truly, right now we are living in very interesting times that should fill the believer with joyful expectation of seeing his Lord and Savior at any moment. Ed.

We wait not tribulation times.

Nor seek we death to take us.

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.
None from this hope can shake us.
Our Lord is coming; this we know,
Some day, some night or at noon,
And though we have no date to show,
We know He is coming soon.

The Bride, the Lamb's Wife

Rev. 21:9-27

We are considering a heavenly scene, and the most marvelous description of it. The hymn writer put it: "O bright and blessed scenes, where sin can never come." The world is trying to make this poor scene, through which we are passing, a place where men can find their pleasure and satisfaction. But the world is sunk in iniquity and cannot rise to enter into the thoughts which we have before us here in Rev. 21.

In order that even the child of God may enter into the thoughts the Spirit of God is bringing before us here, we have, as it were, to go up to the top of that high mountain. You will find in chapter 17 of Revelation that one of the seven angels also took John to see the woman that rides the beast. That gives us the thought of the false bride, and she is seen in the wilderness. But the angel that shows John this great and holy city takes him up to a high mountain.

When the Lord was transfigured, it tells us that He took Peter, James and John to "a high mountain apart." Then He was transfigured before them. What a blessed thing to get out of the atmosphere of this sinful world, and be engaged for a little while with these heavenly thoughts. Then we can enter into the mind of the Spirit of God, and get a few glimpses of that which lies before our souls—that holy city, the holy Jerusalem descending out of heaven from God.

We might inquire: In what way does the city descend out of heaven from God? But before we answer this question, we will mention that here we are getting a picture of the bride in her millennial glory. If we want to consider the eternal state, we must look at the first four verses of Rev. 21. Then the Spirit of God takes us forward and shows the bride as she will appear in that day when Christ is reigning and the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ.

"I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife."

It is interesting to notice that the angel tells John that he will show him the bride, the Lamb's wife, but when he looks, he sees a city. The Church is looked at in various ways in the Word of God. Paul's special view of the Church, which he received as a revelation, was as the body of Christ—that which He loved and gave Himself for—united by the Spirit of God, with Christ, the glorified Head. But here we have another thought of the Church entirely and that is that the Church is looked at in connection with her government of the earth. Of course, it is only in association with her Bridegroom, the King of kings, that she has any part in that marvelous reign of Christ.

When we see what is happening down here and how this world is developing so fast, we know that man is just winding up his history—he is working out his own destruction. These great cities with the skyscrapers and all the great works of man are soon to come down for we read of a time when "the cities of the nations fell." Rev. 16:19. Then the blessed Lord is going to set up His kingdom down here.

Let us not forget that there are glorious things in prophecy connected with this world in which we are living. You know, there isn't another planet in the whole universe like it. The more the astronomers try to learn something about the planets, the more it is proven that there is not another world, in this solar system at least, where the kind of life that we know could exist. Christians did not have to use telescopes or have astronauts to find out that there was just one world upon which God had focused His thoughts and purposes. And we should never forget that this world is the place where the eternal Son came into a scene of suffering and sorrow, and died to save rebel sinners. God will never forget His thoughts about this world where the cross of Christ raised up the precious Savior to suffer and die for sinners like you and me!

“Descending out of heaven from God.”

We have not answered the question yet about the new Jerusalem descending out of heaven from God. How does it descend? Does it come down to the earth? No, we find the nations walking in the light of it. When the Lord descends from heaven with a shout, He is not coming down to this earth. When He comes with that shout it is to call His people up to meet Him in the air. So you see that "descending" does not mean that it comes down and settles on this earth; no, it goes just so far—far enough to light up this world with the glory that we will be associated with in company with our Bridegroom.

What a lovely expression, "the bride, the Lamb's wife." I love the thought of the Lamb's wife. It could have said the King's wife, or the wife of the Lord of glory. So there is a special word to bring joy to our hearts when we think of the Lamb, because that very expression tells us of how we who know the Savior are some day going to be united to Him in His victim character—the Lamb that was slain in His love for us.

“Having the glory of God: and her light
was like unto a stone most precious, even
like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.”

We find that the One who sits on the throne in the fourth chapter, where the throne is set for judgment, was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone. I understand that the jasper stone speaks of the glory that you and I can enter into. There are other glories; we are told in 1 Tim. 6:16, that God dwells "in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see." But we have a glory here that is for the delight of the creature. And is it not rather striking that the One who sits upon the throne, and the city which is described as the bride, are identical? Yes, we are going to be like the blessed One in His glory some day! The very glory that we see in Christ is going to be displayed in His redeemed ones.

“And had a wall great and high.”

That is the first description we have and a very important description. The Garden of Eden was an un-walled garden. The serpent entered that garden and persuaded man that he was a better friend than the God who had given man all those blessings. Wherever you look in this fair scene, how many beauties there are, the glories, wonders, marvels and majesty of the work of the Creator. But wherever you turn, you see also the sad trail of the serpent. The miseries, the sadness, the heartaches are found wherever you go no matter how beautiful the surroundings may be. But the

first thing the Spirit of God would assure us of is this, that the serpent will never enter that heavenly scene—it had a wall "great and high." So we do not have to anticipate another fall of man. No, it is all secure for the redeemed.

“And had twelve gates, and at the gates
twelve angels, and names written thereon,
which are the names of the twelve tribes of
the children of Israel.”

Here we view the bride in her domain. It would be one thing to see Queen Elizabeth when she was over here in America, but it would be quite another thing to see her in Buckingham Palace. There you see her in her domain. So here you not only have the bride, the Lamb's wife, but we have her in her domain, and in connection with the government of this world below. If you carefully read Scripture, you will find that the gate was where the government of the people was conducted. It speaks of government; twelve is administrative perfection in man.

It all tells of that kingdom which is to be set up. We may be in that kingdom sooner than we anticipate; things are winding up very fast! When the Lord comes, the next thing is that those judgments will come on this earth, and then He is going to set up His kingdom. In a few years all that we are talking about may be realized!

The angels here are just servants. I think it is very touching to see the angels who excel man in power and strength, and who have never sinned or fallen as you and I have, yet they are willing to open their ranks to another people who come into a nearer place of blessing than themselves. Here they are satisfied to be just porters at the gate. How they rejoice in seeing the purposes of God wrought out! We are told that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church the all-various wisdom of God.

“And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.”

That is very precious. When the Lord was eating the last supper with His disciples, they got into a quarrel over who would be the greatest. But that was the very time you find the Lord saying, "Ye are they which have continued with Me in My temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as My Father hath appointed unto Me; that ye may... sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Luke 22:28-30. The Lord doesn't forget His promises, does He? Here where we get a description of the heavenly scene, what the Lord promised the twelve is seen and they are to have a special place.

James and John wanted to suggest a place for themselves—to sit on His right hand and on His left. But they were not promised that. He told those two that "it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of My Father." It is far better to let the Lord decide the reward, the size, and the gain than to try to decide the matter for ourselves. Leave it to the Lord; serve Him faithfully, and He will see to it that you will not be disappointed. I am sure that when the time comes, and we see what He has prepared for those that love Him, we are going to be so humbled and our hearts will be so filled with delight that we will fill heaven with His praises!

“And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof.”

You will find in the eleventh chapter that there was a reed like unto a rod to measure the temple, for there it is the earthly temple. But here it is a golden reed. Gold, as we know, speaks of divine righteousness. Everything in that heavenly scene is measured by divine righteousness. Thank God, that through grace we have already been made the righteousness of God in Christ!

But alas, we have the old nature still in us and often we are measuring things by the ideas and thoughts of poor, unworthy creatures like ourselves. We begin to measure whether this is wise, or this is worthwhile. And if you get into the higher education, you begin to measure your prospects or your interests by a human measurement if you are not watchful. How delightful it is to look into this scene and find that all that kind of measurement, the rod that is just an earthly thing, is no more. The old nature is gone; you measure everything that unfolds before you and it is all divine. There is nothing to bring sadness, disappointment or regret to your heart.

“And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs.”

We could picture this city on a map of our North American continent. If we were to measure from the Pacific Ocean at Vancouver, B.C., to Lake Superior; then south on a line to the Gulf of Mexico; west to the Pacific Ocean, and follow a line back to the starting point, we would have the twelve thousand furlongs. Just think of a city described in this way. We know that both Los Angeles and New York are immense cities, but how everything that man has built just fades into insignificance compared to what we are describing here!

We must remember, however, that what we are considering is not something that is literal; everything here is figurative. But it is a figure of something that is real. The way the Spirit of God instructs the saints is to take something that we are familiar with in this world, or we would not have any concept of the things set before us. So He takes a city, and immediately expands into something that is so beyond anything possible down here that we are just lost. Think of a city, the extent of that which we have just described, which has just one street down the center! It shows that it could not be literal. Then think of the amount of gold to cover the walls of a city the length and breadth of what we have been reading about.

Then there is the pearl. The pearl comes out of an oyster. Here is a pearl not only large enough for a door, but for the gate of the city! He just takes something that we are familiar with again and immediately carries us beyond anything down here. So we get a little glimpse of the glories and wonders of what is before us. Then we are just left gazing up, as it were, like those disciples that the Lord took to the Mount of Olives; they followed the Lord to the confines of the unseen world, and were left gazing until the two in white come and say, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing

up into heaven?" Yes, they tell us that He is coming back; so we gaze, and gaze and wonder. It fills us with the anticipation of what is before our souls. The result is that things down here look very cheap. Think of a pearl of that extent—so large that it fills the gate of that great city—when compared to a pearl in a necklace!

This city is a perfect cube; or finite perfection. The universe is laid out in a circle. There is divine perfection. What we have before us here is suited to the needs of man. So everything is perfectly equal. Everything that we see in the world today is unequal. In some parts of the world people are starving; here we have a superabundance. Everywhere we go things are out of order. One is in good health and another a poor cripple. Some people blame God for it all, but who brought sin into the world? Did God bring it into the world? He did not! He told His creatures how they could keep it out of the world but man brought it in and ruined everything. Here we have a scene which is described in this way, "When that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away."

"He measured the wall thereof, a hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel."

The very fact that it speaks of the angel shows that there is divine power in connection with all the blessings that are found there. And yet, it is the measure of a man. We are going to be men for all eternity and so is our blessed Lord and Savior! Here is a theme that is suited for man in his likeness to Christ Himself. What a theme, where we as men and women like Christ, filled with His joy and His glory are to enjoy an eternity together with our blessed Lord and Savior!

"The building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass."

We never saw gold like that, did we? It is divine righteousness but in its transparency. We have already mentioned that we down here are made the righteousness of God in Christ; but we still have all the old flesh in us to contend with. There it will be transparent. Not a thought will ever cross our minds that will bring any regret to our souls! As William Cowper wrote in one of his poems:

Or, if yet remembered above,
Remembrance no sadness shall raise,
They will bring but new thoughts of Thy love,
New themes for our wonder and praise.

"The foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones."

Then we get the names of the twelve stones. A stone is not something that gives light, it merely reflects light. It is rather striking that the same stones mentioned here appear in the twenty-eighth chapter of Ezekiel, in connection with Satan who was the most exalted of all the creatures of God before he sinned. He once was arrayed with those glories with which some day the bride of Christ will be arrayed.

One thought that should touch our hearts is that these very stones are found on the breastplate of the high priest. So, Christ bears us, not only on His shoulders, but also on His heart of love. The glories that are seen in these stones bring us very close to the heart of that blessed One. Every child of God will reflect some glory of Christ. How good it would be if we reflected more of His glories down here—the meekness, gentleness, devotion to His Father's will. If those things were seen in our ways, what a beauty it would surely be.

“The twelve gates were twelve pearls; every
several gate was of one pearl.”

We have the pearl of great price in the thirteenth chapter of Matthew, where we find the merchant man seeking goodly pearls. "Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it." Matt. 13:46. In this city there were twelve gates; three of which faced in every direction. What a story that tells in that scene above, that it will be the display in glory of Christ's love for the Church, that He gave His all in order to possess her! We have its value and its beauty. The beauty of the pearl was what attracted the merchant man, and such was this pearl. Think of Christ back in eternity looking at what He is going to see in glory, and of which you and I by grace form a little part. It so delighted His heart that He would give up everything in order to possess it.

“The street of the city was pure gold, as it
were transparent glass.”

That is where we walk. How many times we have walked in this world and contacted defilement. But up there, there will no longer be the need of the basin, the water and the towel; the precious service the Lord is carrying on in our behalf now. We are going to walk a street where we will never pick up any defilement. It is transparent too. That is one thing that is very lovely to see in God's people, transparency; you can see through and through them—nothing is said behind the back. All will be perfect up there and nothing will create friction or suspicion!

“I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God
Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.”

Why is it that there is no temple in heaven? We find that the temple is measured in the eleventh chapter of this book, and in the seventh chapter there are those that serve God in the temple. But that is earthly. There will be an earthly temple. The Jews have not built a temple over there in Palestine, and I do not think they will now. Some day they will build a temple where Solomon's temple stood, but I do not expect it until we are gone.

Again, why is it that there is no temple in heaven? You know, the temple is where worship is confined. But will there be a confinement of worship in that glorious scene? The whole heavenly scene will be a scene of worship; no need for a temple there. Think of the company there walking that street where they never have defilement. When we lift our voices in praise to the Lamb, all heaven will join in the praise. What a destiny lies before us! We are approaching it rapidly; we may be called up there before another sunrise. These things are real.

"The city had no need of the sun, neither
of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of
God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof."

We find that Christ, the Lamb, is the light of the heavenly city. The Church, viewed here as a city, reflects the glory within to the world below. And the Church should have reflected that glory through her history in this scene. But what a sad story of failure it has been, although we can say that the only light that reaches this dark, benighted world comes through the Church. As little, feeble and flickering as that light is, take the Church away and what will become of that light? What a solemn day when the Church leaves this scene in its awful darkness. In that day she will shed her light in all its perfection. Perhaps the Lord was speaking of that in John 17:23: "I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me." When it is testimony, it is that "the world may believe," but when it is the communion of the saints in glory, it is "they shall know."

"The nations of them... shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it."

What a testimony will be rendered here below all through the thousand years. This very world on which we are living is going to enter into the glorious kingdom of Christ!

"The gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there."

The light and glory of that scene exclude every effort of Satan to bring in that which spoils. In another way the same thing is true today. Look at Rom. 13:12. "The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light." Light excludes darkness. The same principle that we see in connection with the heavenly city, that will forever exclude everything of man's failure and of Satan's deceit, should characterize us down here. That is having on the armor of light. Satan cannot operate in the light of the truth of the presence of God. The danger always is the covering up, and not bringing what is contrary to God wholly into the light where it is confessed, judged and put out so that there is a testimony for Him.

This chapter closes in a most marvelous way:

"And there shall in no wise enter into it
anything that defileth, neither whatsoever
worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but
they which are written in the Lamb's book of

life.”

Abomination is idolatry Satan's work. How thankful we can be that Satan is never to bring in his work into this scene. How sad that he has succeeded in bringing in his work among the people of God and to our shame. The corruption of man comes in if we are not watchful and careful, the corruptions that come in through the way of the world. But here we are looking at a scene where the things that try our faith are gone forever!

“There shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him.... for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign forever and ever.” Rev. 22:3, 5.

We have the bride viewed in her millennial glory, yet it carries us right on beyond the millennium into the eternal ages. Reigning to the ages of ages is where the Spirit of God draws the curtain for us. The Apostle Paul had to reprove the Corinthians; he said, "Ye have reigned as kings without us." 1 Cor. 4:8. They were trying to reign too soon. Reigning is not merely government, but it is the whole enjoyment of that scene where "His servants shall serve Him." It is not a scene of idleness, but perfect service, which we have failed in so sadly down here. It will be fully realized up there. Then, just look into the eternal ages: we shall reign forever and ever! A.M. Barry

Bible Challenger-09-September V.03

The first letters of each of the following responses will form the word Job used to characterize a part of his daily existence that normally should have been restful.

1. Something that once caused foulness of face.
2. Something thought to be unseemly when metaphorically found in a wise man.
3. Something in God's providence that does not come forth of the dust.
4. Something benefiting mankind because of a decree made by God.
5. Something found in the life of everyone for which God exacteth less than deserved.
6. Something croaked formed by God.
7. Something we may do which surely should be terminated when we sense God's chastisement.
8. A descriptive word applied to the things God does without number.
9. A seemingly strange place for God to stretch out a compass point.

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

R. Erisman

Bible Challenger-08-August Answers V.03

1. Wages Gen. 31:41
2. Ear Ex. 21:6
3. Ladder Gen. 28:12
4. Lamps Judg. 7:20
5. Sackcloth 2 Kings 6:30
6. Parlor 1 Sam. 9:22
7. Ravens Luke 12:24
8. Inn Luke 10:34
9. Net John 21:11
10. Gifts Prov. 15:27

"Understanding is a WELLSPRING of life unto him that hath it: but the instruction of fools is folly."
Prov. 16:22.

"Above the Brightness of the Sun"

I was journeying in the noontide,
When His light shone o'er my road
And I saw Him in the glory—
Saw Him—Jesus. Son of God.
All around, in noonday splendor,
Earthly scenes lay fair and bright:
But my eyes no more beheld them
For the glory of that light.
Others in the summer sunshine
Wearily may journey on;
I have seen a light from heaven,
Past the brightness of the sun—
Light that knows no cloud, no waning,

Light wherein I see His face,
All His love's uncounted treasures,
All the riches of His grace.
All the wonders of His glory,
Deeper wonders of His love—
How for me He won, He keepeth
That high place in heaven above;
Not a glimpse—the veil uplifted—
But within the veil to dwell,
Gazing on His face forever,
Hearing words unspeakable.
Marvel not that Christ in glory
All my inmost heart hath won;
No more star to cheer my darkness,
But a light beyond the sun.
All below lies dark and shadowed,
Nothing here to claim my heart
Save the lonely track of sorrow
Where of old He walked apart.
I have seen the face of Jesus—
Tell me not of aught beside;
I have heard the voice of Jesus—
All my soul is satisfied.
In the radiance of the glory
First I saw His blessed face,
And forever shall that glory
Be my home, my dwelling-place.

At the Gate

Many years ago in England, a farmer was at work in his field when he saw a party of horsemen riding about his farm. He had one field over which he was especially anxious that they should not ride.

"Shut the gate to the field," he said to one of his boys, "and on no account let it be opened."

The boy did as he was told, but was hardly at his post before the riders came up and ordered the gate to be opened. This the boy refused to do, stating the orders he had received and his determination not to disobey them. Threats and bribes were offered in vain.

After a while one of the huntsmen said in commanding tones, "My boy, you do not know me. I am the Duke of Wellington, and I command you to open that gate that I and my friends may pass through." (You will remember the Duke of Wellington was the general who defeated Napoleon at Waterloo.)

The boy lifted his cap and stood uncovered before the man whom all England delighted to honor, then answered firmly, "I am sure that the Duke of Wellington would not wish me to disobey orders. I must keep this gate shut and not allow anyone to pass except with my master's permission."

Greatly pleased, the old warrior lifted his own hat and said, "I honor the boy or man who can neither be bribed nor frightened into doing wrong," and he handed the boy a gold coin. Then the Duke put spurs to his horse and galloped away. You are a gatekeeper, young believer, and your Master's command is, "Be thou faithful unto death." Are you ever tempted to drink or to smoke or to take drugs? Keep the gate of your mouth fast closed. When tempted to lie, to deal falsely close. When tempted to lie, to deal falsely, keep the gate of your heart fast shut against such temptation. Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life." James 1:12.

They Believed God

It was nearly four thousand years ago that Abraham lived. He had no child, and he was old. God, however, told him that he should have a son, and that his descendants should be as numerous as the stars. This was a hard saying, but "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." Romans 4:3.

In this day of grace, God says, "To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." Romans 4:5.

More than 2800 years ago there was an exceeding great city called Nineveh. The wickedness of its inhabitants reached up to God, and He sent the prophet Jonah there to preach the message that He should bid him. So Jonah stood in the street of the city and he cried, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." That was not a pleasant preaching of grace and mercy, but a solemn one of judgment. We do not know that the Ninevites had ever before heard about the living God, though they had plenty of false gods, yet we read, "The people of Nineveh believed God." Jonah 3:5. They heeded his warning and they were delivered from the coming judgment.

Some 1900 years ago Paul stood on the deck of a small vessel sailing in the Mediterranean. He was a prisoner. A tempest was raging, and the ship was driving before the wind. There was no hope of being saved. Suddenly Paul stood forth among the crew and passengers, and told them that God had sent an angel to him, and that there should be no loss of life, but only of the ship. Incredible news! Almost too good to be true. But what did Paul add? "I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me" Acts 27:25; this was faith.

Blessing through Jesus is still being offered to the sinner. "We have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world." 1 John 4:14. What answer will you give to the love that makes known such blessing to you? Here is the inspired answer which is recorded for us: "We have known and believed the love that God hath to us." 1 John 4:16. H.L. Harris

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.

Home Building

"O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together." Psa. 34:3

"That in all things He might have the preeminence."

Col. 1:18

A. Architectural Plans—

a. The Word

"Jesus our Lord, according as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue."

2 Peter 1:2, 3

b. Circle of Grace (Your household)

"And the Lord said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before Me in this generation."

Gen. 7:1

"So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran."

Gen. 12:4

"Behold, when we come into the land, thou shalt bind this line of scarlet thread in the window which thou didst let us down by: and thou shalt bring thy father, and thy mother, and thy brethren, and all thy father's household home unto thee."

Josh. 2:18

But Joshua had said unto the two men that had spied out the country. Go into the harlot's house, and bring out thence the woman, and all that she hath, as he sware unto her."

Josh. 6:22

"And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites. in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

Josh. 24:15

"And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house. forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham."

Luke 19:9

"Cornelius... a devout man. and one that feared God with all his house."

Acts 10:1, 2

c. Christ and the Church (God's eternal plan)

"For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church."

Eph. 5:31, 32

B. Foundation—

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

1 Cor. 3:11

"Nevertheless the foundation of God

standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."

2 Tim. 2:19

"Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain."

Psa. 127:1

"Through wisdom is a house builded; and by understanding it is established: and by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches. A wise man is strong; yea, a man of knowledge increaseth strength."

Prov. 24:3-5

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction."

Prov. 1:7

"For the Lord giveth wisdom: out of His mouth cometh knowledge and understanding."

Prov. 2:6

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the Holy is understanding."

Prov. 9:10

C. Superstructure— (Four Pillars of a Godly Marriage)

"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed." Gen. 2:24, 25

The husband and the wife must leave their parents and cleave to each other, and love one another 100% and be transparent and guileless (naked) before each other.

D. Building Bricks—

Wives

a. Submission

"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and He is the savior of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything."

Ephesians 5:22-24

"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord."

Col. 3:18

"Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation [lifestyle] of the wives; while they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement [great fear]."

1 Peter 3:1-6

Today, in our society women are usurping God's role for men and missing their role before God.

b. Deportment

"While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear."

1 Peter 3:2

c. Appearance

"Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."

1 Peter 3:3, 4

"In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array."

1 Tim. 2:9

It is very important to say here that a tidy, clean, attractive wife welcoming her husband home from work is very important, but the essential part is the inward meekness and quiet spirit.

d. Keepers of Home "That they may teach the younger women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children."

Titus 2:4

"She is like the merchants' ships; she bringeth her food from afar. She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens."

Prov. 31:14, 15

e. Love Husband and Family

(1) Good Wife

"Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. She will do' him good and not evil all the days of her life. Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land."

Prov. 31:10-12, 23

(2) Good Woman

"Strength and honor are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come."

Prov. 31:25

(3) Good Neighbor

"She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy."

Prov. 31:20

(4) Good Christian

"Strength and honor are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come. Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised."

Prov. 31:25, 30

Husbands

a. Love (Spiritual, emotional, physical)

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself."

Ephesians 5:25, 28

"Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them."

Col. 3:19

“Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.”

Heb. 13:4

“Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband.”

1 Cor. 7:2, 3

b. Dwell and Know

“Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.”

1 Peter 3:7

c. Provide

“But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.”

1 Tim. 5:8

d. Manage

“One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity.”

1 Tim. 3:4

E. Crowning—

“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. 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. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.”

Rev. 19:7-9

“And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.” (After 1000 years still a bride!)

Rev. 21:2

“That He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.”

Eph. 5:27

“As the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.”

Isa. 62:5

E. Ferguson

Four Generation

The book of Proverbs is the book that is very adaptable to the needs of people today for it gives us heavenly wisdom for an earthly pathway. If you are not acquainted with the book of Proverbs, let me urge upon you an intense consideration of these wonderful truths that have been brought to us in a practical way in this book, and given to us by inspiration of the Spirit of God.

In chapter 30, we notice the reference to four evil generations. There is a series of four things in this chapter. Proverbs has a chapter for each day of the month, so you can time your studying with the days of the calendar.

"There is a generation that curseth their father, and doth not bless their mother." v. 11. This was observed a long time ago. But today, would you not agree that we have this manifested in a fuller sense than in any previous time? A generation that curseth their father. The father is the head of the house and he is the man with authority. Today we have an increase in the resistance and rebellion against God's ordained authority in the family and in the government and in the Church of God.

"A generation that curseth their father." We feel that ourselves; how we fret sometimes even when we are small and we, like to have our own way. There are two ways: the Lord's way, and then the way that we would like to have for ourselves because of these strong wills that are embedded in us. But it is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man. You can't even trust yourself. That is the reason that it tells us to trust in the Lord with all thine heart. Would you like to trust in the Lord with half of your heart, half-heartedly? We hold our reservations oftentimes and we do not wholly trust ourselves to the Lord and we miss those blessings that He has for us. We need to cast down reasoning and exercise the obedience of faith, and to accept God's Word without questioning it, without bringing in our own judgments about it.

This generation wants to break away from moral value, to be without restraint. Many prefer an independent life-style, actively pursuing the pleasures of this world which come to nothing. "Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity." What is vanity? It is a vacuum, that which is empty. Success, beauty, wealth... all that this world has to offer falls under this category. Like bubbles, they look bright and they float high, but they are not durable. They burst and are gone with nothing realized.

"There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes and yet is not washed from their filthiness." This generation might say, "We are able to do something about our current problems; we can manage alright. We're capable. We'll present ourselves in a good light and everything will turn out fine." They are pure in their own eyes but God sees them through and through. He knows the depths of wickedness of the human heart, the source of all the evils that ever afflicted the human race. We don't blame God for it. Some complain and ask why God allows such suffering as is seen in this world. There are mental and physical handicaps, and if God were a God of love (they reason), He would not allow it.

If you have heard the Savior's voice and are born again, there should be no complaining about the weaknesses and faults of the human race which have come upon us as a result of sin. We never justify sin, but we can be thankful to God and His grace for sending His Son to be the Savior of the world so that we might be saved from sin and its consequences and brought into fullness of blessing. This blessing far surpasses any blessing that can be realized on the earth. This generation may be "pure in their own eyes," but they won't bear the searching of God's Word.

Once there was a lady who came into the hospital as a charity patient. As they were going through the x-rays, she inquired of the doctor as to what he had found. She was very anxious about this and the doctor said to her, "I found a lie on your heart." She didn't expect that answer from a medical man. He said, "I did. You came in here as a charity patient but we found a big billfold tied on you. It is full of big bills of money." Indeed he did find a lie on her heart. Men may discover our obvious sins; an x-ray may discover our physical problems but God's Word can do even more. It exposes us according to our needs before a holy and righteous God. It also tells us of a Savior that was willing to come into this world to save us from our sins. He gave Himself for our sins that He might deliver us from this present evil world.

"Pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness." Another word for filthiness would be corruption. In the days before the flood, two things filled the earth: corruption and violence. Both required God's judgment. God's judgment is coming again. Our Lord said on the way to the cross, "Now is the judgment of this world." The sentence has been passed but not executed. Shortly it will be, because our Lord is coming soon. When we are removed from this earth, the judgments will follow; they will fall in heavy, successive blows on this godless, Christ-rejecting scene. Be sure that you are not left behind for such a time.

"There is a generation, O how lofty are their eyes! and their eyelids are lifted up." Man's pride has introduced into the educational system the idea of undisciplined "free expression." The attitude was, "Oh, don't restrain a child; don't tell him to do this or that. Give him the opportunity of self-expression, or you might harm something in him. There is a beautiful little god inside just waiting to blossom out and become something that is very remarkable!" Well, that is a wrong basis for unleashing man's potential. The error has since been acknowledged and today there is a cry for more discipline in schools.

"There is a generation, whose teeth are as swords, and their jaw teeth as knives." Now we come to violence. Their purpose is to devour the poor from off the earth and the needy from among men. These are four bad generations. You might suggest that this doesn't apply to you. But, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." There is an increase of the violence that is in the world now and it is rising at an alarming rate. This is the mystery of iniquity that was already at work in the time of the apostles. It is an indication of the nearness of the coming of the Lord. The Lord will have to come back to straighten things out in this world. Men are not able to solve the problems that arise in these evil days, but the Lord will come back and will correct that which is wrong.

P. Geveden

Editorial

France has just finished its election. This fall the United States will have an election for a new president and many other important government officials.

Changes in the government are always full of interest. A striving for position and power completely takes over some people and the resulting struggle stirs up the passions of many to varying heights, or perhaps we should say depths. Hundreds of millions of dollars are spent in the great power struggle for fame and fortune.

We suppose that the last words of David are quite unknown to the participants in their search for power, yet they are very important to know both for them and us. "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God." 2 Sam. 23:3.

In a former election year, Paul Wilson wrote in the Editor's Column just what we desire to repeat for all of us this year.

"When political campaigns wax hot and the world is besieged with claims and counterclaims, the Christians who are conscious of their heavenly calling can go on serenely, knowing that men are merely working out 'whatsoever Thy hand and Thy counsel determined before to be done.' Even though Satan is the god and prince of this world, and is blinding the minds of those that believe not, God is still supreme and is moving behind the scenes to work out His own purposes and counsels. These may not be what men think are best, but we must remember that this world, as it now is, is not going on to a bright future but to certain trouble, the like of which will never have been known before. It is guilty of casting the Son of God out and has not repented of its deed; God's righteous judgments hang over it, ready to begin to fall when the true Christians are taken out.

"What a mistake it is for real Christians to think that they can improve this doomed scene by political means. When the Lord Himself was here, He did not try to improve it; He refused to be a judge between two brothers, to remove an iniquitous Herod, or to stop a wicked Pilate. He left this world as He found it, except that when He left it, it was guilty of rejecting Him. Can we suppose that we are to do what the Lord did not do? Have God's thoughts about the world changed? He sent His Son into the world to testify for Him, and in the same manner the Son has sent us into the world.

"How thoroughly unlike Christ it would be for a Christian to help select or to wield political power. Christ is the heir of this world and we are joint heirs with Him; shall we, the joint heirs, have a place here before the Heir does? We are but followers of the rejected One, waiting for the moment when He will take us home. Our position is much like that of the Israelites who were sheltered by the blood of the lamb in an Egypt under divine sentence, while they themselves were awaiting the command to depart. How incongruous it would have been for those Israelites to be absorbed in Egyptian politics, or to help to improve that doomed land!

"The Christian is bound to respect all who are in authority, and to treat them as established by God, but at the same time to pass on as a stranger and a pilgrim. His home is elsewhere; he is but passing through. He is here to represent One who is in heaven to manifest Christ and His ways, which were always full of grace and truth.

"One writer has translated Phil. 3:20 thus: 'Our politics are in heaven, from whence also we look for the Savior, the 'Lord Jesus Christ.' How comforting! How encouraging! The sense of this should free us from all participation, and even from all anxiety in any political agitation regardless of how or where. Soon we shall hear that shout and be off to meet our Lord in the air. May we be found

feeding on Christ the "slain lamb"; underwent the judgment for us, and by whose precious blood we have been sheltered, while we are girded (shoes on the feet and the staff in the hand), ready to depart. (See Ex. 12:8-12.)”

If we are, then, looking for our Lord and Savior at any moment, we can leave the world now to its own struggles for power and position. For them, all will be very brief. In contrast, when Christ comes later with us and sets up His kingdom in power and great glory, we know that it will last for 1000 years. Ed.

Extract

All intelligence in divine things depends upon a state of soul.

Joy will ever rise in proportion to prayer and thanksgiving.

To have power in prayer you must have purity in life.

Conscience is the real guide to knowledge.

In God's presence sin is not measured by transgression, but by what God is.

Serving — Sleeping — Singing

Three men were in prison: (1.) Joseph serving, Gen. 39; (2.) Peter sleeping, Acts 12:6; (3.) Paul praying and singing, Acts 16:25.

You will notice the difference between Joseph in Gen. 39:1 who was brought down to Egypt, and Abram in Gen. 12:10 who went down into Egypt. Abram in the time of famine lost confidence in God and went down to Egypt to escape the famine. Abram did not have the mind of God in this. It was very different with Joseph who was brought down to Egypt. We see in this God working out His counsels and purposes. This is what God is doing today.

In many ways Joseph is a most beautiful type of the Lord Jesus. In this 39th chapter of Genesis he is in prison and is thus a type of the Lord Jesus. (See Isa. 53:8.) "He was taken from prison and from judgment." There is something very instructive for us here. It makes all the difference how the people of God get into their circumstances. Here Joseph could not help being brought down into Egypt. But in Gen. 12:10, Abram went down of his own will. "And there was a famine in the land: and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there." Egypt is a type of this world out of which the people of God have been delivered.

Prosperity

"And the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian." Gen. 39:2. He was not prosperous in the things of this world. There are two kinds of prosperity spoken of in the Word of God: one is worldly prosperity, and the other is spiritual prosperity. I believe we have the two kinds of prosperity brought out in connection with Joseph and Abram.

Gen. 13 shows that Abram got back to the place which he left. He was rich in cattle, silver and gold, but all the time Abram spent in Egypt was lost time as far as communion with God was concerned. We do not read of the tent or the altar in Egypt. You may say Abram got on well in Egypt, and he was very rich in cattle, silver and gold, but that was worldly prosperity. Egypt can give a Christian that. If a Christian gets away from the Lord and gets into the world, the world can give him prosperity but it cannot give him Christ.

Spiritual Prosperity

But the prosperity Joseph enjoyed in the house of Potiphar and in the prison was of a different kind. It was prosperity of soul with Joseph. What do we desire as Christians, the prosperity of the world or spiritual prosperity? Twice we read in Gen. 39, "The Lord was with Joseph." It does not say that the Lord was with Abram in Egypt, although doubtless He was because Abram was a man of God. The Lord did not forsake Abram because he went down to Egypt, but the time Abram spent in Egypt was lost time as far as communion with God was concerned.

All the time we are out of communion with the Lord is wasted time. If you turn to Ex. 12:1, 2, you will find the same principle in regard to the sinner. The Israelites had been in Egypt about 430 years, yet the Lord says, "This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you." All the time we are in our sins, not saved and out of Christ, is lost time as far as God is concerned. Our history Godward begins from the time we are born again, from the time we are redeemed with the precious blood of Christ. It is so with the child of God if he is going on with the world, making his nest here, grasping after the things of this poor world. This is lost time as far as communion with God is concerned. A Christian cannot have the world in one hand and Christ in the other. It must be Christ or the world.

Fear God

Joseph was a prosperous man. He was upright, honest, and had great integrity of heart. A few words in Gen. 42:18 show us what characterized Joseph all the way through: "For I fear God." This was the holy fear of offending God which comes out very beautifully in the 39th chapter. The temptation must have been very strong which was presented to Joseph by his master's wife, but it was the fear of God which prevented him from falling into this awful sin. The fear of God possessed Joseph's soul and kept and preserved him in the hour of temptation. He ever desired to inculcate this fear into the hearts of his brethren. He succeeded in doing this and it resulted in their repentance and blessing.

Joseph was brought into circumstances over which he had no control. What a comfort this is to the people of God in a day like today. Sometimes we are brought into circumstances which we cannot help and from which we cannot extricate ourselves.

Potiphar bought Joseph from the Ishmaelites and found when he got this poor slave that the Lord was with him. It is a beautiful thing when the people round about us can see that the Lord is with us. It is said about Peter and John in Acts 4:13: "They took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus."

Serving in Prison

Whether in the house of Potiphar or in the prison, Joseph served others. What should characterize us as the children of God? It should be happy, holy service. We are not to live down here to please ourselves, but to please the Lord. We read in Rev. 22, "And His servants shall serve Him." What a blessing Joseph was in the house of Potiphar. Because he was there, God blessed his house for Joseph's sake. We see the same in 1 Chron. 13:14, "The Lord blessed the house of Obed-edom, and all that he had." It is very easy for the Lord to bless His people because of any service done for Him or His people. (See Matt. 25:35-40.)

There is no doubt that God blesses the unconverted down here in this world because of their kindness to the people of God. Joseph is now in prison, falsely accused, and one would naturally suppose his days were done. He was accused of the most dreadful crime and put into the dungeon. But the Lord was with Joseph and showed him mercy and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison.

Suffering

We see in Psa. 105:17-20 what the Lord had to say about Joseph: "He sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant: whose feet they hurt with fetters: he was laid in iron." We would not have known how much Joseph suffered were it not for this Psalm. God wants us to know that Joseph was a sufferer. Few men have submitted to a more severe test than; Joseph, but he stood the test. It is in a time of prosperity that Satan tries people most. Joseph's trust was in the Lord. "The Lord is thy keeper: the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand. The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil: He shall preserve thy soul." Psa. 121:5.7. There are very many Scriptures which show how the Lord takes care of His own. May we enter into the truth of the little hymn:

Keep us Lord, O keep us cleaving,
To Thyself, and still believing;
Till the hour of our receiving,
Promised joys with Thee.

In times of trial and difficulty we can always cry to the Lord. "Lord, help me. Hold me up and I shall be safe." We cannot keep ourselves.

Sleeping in Prison

In Acts 12:6 we have another man in prison, Peter, who is not serving like Joseph, but sleeping. Matt. 26:40 says. "He cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with Me one hour?" Peter had failed to watch with His beloved Master in His hour of sorrow. Through sleeping, Peter lost that precious privilege. In Acts 12, Peter is asleep again, but under different circumstances. Here he is the beloved servant of the Lord and is tired and weary in service for his Master. He is sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains.

It is nice to turn away from ourselves and our failures to the One who never fails. Here we have the blessed Master watching so lovingly and tenderly over His beloved servant. Peter, lying chained between two soldiers was casting all his care upon the Lord. We like to read about Peter because he is so much like ourselves. This is the very thing that Peter exhorts believers to do in his first epistle: "Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you." It is very encouraging to read the letters of Peter and Paul who carried out the truth practically and also taught others so to do. May we all learn in time of trouble to cast all our care upon the Lord, knowing He cares for us.

Praying and Singing in Prison

"At midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them" Acts 16:25. Here we have the third man in prison, Paul, praying and singing praises to God at the midnight hour. A most unusual event took place in that prison. The jailor had never seen such a thing take place before. They had been severely beaten and their feet made fast in the stocks, yet they were singing. In the most trying circumstances what a wonderful thing it is to be a Christian, to be saved. Paul was saved on his way to Damascus where he was going to persecute the Church (Acts 9:1-9).

Paul and Silas, two dear children of God in the prison, two real believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, endured great suffering, yet it did not hinder the divine life from flowing out. They had been imprisoned wrongfully. It was an effort of the devil to get rid of the truth.

Conversion

In Acts 16 there are three characters are brought before us. In Lydia we see an honest seeker; in the young girl with the spirit of Python, we have the false professor; in the jailor, we recognize the hardened sinner. The jailor is about the most hardened man one could find. It was through Paul and Silas's being put in prison that this jailor was converted. Perhaps he would not have heard the gospel had they not been put into prison. God had His eye upon the jailor. He caused the jailor to see that Paul and Silas had something that he did not possess. The Spirit of Christ was manifested beautifully in these servants of the Lord. They do not complain of their treatment, but they can pray for those who put them there.

“And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed.” v. 26. It was a wonderful earthquake; no damage was done. It accomplished one thing: it awoke the jailor from his sleep! The bands were loosed; the prisoners were all free and could have gone out but not one prisoner stirred. The jailer heard from the inner prison, “Do thyself no harm: for we are all here.” He had drawn his sword and was about to kill himself supposing that the prisoners had fled.

It was the same spirit manifested by the Lord Jesus when He was on the cross. Jesus prayed for His enemies saying, “Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.” If Paul and Silas had not been born again, they could not have acted as they did. They knew the Lord Jesus Christ as their own personal Savior.

Priesthood

Paul and Silas were carrying out the two aspects of the priesthood as given us in 1 Peter 2:5-9: the holy priesthood and the royal priesthood. The holy priesthood offers up spiritual sacrifices which are acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. The royal priest shows forth the character of Christ to others. We are not only left here to give God something, the worship and thanksgiving of our hearts, but we are here to show forth the virtues of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. Are we doing this as Christians? Are we acting like Paul and Silas in the prison: something going up and something of Christ manifested in our daily lives? It is only the salvation of God possessed and enjoyed in our souls that can enable us to do this. W. Willis

Bible Challenger-10-October V.03

The first letters of each of the following responses will form the word defining something which by the houseful, where strife is, is considered inferior to a meager fare in the presence of quietness.

1. Something the name of the Lord is likened to which provides refuge for the righteous.
2. Someone whose friendship should be avoided.
3. Something the spirit of man is likened to.
4. Something unnoticed by one who scorns.
5. Something mercy and truth are able to purge.
6. Something hardened by those that are wicked.
7. A word never ascribed to those who make haste to be rich.
8. Something the tongue of the just is likened to.
9. Something causing rottenness of bones.
10. The sense imparted to the soul when desire becomes a reality.

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

R. Erisman

Bible Challenger-09-September Answers V.03

1. Weeping Job 16:16
2. East wind Job 15:2
3. Affliction Job 5:6
4. Rain Job 28:26
5. Iniquity Job 11:6
6. Serpent Job 26:13
7. Offend Job 34:31
8. Marvelous things Job 5:9
9. Empty place Job 26:7

"So am I made to possess months of vanity, and WEARISOME nights are appointed to me." Job 7:3

Service

True service begins with Christ who is the Head, and when Christ is forgotten, then the service is defective; it has lost connection with the spring and fountain of all service, because it is from the Head that all the body, by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, increases. The body is of Christ, and He loves it with an everlasting love; everyone who would serve it will best learn to do so by knowing His heart and purposes toward it. In a word, it is Christ who serves, though it may be through us. We are only "joints and bands." If we are not derivative from and communicative with Christ, we are useless. To be useful, my eye and heart must be on Christ and not on the issue of my service, though, if true to Him, the end will vindicate me too, however disheartening the interval. He who judges of his service by present appearances will judge by the blossom and not by the fruit; after all, the service is not for the sake of the Church, but for the sake of Christ, and if He be served in the Church, though the Church own it not, yet, Christ being served, He will own it. Now the constant effort of Satan is to disconnect, in our minds, Christ from our service. This effort is much more prevalent than any of us, perhaps, have fully discovered. Whether in reading, or praying, or speaking, how seldom, if we judge ourselves, do we find that we act simply as toward Christ, and Him alone! How often may sentimentality and natural feeling affect us in our service, instead of simple love to Him!

Take

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

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

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

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

This is the word of the Lord Jesus to His disciples, so that they would not be filled with anxious care about their earthly needs. He gives several reasons why they should not be troubled about these things: God cares for the fowls, and the disciples were more important than the fowls (v. 4), and if they were ever so anxious, it was still beyond their power to make certain provisions—they were not able to do that which was least (vv. 25,26). He clothed the lilies and the grass of the field, and they were better than such (vv. 27, 28), and after all, their Father knew what they needed (v. 30), and it was the Father's good pleasure to give them even more—the kingdom (v. 32).

Editorial

Recently Turkey completed the second bridge linking Europe to Asia. Prime Minister Turgut Ozal called this eight-lane suspension span "a monument symbolizing friendship between Turkey and Japan and Italy." Money and power from Japan and Italy are being used to form this link of the peoples to the north and west of Israel. Commercial energy is making marvelous advances in developments in the world. With great skill and activity it boasts and shows what it can do and pledges further what it means to do.

Surely the character of this present time already reveals the great powers that are destined to complete the action of the closing days of Christendom. There will be two great powers—the civil and the ecclesiastical.

Without stretching the imagination, the civil or federal power of the revived Roman Empire can now be pictured as rising by means of the efforts of the European Community. The old Roman Empire surrounded the Mediterranean Sea and included all of Turkey.

The ecclesiastical power is the strange woman, "Mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth." It is religion without Christ. It is the false church—what is left of Christendom after the true Church is raptured to heaven.

Between these two powers, there is at times, confederacy, and then at times there is rivalry. The ecclesiastical, for a season, will prevail. The woman is to ride the "scarlet-colored beast" for a while. There are efforts even now to mount the saddle. The civil power will have to yield the supremacy to her for a short time, and then the civil power will take offense and remove her.

All at present seems quiet; things are advancing and prospering in a social life of prosperity and wealth with earthly comforts. Behind their fair show, the apostate powers of man are developing into their most abundant exhibition. Rivalry predominates now and the secular and the religious are far apart, but confederacy will succeed rivalry. The world, in order to gain its own ends, must adopt religion for a season and for that time the woman will ride the beast.

Another interesting development of power in our time is seen in France. President Francois Mitterrand's lopsided election victory has greatly increased his political influence. He intends to use it to push the twelve-nation European Community toward a federal system that will emerge as trade barriers are removed in 1992. Closer cooperation with West Germany adds to the coming change that some have likened to a United States of Europe.

As Christians who know from the prophetic Scriptures that there shall arise a false prophet who is the antichrist, and also a revived Roman Empire, we do not expect to see these things while we are yet on the earth. Above the confusion of things around us is our God who works all things after the counsel of His own will. The world is guilty of casting out His own Son; judgment is pronounced and pending, and will shortly come to pass. We need to keep our eyes and hearts heavenward. Beware of being drawn into earthly attractions and interests. Beyond the judgments is the kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The promise in 2 Tim. 2:12 is, "If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him." Ed.

Palestine

How true it is that God's thoughts are not man's thoughts, nor His ways as man's ways. Man attaches importance to extensive territories, material strength, pecuniary resources, well-disciplined armies, and powerful fleets. God, on the contrary, takes no account of such things; they are to Him as the small dust of the balance.

Have ye not known? have ye not heard? hath it not been told you from the beginning? have ye not understood from the foundations of the earth? It is He that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in: that bringeth the princes to nothing; He maketh the judges of the earth as vanity. Isa. 40:21-23.

We may see the moral reason why, in selecting a country to be the center of His earthly plans and counsels, the Lord did not select one of vast extent, but a very small and insignificant strip of land of little account in the thoughts of men.

What importance attaches itself to that little spot! What principles have been unfolded there! What events have taken place there! What deeds have been done and what plans and purposes are yet to be wrought out there! There is not a spot on the face of the earth so interesting to the heart of God as the land of Canaan and the city of Jerusalem. Scripture teems with evidence as to this. We could fill a small volume with proofs of this. The time is rapidly approaching when living facts will do what the fullest and clearest testimony of Scripture fails to do. That is, convince men that the land of Israel was, and is, and ever shall be God's earthly center. All other nations owe their importance, their interest, their place in the pages of inspiration, simply to the fact of their being in some way or other connected with the land and people of Israel. How little do historians know or think of this! But everyone who loves God ought to know it and ponder it. C.H. Mackintosh

A Great Principle

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

The Trumpet and the Harp

The trumpet blast is startling to those who are asleep but the music of the harp helps to soothe us to sleep. The importance of clear teaching in the assembly in order that all may be edified, is compared with the differences in sounds of musical instruments, specifically the trumpet and the harp. "And even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped? For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?" 1 Cor. 14:7, 8.

In Israel's journey through the wilderness, trumpets were an important means of communication. It was imperative that there was a distinction between an assembling call and an alarm. Chaos and disorder would have marked Israel's movements if the trumpets had not been properly sounded. (Num. 10:1-10.)

The trumpets were made of silver, typifying the Lord's rights over us by redemption. Silver was used as atonement money. (Ex. 30:12, 15; 38:25; 1 Peter 1:18.) The hymn writer expressed this truth nicely when he wrote:

I love to own, Lord Jesus,
Thy claims o'er me divine,
Bought with Thy blood most precious,
Whose can I be but Thine.

The children of Israel were to blow the trumpet at various occasions. Likewise the believer is responsible to declare the Lord's claims over him in all seasons, whether they be days of happiness or days of trouble.

Ministry that would exercise us to own the Lord's authority practically in our lives may be likened to the blowing of the trumpet. The trumpet blast is startling to those who are sleeping and most needful when there is spiritual lethargy and slothfulness. The trumpet sound is also exhilarating. How good to hear ministry that gives us guidance, refreshes our spirits, quickens our steps, and encourages us to press on.

In Scripture, the trumpet blast is often connected with victory (Josh. 6:20; Judg. 7:20; 1 Thess. 4:16). It is a grand testimony when souls publicly stand for Christ and confess His name amid scorn and ridicule.

There is a danger, however, of misuse of the trumpet. A trumpet blown at a wrong time can be very jarring and rude. It is also important that a distinction is made in how it is sounded. Sometimes a trumpet is sounded in hopes of energizing the people of God to make spiritual progress and unite in the interests of God. Instead, an alarm has sounded and the people of God mistake the noise as a call to battle. Misunderstandings and friction result. We are to earnestly contend for the faith but with what caution should the trumpet be used lest a wrong message is

sent.

The prophets' ministry of old bore the character of the trumpet. Their mission was to call the people of God to repentance by ministry that dealt faithfully with their spiritual state. The people's attitude was one of indifference to the claims of God as they continued in a willful course of lust, arrogance and impudence. Yet, these same prophets brought messages of cheer and hope. It is time well spent to peruse the writings of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Joel, Haggai, Malachi, as well as the other prophets to find these words of comfort. This line of ministry would answer to the harp.

While a trumpet would rouse one from sleep, a harp would help put one to sleep. The Lord delights for us to be at rest and peace in His presence. David used the harp to relieve Saul of the troubling evil spirit. What a calming influence is brought in by one walking in communion with the Lord. How rare is the ministry of the harp.

For the harp to give its beautiful sound, the strings must be taut. The Lord often tightens the strings in our lives in order that we may give a true and beautiful sound. It may be by means of trial, ill health, financial hardships, domestic sorrows, assembly troubles, secular demands, social pressures, loss of loved ones, rejection, isolation, or misunderstanding. The Lord works in us so that we may feel a need of Him and draw near to Him.

Paul wrote in 2 Cor. 1:4 of the comfort that he received from God. It fitted him to be a comfort to others. If one were to speak only in theory of the comfort of God without some practical firsthand experience, it would sound as discordant as a loosely tuned harp. God insists upon reality. We need both the ministry of the trumpet to stir us, and the ministry of the harp to calm us. Care is needed not to strum the harp when the trumpet ought to be sounded nor to blow the trumpet when the soothing sound of the harp is required. May we seek the Lord's mind to know how and when to use them both. "He that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, [the trumpet] and comfort [the harp]." 1 Cor. 14:3.

W. Brockmeier

The Third Thing

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

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

"What do you mean?"

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

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

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

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

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

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

innumerable ways in ministering for Him both to the souls and bodies of those around us. The heart will be happy and confident in God as to temporal resources. Liberality will characterize us in communicating of our substance for the benefit of others. Selfishness will depart with self being displaced by Christ. The divine order, then, is to go forth to Christ first, to praise God by Him second, to do good for Him (in His name) third. Fellow-Christian, do you follow this order? Young Christian

Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Baptism and the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 10) are for the wilderness. One introduces into the wilderness, but it is Christ's death, not mine only. I thereon reckon myself dead as a consequence, planted in baptism in the likeness of His death. But we do not have in Romans resurrection with Him, and, even where we do have it, as in Colossians 2, we have no ascension, no Canaan.

As the one brings into the wilderness, the other sustains in it. So we show forth Christ's death till He comes. I am on the earth, but in the consciousness of being a member of the one body, which implies union with Christ. It is on earth, however, that I celebrate it, not in heaven. I look at the humiliation as over with Him, but remember Him in it. Our service in it is simply owning the preciousness of His death, till He comes. Our state is in resurrection, but we are occupied with and celebrate His having been once down here and we show forth His death. The question is, Where are we when we celebrate it? In the wilderness.

Melita to Rome

Acts 28

All those that were aboard the wrecked ship had landed on the island of Melita and God laid it on the hearts of the uncivilized inhabitants to show them kindness. This they did liberally. They kindled a fire and received every one of them because of the rain that was falling and because of the cold.

Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and laid them on the fire when a viper came out of the heat and fastened onto his hand. The barbarians saw it and said among themselves, "No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live." They watched him for a while, expecting that he would suddenly drop dead. But as nothing unusual happened, they changed their minds and said that he was a god.

In the same quarters, Publius, the chief man of the island, had possessions. His father was sick with fever. Paul went in and prayed and laid his hands on him and healed him. Others also on the island who had diseases came and were healed. These honored Paul and his companions with many honors. When they departed, they loaded them with such things as were necessary.

We are not told of any evangelizing on the journey. After three months, when the winter was gone, a ship took them to Puteoli where they found brethren. They were asked to tarry with them seven days. This was another green spot in the desert world!

Then they journeyed toward Rome.

The Lord's Servant Cheered

At Appii Forum and The Three Taverns, the brethren from Rome came to meet them and this cheered the heart of Paul somewhat. He knew what awaited him in every city, for was he not going to bear testimony to a rejected Lord whose prisoner he afterward called himself? The Lord knows how to strengthen and to help His dear servants in the hour of trial.

It was not the time yet for his trial before Augustus Caesar. The testimony of Paul, the prisoner, must go forth. God prepared the place and the people and gave Paul exceptional privileges to have his own hired house with a soldier as his guard. After three days, he called the chief men among the Jews together and told them how he had been falsely accused and that he was wearing the prisoner's chain for the hope of Israel. They were willing to hear of this sect that was everywhere spoken against.

On the day appointed, many came to him into his lodging to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God out of the law of Moses and the prophets all day long. But a suffering, rejected Messiah was not the kind of king they wanted.

Palestine and Prosperity

Some believed and some did not believe. A king that would give them Palestine and prosperity and peace on the earth would suit them but the Man in the glory, calling out the Church as His body and His bride, did not suit them.

Things new as well as old, He had to tell them (Matt. 13:52), but they would not hear. It was earth they wanted, not heaven. Paul therefore, before they left, quoted to them part of Isa. 6

Well spake the Holy Spirit by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: for the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it.

The long-suffering of God is over for the present to the nation of Israel, till the Church is completed. Israel is now not the people of God. Those of them who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ now, are brought in on the ground of mercy to all, for He hath concluded all in unbelief, that He might have mercy on them all. (Rom. 11:32.) Now the gospel goes out freely to the Gentiles.

No Ecclesiastical Center on Earth

Having thus declared the truth to them, they departed with great reasonings among themselves. Paul was allowed to go on bearing his testimony for two whole years, yet as a prisoner.

The Word of God does not tell us of an apostle's ever being sent there. God has no "See," no ecclesiastical center on earth. Christianity dates from a glorified, earth-rejected Christ in heaven. Here ends the history of the acts of the Holy Spirit through the apostles. Paul, from the prison, wrote the epistles to the Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon, a rich feast for the soul.

Young Christian 1923

The Apostle's Gospel

The gospel preached by the apostles (Mark 16:15), was the glad tidings of salvation to every creature during this period, though their commission did not go so far as Paul's—the gospel of the glory. The gospel of the kingdom is the glad tidings of the coming reign of Christ on earth.

"We see not yet all things put under Him." Heb. 2:8. At present He is cut off, and has nothing as Messiah. He does not take the book of judgments and inheritance until the redeemed are with Him (Rev. 5). All who compose the full complement of the first resurrection live and reign with Christ a thousand years. May our hearts be kept patiently waiting for Him (Rev. 20:4, 5).

Bits and Pieces

Depend upon it, if there is not the slaying of the lion and the bear in secret, there will be no killing of Goliath in public. (1 Sam. 17:36)

A man is really what he is before God, and no more. When Christ was praying, Peter was sleeping; when Christ was submitting, Peter was fighting; when Christ was suffering like a lamb, Peter was cursing and swearing. This is just the flesh—in energy when we ought to be still, sleeping when we ought to be working.

The Kingdom of God

There are two great systems, economies or divine administrations in the counsels of God respecting the earth. One is based on the responsibility of man in connection with his faithfulness in carrying out that responsibility. The other flows from the purposes and the effectual power of God. The first is the household of the Law, the second the household of the Kingdom. The first, under which man willingly placed himself (Ex. 19:8), began with the giving of the law on Mount Sinai and continued until John the Baptist. The second began with the testimony of the forerunner of the Lord Jesus and was immediately announced by John as "at hand." This message was then taken up and continued by the Lord Jesus and His disciples.

Israel stood on the ground of the law, and had the law been kept and the message of the Kingdom accepted, this kingdom would have been established in power, with accompanying peace and order on earth under the scepter of the Prince of Peace. But we know that man is not capable of keeping the law, and as soon as the true Light began to appear, the deep shadows of darkness began to be visible. The true condition of man, his natural corruption and his enmity toward God became manifest. The witness of John, as that of the Lord Jesus, was rejected; John was beheaded and Christ nailed to the cross.

With this, the setting up of the kingdom in power and glory manifestly became impossible. Daniel's prophesy was fulfilled: "Messiah shall be cut off and shall have nothing." (Dan. 9:26 Marg.) Instead of a time of outward unfolding of power there followed centuries of debasement and rejection for Israel. These times will continue until the "Son of man" returns to take up His rule over all things in heaven and upon earth. In confirmation of this, the Lord told the leaders of the Jewish people on the eve of His departure: "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." Matt. 26:64.

Was the kingdom, then, not set up at all? The kingdom was indeed set up, but it had taken on a new, mysterious form. This new form or character is the subject of the well-known parables of Matt. 13, in which the Lord instructs the disciples. To them, and thus to us, it has been given to be led into the "mysteries of the kingdom of the heavens." To the "things old" were added things hitherto unrevealed. Thus the Lord had shown them, that a scribe disciplined to the kingdom of the heavens would bring forth out of his treasures "things new and old."

Let us examine the meaning of the expression

The Kingdom of God

The expression "Kingdom of God" of itself suggests to the mind a realm or condition in which the ruling power of God is expressed or unfolds itself in the course of circumstances brought to pass in His wisdom. It is the widest, most encompassing designation of the various similar expressions which we encounter in the Word of God. We read of the kingdom, the kingdom of the heavens, the kingdom of My (or your) Father, the kingdom of the Son of man, and the kingdom of the world of our Lord and His Christ.

"Kingdom of God" is a generic or family name under which the others are grouped. The expression has an internal, spiritual or moral meaning and an outward meaning falling more into the sphere of the senses.

When God appeared on this earth in the Person of His Son, the kingdom of God was there because He was there manifested in all His divine power and wisdom. And thus the Lord says to the Pharisees, who in the enmity and blindness of their hearts asserted that He cast out devils through Beelzebub the prince of the demons: "If I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you." Matt. 12:28. (See also Luke 11:20.) Also in Luke 17:20, 21 we read: "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within [among] you."

If Israel had accepted Christ, nothing would have stood in the way of the kingdom's being established. He who coming after, but preferred before John, was there with His winnowing fan in His hand to thoroughly purge the granary. But consequent upon the rejection of Christ, the establishment of the kingdom in judicial power and glory must be postponed. This establishment is yet future and will only be fulfilled at the second coming of Christ, that is at the appearing of the Son of man when all flesh and every eye shall see Him, even those who have pierced Him. In the meantime He is seated at the right hand of the majesty on high and awaits the time when God will put all His enemies under the footstool of His feet, and send the rod of His strength out of Zion. Then, in "the day of His power," His people (the believing remnant of Israel) "shall be willing" and He will sit as "priest forever after the order of Melchizedek," ruling "from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth." (Psa. 110; Zech. 6:13; Psa. 72; Isa. 9:7; etc.)

Faith sees Jesus already glorified above, crowned with honor, and knowing that soon all things will be subjected unto Him. All is secured for faith in the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the slain Lamb who has overcome and is set down on the throne of His Father—not yet on His own throne. (Rev. 3:21.)

In the Gospel of Matthew is the only place where the expression is found:

The Kingdom of the Heavens

The evangelist sets Christ before us primarily as the Messiah and wherever it is used, without exception, the kingdom is spoken of as future. Why? The reason is simple. While the "kingdom of God" necessarily was there as the Son of God walked on earth, or, in other words as God was here, the "kingdom of the heavens" could not exist as long as Jesus was not rejected and had not yet returned to heaven. I repeat, could not. Why not? Because the "kingdom of the heavens" is the result of this return, the setting forth or unfolding of the kingdom of God in its heavenly character. The manifestation followed upon the rejection of the king of this kingdom by Israel and the whole world. Many difficulties disappear when this fact is grasped. One understands immediately why the Lord Jesus could not say in Matt. 12:28 "the kingdom of the heavens is come unto you" or in 21:43 "the kingdom of the heavens shall be taken from you." The kingdom of God was there, and so could be taken away, but the kingdom of the heavens was not yet in existence, as such it was "nigh" but not yet come.

The "certain nobleman" whose kingdom was "not of this world" has gone to a distant land to receive a kingdom for Himself and return. During the time of His absence He maintains only a spiritual connection with His kingdom here below. Every outward connection is severed and every claim to the outward recognition of His kingly rights has been given up. At the same time a new work has begun, the calling out of the bride of the Lamb from every people of the earth, the gathering of the congregation of the living God whose beginnings we see in the remnant of Israel. "And the Lord added to the church [assembly] daily such as should be saved" Acts 2:47. All, yes all (converted or not), who profess Christ today, find themselves in the kingdom of the heavens, and are held responsible to observe the principles laid down in Matt. 5 to 7.

The Keys of the Kingdom of the Heavens

Were given to Simon Peter. Following the Lord's well-known words "on this rock I will build My church [assembly]" He says: "I will give unto thee [Peter] the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." The keys are of the kingdom and not of heaven or of the Church. Acts gives us the fulfillment of the first part of this saying. In chapter 2, Peter reopens the door of the kingdom to the Jews who had lost all right to the kingdom by rejecting their Messiah. Then in chapter 10 he opens the door to the Gentiles in the person of the centurion Cornelius, his friends and relatives. Two keys were placed in the hands of His disciple by the Lord, and both were used by Peter.

The second part of the Lord's word quoted above, introduces quite a distinct thought. Keys are used to unlock and lock; binding and loosing have as little to do with keys as with the previously mentioned building of the Church. The latter part of our expression does speak of a power or authority, but connected with the administration of the kingdom here below. Acts 5 gives us a solemn illustration of the exercise of this authority in connection with Ananias and Sapphira. Power flowing from the delegated authority binds the sin of the unhappy couple on them, and the apostle's act is ratified by heaven. Both expire immediately.

The kingdom of the heavens will be transformed into:

The Kingdom of the Son of Man and the Kingdom of the Father (of the Righteous)

Jacob's dream will then be fulfilled; heaven and earth will be joined together and the heavenly inhabitants will serve as channels of blessing to those of the earthly kingdom below. Then will begin, as announced in Rev. 11:15, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ." It will no longer be ruled from the heaven; the King Himself shall there enter into His dominion. "Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven." Psa. 85:11. "The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness." Psa. 72:3. The will of God shall be done on earth as in heaven.

Now a word on the controversial portion in 1 Cor. 15. The Apostle Paul says in verses 25 and 26: "He [Christ] must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." Our exalted Lord must and will reign in righteousness and peace, as never a king has reigned, to the glory of God. In humiliation He glorified His Father; thus also He will perfectly glorify Him in the day of His exaltation. The government will then rest on His strong shoulder, and "of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end." That is, this creation endures according to the will of God as long as sun and moon remain. (Isa. 9:7; Psa. 72:7, 17; 89:29, 36, 37; Dan. 2:44; 7:14; Luke 1:32, 33.)

"His day" will last a thousand years, and then as the days of His government are over and "the end" is come, (in other words, when heaven and earth have passed away and the eternal state begins) He gives up the kingdom to Him who is God and Father. He who in this, too, has demonstrated perfection will lay down His government in order finally (now as man) to be placed in subjection to Him who put all things in subjection to Him, that God may be all in all—Father, Son and Holy Spirit. All rule, authority and power connected with this creation will be put away. From the hands of the perfect Man, into which God had placed it consequent on His obedience to the death of the cross, the government will be laid in God's hands again, following a faultless, perfect administration. Already at the present time our exalted Lord has been given all power in heaven and on earth, however, He has not yet entered fully into that dominion, nor taken up the inheritance. The possession is "acquired" but not yet "redeemed" (Eph. 1:14). He is the mysterious Man of God's counsels, the only Son by whom and for whom all things were made, and who as the dependent and obedient Man accomplished redemption. As that Heir of all things, He has set Himself down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. God has highly exalted this One and already given Him a name which is above every name. Yet a very little time and we shall see Him come, uniting in His mighty hands all authority, power, and dominion. And then, "at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Phil. 2:10, 11. Tr. by H. Vedder

Questions and Answers

QUES . A reader inquires about instrumental music being brought into the meeting room. In our home perhaps it might be different?

ANS. The positive teaching about what is acceptable and pleasing to God in this dispensation is of first importance as to our worship and praise which is the Christian's highest privilege now. Three scriptures clearly give instruction:

Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus: that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Rom. 15:5, 6.

For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. Phil. 3:3.

God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, seeing He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things. Acts 17:24, 25.

In worship and praise the Spirit of God in the believer, who in his mind (conscious knowledge) is rejoicing in Christ, gives utterance by mouth to glorify God even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is positive, but there are restrictions. Mere flesh can have no part and what men's hands produce has no place. The Scriptures are clear and conclusive and we must abide by them.

In Hebrews it tells us where our present place of worship is.

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.

Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus. Heb. 10:19.

Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach. For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come. By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. Heb. 13:12-15.

Actually then, we now worship in heaven where our great High Priest is. Yet, there is a place on earth connected with our place in heaven where Christ has promised His presence as He says in Heb. 2:12, "I will declare Thy name unto My brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto Thee."

Instrumental music should not be brought into the meeting room. In worship it can only minister to the senses of the flesh and it cannot be and is not acceptable to God.

Our homes are different and in learning to sing more correctly, instrumental music can be a help to us. I believe that God intended that Christians should write their own hymns and spiritual songs and even psalms in their own language. This is according to Eph. 5:19. This would surely include the suitable music for them.

We must remember that we are under grace and not law. God has not given rules and regulations today and we must not put them there.

It is noteworthy that harps and organs down here began in Cain's city when he had gone out from the presence of the Lord. C. Buchanan

Bible Challenger-11-November V.03

The first letters of each of the following response will from the worlds that the Psalm writer expected that future generations should quit naturally do.

1. A figurative place were our souls may very well be if we praise not the name of the Lord.
2. A daily event that provides a time frame wherein the Lords is to be praised.
3. A specific gathering were praise to the Lord should certainly emanate.
4. A personal commitment to praise the Lord with entire purpose of heart.
5. A personal schedule of praising the Lord in view of all His righteous judgments.
6. The geographical extent unto which praise to God is rendered because of His great name.
7. What unique characteristic did the instrument have that David used to sing praises unto God?
8. The place where we might very well expect the wonders of the Lord to be praised.
9. For what time duration dose praised continue to be rendered to the Lord, the source of all wisdom?
10. What is one attribute of the Lord that elicits praise to His name and promotes an attitude of worship?
11. A suited prayer to the Lord for any who wont to show forth praise to Him with their mouth.
12. What should those also do who sing praise unto the Lord with a loud noise?
13. Of what class are they who are not expected to arise and praise the Lord?

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

R. Erisman

Bible Challenger-10-October Answers V.03

1. Strong tower Prov. 18:10.
2. Angry man Prov. 22:24
3. Candle of the Lord Prov. 20:27
4. Rebuke Prov. 13:1
5. Iniquity Prov. 16:6
6. Face Prov. 21:29
7. Innocent Prov. 28:20
8. Choice silver Prov. 10:20
9. Envy Prov. 14:30
10. Sweet Prov. 13:19

"Better is a dry morsel, and quietness therewith, than a house full of SACRIFICES with strife."
Prov. 17:10

Holiness—Innocence

Holiness—Separation from evil.

Innocence—Ignorance of it.

Adam was created in innocence, and fell, thus obtaining the knowledge of good and evil, as we read, "the man is become as one of Us, to know good and evil." Gen. 3:22. To the state in which he was created we never can return. We never can unlearn the knowledge of good and evil. The "new man" (the Christian), is "after God... created in righteousness and true holiness." Eph. 4:24.

The Two-Fold Way of God

Psa. 77:13, 19.

His way is "in the sanctuary," and His way is "in the sea," but there is a great difference between these two things. First of all, God's way is in the sanctuary where all is light and clear. There is no mistake there. There is nothing in the least degree that is a harassment to the spirit. On the contrary, it is when the poor troubled one enters into the sanctuary and views things there in the light of God, that he sees the end of all else—everything that appears to be entangled, the end of which he cannot find on the earth.

We have the same thing in Psa. 73:16, 17. "When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me; until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end." That is, in the sanctuary of God, everything is understood, no matter how difficult, trying or painful in regard to ourselves or others. When we once enter there, we are in the place of God's light and God's love. Then whatever the difficulty may be, we understand all about it.

Not only is God's way in the sanctuary where all is bright and happy, but God's way is in the sea also. He walks where we cannot always trace His footsteps. God moves mysteriously at times, as we all know. There are ways of God which are purposely to try us. I need not say that it is not at all as if God had pleasure in our perplexities. Nor is it as if we had no sanctuary to draw near to where we can rise above them. But still, there is a great deal in the ways of God that must be left entirely in His own hands.

The way of God is thus not only in the sanctuary, but also in the sea. And yet, what we find even in connection with His footsteps being in the sea is, "Thou leddest Thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron." That was through the sea; afterward it was through the wilderness. But it had been through the sea. The beginnings of the ways of God with His people were there, because from first to last, God must be the confidence of the saint. It may be an early lesson of his soul, but it never ceases to be the thing to learn. How happy to know that while the sanctuary is open to us, yet God Himself is nearer still, and to Him we are brought now. As it is said, "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." 1 Peter 3:18.

This is a most precious thing, because there we are in the sanctuary and brought to God Himself. Even heaven itself would not satisfy our hearts if we were not brought to God there. It is better than any freedom from trial—better than any blessing to be in the presence of the One to whom we belong, who is Himself the source of all blessing and joy. That we are brought to Him now is infinitely precious. There we are in the sanctuary brought to God.

There are other ways of God outside the sanctuary—the sea. And there we often find ourselves at a loss. If we are occupied with the sea itself and with trying to scan God's footsteps there, we become perplexed. But confidence in God Himself is always the strength of faith. May the Lord grant us increasing simplicity and quietness in the midst of all that we pass through for His name's

sake.

Editorial

This last month of 1988 it seemed appropriate for us to make the last book in the Bible the theme of the articles selected for CHRISTIAN TREASURY. The final book of God's Word is called the Revelation. Sometimes it is called the Apocalypse, which means the same as Revelation. In one sense the whole of the Bible is a revelation. Creation is only well known by God's revelation of it. Also, God's Word reveals what is in man's heart and what is in God's heart. God is light. Light reveals. God is love. Love covers the believing sinners' sins and washes them away through the blood of Jesus Christ shed on Calvary (Rev. 1:5). The past, the present and the future are revealed in God's precious book. It closes with the book of Revelation. As the different articles in this periodical instruct us, it is prophetic and mostly about judgment. Grace is seen at the beginning and at the end and there is a blessing just for the reading of the Revelation. What should stir up and motivate the Christian, as we read this last book in the Bible, is the nearness of the fulfillment of these prophecies that God has told us so much about. Do you and I realize that we are living in the time of Laodicea, and that Laodicea is the last of the four churches that go on until the coming of Christ for His bride, the Church? Do we understand the severity of the judgments that will soon fall upon this earth and upon the earth-dwellers that will be left on the earth? It is quite remarkable how much detail God has made known about the seven years of tribulation that fall upon the earth after the rapture of the heavenly saints. In a similar way God made known to Abraham, His friend, the judgments which were then about to come. "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?" Gen. 18:17. God never judges without warning. We have had the warning of the Revelation for 1900 years. Chapters two and three were prophetic of the stages of the Church's history and we can easily see that they have accurately come to pass. In like manner the following chapters from four on shall be fulfilled. And the word is imperative for it says, "the things which must shortly be done." And again, "the time is at hand." Rev. 22:6 and 10. As creatures made for the earth, we can relate to and understand things concerning the earth. But heaven and its glory are unspeakable and can only be communicated to us when we arrive there. Then we shall know as we are known. Since we cannot receive the full revelation of heaven, it seems that God has specially revealed earthly things; past, present and future. Are you interested? A careful and prayerful study of the book of Revelation is very rewarding. One very happy thing for you to look for is—there are seven times that the word "blessed" is used in this last book. Ed.

Notes of the Revelation

In the seventeenth chapter we saw the instrumentality employed by God in the judgment of Babylon the Great, but in the eighteenth chapter, God alone appears as having taken vengeance upon this terrible abomination, which has both a religious and a civil, or rather a political aspect.

It is not the sin of adultery which is charged upon Babylon, but fornication. Israel was addressed by the prophet Jeremiah as married to Jehovah (Ch. 3:14), and Ezekiel says. "Thou hast not been as a harlot, in that thou scornest hire; but as a wife that committeth adultery, which taketh strangers instead of her husband." (Chapter 16:31, 32.) But the Church is only espoused, having the marriage in anticipation, therefore the sin of those professing to be betrothed to the Son of God, who depart in heart and ways from Him for the hire of the seducer, is fornication, or harlotry. To confess Christ with the lip, while the affections and desires of the soul are going out after other objects, such as the pride, lust, and gain of this world, is the special sin here marked out. Happy are those whose affections are so set upon Jesus as to be able to say in truth He" is all my salvation, and all my desire." H. H.

Babylon

The mystic Babylon of Revelation may be brought to boast in a crucified Christ, and be Babylon still. For what is it, as delineated by the Spirit? It is a thing worldly in character as well as abominable and idolatrous in doctrine and practice. Rev. 18 gives us a sight of Babylon in its worldliness, but in chapter 17 it is seen in its idolatries.

Babylon of old in the land of Chaldea was full of idols and guilty of the blood or of the sorrows of the righteous. But it also had this mark: it displayed greatness in the world in the time of Jerusalem's depression. So it is with the mystic Babylon. She has her abominations in the midst of her, and the blood of the martyrs of Jesus stains her. But still more fully she is disclosed as great and splendid and joyous in the earth during the age of Christ's rejection. She is important in the world in that day when the judgment of God is being prepared for the world. She can glorify herself and live luxuriously in a defiled place.

It is not that she outwardly ignores the cross of Christ. She is not heathen. She may publish Christ crucified, but she refuses to know Christ rejected. She does not continue with Him in His temptations. The kings of the earth and the merchants of the earth are her friends, and the inhabitants of the earth are her subjects.

Is not the rejection of Christ the thing she practically scorns? Surely it is. The prevailing thought of the spirit about her is this: she is that which is exalted in the world while God's witness is rejected, and she is defiant of that rejection, for she knows of it.

Babylon of old well knew of the desolation of Jerusalem. Christendom externally knows and publishes the cross of Jesus. Babylon of old was very bold in her defiance of the grief of Zion. She made the captives of Zion contribute to her greatness and her enjoyments. Nebuchadnezzar had done this with the captive youths, and Belshazzar, with the captive vessels.

This was Babylon, and in spirit this is Christendom. Christendom is the thing which glorifies herself and lives comfortably in the earth, trading in all that is desirable and costly in the world's esteem, in the very face of the sorrow and rejection of that which is God's. Christendom practically forgets that Christ is rejected on the earth.

The Medo-Persian power is another creature. He removes Babylon but exalts himself (Dan. 6). This is the action of "the beast" and his ten kings. The woman, mystically Babylon, is removed by the ten kings, but then they give their power to the beast who exalts himself (as did Darius the Mede) above all that is called God or that is worshiped. This is the closing, crowning feature in the picture of the world's apostasy, but we have not reached it yet. Our conflict is with Babylon and not with the Mede, or with that which lives in luxury and honor during the age of Jerusalem's ruins, that is, of the rejection of Christ.

J.G. Bellett

Revelation 1:13-16

The seven candlesticks made of gold represent the seven churches mentioned in verse 11.

The Son of Man is the Lord as Judge; to Him all judgment is committed (John 5:22, 27; Acts 17:31).

"Clothed with a garment down to the foot," is priestly discrimination (Lev. 13:2, etc.; also Luke 17:14).

"Girt about the paps [breast] with a golden girdle"—His affections can only flow out in Divine righteousness: the breast, the place of affection; the gold, Divine righteousness.

"His head and His hairs were white like wool, as white as snow"; this is the Ancient of days, the great "I Am " (Dan. 7:13, 22).

"His eyes were as a flame of fire," from which nothing can be hid, searching out and uncovering all sin and iniquity.

"His feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace"—His ability to judge everything according to Divine righteousness.

"His voice as the sound of many waters"—irresistible power and majesty.

"He had in His right hand seven stars" the authority belongs to Him. The stars are subordinate authority.

"Out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword"—He judges by the Word of God.

"His countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength"—supreme power and authority.

Young Christian

Divisions in the Book of Revelation

The book of The Revelation is divided into three parts: (a) "The things which thou halt seen," chapter 1. (b) "The things that are," or the true condition of the Church, the history of its responsibility on the earth from first to last, chapters 2 and 3, and (c) "The things which must be hereafter," chapters 4 through 22.

Chapters 4 and 5 are transitional, showing the place which the Church and the Old Testament saints will occupy, from the moment of the rapture until the coming of Christ in judgment with all His saints (chap. 19).

The book of Revelation, being mainly judicial or governmental, does not record the rapture of the saints or the coming of Christ for His people. The Church is seen on earth in chapters 2 and 3. It is seen in heaven in chapters 4 and 5, but we are not told of its going how or when. Such is not the object of the book. There is not a word about the Church on earth from chapter 4 to chapter 18. Other saints will appear on the earth during the stirring scenes in chapters 6 to 18, but the Church will not be there.

In chapter 19, Christ comes in judgment on the Roman beast and the false prophet, the antichrist or the man of sin. Satan is bound and Christ reigns for a thousand years. Then comes the judgment of the wicked dead, the consignment of Satan to the lake of fire, and finally the everlasting state. We may just add that during the present period, righteousness suffers. During the millennium, righteousness will reign. In the new heavens and new earth, or the eternal state, righteousness will dwell.

Things New and Old 1878

The Church Removed

Revelation chapters 4 and 5 present to us a scene in heaven, a scene which neither answers to the existing state of things in the present dispensation, nor to the state of things in the millennium.

The throne of Him who is worshiped as the "Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come," is seen here by the apostle. Out of it proceed "lightnings and thunderings and voices." Surely this is different from the throne of grace to which we are now invited to come boldly, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. Lightnings, thunderings and voices tell of judgment, not of grace. And yet it is evidently not the millennial state, for the seven-sealed book which has not begun to be opened in chapter 5, unfolds the judgments which precede the millennium. The Lamb, too, is here in the midst of the throne, and receives from Him who sits thereon this seven-sealed book, as the only one in heaven or in earth who prevails to open it. Evidently, then, these two chapters describe a transitional state, an interval between the present dispensation of full grace and the millennial dispensation.

The question is, where is the Church during this interval? The only answer afforded by the book of Revelation is: in heaven.

Who are they that are symbolized by the twenty-four crowned elders in white raiment, and the four living creatures in these two chapters? Let their song give the answer. "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth." They are clearly not four and twenty individuals literally. How could they, in that case, have been redeemed out of every kindred, tongue and nation? They are symbolic persons representing the whole company of those who are redeemed, and who are to reign on the earth.

Those who are to share Christ's royal glory during the millennium are assembled around Him in heaven through the transitional period between the present dispensation and the millennium. They are owning His worthiness, and anticipating their reign with Him over the earth. Every glimpse that we have of them in chapters 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 14, 15, and 19, presents them in the same place. As another has beautifully observed:

"In chapter 4, we see the living creatures and crowned elders around the central throne of God Almighty in the heavens. The action in the course of the book changes, but the place of these mystic personages never does. They are interested in the action; they sing and rejoice at certain stages of it, but they are never engaged in it, nor leave their high habitation."

In Rev. 19:4, we have the last mention of the crowned elders and the four living creatures. It goes on to inform us of the marriage of the Lamb, His wife having made herself ready. Surely the Church must be complete and in glory when, as the Lamb's wife, she is ready for the marriage. The marriage is in heaven.

After the marriage, heaven opens and the rider upon the white horse comes forth to the final conflict, to tread the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. Now notice in chapter 19, the 14th verse: "And the armies which were in heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean." The fine linen has been explained in verse 8 to be the righteousness of saints.

In chapters 2 and 3, we have a sevenfold presentation of the Church in its responsibility here below. In chapters 4 to 19:4, we find the Church in heaven under the symbols of the elders and living creatures. The seals are opened, the trumpets blown and the vials poured out. All these bring dreadful sorrows on the earth and its inhabitants, but it is from heaven that the Church views the whole, and celebrates the praises of God and the Lamb.

While waiting in heaven for the time when they, with the Lamb, shall reign over the earth, they are symbolized by the crowned elders and living creatures. In chapter 19 the false pretender, Babylon, having been judged, the marriage of the Lamb with the true bride takes place. We hear no more of the crowned elders and living creatures. The Church, now married to the Lamb, comes with Him when He comes forth, conquering and to conquer.

In chapter 20, the reign takes place, and in chapter 21:9 to 22:5 we have the Church's glory as the Bride, the Lamb's wife, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God. The Church is never seen on earth, or anywhere but in heaven, from the end of chapter 3 until in chapter 19. Christ comes forth from heaven, and the armies which were in heaven follow with Him.

Finally, it is the positive promise of Christ in Rev. 3:10 to those who have kept His word, and not denied His name: "Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, I also will keep thee from (not keep thee in or keep thee through, but keep thee from) the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." W. Trotter

Questions and Answers

QUES. What is meant by saying, "they are Jews" in Rev. 3:9? Are they not really Jews?

ANS. They are the concision, not the circumcision. They are the pretended successional religion and this God did not want. They may have been Jews, but Christ does not own them. The object is to show up successional religion in contrast with spirituality.

QUES. Do you expect miraculous power to be largely put forth after the Church is gone?

ANS. On the devil's side, I do, especially since after the Church is gone there will be "signs and lying wonders." The same words are used in 2 Thess. 2:9, as to antichrist, as are used by Peter in Acts 2:22, to show that Jesus was a man approved of God. These three words are: miracles and wonders and signs. Another thing that makes it more striking is what Elijah did to prove Jehovah was God of Israel. This is done also in Rev. 13 where antichrist, the second beast, makes fire come down out of heaven. Satan will do the same in a lying way, of course. Mesmerism is more connected with infidelity. When Satan is cast down from heaven, he gives up his anti-priestly character, then there is only left to him to be anti-king and anti-prophet. This second beast merges then into the false prophet. He has two horns like a lamb. J.N.D.

“No Cross. No Crown”

I have been looking at the conquerors in the Apocalypse. All are conquerors there, and their victories tied to the kingdom. As on the journey they were overcoming, so at the end they sit on thrones. In all the churches you see the saints as conquerors (chapters 2 and 3). Another company is looked at in the same character in chapter 12:11, and again another company in chapter 15:2. Jesus Himself recognizes His own conqueror character in chapter 3:21. The inheritors of all things forever, show the same in chapter 21:7. "No cross, no crown," is the word. No victory, no throne, is the impression left on the soul by the apprehension of the Book of the Apocalypse.

But then the path we travel to the Father's house is not the same. We believe and (as trusting in Jesus, as receiving the Son, as believing the message which He has brought from the Father's bosom to us) we reach the Father's house. John's Gospel shows us this. As believers, we reach the house; as conquerors, we reach the throne. All is beautiful in its place and in its season, and the Spirit of God in Scripture distinguishes these things for us, that we may be both comforted and yet kept watchful and vigorous.

Look at Psa. 23 and then at Psa. 24. The one conducts the soul by a sweet, gracious path, to "the house of the Lord," the other, by a stronger, more vigorous journey, as it were, to "the hill of the Lord." or place of government. How it should humble us to own that we know little of the vigor of conflict or the blessedness of conquest!

Still a Man, though now in glory.

Saints who love Him seek His face—

See Him shine in radiant beauty,

Bright with glory and with grace.

Know the Father's thoughts toward Him—

Gaze in rapture and adore

Christ, in His resplendent shining—

Brought to heaven's opened door.

In the face of Jesus, beaming

On God's glory, we can gaze,

Humbled once and now exalted

High in heaven's highest place.

Then in heartfelt adoration,

Owning thus the glory's claim,
Bow in silent admiration
Of His blessed, matchless name.
Words of Truth

God Seeking the Sinner

Under the law, God was in the holy place, and the unclean must be removed, and the priest and the Levite attend that sanctuary. But in the gospel, God is in the unclean place, seeking the ruined ones. Jesus is going about doing good: the Stranger from heaven has come where man lay in his blood, and has looked on him and had compassion, has gone and meddled with all that pollution, untouched by it, washed the wounded sinner from his blood, and anointed him with oil (Ezek. 16). All this He has done, and changed places with the wounded sinner also. For though rich, He has become poor, that we, through His poverty, might be made rich. J.G. Bellett

The Public Celebration

The public celebration of the marriage of the Lamb in heaven is described in Rev. 19. What is contemplated here, in connection with the coming of Christ, is what is revealed to John by one of the seven angels. He said. "Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal." Rev. 21:9-11.

The subject would be incomplete without a few words on the effect of the presentation of Christ to the Bride. "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come." How simple! And yet it was the suited response. It could not be otherwise inasmuch as it is the language of the Spirit and the Bride. But how can it be the language of both? Because it was produced by the Spirit in the heart of the Bride. It was His words, though uttered by herself (See Rom. 8:26, 27.). The response therefore, was the one which the Lord desired to hear, and the only one suited to the moment. Notice that it was elicited by the presentation of Himself to the heart of the Bride. If, as a consequence, her heart overflowed in the one word "Come," it was the effect of the mighty working of the Spirit.

What a lesson to all who seek to minister to God's beloved people! Is it desired to lead them into fuller blessing by awakening in them more fervent affection to Christ? Let us notice the Lord's own way. It is to minister Himself in the aspect suited to the need. For this, the one who ministers must himself be in communion with the heart of Christ about His people. He must be near enough to Him to apprehend His mind for them at that particular moment. Oh, that many such servants may be found laboring among the saints of God.

"Let him that heareth say, Come." The Bride turns upward in the power of the Spirit as she gazes on the face of the Bridegroom and says with unutterable longing, "Come." It is not only the Bride but the Lord would have every one of His people, wherever they may be and who hear the cry, to join in that longing individually. What could more plainly reveal the Lord's mind for His own, than that He would have every saint of God maintaining the expectation of His return. Not one is excepted, and this very fact is a challenge as to our state of soul in view of seeing the Lord face to face. This prospect, when cherished, constitutes the one great motive for holiness, as the apostle teaches when he says that everyone who looks for Christ and being like Him, will purify himself, even as Christ is pure. (1 John 3:2, 3.)

The circle is now widened. The Church is in a sense the depository of grace. So the Spirit of God speaking through her or through His servants, and thinking of the multitude of needy, thirsty souls scattered throughout the world, remembering that the day of grace will be closed when the Lord does come, utters the yearning appeal, "Let him that is athirst come." As the Lord said when He was on earth, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink," so now the Spirit repeats the invitation. Oh, that weary souls who have been attempting to satisfy their thirst at human cisterns, might have their ears opened to hear this pleading invitation, and as they hear it, remember the words of the Lord Himself, "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst;

but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well [fountain] of water springing up into everlasting life." John 4:14.

Every person on the face of the earth is thought of, for it says, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Nothing could more fully show that the living water which Christ has secured through His death and resurrection is "towards all." All that is in the heart of God is for man, and consequently the gospel is to be proclaimed to all, for God has been pleased to assume the attitude of a Savior God. Since Christ died for all, He would have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth. (1 Tim. 2:4.) Let this gracious invitation, therefore, be proclaimed throughout the wide world, and with all the more urgency because of the imminence of the Lord's return.

Attention may be called to the fact that the presentation of the Lord in this twofold way, as the root and offspring of David and the bright and morning star, becomes the occasion for the description of the whole circle of the Church's affections. She, as the true Bride, begins with the Bridegroom. She then thinks of and includes all who are His. Next she remembers all anxious and thirsty ones, and lastly she travels out and becomes the interpreter of her Lord's mind, to all men everywhere. Let us seek grace that we may move in no narrower circle. Notice that the Bride begins with Christ and not with souls, however precious they may be. In the same way, if we are to become in any measure the expression of the heart of Christ, we must begin with Himself. If we forget this and commence first with saints or sinners, our hearts will become contracted and narrow, and we shall no longer be the exponents of His blessed heart and will. Give Him the first place in our affections and we shall be His faithful representatives towards all.

E. Dennett

Eternal Security

Five impossible things must happen before a saved soul can be lost.

1) Someone has to pluck us out of the hand of God Himself "My Father, which gave them Me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand." John 10:29.

2) Someone has to break the seal of ownership which made us God's purchased possession. "Ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory." Eph. 1:13,14.

3) Someone has to cast out the indwelling Spirit of God. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" 1 Cor. 3:16. "And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever." John 14:16.

4) Someone has to separate us from the love of Christ. "If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For Thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Rom. 8:31-39.

5) Someone has to erase the believer's name from the Lamb's Book of Life. "Rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." Luke 10:20. "Those... whose names are in the book of life." Phil. 4:3. "Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." Rev. 20:15. "They which are written in the Lamb's book of life." Rev. 21:27.

Our names, from the palms of His hands

Eternity will not erase;

Impressed on His heart they remain.

In marks of indelible grace;

And we to the end shall endure,

As sure as the earnest is given;

More happy, but not more secure,

The spirits departed to heaven.

Book of Results

The Revelation may truly be called the book of results. In it, though Christ's faithfulness to His own abides, declension marks the churches. Sin receives its eternal wages. The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, are seen in full bloom, and pass away forever. False religion is judged, its blazing glory extinguished, and the smoke of the torment of the unchaste woman rises up forever and ever. Man living in rebellion is crushed under the feet of Jesus, and the dead are banished from His presence forever. The antichrist and his associates meet their just and most terrible abasement and misery. Satan is everlastingly consigned to the lake of fire. The created heavens and earth are cleared of evil, Christ's powerfully known, and His worth fully owned. The Church is seen in glory, in uncreated light and beauty, and the new heavens and the new earth speak to us only of righteousness and blessing from God to man. It is emphatically a book of judgment upon things on earth, prophetic, of course, in its character.

Unlike the epistles, we do not find the believer's calling or relationship with the Father considered in the Revelation. We only have the Father referred to about four times, twice as "His Father" and "My Father," and always referring to God as the Father of the Lord Jesus. In this book we see God preparing the earth for His Son, the rightful Heir, under whose feet all enemies will be put.

There appear to be three great hindrances to saints having a clear apprehension of at least the outline of this blessed book. First, the false and unbelieving feeling, long cherished by many, that the Revelation is full of mysteries which no one can understand. Secondly, the erroneous idea that the main scope of the book is a prophetic statement of events while the Church is on earth, and that we are now perhaps in the midst of the outpouring of some of the vials. The consequence is, that it is approached with wrong thoughts, so that the book becomes at once so perplexing that it is quickly laid aside. Thirdly, the chief difficulty perhaps is having false ideas of what the Church of God really is, not seeing its special and unique character, which is defined in Scripture to be the body of Christ, "the fullness of Him that filleth all in all." Eph. 1:21-23. When the believer clearly sees that the Lord abolished in His flesh the law of commandments in ordinances, in order to create (not apart from Himself, but) "in Himself" one new man, he gets at once something new before his mind, very distinct from what had ever gone before, or, as I believe, will follow. It was to this the Lord referred when He said to Peter, "Upon this rock I will build My church." Matt. 16:18. Believers now know union with Christ, and are partakers of the heavenly calling are quickened together, raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. This very distinctive truth the book of Revelation does not enter into, for it is, as we have said, a book of judgment, and especially of things in relation to the earth. We do get in the Revelation, the Lord judging the assemblies on earth professedly gathered to His name, but the Church in her special and unique character as the body of Christ, as before observed, is not dealt with there. She is, however, seen coming down from heaven as the Bride, the Lamb's wife, in manifested glory, to take her place in the glories of the kingdom, and she is also seen afterward as the Bride in the eternal state, when the Son shall have delivered up the kingdom to the Father. H.H. Snell

Seventy Weeks of Prophecy

The weeks are weeks of years so the 70 weeks equal (7x70 weeks) 490 years. The weeks are divided into three parts. The first part is from the decree to rebuild Jerusalem by Artaxerxes in the twentieth year of his reign (7x7 weeks) 49 years. The second part is from the building of the wall until the Messiah (7x62 weeks) 434 years. The third part (1 week) of 7 years concludes with the still-future blessing of Israel.

In Dan. 9:26 we read, "After threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, and shall have nothing." (margin.) The moment of His cutting off is left vague, that is, it does not confine it to the moment of the conclusion of the sixty-ninth week (62 + 7) of years, but "after" it.

The Lord during His three and a half years of ministry gathered a remnant of the people to Himself. For the believing remnant His ministry was the first half of the seventieth week. His cutting off was in the middle of the seventieth week, leaving only half the week to come.

For the apostate Jews the seventieth week is yet to come. Consequently, the seventieth week has a double those who had faith for it, yet Elijah has yet in fact to those who had faith for it, yet Elijah has yet in fact to come (see Matt. 17:10-13; Mal. 4). For the Jews with faith, the first half of the week was fulfilled and then the Messiah was cut off, while in fact, it would still have to come.

In Scripture when you come to counting out of days, only the last half of the seventieth week is ever named. The passages of Scripture where it is counted are Dan. 7:25; 12:7; Rev. 11:2, 3; 12:6; 13:5.

The Lord's coming for the saints may happen at any moment, and, the first half left. week being thus le vague, any period necessary (longer or shorter, as the case may be) for what has to be accomplished, may take place between the rapture of the saints and the commencement of the final events of the period of tribulation, during the three and a half years or last half week. At its close, the Lord will appear for the deliverance of His people.

When Messiah was cut off at the cross and got no kingdom, sixty-nine-and-a-half weeks were gone for the true saints, sixty-nine weeks only for the apostates. Then comes in the great Church parenthesis, when all time has ceased to be counted, because the Jews are set aside, and God is gathering the Church—the body of Christ—to which times and seasons do not belong. When that is accomplished, He turns again to time, the earth, and the Jew. Half a week only then has to come, the last of the seventieth, for those who had received Him, a whole week for those who did not. The conclusion of it will bring in the full blessing of Israel.

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

The subject of this book is judgment; the style, symbolism.

God is revealed as the Almighty, the Eternal, the Judge of all the earth. Christ appears exercising His judicial functions, first in the house of God, and afterward among the nations. The Holy Ghost is seen, not as the "one Spirit." but in His perfect diversity of action in connection with the government of God.

Here, as in all Scripture, the person of Christ is the central figure, the glory of Christ the central object. But next to the person and glory of Christ, the kingdom and the Church occupy the most prominent place.

The earth, is however, regarded throughout as a scene of judgment. Hence it is the judgments, and not the blessings, of the earthly kingdom that are here recorded. So, too, the Church on earth is looked upon, not in its privileges, but in its responsibilities as the house of God, at which judgment must begin. On the other hand, the heavenly glories of the Church and the heavenly side of the kingdom, about which the Old Testament is silent, are here blessedly unfolded.

The style of the book is largely symbolic, and in this it resembles the prophecies of Daniel. But while in Daniel the symbols are generally explained, in the book their interpretation is usually left to be gathered from other portions of Scripture.

The book naturally divides itself into three parts. At the close of the first chapter, John is told to "write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are. and the things which shall be after these." "The things which thou hast seen" are not so much a separate division as an introduction to "the things which are." But "the things which shall be after these" comprise two distinct classes: those which precede, and those which accompany or follow, the coming and kingdom of Christ. The three divisions of the book are therefore:

FIRST. "The things which are," described in the addresses to the seven churches, and preceded by the introductory vision;

SECOND. The judgments falling on the earth before the Lord's advent from heaven, and,

THIRD. The coming and reign of Christ, ending with the judgment of the dead before the great white throne, and leading on to the eternal state in which God is all in all. "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass; and He sent and signified it by His angel unto His servant John, who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw. Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand." Chapter 1:1-3. Such is the preface to this book, which is entitled, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ." These words, however, do not mean His predicted revelation or manifestation to the world, but a revelation or prophetic communication which He receives from God and transmits to His servants. This shows the character in which the different persons, Divine,

and human, are here presented. God is not looked at primarily as the Father of believers, or even of Jesus Christ but as sovereign Creator and Judge, communicating to Christ His own counsels. Jesus Christ, again, is not seen as "the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father," and acquainted with all that is there hidden, but as the servant who knows and does nothing of himself, the dependent man to whom God's purposes concerning the judgment of the earth and the coming kingdom are entrusted. He is thus seen in Mark's gospel, where He says, "Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." Mark 13:32.

To His disciples also He does not here show Himself as Head of the body, nor even as the Friend opening to them His heart, but as the Lord giving directions to His servants concerning "the things which must shortly come to pass." This "He sent and signified by His angel unto His servant, John." Now angels were God's medium of communication with Israel. Stephen says they "received the law by the disposition of angels" (Acts 7:53), and in Hebrews, "the word spoken by angels" is contrasted with God speaking by the Son. (Chaps. 1:2; 2:2.) There is, then, a return to Jewish modes of communication perfectly suitable to the character of a book which unfolds God's dealings with the world when He restores to favor His earthly people, a book which regards the Church, not in its privileges, but in its responsibilities as a witness for Christ, a branch grafted into the good olive tree, which must either bear fruit or be broken off.

It is said the things "must shortly come to pass," for the Church period is always left indefinite, and though the Lord. "Not willing that any should perish," has hitherto mercifully postponed His coming, still His word is. "Behold, I come quickly." and His disciples are to have their "loins girded about, and [their] lamps burning." and to be "like unto men that wait for their Lord." Luke 12:35, 36.

The angel gives the message to John, "who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ... all things that he saw." There is no "and" before the last clause in the original. He does not bear witness to something that he saw in addition to the Word of God and testimony of Jesus Christ, but to all that he saw of them. Here again, Christ is not the Son revealing the Father, but the faithful witness testifying God's Word. And this Word is earnestly commended to our study. "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand." Of such value is the book in God's eyes. There is a blessing both upon reading and hearing, for the truth is practical, and must be held fast because its accomplishment is near.

T. B. Baines

Judgment

Christians have gotten on the ground of a judgment to come, and not on the ground of a redemption. Consequently they are not judging of right and wrong, or good and evil, according to a relationship they are in by grace, but according to a possible state they may come into, by a coming judgment.

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The first letter of each of the following responses will form a word that describes how skillful hands have wrought in forming something we know right well.

1. Something an apostle uttered when contemplating failure to meet a necessity.
2. A single appointment given to men by God.
3. Something Christians are encouraged to look for, knowing they are founded on a sure promise.
4. A group of women who were admonished to change their priorities for weeping.
5. Something to be received with meekness.
6. A certain attribute of our merciful God, even when faced with open rebellion.
7. Something Christians are exhorted to be, having children as our example.
8. Something Christians should endeavor to keep by peaceable means.
9. God's invitation to all the ends of the earth for His salvation.
10. The special diet of a special messenger as he prepared the way of the Lord.
11. A three-fold time frame denoting the Savior's unchangeability.

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

R. Erisman

Bible Challenger-11-November Answers V.03

1. Prison. Psa. 142:7.
2. Rising of the sun. Psa. 113:3.
3. Assembly of the elders. Psa. 107:32.
4. I will praise Thee, O Lord. Psa. 9:1.
5. Seven times a day. Psa. 119:164.
6. Ends of the earth. Psa. 48:10.
7. Ten strings. Psa. 144:9.
8. Heavens. Psa. 89:5.
9. Endureth forever. Psa. 111:10.
10. Loving-kindness. Psa. 138:2.
11. Open Thou my lips. Psa. 51:15.
12. Rejoice. Psa. 98:4.
13. Dead. Psa. 88:10.

"This shall be written for the generation to come: and the people which shall be created shall PRAISE THE LORD." Psa. 102:18

Giving up the World

We must all, converted and unconverted, give up the world. The strongest worldling must sooner or later give up its vanities and pleasures, its hopes and interests. He must give them up.

The difference is this: the Christian gives them up for God: the worldling gives them up in the end because he cannot keep them.

The King of Egypt gave up Egypt and its court as well as Moses. But there is this difference that the King of Egypt gave it up for judgment; Moses gave it up for Christ. Young Christian

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