

CHRISTIAN TREASURY VOLUME 6

by Unknown

A collection of articles and writings from Christian Treasury Volume 6, covering various biblical topics and Christian teaching.

244 Chapters

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Christian Treasury Volume 6

Marriage

Marriage was instituted in the Garden of Eden, and it vividly displays the nearness of relationship into which believers are to be brought to Christ as His Church and bride. Moreover, the familiarity of our minds with the marriage relationship makes us understand better the place to which we are brought in the gracious affections of Christ.

Many of the blessed and substantial revelations of God we cannot understand so clearly. For example, the reign of Christ in glory, and our association with Him in that reign, however blessed it may be, can hardly be definitely familiarized to the mind. But everything around the Christian, in this world, serves to illustrate what this blessed relationship is between Christ and the Church.

Eve was to Adam the companion of his home, and the object of his affections. So Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it. The fact that she becomes the object and witness of His affections is more deeply touching than all the glory which will be her endowment as allied to Christ.

The purpose of Christ's ministry toward His Church is "that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." The end of that ministry is "that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing." Just as Eve was for Adam himself, so is the Church to be for Christ Himself.

G. V. Wigram

EDITORIAL:What's Going to Happen Next?

EYES are focused on the Middle East and people are wondering what will happen next. Who is the king of the north? Just where will he arise? These and many other questions are grave concerns of many today.

The Bible is the only book that can tell us the future. It was written by the Spirit of God and can only be rightly interpreted by that same Spirit of God.

A general thought of many is that doomsday is coming for this earth, and what the Spirit of God has written agrees well with this. Judgment is determined. "Now is the judgment of this world." John 12:31. When the world rejected Christ, who came in grace to be a Savior, it sealed its doom.

Who will be the judge? John 5:22 and 27 tell us: "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.... And hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man."

In Dan. 11 we read of three kings; the first is the willful king abruptly announced in verse 36. This is the Antichrist, the false messiah. The second is the king of the south who at the time of the end pushes at the first king, the Antichrist. Then the third king is aroused, the king of the north who comes like a whirlwind. Two attacks on Jerusalem are the result.

What is generating much interest in Christian circles now is what can we expect from the horrible hatred and fighting particularly to the north and east of Israel at this time? We will say this: it will get worse.

The three kings mentioned will arise, but as Christians we do not expect to see or know who they are. After we-the Church, or the bride-are "caught up" it will not be long before these kings make their power and presence felt.

The Armageddon judgments of Rev. 16 and 19 then take place. While we as believers are expectantly waiting for our Lord and Savior (Deliverer) to come and snatch us from great danger, the tribulation, we should be interested in preparatory happenings in the Middle East. Two countries that we might well observe are Syria and Turkey. These are the countries to the north of Israel, and it is from this region that the king of the north will come. Egypt, the country from which the king of the south comes, is already in place and showing increasing signs of power. The turmoil of these past few years in the Persian Gulf area increases the importance of Turkey. This country is strategically situated with borders on Syria, Iran, and Iraq as well as countries in Europe. She has an army of 800,000. It may be that we will yet see a shift of power in the Middle East toward Syria and Turkey.

C. Buchanan

The Hope Set before Us

The hope set before us" (Heb. 6:18) is the expectation of heavenly glory as secured and displayed in Christ exalted on high. Of course, the "hope" implies something yet to be done or manifested, though, being of God in Christ, it has not the smallest shade of uncertainty about it like what men call hope. This hope has present effects too, causing us to "draw nigh to God." If you compare Heb. 10:23, which ought to be "hope" rather than "faith" as in the Authorized Version, it should fill us with joy (Heb. 3:6). It is clearly in the future alone that all will be realized, and therefore it is justly called "hope." Still, the work being finished, and Christ having entered within the veil, our hope is said to penetrate there too. That is, besides being sure for us and steadfast in itself, it is heavenly as entering into the immediate presence of God on the basis of the precious blood of Christ. It counts upon God fulfilling all He has promised, according to the faithfulness which has raised up Christ from the dead (like Isaac in the type), and set Him in the atmosphere of unchangeable blessing inside the veil. As Abraham had his son given back and the promise confirmed by an oath, so we have our hopes confirmed in a yet more precious way in Christ glorified above, though still having need of patience.

Bible Witness and Review

Consider Him

Heb. 3:1 -6; 1 2:1 -3

Man's superiority over other creatures is in mind and heart. The angels excel in strength, and it is never said that they are made in the image of God. Man's heart is very large and there is only One who can fill it. When the Lord is before us, we have One who can and does fill the heart and mind.

The above two scriptures bring the Lord before us in two different ways, perhaps three. He is brought before us in many ways in Scripture. Sometimes we see Him in His eternal glory, then again in His manhood, then back to glory. His glory is great, and His glories are many. Joseph's father loved him, and made him a coat of many colors. Apply this in type to the Lord Jesus. He has personal glories, and glories that have been given Him.

"Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling." How much there is in these few words! "Consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession [confession]." His apostleship was on earth; His high priesthood is in heaven. Let us consider these two things: first, what is our confession? It is this-God is known, is revealed, is no longer concealed, no longer in darkness. "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." In 1 John 4 we get "God is love" twice, but in the first chapter it is "God is light."

The next thing to consider is, where God is, that is, "in the light." Then as to our confession, it is walking "in the light." He told the prophets of old a great deal about Himself, but when He is revealed, it is alone in the person of His Son (John 1:18).

The Apostle of Our Confession

Heb. 1, where we have the Lord as the Apostle of our confession, begins: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us" in the person of "His Son." And after our attention has been called to that person it says, "Who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." Such is our confession, of which the Lord is the Apostle. What a subject for consideration!

High Priest

As High Priest we see Him in heaven, as the One who is qualified to sustain us in the circumstances of faith. We also see Him as the One who lives within the veil, and is touched with the feelings of our infirmities.

His advocacy (1 John 2:1) is another thing; it is the grace which restores our souls if we wander and sin. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." There, it is the Lord as restorer of our souls. He brings the soul back into communion of the relationship into which we have been brought.

His high priestly service is another thing. It is His sustaining us in the midst of difficulties, and we are exhorted to consider Him in this capacity. In Heb. 5 the priesthood is the position to which He has been called, and there He sustains us. How precious that makes the Lord to us; He who has felt what we feel, has entered into all that we pass through. Do we know what it is to consider the Lord in that way? It is a wonderfully sustaining truth in sorrow to know Him thus, who lives in sympathizing love for us.

Son over the House of God

Another thing is the position He occupies in the house of God. God has a house on the earth. "That thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God." God's dwelling place on earth is in the midst of His people. The place that the Lord Jesus occupies in the house is not as a servant in the house, but He is a Son over it. Moses was a servant in it, and was faithful to Him who called him. The Lord Jesus is a Son over the house, and "faithful to Him that appointed Him." We get Him in Revelation, chapters 1-3, as Son over the house in addresses to the churches. "I have not found thy works perfect before God," etc. The Lord is maintaining what is becoming to the house of God.

Beginner and Completer of Faith

In Heb. 12 we find the Lord, not as Apostle and not as High Priest, but as the beginner and completer of faith. He began and completed that path in all perfection.

In these three ways we are called upon to consider Him: as Apostle, as High Priest, and as beginner and completer of faith, "who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

He was sustained in that path of faith. What sustained Him? That which was at the end-"who for the joy," etc. What can sustain us in the path of faith so charged with difficulties from beginning to end? One way to be overcome is to get occupied with the difficulties. We need to look at Him. So "consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." If we get occupied with the circumstances, we faint in our minds; we need an object before us.

Paul said, "If by any means I might attain." The object was before him. In going up a steep hill, if the mind gets occupied with something else, one is soon there. Keep the eye on Christ, and the heart is sustained.

If we go back to the first chapter, we find Him at the right hand of the Majesty on high. This is another viewpoint.

With these few thoughts before us, let us consider Him: the Apostle, High Priest, and the One who endured, lest we be weary and faint in our minds. Long or short, the way is difficult. What enables us to endure is to consider that One who has gone before and has reached the goal.

W. Potter

Melchisedec

Heb. 7:8

"It is witnessed that he liveth."

There is really no solid ground for denying that Melchisedec was a man as simply as Abram, Lot, or any other personage that figures in the description of Gen. 14.

The mystery consists not in the person, but in the way in which the Spirit of God records his appearance and action in the scene, so as to make of him a suitable type of the Lord Jesus. Thus not a word is said of his birth, or of his death. There is total silence as to his ancestors, and no hint is given of the lapse of his office, or of any successor.

The Holy Spirit by Paul argues from this silence, which is so much the more striking as contrasted with the well-known pedigree and succession of Aaron. And it thus illustrates Christ's priesthood, which really had those features that are here shown to be typically foreshadowed in Melchisedec. For instance, while verse 8 refers to Melchisedec, the testimony Scripture renders is to his life, not to his death, whereas it frequently speaks of the death of Aaron and his sons. The same principle applies to his abiding "a priest continually."

The Bible does not speak of his institution, nor of his resignation. When first we hear of Melchisedec he is a priest, and as such we leave him; no son, no successor appears. Each of the following are obviously and eminently typical:

- (1) The name, "King of righteousness";
- (2) The place, "King of Salem";
- (3) His sacerdotal office (especially in connection with so peculiar a title of God), "priest of the most high God";
- (4) The circumstances, "met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings";
- (5) The character of his actions, "blessed him" (and not merely sacrifice and intercession).

There is scarcely more difficulty as to Melchisedec than as to Jethro, priest and king of a later day, though of course the latter could not furnish so apt an illustration in the circumstances of the case as the former. Both were real, historical persons and not merely mystical.

Two remarks may be made towards the better understanding of this chapter and epistle. The first is that if the order of Christ's priesthood is that of Melchisedec, the exercise is that of Aaron (Heb. 9:11). The second is that in verses 18 and 19 of our chapter, we must take "for the law made nothing perfect" parenthetically. The word "did" is in italics and ought to be left out of the Authorized Version.

Bible Witness and Review

God's Way of Blessing and Fruitfulness

by Dan Hayhoe

There is one brief episode in the life of Abraham that gives us the pattern for blessing and fruitfulness. Also in the book of Ezra there is a pattern that Satan follows when he attacks God's people to prevent that blessing and fruitfulness. We shall begin with the positive aspect: an example in Scripture which tells us of Abraham who did indeed enjoy blessing in his life. Then we shall see how Satan methodically, step by step, attacks those who seek to go on in faithfulness to God.

First, in Gen. 14, Lot and his family and all his goods were taken captive, but Abram goes out with his armed servants and his household, wins a great victory, and recovers Lot and his household. Now what we are going to see is what happens immediately following that victory. Often in the Christian life, God, by His grace, allows us to win a victory, not through our own power but through the power of God and the working of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Then there is going to be a test, a major decision and a confrontation with Satan himself immediately after that victory. That is exactly what we find in Abram's life.

The victory has been won and in verses 17 through 20 we read, "And the king of Sodom went out to meet him.... And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: and blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand." But notice in verses 21-23, "And the king of Sodom said unto Abram, Give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself. And Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lifted up mine hand unto the Lord, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth, that I will not take from a thread even to a shoe latchet, and that I will not take anything that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich."

Let us lay this out in very clear terms. The victory has been won. Abram has a desire to go on for God, and now he's met by two opposing forces, the king of Sodom and the king of Salem. A decision is now going to be made. He faces the attraction of family, because Lot had affiliated himself with Sodom by going back there again, and was there just prior to the ultimate judgment upon that city. Now Abram faces these two men, the king of Sodom and the king of Salem.

King of Salem

Let us look first of all at the king of Salem in verse 18, "Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine." I believe this is a picture of what Christ would offer to the believer in his or her Christian pathway. The Lord Jesus Christ is typified by the king of Salem. Salem means "peace" and we read in Isa. 9:6, "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Melchizedek was the priest of the most high God.

We find the Lord Jesus Christ is our great High Priest in the glory for us. He is the Prince of Peace, not perhaps acting in that character towards the world at this point in time, but nevertheless this king of Salem brings Christ before us. And what is it that the king of Salem would bring to Abram's attention? He would give Abram bread and wine. He does not take from Abram; he gives to Abram. That is the Christian pathway; that is what Christianity is. It has often been mentioned that Christianity is not known by what it finds, but by what it brings. The Lord Jesus Christ wants to bring Himself into our lives to give blessing, peace, joy and happiness to us.

The wine would speak of the joy that we find in Christ and the bread speaks of Christ Himself. We could trace that from Genesis to Revelation. In Genesis we find Joseph, a type of Christ, with all around starving for lack of food, but where Joseph was there was bread. (Gen. 41:54.) Where the Lord Jesus is, there always will be bread. The children of Israel went through the wilderness and they were fed with manna from heaven. This speaks of Christ in His humanity, Christ in His manhood and the privilege of feeding on Christ for the daily pathway.

In the book of Ruth, we find Naomi who had gone from Bethlehem, "the house of bread." She had gone into the world, Moab, and there was famine. Finally, in restoration she comes back to Bethlehem again and hangs her head in shame and says, "Call me not Naomi, call me Mara: for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me." When she returns to Bethlehem, "the house of bread," we find immediately that it's the beginning of barley harvest. And so where there is restoration, there is bread and nourishment.

Bread of Life

We go on to John 6:48 and the Lord Jesus Christ says, "I am that bread of life." Christ is the bread. We could go right on through to the book of Revelation and find in Pergamos that the Church and the world are united, a particular temptation to the believer. The privilege of the overcomer is to eat of the hidden manna, feeding secretly on Christ in his own soul regardless of the state of the Church around us, and regardless of the difficulties and the problems in our families. In Gen. 14 Abram's own nephew had gone off into the world and he had to go out physically and bring him back again. He is met by the king of Sodom trying to entice him back into Sodom. With all these difficulties arising in our lives and families, the hidden manna and feeding on Christ in our own soul are what will keep us.

The king of Salem does not ask for anything from Abram; he gives. And the Lord Jesus Christ gives; He gives everything. He gave Himself. "The Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." He gave everything for us and all He wants in return is our affection and to have us walking in communion with Him. If, by His grace, He gives us a little service to do for Him, it is a wonderful privilege to be involved in that, but He does not demand it of us.

King of Sodom

What about the king of Sodom? Sodom means "an abundance of dew." It also means "their secret" and "burning." It was a wicked and sinful place. We look around and we see what appears to be blessing in this wicked world around us, an abundance of dew, perhaps, but don't forget He "sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." Do not let that fool us because Sodom also means "their secret." The secret sin of Sodom soon spilled out into the open and then what happened? Burning, the judgment of God upon that city. And what does the king of Sodom say? "Give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself."

Satan says: Give me the souls; you take the goods. In fact, I will help you get them Go ahead with your education; go ahead with your plans for advancement in the business world. Go ahead with your plans for accumulating wealth. Take it all, but give me the souls.

Here is the decision: maybe you've won a great victory, a spiritual victory in your life. Maybe you have been used for the restoration of someone in your own family like Abram was for Lot. But now the decision comes: are you going to go on for Christ, the King of Salem? Or are you going to be drawn by Satan, the king of Sodom who says, "Give me the souls, and take the goods to thyself." v. 21, margin. That is the challenge for all of us. Satan says: Give me the souls; you take the goods. In fact, I will help you get them. Go ahead with your education; go ahead with your plans for advancement in the business world. Go ahead with your plans for accumulating wealth. Take it all, but give me the souls. We have fallen into that trap of accumulating "goods" while millions of souls are perishing without Christ.

What was Abram's response? Abram said to the king of Sodom, "I have lifted up mine hand unto the Lord, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth, that I will not take from a thread even to a shoe-latchet, and that I will not take anything that is thine." A thread speaks to us of our clothes, how we present ourselves to the world and those around us at work and school. The shoe-latchet would speak to us of our walk, our association with this world and our pathway through this world. Abram says that he would not take anything; he would be completely separate, sanctified, and meet for the

Master's use (2 Tim. 2:20, 21). That is the beginning of a pathway of blessing and fruitfulness for the Lord Jesus Christ.

"After these things the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." What is the prize? Christ! "For to me to live is Christ." Phil. 1:21. "I... count them but dung [refuse], that I may win Christ." Phil. 3:8. Every link formed with the world weakens the testimony and saps spiritual strength.

Steps to Fruitfulness

First Step

In Gen. 17:1, we see several specific steps leading up to verse 6, which says, "I will make thee exceeding fruitful." I know that every one of us wants fruitfulness for Christ. The primary evidence of divine life is fruit. The pattern for fruitfulness is in Gen. 17:1, "And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God." The first step is a revelation and the realization of who God is.

Second Step

The next step is, "Walk before Me, and be thou perfect." We begin with a knowledge of God as revealed in Christ and go on to a walk in communion with God. "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ." 1 John 1:3. That is fellowship and communion. There is no true fellowship apart from the fellowship that is based on a knowledge of Christ as revealed from God the Father.

Third Step

The third step is, "Be thou perfect"; the margin says, "Be thou sincere." The word "sincere" comes from two Latin words—sine cera—"without wax." Phil. 1:10 says, "that ye may be sincere... till the day of Christ." In the days when this scripture was written at the time of the Roman empire, the potters would make their clay pots and sometimes the pots would crack during the firing process. A potter who was not honest would take wax and seal up the crack and color it so that when you looked at it you could not see the cracks unless you held it up to the light. Then you would find that there was actually wax filler in it. A potter who was honest and did good work would turn his finished product upside down and stamp on the bottom "sine cera"—without wax. That's what "sincere" means.

Fourth Step

The fourth step is in verse 3, "Abram fell on his face." It tells us in 1 Peter 5:6, "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time." If we start the pattern of our early life in stubbornness and self-will, in refusing to bow under the hand of God, it will plague us for the rest of our lives. And then when we are older and someone in the assembly says something that hurts us, or is not true about us, we will react in self-defense and self-vindication. That will bring sorrow and sadness into our lives and our families' lives, and division and sorrow among the people of God. If we can do like Abram did and fall on our faces and humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, there will be blessing.

Fifth Step

The next step is that God talked with him in communion. That may go beyond our selfish thoughts about what is God's will for our life; it is really an understanding of God's thoughts for His people.

Perhaps you say, "I wonder why I cannot understand prophecy?" Those are God's thoughts with respect to His people. If we do not understand it, one of the reasons may be because our thoughts are so selfish and narrow that they don't include the purposes of God.

Sixth Step

The next step is in verse 5, "Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham." A new name really brings before us a complete change, leaving behind everything that was before. We become a new creature [creation] in Christ. (2 Cor. 5:17.) That happens when we are born again. But I believe there is a time in our lives, too, as we go along for the Lord, that we have to remind ourselves to walk in the good of that position in which we have been placed.

Satan's Pattern for Attack

We have seen God's pattern for blessing. Now we're going to see Satan's pattern for attacking God's people. In Ezra's day the Lord stirred up the hearts of some of His own people who had been in captivity. There was a restoration and they began to rebuild the temple. And when that happens, Satan always attacks. We have seen the positive side-the pathway to blessing in the life of Abraham. Now we're going to see the negative side and how Satan attacks in the time of Ezra.

The temple, which was being rebuilt, was God's center on earth. God's Church, the assembly, is how God manifests Himself on earth today. Those who are willing to put their heart, soul and energy into identification with God's assembly are going to face a tremendous onslaught of Satan. "Now when the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the children of the captivity builded the temple unto the Lord God of Israel; then they came to Zerubbabel, and to the chief of the fathers, and said unto them, Let us build with you: for we seek your God, as ye do." Ezra 4:1, 2. The answer is in verse 3: "Ye have nothing to do with us."

First Tactic

Satan's first attack is to introduce those who were really Samaritans, who would say, "We are with you; we are one of you," but they were enemies and adversaries. Take that as a warning not to join hands with the world even if it is to accomplish something that may seem to be for the glory of God. If it is not done according to the Word of God, it cannot have the blessing of God in our lives. The children of Israel were faithful; they refused that.

Second Tactic

The second tactic of Satan is in verse 4: "Then the people of the land weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in building." Satan is going to weaken our hands; he is going to trouble us and bring all kinds of things into our lives that are going to sap our energy and take away our strength.

In the book of Haggai we find they left building the temple; instead they went back to building their own houses. If we turn to Ezra 6:11, we find the result. "Also I have made a decree, that whosoever shall alter this word, let timber be pulled down from his house, and being set up, let him be hanged thereon; and let his house be made a dunghill for this." If we turn our energies to ourselves rather than God, it is going to bring down God's judgment on our own heads.

Third Tactic

Let us see Satan's next tactic in Ezra 5:3, 4. They had questioned God's authority. "Who hath commanded you to build this house?... What are the names of the men that make this building?" There is a tremendous movement in Christendom to question the inerrant authority of the Word of God. And there will be many who will come to us and say, "Who gave you the authority to meet in that simple way around the Person of Christ?" The authority comes from God Himself and the Word of God, and from the Holy Spirit who has the liberty to guide and direct our thoughts to Christ

in the midst. The authority does not come from man.

Fourth Tactic

We will find Satan's last tactic in Ezra 9:2. "For they have taken of their daughters for themselves, and for their sons: so that the holy seed have mingled themselves with the people of those lands: yea, the hand of the princes and rulers hath been chief in this trespass." That was Satan's final tactic and the one that worked. That was the one that wrought havoc and brought in this awful mixture. The command in 2 Cor. 6:14,15 is so clear: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers.... What concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel [unbeliever]?"

May the Lord preserve us from Satan's tactics and give us the courage to follow the pattern for blessing and fruitfulness.

Questions and Answers

QUESTION: Is there anything on earth about which we can say, according to the truth of God and with certainty in our own minds, "The Father worketh herein and the Son also"?

ANSWER: Most assuredly, yes. The Church of the living God is still upon earth, and that Church is the workmanship of God—is the subject of the operations of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Yes, God is working upon the earth. It is a work, too, which was counseled from everlasting, which is for God's own eternity and for Himself and His Son in that eternity. When man sees this as to the

Church, he (the renewed, saved man) will see how near he is to the work of God. Questions will surely follow to each one—questions such as, "How far do I understand God's thoughts as to the Church?"

"How far am I practically working together with God in this matter?" or "How far is my life here below, practically inconsistent with the present aim and the present object of God in His work?"

The Spirit of God dwells in a body, the Church upon earth, and that body is made responsible for the honor and the glory of the Lord. Eternal salvation to each soul individually is through faith in the Lord Jesus. But the individuals so saved were to be gathered together in each place under the present guidance, corporately, of the Holy Spirit, and be the body which is responsible for the truth and the honor of the Lord.

Bible Challenger-01-January V.06

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the word that defines something which cannot be made perfect through the offerings of gifts and sacrifices. [The number in brackets indicates the number of words in the answer.]

1. The natural consequence emanating from something that is pure and something that is good [1].
2. A desirable void in each believer's life as to that which relates to both God and man [1].
3. A descriptive word of things pure in the lives of the defiled and unbelieving [1].
4. A catastrophic end to the pathway of faith when something, once good, is put aside [1].
5. Something both young and old felt within themselves after receiving a down-to-earth message [1].
6. A place in which one having knowledge could be a bad influence on someone weak in faith [2].
7. Something Christians might do that is thankworthy even though wrong is involved [2].
8. The frequency of prayer remembrance of an apostle for his own son in the faith [3].
9. A character of walk to be avoided when truth is fully manifested [1].
10. Something Christians' hearts are sprinkled from when there is the full assurance of faith [2].

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

Bible Challenger-00-December Answers to V.05

1. M ake my refuge Psa. 57:1

2. E vil to come [so. 57:1

3. R opes 1 Kings 20:31

4. C ruel Prov. 11:17

5. I ntegrity Psa. 26:11

6. F aithful Heb. 2:17

7. U nrightheousness Heb. 8:12

8. L ot Gen. 19:15,16

"And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be MERCIFUL to me a sinner."

Luke 18:13.

The Bible in Two Parts

The Old and New Testaments are perfectly harmonious! There is not a line or word of one that contradicts the other, but they are not and do not say the same things.

God takes particular pains to mark the difference; in fact, He writes each in a different tongue—the one, Hebrew, having its groundwork in the family of Abraham after the flesh. The other is in Greek, used when God was sending the gospel to the Gentiles as such. Thus the Greek was just as much a representative of Gentile objects, as the Hebrew found its fitting object in Israel. But, for all that, God shows His mind in both.

The distinctive feature of the Old Testament is His government, while the distinctive feature of the New Testament is His grace. Government and grace are totally distinct. Government is always a dealing with man, whereas grace is the revelation of what God is and does. Consequently, the one invariably supposes judgment, and the other is the full display of mercy and goodness. Both find their meeting point in Christ.

As He is the King, He consequently is the head of the government. As He is the Son of God, full of grace and truth, He consequently is the one channel for all the blessing peculiar to the New Testament. His glory, now that the mighty work of redemption is done, accounts for all our characteristic privileges.

W. Kelly

Old Creation

Dead to sin, to the world, to the law-this I find in Scripture but not dead to the old creation. This is the place of every Christian, and he is to hold himself so. But God does not say dead to the old creation, for it is God's creation, and every creature of God is good. Live above it. In its present state all is well, if it be given to us, but death to the first creation, and breaking every link with it, is not true, while we are in the body. Scripture does not say so, and Scripture, I say again, is much wiser than we are. There is a new creation, and, as in Christ, we are of it-I think we may say, the firstfruits of it-"of His creatures," at any rate.

Out of His Treasure

Christ was witnessing while Peter was denying, but Christ had been praying while Peter was sleeping. The armor should be put on before the battle, not just during the battle.

Waiting is readiness; watching is expectation.

We can never be said to have outlived our usefulness unless we have outlived our spirituality.

The source of real strength is in the sense of the Lord's being gracious. The natural man in us always disbelieves Christ as the only source of strength and every blessing.

To learn, and yet to learn, while life goes by,

So pass the student's days;

And thus be great, and do great things, and die,

And lie embalmed with praise.

My work is but to lose and to forget,

Thus small, despised to be;

All to unlearn-this task before me set;

Unlearn all else but Thee.

G. T. S.

Mischief

Whatever (Satan seeks to do, as he has done from the beginning, must ultimately tend to the divine glory.

A large part of the New Testament epistles owe their origin to the mischief Satan did in the Church. Examples are the epistles to the Corinthians, Thessalonians and Galatians. The mischief was permitted that the folly of these things might be made manifest, and that the full glory of the truth might be brought out. "These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you." They were persons of the highest pretensions that would seduce them.

The attack of the enemy brought out in the epistle to the Corinthians was the truth of the resurrection; in Thessalonians, the coming of the Lord; in Galatians, justification by faith. This was hardly the case in Philippians, because Paul was comforted by the love of those at Philippi.

Whatever Satan seeks to do, as he has done from the beginning, must ultimately tend to the divine glory, and the comfort and blessing of the souls of those who seek to serve God. The fall itself is the occasion of God's introducing greater blessing than before. Of course, man gets humbled in it, but God overrules it for greater good.

EDITORIAL: Israel: Whose Land Is It?

The land now occupied by Israel is claimed by the Palestinians and also by the Jordanians. Syria would like to have it as well. To whom does it rightly belong?

It is the Holy Land of the Bible. Judaism and Christianity began in Palestine, but Islam claims it as their sacred place. Today it is about the same size as Kuwait, and likely it soon will be the center of a greater conflict than Kuwait is experiencing at this time.

In promise, the Lord made a covenant with Abram saying, "Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates." Gen. 15:18. This promise has never been completely fulfilled, but it shall be in Christ. In the second Psalm the Lord emphatically states it as done, as He alone can speak saying, "Yet have I set My King upon My holy hill of Zion." More is added in Psa. 132:13, 14, "For the Lord hath chosen Zion; He hath desired it for His habitation. This is My rest forever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it."

All this is future and certain, but what about the present state of uneasy possession by Israel of the part they forcibly control? Under David, the Lord gave Israel much of the land of promise. It began in the day of Joshua and reached its peak under Solomon. Israel had to drive out the heathen idolaters and to walk upon all that they possessed. Never were the Philistines fully conquered, nor did Israel gain possession of all the large territory that the Lord promised to Abram.

Instead, the kingdom was divided and the ten tribes soon turned to idolatry themselves. For this they were carried away captive by the Assyrians and their identity is lost.

A little later because of idolatry, the kingly line of David with the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin were taken captive to Babylon. A little remnant was brought back to the land, and about 2000 years ago their Messiah was presented to them. Did they receive Him? No! Nationally, they rejected and crucified Him. Will that nation be punished for their crime? They said, "His blood be on us and on our children." This is why the children have been allowed to come back, in measure, to the site of their crime.

The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof. Man proposes, God disposes. The Gentiles and the Jews were at the cross led by Satan against "the Lord, and against His Christ." Acts 4:26. The present state of affairs in and around Israel surely is a preparation for the judgment of this guilty world which crucified God's Son, sent in grace to be a Savior.

After these judgments which last for 7 years at least, there will be that wonderful 1000-year reign of Christ. He will gather all Israel and they shall be in the land in peace, and the nations all around enjoying that righteous reign of great earthly blessing. (Zech. 14:9-11.)

C. Buchanan

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 manning the oars on the galleys. 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!

A Christian

Before God a Christian is seen in Christ as holy and without blame in love, and such a character should mark him now.

A Christian, everyone will admit, ought to be a Christian in conduct and walk, as well as in name. How else is the life of Christ to be seen in him?

In these days of worldliness and declension we have to leave with the Lord the question of whether a person is really a Christian or not. We know that "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His" (2 Tim. 2:19), but it is incumbent on everyone who names the name of the Lord to depart from iniquity. It is not the walk which makes the Christian, though to walk in some measure as Christ walked entitles such a one to the name, for what a Christian is before God should be reproduced in his walk. Before God he is seen in Christ as holy and without blame in love (Eph. 1:4), and such a character should mark him now.

The Christian is in the same position before God as Christ is; he has no other standing, for he is in it as the effect of the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. He knows it by the Holy Spirit which dwells in him, through whom he enjoys all the results of that death and resurrection, whether present or future. His sins have been forgiven for His name's sake. He is in Christ, saved forever from judgment, for love with him has been made perfect, so that it can be said, "As He [Christ] is, so are we [Christians] in this world." God sees each believer as such absolutely; he is perfect in Christ.

Has the state of Christendom, which is a witness of the ruin of Christian profession, altered one bit what a Christian is, and consequently what his walk should be? No! We ought to be true to what, through God's grace, we are.

As He Is

God's perfect love casts out fear, for "as He is, so are we in this world" (1 John 4:17). Look at these nine monosyllables. Exactly as Christ is, so is the Christian. When he dies? No. When he has attained to a state of perfection? No. "In this world." I know nothing sweeter to the heart than to see that peerless Man who was in death, but has gone back to heaven, at the right hand of God, and God says, "As He is, so are we in this world."

See Him, the Father's delight from all eternity. How is He? Is He on the other side of death? So are we. Is He where no sin can touch Him? So are we. Is He the Father's delight? So are we. If you believe this, you will have life, peace, power, and boldness in the day of judgment. I shall be at His side in that day of judgment. He is the One who took my judgment on the Cross.

"Bold shall I stand in that great day,
For who aught to my charge shall lay?"

He has given us His place—"As He is, so are we in this world." May the Lord lead us to rest in Himself, and thus to walk in the enjoyment of His love till we see Him face to face. W. T. P. Wolston

Paul's Manner at All Seasons

Whether there be conditions as cold as winter, as promising as spring, as bright as summer, or as overcast as autumn, Paul's ministry is appropriate for us.

Paul's closing words to the elders at Ephesus tell the proper spirit and character of a true servant of God. Paul passed through all manner of conditions with respect to the assembly, which indicates his ministry is suitable for any condition among the people of God today. Whether there be conditions as cold as winter, as promising as spring, as bright as summer, or as overcast as autumn, Paul's ministry is appropriate for us.

And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church. And when they were come to him, he said unto them, Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews: and how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have showed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house.

Acts 20:17-20.

Winter

Winter begins our year and illustrates the condition of man's heart untouched and unmoved by the love and grace of Christ.

And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter. And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch. Then came the Jews round about Him, and said unto Him, How long dost Thou make us to doubt? If Thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. John 10:22-24.

The Jews had asked Jesus to tell them plainly if He were the Christ. He had already abundantly proved this. When He stated the truth that He and His Father were one, they took up stones to stone Him. They were filled with coldness and hatred for Christ. Paul also experienced this same response from the Jews. (Acts 9:23, 24.) Religious flesh will always be opposed to Paul's ministry

Spring

Spring is characterized by freshness, growth, and life out of death. Paul wrote to the assembly at Thessalonica commending them for their work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope. He also recalled how they had turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God and to wait for His Son from heaven. Whether an assembly or individual is characterized by the features seen in the Thessalonian believers, the encouragement and testimony to others is indisputable.

How refreshing to see a believer, young or old, hungering after fellowship, anxious to gain a fresh thought of Christ, desiring better understanding of Scripture, fervently engaged in the gospel, and sincerely concerned for the welfare of all men. The coldness and barrenness of winter are left behind as spring arrives. Worldly wisdom and ways fade away as love for Christ moves one to willing obedience to Him.

Summer

Summer is known for warmth, long days, and blooming vegetation. The epistle to the Ephesians tells us we are blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ. No greater blessing could be ours. The believer should be enjoying the fullness of the blessing he has in Christ. It is not material wealth and abundance, but a spiritual treasure that belongs to us.

There is a walk that corresponds to these truths and so the Ephesians were exhorted to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they were called. As intelligence in divine things increases, so should godliness. What has begun in spring, matures in summer. What has matured in summer, falls away in autumn and the chills that characterize winter are occasionally felt.

Autumn

Autumn may be compared to the end of one's natural life, but it also indicates the last days of the assembly's history on earth. It was in autumn when Paul wrote:

The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments.... Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick. Do thy diligence to come before winter. 2 Tim. 4:13, 20, 21.

No doubt Paul felt the need of warmth in his prison cell as the chilling gusts of autumn wind pierced his skin. But what bit more deeply than the cold winds was the realization that many had forsaken him. "Notwithstanding," he said, "the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me." v. 17. We have the same resource today.

Trophimus was sick and in the last days many are spiritually ill and weak. Paul desired Timothy to come before winter set in. Timothy's coming would warm the soul of this venerable servant of God. It must have done his heart good to see a younger brother who still cared for him and his ministry. Paul's writings from the prison in Rome give needed truth for the days of autumn, a day of falling away and giving up.

Soon the icy conditions of winter will prevail again as all who love the Lord Jesus will be caught up to be with Him. The principles of opposition to the truth which will rise to their peak after the assembly is gone are felt even now.

Still, there is encouragement, even in a day of decline. Ephraim will say upon his restoration, "I am like a green fir tree." Hos. 14:8. May we be as an evergreen tree even in the days of autumn. When all around is giving evidence of death, we may enjoy communion with the Lord and be characterized by the very life of Christ. He will say, "From Me is thy fruit found."

Autumn is similar to sunset. On the positive side, some of the most beautiful sights and colors are seen just before the leaves fall, or the sun sets. Many older saints give the richest display of Christ in their lives just before they are called home.

It is good to recognize that though we live in the days of autumn, we may be characterized by spring and summer. Paul's ministry is not only appropriate, but necessary for us in all seasons.

W. Brockmeier

His Love

Not to shield my path from sorrows

Is His care and thought;

Not to make the dark world brighter

Where Himself is not.

But to have me there beside

Him In the love and light,

There to tell my heart how precious

I am in His sight.

Youth

The blessing of giving the Lord the best days.

"I thy servant fear the Lord from my youth." 1 Kings 18:12. What a blessed statement of Obadiah's! The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and if we start our Christian life with this, our path will be a happy one in serving Him.

A dear brother once said to a group of young Christians: "You, dear young people, in all the freshness and bloom of youth, remind me of a very beautiful bouquet of flowers. Suppose you desire to present a very beautiful bouquet to a good friend. You purchase it, and it is so beautiful that you wish to keep it. But the third day you notice it is beginning to wither, and you hasten to give the faded bouquet to your friend. Do not treat the Lord this way. Give yourselves to Him while in your vigor and strength. Serve Him with your whole heart. Remember what He has done for you."

Oh, how little do Christian young men and women appreciate the blessing of giving God their youth—their best days—the strongest and heartiest time of their short life. "In thy youth," give yourself to God for His service and honor. "In thy youth," be out and out for Christ, a good soldier for Him. Do not say in your heart, Why should I not enjoy the world and its joys as others do? Jesus, the Son of God beckons you to a nobler life; He calls you to self-sacrifice and devotion, in which you shall have joys beyond all that this poor world ever gave to its servants.

Dear young Christians, the truly happy life is the one that is given to the Lord. There are more joys found in the service of Christ than in all the pleasures of the world. We appeal to you now, in your youth, to devote yourselves to Him.

Understanding Scripture

What is it that renders all Scripture so difficult? It is not the language. A striking proof of it is found in this: if anyone were to ask what part of the New Testament I think to be the most profound of all, I should refer to the epistles of John. Yet, if there be any part more than others put in language of the greatest simplicity, it is these very epistles. The words are not those of the scribes of this world. Neither are the thoughts enigmatical or full of foreign or difficult-to-comprehend allusions.

The difficulty of Scripture lies in this: it is the revelation of Christ for the souls that have their hearts opened by grace to receive and to value Him. Now John, of all the disciples, was most favored in intimacy of communion with Christ. He is used of the Holy Spirit to give us the deepest thoughts of Christ's love and personal glory.

The real difficulty of Scripture consists in its thoughts being so infinitely above our natural mind.

We must give up self in order to understand the Bible. We must have a heart and an eye for Christ, or Scripture becomes an unintelligible thing for our souls. But when the eye is single, the whole body is full of light. Hence we see every day a learned man completely at fault, though he may be a Christian—stopping short at the epistles of John or at the Revelation as being too deep for him to enter into.

On the other hand, you may find a simple man, who, if he cannot altogether understand these scriptures or explain every portion of them correctly, can at any rate well enjoy them. They convey intelligible thoughts to his soul and comfort, guidance, and profit too. Even if it be about coming events, or Babylon and the beast, he finds there great principles of God which, even though they may be found in what is considered the most obscure of all the books of Scripture, yet have a practical bearing for his soul.

The reason is that Christ is before him, and Christ is the wisdom of God in every sense. It is not, of course, because he is ignorant, but in spite of his ignorance he can understand it. Nor is it because a man is learned, that he is capable of entering into the thoughts of God. Whether ignorant or learned, there is but one way—the eye to see what concerns Christ. Where Christ is firmly fixed before the soul, I believe that He becomes the light of spiritual intelligence as He is the light of salvation.

It is the Spirit of God who is the power for us to apprehend Scripture, but He never gives that light except through Christ. Otherwise man has an object before him that is not Christ, and therefore cannot understand Scripture which reveals Christ. He is endeavoring to force the Scriptures to bear upon his own objects and thus Scripture is perverted.

Such is the real key to all mistakes of Scripture. Man takes his own thoughts to the Word of God, and builds up a system which has no divine foundation.

W. Kelly

Under God's Hand

Learning to Enjoy Christ

But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel." Phil. 1:12.

In the circumstances to which the Apostle here alludes, we get the result of the overruling hand of God in His power and ways toward us in the Church. There is nothing so good for us as the hand of God coming in and leading us, as He did Paul, in a path altogether contrary to our will. But the flesh always runs away from the hand of God.

There is nothing that we more shrink from than from the hand of God. When Paul wrote this epistle, it was exactly his case. If the things which happened to him fell out for the furtherance of the gospel as he says, nothing at this time happened to him, according to his prayers, but there was the hand of God upon him, keeping him from his longed-for service. This very thing is used of God to set the saint in Christ far above the service he is occupied in—precious in its place as that may be—and to give the greater blessedness of the enjoyment of Christ Himself.

Paul, at Tarsus, for a while rested from service; afterward he labored more abundantly than they all. The early part of his course sent him into activity, and he "conferred not with flesh and blood," but he went on in the power of the Spirit in him. Here we see him the subject of another process in his soul.

In Romans we find him saying, "Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me; that I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judea." Rom. 15:30, 31. He prayed to be delivered from ungodly men, yet they put his feet in the stocks. While there was service to be done, there was another matter with Paul. He was idle from service for two whole years at Caesarea. He was a prisoner, but as a prisoner was able to teach them all. All this time the hand of God was upon Paul. The Lord was meeting the remainder of self-will in his servant. The value of being with the Lord alone is that one gets more thoroughly into the presence of God. From being himself in the presence of God, he knows what the saints are before God. Paul advances in the joy of being with the Lord, that he might know the difference in the joy of being with the Lord and in service here. He uses the joy of being there as "far better," and so dwelt in God's love that when he saw service to the Church, he says, "I shall abide and continue with you." Though in a strait, yet he had no doubt, because he knew what was in God. It was far better to depart and be with Him, but in seeing the other principle of God's active love, "to abide in the flesh is more needful for you."

God is ever acting in love; therefore we should never be disturbed at anything which occurs, as though some strange thing happened to us. The things which happen to us always are of God, and are all perfect as being of God. There was never a time when God more deferred acting in Paul than the two years at Caesarea. Paul was entirely and painfully set aside by these circumstances. If your soul is in communion with God, you will know God's mind about the saints.

But you are not to be content unless "changed into the same image." That which is well pleasing to God should be wrought in us.

Is the Testimony Our Object?

Wherever Christians set up to be a
testimony they get full of
themselves...

The question is to my mind a profound mistake, that the testimony they bear is the governing object of the mind of saints. It is no new thought to me, but what I have insisted on. I know not how long—some 30 or 40 years—that wherever an assembly, or those in an assembly, are set to bear a testimony, they will be a testimony to their own weakness and inefficiency, because the object of their walk cannot be one which efficiently forms a Christian. When they have a right one, they will be a testimony, but to be one is never the first object.

To have Christ (I mean practically to walk with Him and after Him), to have communion with the Father and the Son, to walk in unfeigned obedience and lowliness, to live in realized dependence on Christ and have His secret with us, and realize the Father's love, to have our affections set on things above, to walk in patience and yet confidence through this world—this is what we have to seek. If we realize it we shall be a testimony, whether individually or collectively, but in possessing the things themselves, and they form us through grace, and so we are a testimony: but seeking or setting up to be a testimony does not. Moses did not seek to have his face shine nor even know when it did, but when he had been before God it did so.

Wherever Christians, as far as I have seen, set up to be a testimony they get full of themselves, and lose the sense that they are so [full of themselves], and fancy that it is having much of Christ. A shining face never sees itself. The true heart is occupied with Christ, and in a certain sense and measure, self is gone.

J. N. Darby

Guidance

I have no doubt that if we kept close to Christ, His Spirit would guide us in our intercourse with others. We are not always conscious of divine guidance even when it is there, but the word comes from Christ to the souls we have to say to, even if rejected.... But our part is to keep close to Christ, so that it should be "not I, but Christ liveth in me," and thus He acts in our thoughts and ways without our, at the moment, thinking of Him directly, but we always have the consciousness of speaking for Him, and of His presence.

He Loved Them unto the End

The precious words "He loved them unto the end" are found in John 13:1. Most of us know that "to the end" means on and on, through every day. That is, He has loved and loves us with a love that nothing can stop; nothing can make Him cease to love us.

It is remarkable too, that we find a passage in Heb. 13 which says, "Let brotherly love continue." What does that mean? Just exactly what it says: that it is to continue—never to cease. Our brethren cannot act worse toward us, nor we toward them, than the disciples did toward the Lord. "This in My commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you." John 15:12. This means that we are to love our brethren in the same way—the same manner—on and on, through and through in spite of everything.

Peter and John—Restoration and Communion

The way in which this love is to manifest itself, of course, has to do with the way in which others conduct themselves. We find John lying on the

Savior's breast, and we find Peter denying Him with oaths and cursing. He loved them both with the same love, but that love had to manifest itself according to the ways of each. I speak of the principle now. Of John it is written: "He then lying on Jesus' breast saith unto Him, Lord, who is it?" John 13:25. Here is communion.

What about Peter's denying Him with oaths and cursing? Is there communion there? Oh, no. The cock crows and he remembers the words that Jesus spoke to him, and their eyes meet. What is the result? The poor failing one went out and wept bitterly. The Lord's love to Peter was not one whit less when he was denying Him than at any other time.

Martha—Service a Burden

Martha's service to the Lord had become a burden. (Luke 10:40-42.) When service to the Lord becomes a burden, it loses its worth in His sight. And when does it become a burden? It is when love to Himself is not the spring, so we hear Martha saying, "Lord, dost Thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me." She wants help. Her service has become a burden because He is not known as He should be, though in a sense He is the object of service; nevertheless it is a burden.

Elijah—a Hard Thing to Ask

Then there is that wonderful servant of God, Elijah. It is very interesting to note when we first meet him and when we leave him. He comes before us first directly from the presence of the Lord. He comes out of a hidden place to speak; no one ever heard of him before, according to the record given in Scripture. He comes before us in this way: "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word." 1 Kings 17:1.

From James 5:17 we learn that he had been in communion with God about it. It was his love to the Lord's people, and his love to the Lord that led him to say in substance: Lord, if nothing else will bring the people to their senses, to a sense of their sin, withhold the rain. It was a hard thing to ask, yet it was love that led to it. He got the answer.

Elijah goes on, and after a while we find him leaving this world, and oh, what a departure! He is carried to heaven in a chariot of fire. Next we see him, not going to heaven, but in the glory itself, and there with the Lord and with Moses. (Matt. 17:3.)

What preceded his going to heaven that way? He was overcome with evil. Was a man that went to heaven in a chariot of fire, and was seen on the mount of glory, and in the glory with the Lord and Moses, really overcome of evil? What do we find him doing? Making intercession against Israel. (Rom. 11:2.) "Lord, they have killed Thy prophets, and digged down Thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life." Then he asked to die. He was overcome of evil in that way. (See Rom. 11:2,3.)

We are told not to be overcome of evil, but to overcome evil with good. (Rom. 12:21.) The love with which we are loved, and the love with which we are to love, is the love of Christ—it never can be overcome of evil. Do we not feel the danger of being overcome with evil, being cast down, when we see evil coming in like a flood?

The Lord Jesus—Love That Never Forgets Its Object

In John 13:1 it says, "Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end." Then what did He do? He laid aside His garments, poured water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He had girded Himself. Instead of being occupied with Himself and the thought that now He was going to leave the world and depart to the Father, He was thinking of them. He says, as it were, I know I will be up there, but I will not be happy without their fellowship and communion, and without My services I cannot have it. So I will take a position toward them that will maintain them in fellowship with Me while I am absent from them, until they do not need that kind of service anymore.

His love never for a moment forgets its object. What a humbling, blessed truth! How we feel more and more our utter unworthiness of it. Nothing humbles like grace, like love. That is the love with which we are loved.

After He had performed that service for them, a type of the service in which He is now engaged in order to sustain us in communion with Himself, He sat down. All this took place in that upper chamber.

This is the only place that I remember where the Lord calls the attention of the disciples to the fact that He is their Lord and Master. "Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call Me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet." vv. 12-14. He had never said this before.

Then He says, "If ye know these things." What? Happy are ye? No, it does not say that. There is a little word of two letters in there that is important: "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." Do what? Wash one another's feet.

Now we all know, if we know what communion with Christ is, that there is no going on with Him without His doing for us what He did for His disciples. It is utterly impossible for us to restore our souls. "He restoreth my soul." We are as dependent on Him for the restoration of the soul as we are for its salvation. We cannot get on without this service—we cannot get on without the Lord. There is another thing: we cannot get on with one another without knowing how to do it with one another.

He says distinctly, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me." And how often have we felt the communion broken, a cloud between. How is it going to be removed? There is just one way, and that is to put the feet into His hands. That is all. We will never get the cloud removed in any other way. "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me." Just so, unless there is this service one to another, there is no going on with one another. Think of the love with which we are loved: the love of Christ.

What the heart feels the need of is personal communion with Christ. What He looks for and values above everything else is personal devotedness to Himself. No amount of service can ever

compensate for lack of communion with Himself. If there is devotedness, there will be communion; if there is communion, there will be service.

W. Potter

Bible Challenger-02-February V.06

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the word identifying the source of light emanating from the Lord's person that guides a people attracted to joyfulness. [The number in brackets indicates the number of words in the answer.]

1. A one word description of the appearance of a certain "dove that had a pleasant voice [1].
2. What man looks on in contradistinction to how the Lord views an individual [2].
3. Who are they that the eyes of the righteous Lord beholds [1]?
4. What physical element is used to illustrate the interaction of a sharp tongue and an angry appearance [2]?
5. What troubled a mighty king when his festive mood was dramatically changed [1]?
6. That which a king, who trusted in the Lord's strength, recognized that His presence had made him [2].
7. The name of a churlish man whose wife was wise and of a goodly appearance [1].
8. The likeness of a special messenger that appeared to an unnamed wife concerning a son yet to be born [3].
9. The changed appearance of a woman after the reason for her silent speech was understood [3].
10. An outward appearance resulting from an inward manifestation of by [2].
11. The appearance of one who was likened to a country famous for its trees [4].

Answers to these questions will be found in the next issue of Christian Treasury. R. Erisman 0

Bible Challenger-01-January Answers V.06

1. C harity 1 Tim. 1:5
2. O ffense Acts 24:16
3. N othing Titus 1:15
4. S hipwreck 1 Tim. 1:19
5. C onvicted John 8:9
6. I dot's temple 1 Cor. 8:10
7. E ndure grief 1 Peter 2:19
8. N ight and day 2 Tim. 1:3
9. C raftiness 2 Con 4:2
10. E vil conscience Heb. 10:22

"Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the CONSCIENCE." Heb. 9:9.

Unspiritual and Unprofitable Discussions

"Shun profane and vain babblings." "But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes." 2 Tim. 2:16,23. We need to guard against anything that would tread down the pastures, or foul the waters, by unspiritual and unprofitable discussions, thus depriving the sheep of the flock of the rich and healthful nourishment provided (see Ezek. 34:18,19).

Be Careful for Nothing

God gives us peace in Himself which is beyond our understanding

We are in relationship with God; He is our refuge in all things, and events do not disturb Him. He knows everything and He knows it beforehand. Events shake neither His throne nor His heart; they always accomplish His purposes. But to us He is love; we are, through grace, the objects of His tender care.

He listens to us and bows down His ear to hear us. In all things, therefore, instead of worrying and weighing everything in our own hearts, we ought to present our requests to God in prayer, with supplication and with a heart that makes itself known. We are human beings with knowledge of the heart of God and we know that He loves us perfectly, so that even while making our petition to Him, we can already give thanks, because we are sure of the answer of His grace, whatever it may be. It is our requests that we are to present to Him. Nor is it a cold commandment to find out His will and then come before Him; we are to go to Him with our requests. It does not say that you will have what you ask, but that God's peace will keep your hearts.

We trust Him, and His peace, the peace of God

Himself, shall keep our hearts. It does not say that our hearts shall keep the peace of God, but having cast our burden on Him whose peace nothing can disturb, His peace keeps our hearts.

We cast our trouble before Him who takes charge of everything and knows all beforehand. The constant peace of the God of love quiets our hearts. He imparts to us the peace which is in Himself, and which is above all understanding (or at least keeps our hearts by it), even as He Himself is above all the circumstances that can disturb us, and above the poor human heart that is troubled by them.

O, what grace! Even our anxieties are a means of our being filled with this marvelous peace, if we know how to bring them to God. How true He is. "Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you." 1 Peter 5:7.

Young Christian

EDITORIAL: Israel and Edom Twins at War

Twins—formed together in the womb of their mother, and then brought up together in the home of their parents—are indeed in a very special relationship. Can such nearness be broken or spoiled? Yes! Such is the case with Esau and Jacob. Their history is well traced even down to this present time and there are lessons for us to learn from them.

Because of the present-day situation in the area from Israel and Lebanon eastward to the Persian Gulf, we mention one verse to show where some of the hatred began. "And Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing wherewith his father blessed him: and Esau said in his heart, The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then will I slay my brother Jacob." Gen. 27:41.

Earlier in the history it says in Gen. 25:34, "Esau despised his birthright." That means that he despised the promise of God. In 1 Sam. 2:30 it says, "Them that honor Me I will honor, and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed." Surely we should always value the Word of God and His promises.

All of the Psalms are prophetic. They especially take up the feelings of the godly remnant after the Church has been caught up to heaven. This godly remnant will believe the gospel of the kingdom. They will suffer along with the ungodly during the tribulation period of 7 years. In the 83rd Psalm, many enemies of Israel are listed, of which Esau, which is Edom, is the first. The children of Lot are mentioned later. What these enemies of Israel say is very interesting to notice in light of what these tribes in the same area are saying now.

"They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance. For they have consulted together with one consent: they are confederate against Thee." Psa. 83:4, 5. Already the nations in the Middle East seem to be poised for the great conflicts to take place during the tribulation period.

What will happen to Israel? Will she be "cut... off from being a nation"? Jer. 30:7 tells us the answer. "Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it." This is confirmed in Rom. 9:27, 28. "Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved: for He will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth."

Now the question arises: What about Iraq? Where will she be at the end of those 7 years of judgments which God brings down upon this world? The judgments will fall not only upon Israel, but upon the nations of this world and particularly those around Israel. One thing sure about Iraq is that at the end of those sore years of God's judgments, Iraq will not possess the land she now occupies. That territory is all promised to Israel. In Gen. 28:13 the Lord says to Jacob, "I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed."

In the days of Joshua, the extent of that land of promise is described in this way: "From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast." Josh. 1:4.

A further prophecy of promise from God that applies at that time is found in Deut. 4:30,31: "When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, even in the latter days, if thou turn to the Lord thy God, and shalt be obedient unto His voice; (for the Lord thy God is a merciful God;) He will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers, which He swore unto them."

So we see that Jacob (Israel) shall inherit the promises. They are unconditional. Because of deceit and selfishness, Jacob inherited what he personally had through much trouble. Such is the history of the whole nation of Israel these 3500 years. Yet the promises of God never fail. Israel shall be blessed under the Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ, the true Seed for the 1000-year kingdom period that follows the tribulation.

C. Buchanan

Young Men in the Book of Acts

by W. Brockmeier

Teaching us by their example

The book of The Acts teaches us more by example than by commandment. It does not so much set forth precepts to obey as patterns to follow. It is one thing to be correct in doctrine; it is quite another to be correct in our walk, although these two should never be separated.

We may notice things in Scripture, enjoy them, and even speak of them, yet their real impact and force is usually not realized until there is a practical testing with regard to them. Perhaps young men are more prone to observe certain truths and take them up in an intellectual way than others. But in the book of Acts we find several young men who gained valuable instruction, not by theorems but by experience. The benefit of any experience is in measure to our having God's thoughts about it. Experience should never be given greater weight than the revealed truth of God, but it is through experience the truth of God is practically learned. With respect to the young men in the book of Acts, we observe very important moral lessons being taught.

Hypocrisy

Ananias and Sapphira were exposed by Peter as having lied to the Holy Spirit. Outwardly their devotion was greater than it was inwardly. In a word, they were guilty of hypocrisy. Who of us can plead exemption from this? We must walk in self-judgment because of our subtle, treacherous hearts. God unmistakably expressed His mind with respect to this evil among the people of God. There were young men present who were eye-witnesses of God's solemn judgment upon the two who were guilty of the leaven of the Pharisees (Luke 12:1).

And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things. And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried him out, and buried him. And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in.... Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost: and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying her forth, buried her by her husband. And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things.

Acts 5:5-11.

In a day when the saints of God are encouraged to speak of themselves and their involvement in the Lord's service, may we take heed to the sobering lesson of Ananias and Sapphira who were smitten by God for their pretense of doing and giving more than they actually were. No doubt these young men never forgot this experience. What a preserving effect this incident should have on us when tempted to exaggerate or call attention to our feeble efforts to serve the Lord. "He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory." John 7:18.

These young men had firsthand experience in the Lord's work—burying two hypocrites. This was needful work and it is still needful today to bury our pretensions to any level of spirituality or achievement. If we are filled with a sense of accomplishment because of our service, we have little understood the Lord's words, "So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do." Luke 17:10.

Zeal without Knowledge

Another danger young men are perhaps more vulnerable to is that of having "zeal of God, but not according to knowledge." Rom. 10:2. The Apostle Paul in his unconverted days, known then as Saul of Tarsus, was a very zealous young man (Acts 22:3; Phil. 3:6). As a young man, he stood by at the stoning of Stephen. "The witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul." Acts 7:58. Perhaps he threw no stones, yet he approved of Stephen's murder.

The Jews had run out of options with respect to Stephen. He assailed their consciences, convicting them by the Spirit of their guilt and rebellion. Also the spirit in which he spoke was without defect. "They were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake." Acts 6:10. Often among ourselves today the truth of God is discounted because of blemishes in the spirit, or failures in the walk, of those who present it. The Jews did not have this escape clause. All they could do was repent or get rid of the one who faithfully showed them their proper position before God.

The last words of Stephen must have resounded in Paul's ears for his entire life. Stephen cried out, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." Acts 7:60. At the end of Paul's life, when referring to the time when no man stood by him during Alexander's opposition, he almost echoed Stephen's words, "I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge."

2 Tim. 4:16. How like their Master were Stephen and Paul. Jesus said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Luke 23:34.

We need to learn that a right spirit is of more value than zeal. Nothing is said of Stephen's zeal, though obviously he was zealous for the Lord's glory. The last recorded words of Paul are, "The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit. Grace be with you. Amen." 2 Tim. 4:22.

Indifference

In reference to Saul of Tarsus, we see a young man antagonistic to the truth of God. In Acts 20 we see a young man indifferent to the truth of God, specifically Paul's ministry which sets forth our Christian blessings, privileges, and responsibilities, both individually and collectively.

And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight. And there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together. And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep: and as Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead. And Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing him said, Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him. When he therefore was come up again, and had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed. And they brought the young man alive, and were not a little comforted. Acts 20:7-12.

While this passage is full of instruction for us, there are some obvious points we may overlook in searching for deeper thoughts. Eutychus fell away from Paul's ministry. Paul recovered Eutychus and he recovered him to the place where he could once again hear Paul's ministry.

It is one thing to talk about restoration, but how blessed to know the sweetness of it in our own souls. How often we have "fallen" after becoming indifferent to Paul's ministry. Yet it is often that same ministry we have ignored that is used in our restoration to a state of soul in which we can again enjoy Paul's doctrine. True restoration does not stop short of the third loft. We might well question the professed restoration of one who has little interest in the ministry of the Scriptures. Here was a young man who knew what it was to be restored in a very meaningful way. No doubt Eutychus had a fresh appreciation for Paul after his recovery.

Appreciation for Paul's Doctrine

Paul had a nephew who also valued him. How encouraging to see a young man in the midst of religious opposition who valued Paul. The Jews were not content in restricting Paul, they wanted to exterminate him.

And when it was day, certain of the Jews banded together, and bound themselves under a curse, saying that they would neither eat nor drink until they had killed Paul.... And when Paul's sister's son heard of their lying in wait, he went and entered into the castle, and told Paul. Then Paul called one of the centurions unto him, and said, Bring this young man unto the chief captain: for he hath a certain thing to tell him. So he took him, and brought him to the chief captain, and said, Paul the prisoner called me unto him, and prayed me to bring this young man unto thee. Acts 23:12-18.

It is only natural for young men to want to be popular, or at least, to be accepted. Paul's nephew realized as a young man that Paul's heavenly ministry was not appreciated. Likewise, it will bring us into direct conflict with religious flesh. Additionally, Paul's nephew entered into practical knowledge of

Paul the prisoner. Paul "the apostle" sets forth his authority, but the thought of "the prisoner" brings out his rejection and restriction.

The castle Paul was in may be a little picture of the house of God in its present condition being likened to a great house (2 Tim. 2:20). In this, Paul was a prisoner. So today, Paul's doctrine is often restricted within the confines of Christendom. The fullness of his teaching is not wanted in many Christian places and is attacked and undermined in others.

Despite his imprisonment, Paul was preserved in these conditions. The manner in which he was kept from the Jews is most interesting, but as far as the young man was concerned, his only responsibility was to follow Paul's instruction. If the body of truth Paul unfolded is to be preserved, we must follow his direction. We cannot alter circumstances-that is God's prerogative-but we can obey.

Paul in writing to the Thessalonians, a youthful assembly assaulted by bad teaching, encourages them to "stand fast, and hold the traditions [instructions] which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle [letter]." 2 Thess. 2:15. Following Paul's instructions will preserve us and maintain us when clever and plausible but wrong concepts are introduced.

To learn experimentally that religious man is opposed to Paul's doctrine, to recognize Paul as a prisoner, and realize that following his instructions is the only means of maintaining his doctrine and resultant testimony are all vital lessons. Paul's nephew did not take up his cause by warfare and confrontation, but by submission to the conditions in which he was placed.

These four incidents regarding young men in the book of Acts would impress upon us the need of understanding practically God's demand for reality, the moral power that comes in having a right spirit, and the importance of valuing Paul's ministry and following his instructions while submitting

to present conditions.

Only a Tool

The following is a quotation from John Duncan,
known as the Apostle of Alaska.

I do not believe in putting my personality to the front. The work is what counts. If I by the grace of God have been allowed to accomplish anything for His glory, mention the work if you must, but leave my personality out. "I will be glorified, saith the Lord." I have only been an unworthy tool in His hand. If an artisan has done a fine piece of work, you would praise him, and the cunning of his handicraft. No one would think of extolling the tool in his hand. The place for the tool is on the floor, or at best on the bench; there I prefer to remain. It is the gospel that has done the work. As for me I have done nothing. I am only a tool in the Master's hand. Let us forget the tool.

Uzziah Strengthened and Strong

The danger of thinking 'I have arrived'

Uzziah, we learn from 2 Chron. 26:5, "sought God in the days of Zechariah, who had understanding in the visions of God: and as long as he sought the Lord, God made him to prosper." He went forth to war and the Lord helped him.

"He strengthened himself exceedingly." He built towers in Jerusalem and fortified them; he built towers in the desert, and digged many wells. He had husbandmen also, and vine dressers in the mountains and in Carmel. He also had a host of fighting men who went out to war by bands:

The whole number of the chief of the fathers of the mighty men of valor were two thousand and six hundred. And under their hand was an army, three hundred thousand and seven thousand and five hundred, that made war with mighty power, to help the king against the enemy. And Uzziah prepared for them throughout all the host shields, and spears, and helmets, and habergeons, and bows, and slings to cast stones. And he made in Jerusalem engines, invented by cunning men, to be on the towers and upon the bulwarks, to shoot arrows and great stones withal.

We do not need to dwell upon the description of the numerous army of King Uzziah. We will turn to God's instruction for ourselves about it.

And his name spread far abroad; for he was marvelously helped, till he was strong. But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction.

There are few phrases more remarkable than these. One would have thought that the very object to be gained by Uzziah was to be strong. The strength we naturally covet, however, is independence of God. Saints are found mourning over their weakness, and what do they mean? Is it not that they have no resources in themselves? We forget that all real strength is derived from the fullness that is in Jesus, otherwise we should always be able to say with Paul, "When I am weak, then am I strong." We need to be deprived of every resource in ourselves, that we may know our strength to be in Him.

When Uzziah felt himself to be strong, he transgressed against the Lord God. There is great danger of our putting multiplied means in the place of the Lord Himself. We may rely on the means, and forget that they are not the source of supply.

This has been the history of the Church. She was marvelously helped till she was strong, and then when she was strong her heart became lifted up. The saints at Corinth had multiplied resources: men, wealth, and wisdom, and were tempted to think that by the exercise of this wisdom they could refute the heathen. But they were told by the Apostle that true wisdom only comes by the bringing in of the wisdom of God which is foolishness with man, and the strength of God which is weakness with man.

The Spirit of God shows us in The Acts that the Church, though few in number, is marvelously helped. But how soon did the Church begin to look to itself and to its own resources and greatness, instead of to the Lord. Has this no voice for ourselves? Our blessing is in taking the place of weakness so that God may help us for His own name's sake.

There is danger in saying or even supposing that we have attained to something. It is a mark of failure when a Christian (or a number of Christians) considers his own honor and credit instead of the honor of the Lord; the great thing is to be mindful of His name. A single eye will be occupied with Christ.

It is a very strong word that we have here in reference to a saint: "his heart was lifted up to his destruction." But there is as strong a word in the New Testament: "He that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption." If any, even a saint of God, "soweth to his flesh," he will reap only a sorrowful harvest of corruption, having misspent all his time. We need to give heed to the searching words of Scripture, not turning away the point of them from ourselves under the supposition that they cannot apply to us. This thought has been the source of much mischief in the Church. That soul will prosper which trembles at God's Word, and is willing to face the most searching parts of it. The saint of God can sow to the flesh, can walk "according to the flesh," can "war after the flesh," but the miserable end will be that he will "of the flesh reap corruption."

When Uzziah was strong, his strength being in his own resources, his heart became "lifted up" and more like King Nebuchadnezzar's heart (Dan. 4:30), than that of God's anointed king of Judah. A heart that is lifted up is in a dangerous state, and almost always on the eve of a fall.

Although Uzziah was God's anointed king, he was not God's anointed priest. But he would have nothing restrained from him, and we find him transgressing against the Lord his God. He went into the temple of the Lord to burn incense upon the altar of incense which was not his prerogative, but that of the priests only. The sons of Aaron were consecrated to burn incense.

Let us, too, beware of dealing with the Lord in unholy familiarity; a humble spirit is always a confident spirit, but a humble spirit can trust only in the blood of Jesus. It does not rush into God's presence as the man who is lifted up in heart does. We can only come there through the incense of the Lord Jesus, not on the credit of our own graces or devotedness or in fleshly fervor.

Azariah the priest, with the fourscore priests that were valiant men, said to Uzziah:

It appertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto the Lord, but to the priests the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense: go out of the sanctuary; for thou hast trespassed; neither shall it be for thine honor from the Lord God. Then Uzziah was wroth, and had a censer in his hand to burn incense: and while he was wroth with the priests, the leprosy even rose up in his forehead before the priests in the house of the Lord, from beside the incense altar.

This history of King Uzziah is written for our admonition. "Lifting up" of heart is always self-seeking, not God-seeking. We have, blessed be God, liberty to enter into the holiest, for we are priests unto God by the blood of Jesus, but it is always through the incense of our great High Priest.

In 2 Chron. 27:6 we have mention of Jotham's great army; he "became mighty, because he prepared his ways before the Lord his God." This is the way for the saint to grow in practical strength. Thus was it with the Thessalonians; their "work of faith, and labor of love, and patience of

hope" was "in the sight of God and our Father." Jotham set the Lord always before him, and went on in an even tenor of conduct. In the eyes of man, he might not be as mighty as Uzziah, but the Holy Spirit records his name as that of one "mighty" in the eyes of God.

Josiah and Jehoiakim

2 Kings 22; Jer. 36

It was when Israel mocked the messengers of God, despised His words, and misused His prophets that the wrath of the Lord arose against His people till there was no remedy. Josiah and Jehoiakim reigned over Judah just before the Babylonian captivity. The judgments of God were at the door.

We have in the history of these two kings the important contrast in the way each received the testimony given to them. In Josiah we have the subjection of heart which God always honors, and in Jehoiakim that insubjection which He always judges. The history of man proves that whether God speaks in the way of commandment, or in the way of threatening, or in mercy, His words are despised. There are many exceptions as in the case of Josiah, the inhabitants of Nineveh, etc., but generally rebellion is the course man takes. This has been the case from the beginning, and continues to be so and will continue so long as the god of this world blinds the minds of men.

Josiah—Finding God a Refuge

There is something deeply interesting in the whole of Josiah's reign, but especially so when the message was conveyed to him that the book of the law was found in the house of the Lord. "Shaphan read it before the king. And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the book of the law, that he rent his clothes." His heart was not unmoved; he trembled at God's Word. In that light, what were his circumstances? That law made manifest Israel's rebellion, brought to light their guilt, revealed the judgment of God against sin, and filled Josiah's heart with sadness. Where could he flee for help? Only to God. It is blessed when the heart is made truly conscious of its condition by seeing it in God's light; there is a refuge in God. "There is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared.... Let Israel hope in the Lord: for with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption." Psa. 130:4, 7. Josiah sends to inquire of the Lord and receives this answer:

Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, even all the words of the book which the king of Judah hath read.... But to the king of Judah which sent you to inquire of the Lord, thus shall ye say to him, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, As touching the words which thou hast heard; because thine heart was tender, and thou hast humbled thyself before the Lord, when thou heardest what I spake against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, that they should become a desolation and a curse, and hast rent thy clothes, and wept before Me; I also have heard thee, saith the Lord. Behold therefore, I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered into thy grave in peace; and thine eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring upon this place. (2 Kings 22:16-20.)

Such is the grace of our God! The bruised reed He will not break. He gives grace to the humble, and blessed is the man that makes the Lord his trust! Josiah might use the language of the Psalmist,

He brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God.

Jehoiakim—God's Testimony Rejected

The contrast is painful in turning to the history of Josiah's son. Of him it may be said, "Lo, this is the man that made not God his strength; but trusted in the abundance of his riches, and strengthened himself in his wickedness." Psa. 52:7.

The 36th chapter of Jeremiah opens with the goodness of God towards His poor rebellious people. He presses upon their attention the solemn condition in which they were. He causes a roll to be written containing all the words Jeremiah had spoken against Israel saying, "It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the evil which I purpose to do unto them; that they may return every man from his evil way, that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin" (v. 3). This roll of a book reaches the ears of Jehoiakim.

So the king sent Jehudi to fetch the roll; and he took it out of Elishama the scribe's chamber. And Jehudi read it in the ears of the king, and in the ears of all the princes which stood beside the king. Now the king sat in the winter house in the ninth month: and there was a fire on the hearth burning before him. And it came to pass, that when Jehudi had read three or four leaves, he cut it with the penknife, and cast it into the fire that was on the hearth, until all the roll was consumed in the fire that was on the hearth. Yet they were not afraid, nor rent their garments, neither the king, nor any of his servants that heard all these words. (Jer. 36:21-24.)

How solemn all this is after seeing the tenderness of heart in Josiah. Jehoiakim rushes from the sound of God's Word into the darkness of infidelity. He supposes he can escape the judgment of God by disbelieving the testimony concerning it. This is where Satan is fast leading the world into open rejection of the Word of God today. Men are like Jehoiakim. He was not afraid, nor rent his garments. "Men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." Jehoiakim had quietness, but it was not that peace which Josiah knew: the peace of condemnation put away and of sin forgiven. There is a message for him in verses 30 and 31:

Therefore thus saith the Lord of Jehoiakim king of Judah; He shall have none to sit upon the throne of David: and his dead body shall be cast out in the day to the heat, and in the night to the frost. And I will punish him and his seed and his servants for their iniquity; and I will bring upon them, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and upon the men of Judah, all the evil that I have pronounced against them; but they hearkened not.

Pride and unbelief shut out from all blessing, and leave their victims exposed to the wrath of God.

"Thus saith the Lord; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord." Jer. 17:5. The only place of blessing is that which Josiah took. There the Lord ceases to have a controversy. He knows the claims of His own truth. He will not relinquish them. "Thou hast magnified Thy word above all Thy name." Psa. 138:2.

Saul sought to uphold his own integrity when the word of God was against him. His heart did not bow before the truth and the Lord cast him off. It is a vain thing to strive with God. May the Lord

guard His children in this day of evil! Let us have tenderness of heart to all His truth so that we may hold our proper place of testimony for Him.

Present Testimony Vol. 2

Questions and Answers

QUESTION: How and when will the lost ten tribes be restored, and can they presently be identified?

ANSWER: Israel, or the ten tribes, was taken to Assyria (2 Kings 17) about 130 years before Judah, or the Jews, was taken to Babylon. Idolatry and turning to Assyria for help, instead of to God, were the immediate causes of the deportation of the ten tribes to Assyria (see Hosea). Not being involved in the guilt of Judah in rejecting and crucifying the Messiah, their restoration to the land of their fathers will be accomplished in a special way. They will not pass through the awful trials under the Antichrist which their brethren of Judah will. Ezek. 20:33-39 records the restoration of the ten tribes by the Lord Himself. The mass of Judah will be restored by the aid of a seafaring nation (Isa. 18).

Whatever human instruments may be employed in assisting the return of the ten tribes, they are hid in the meantime, and God Himself is presented as the source and power of their return. It is to be noted, too, that God deals with the conscience of Israel, or the ten tribes, in the wilderness, not in the land. As the unbelieving and disobedient fell in the wilderness, and only the faithful entered the land, so will it be in the return of these tribes. The rebels and disobedient will be first purged out, and then the godly will be brought into the land to rejoin their converted brethren of Judah. This sifting will take place while the Jews are suffering under the Antichrist in the land. The wondrous meeting of the long-scattered tribes of all Israel is most touchingly described in Jer. 31:8, 9.

There is a later return of any scattered among the nations, whether of Jews or Israelites, when the Lord comes. It is He who sends out His messengers to gather His elect (Matt. 24:31; Isa. 66:19, 20).

There was a return of certain remnants of Judah from Babylon to Jerusalem after the seventy years of captivity (see Ezra and Nehemiah), but there has been no return of Ephraim or the ten tribes. God has His eye upon them; He knows where they are, for He scattered them.

It is most remarkable that people will pretend to tell who and where the descendants of these long-lost tribes are. The truth is, no single people or nation can claim to be their descendants, for they were to be scattered among the heathen and dispersed through the countries. Their scattering and dispersion were to be world-wide (Ezek. 20:34; 34:12, 13).

God further declares them to be "lost" and that He will "search" and "seek them out." What God says, He will do. Man is daring enough to say he has done it. God says He will search for, and seek the lost sheep of Israel. Man says he has searched them out, and can tell you who and where they are.

You have only to read carefully Ezekiel chapters 20 and 34 to have all such thoughts dispelled. There is nothing like the sure and unerring testimony of God's blessed Word in meeting the foolish

thoughts and vain speculations of men.

Young Christian

Bible Challenger-03-March V.06

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the words of something quite profound, yet, those who were little were used as an object lesson to describe it. [The number in brackets indicates the number of words in the answer.]

1. The words of understanding relating the surety of a coming prophetic event with the changing of the seasons. [2]
2. Many things witnessing to the truth of the Lord's resurrection for a period of 40 days. [2]
3. Something having a small eye which might well speak to those with large wallets. [1]
4. Something that was proclaimed by words and actions in every city and village, being witnessed by a select group of twelve. [2]
5. The way one of the scribes answered, implying his proximity to a desired haven. [1]
6. Something remaining after a drastic severance to ensure a desired entrance. [2]
7. The measure of time during which an apostle expounded to his own countrymen a subject of national interest. [3]
8. The manner by which the coming of this month's challenger subject is not to be heralded. [1]
9. A title shared by Aristarchus, Marcus and Justus who brought comfort to an apostle of renown. [2]
10. Something that one who is least can be accounted when compared to someone who was great. [1]
11. The itinerary of the Lord Jesus which those of Capernaum learned when they desired Him to remain with them. [2]
12. The time frame in which Satan operates to accuse the brethren before our God. [3]

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

R. Erisman

Bible Challeng-02-February Answers V.06

1. C omely
2. O utward appearance
3. U pright
4. N orth wind
5. T houghts
6. E xceeding glad
7. N abal
8. A ngel of God
9. N o more sad
10. C heerful countenance
11. E xcellent as the cedars

S. of Sol. 2:14

1 Sam. 16:7

Psa. 11:7

Prov. 25:23

Dan. 5:6

Psa. 21:6

1 Sam. 25:3

Judges 13:6

1 Sam. 1:18

Prov. 15:13

S. of Sol. 5:15

"Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of Thy COUNTENANCE."

Psa. 89:15.

An Honest and Good Heart

A heart that finds Christ more precious than anything else

AN honest and good heart is the heart that loves Christ. We find Christ so precious that we would not give Him up for anything. We may have to suffer for Christ's sake in this world, but no suffering can take away any of the blessings that we have in Him.

We have all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor anything can separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

They who received the seed on the stony ground did not have an honest and good heart, for they gave up Christ in the time of persecution and affliction. They who received the seed among thorns did not have an honest and good heart, for they tried to keep the love of money and of pleasure in their hearts together with the love of Christ, but this cannot be. The love of money and of pleasure will prevail over the love of Christ if we try to keep them both in our hearts at the same time. Neither money nor pleasure can get for us what Christ has for us; therefore, they should never be allowed to have a place together in the same heart.

We could not by pleasure or money get pardon and life, but we have them through Christ. We could not by money or pleasure get a treasure in heaven, but we have it through Christ. He is the Word, which is the seed of life to us. No man can have an honest and good heart who does not keep Christ in his heart as the Word of life. But if he keeps Christ in his heart, then he will bring forth fruit.

Fruit is everything we do that shows that Christ is precious to us.

To confess His name is fruit.

To give thanks to Him is fruit.

To suffer for His sake is fruit.

To show kindness to one of His disciples for His sake is fruit.

To forgive for His name's sake is fruit.

This fruit is brought forth with patience, because we have to bear His cross and endure many things.

T. T.

Questions and Answers

QUESTION: In John 10:36 Jesus said, "I said, I am the Son of God." Is that identical to saying "I am God?"

ANSWER: Verse 30 clearly answers this where Jesus says, "I and My Father are one." God the Father and God the Son are both God. We also include God the Holy Spirit, and so believe in the Trinity.

EDITORIAL: Where Is Your Faith?

THE wind and rain that spoiled your picnic very likely brought relief to many, and a greater production from nearby farmers' fields. An old saying goes this way: "It's an ill wind that blows nobody good." God's Word says, "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven." Eccl. 3:1.

Hurricane season is nearly always in the late summer or early fall. Tropical cyclones in the western hemisphere are called hurricanes, and in the eastern hemisphere they are called typhoons. Tropical storms are spawned in low atmospheric pressure areas over very warm seas. In the northern hemisphere the Coriolis effect deflects the winds to the right, but to the left in the southern hemisphere.

Although God uses nature, He is above it and not bound by it. He works all things according to the counsel of His own will (Eph. 1:11). The psalmist says, "Stormy wind fulfilling His word." Psalms 148:8. Sometimes nature is used to test man, as we see in the case of Job. "While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, Thy sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house: and, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee." Job 1:18, 19.

The Lord tries the hearts, and Job was surely tested in many ways, but the little book of James fully explains all this. "Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy." James 5:11. This is also stated in Job 42:12-17 where it says, "The Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning," etc.

Are there storms in your life and in mine? Most of us will agree to this, and we need to rest in God and know that He is in full control. He always has His end in view for the blessing of His children.

Other reasons for God's permitting storms such as tornadoes are found in Job 37:9-13. The last verse mentions "correction" but it ends with "for mercy." Sometimes in the "tornado alley" of the Midwest U.S.A. we have seen that the samples of God's judgment "correction" have caused men to think seriously of eternal things. If so, there is God's mercy available to all, for He is rich in mercy and not willing that any should perish.

The question the Lord asked of those that were in the ship with Him after He had rebuked the wind and the raging water, was "Where is your faith?" Luke 8:25. Do we have faith in that same Lord who has full control over everything around us as we, who are in fellowship with Him, are in our passage through life? Nothing happens by chance to the believer. Instead, "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." Romans 8:28.

"He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they be quiet; so He bringeth them unto their desired haven." Psa. 107:29, 30.

Nineteen hundred years ago a tropical storm lasted for two weeks in the Mediterranean Sea. Two hundred and seventy-six souls were in a ship in that tempest. One of them was the Apostle Paul who said, "I believe God," the One who had given him the lives of all that sailed with him in the ship. And so it was that they all escaped safe to land.

Storms there are, and as believers we all are tested, but let us remember our Lord's question, "Where is your faith?"

C. Buchanan

A Remark on the Righteousness of God

God has displayed His righteousness not only in the judgment of sin on the cross, but also in setting Jesus at His own right hand in glory. When He suffered for sins and died, it was for us. Therefore, God must have us in glory with Him in divine righteousness. We shall be the continual witness in glory to the worth and eternal efficacy of what Christ has done. Christ would not have the fruit of the travail of His soul unless He had us there.

And now a righteousness divine

Is all my glory, all my trust;

Nor will I fear, since that is mine,

While Jesus lives, and God is just.

The Meekness and Gentleness of Christ

Nearing the end of his second letter to the Corinthians, the beloved Apostle uses these pleading words: "Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ." 2 Cor. 10:1.

Here was the sovereign remedy for softening hard hearts, calming angry spirits, and humbling proud wills. Meekness is a treasure to be sought. "Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth... seek righteousness, seek meekness." Zeph. 2:3.

If we feel that in us there is a deficiency of meekness, and perhaps an excess of pride, what shall we do but seek Him in whom all meekness dwells. And is it not also true that gentleness is the result of a meek spirit, the fruit of a plant rooted in the nature of that meek and lowly One, whose yoke we share?

"The fruit of the Spirit is... meekness." Gal. 5:22, 23. Paul taught the Galatians this, and then, in his practical way, bade them make use of it in dealing with a brother overtaken by a fault: "Restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." Gal. 6:1. Meekness will aim at restoration, rather than indulge in condemnation. It will be saying, "I must be gentle, because tomorrow I may be in this same strait."

Meekness in the Household of God

Nowhere is the need of meekness and gentleness more urgent than in the circle of fellowship in the household of God. At no time is it harder to exhibit and practice meekness than when dealing with the disorderly, faint-hearted and weak members of the family. Only by wearing it constantly as one of the beautiful garments of grace, can we expect to be able to manifest it when specific occasion requires.

In days when great gifts are so coveted and esteemed, and are so dangerous, let us not undervalue the meekness that He so highly prizes.

"Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved... meekness.... And above all these things put on charity [love], which is the bond of perfectness." Col. 3:12-14. This is the Christian's judicial robe in which forbearance and forgiveness will be granted on a heavenly scale. "Even as Christ forgave you." With the garment goes the interior adornment for the eye which looks for more than outward beauty: "The ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." 1 Peter 3:4.

In days when great gifts are so coveted and esteemed, and are so dangerous, let us not undervalue the meekness that He so highly prizes. It is a grace equally becoming to the young and old sister or brother in Christ.

Meekness is connected with keeping the unity of the Spirit. "With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Eph. 4:2, 3. Without these things there can be no practical expression of the oneness of the body of Christ. With them, how could heresy, high-mindedness, and other disruptive forces ever exist? The Lord knows them that are His in all the strange associations around us. If we desire to manifest to them the preciousness of the place and portion which we through grace enjoy, meekness and wisdom far beyond our natural powers are necessary and available.

Meekness before the World

If we consider the largest circle of our testimony, the world at large, those quiet virtues have their place. We are to speak evil of no man, and to be no brawlers, but be gentle, showing all meekness unto all. (Titus 3:2.) Why? Because "we ourselves also were sometime foolish." Titus 3:3.

All we possess we owe to the kindness and love of God our Savior. Who are we that we should be anything but meek and gentle? "In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth." 2 Tim. 2:25.

"But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith." 1 Tim. 6:11, 12. First flee as Joseph fled; then follow hard as Caleb followed; then fight as Joshua fought, with full assurance of victory.

To be meek is not to be weak, morally or spiritually. Moses, renowned for his meekness (Num. 12:3), was also renowned for his inflexible faithfulness (v. 7). The gracious lips of Him who is "meek and lowly in heart" blazed with fiery indignation against the scribes and Pharisees. We may safely follow our blessed Lord's steps, but with unshod feet, for we are prone to error. If so be that we must act in judgment, let it be on our knees in meekness and gentleness, for we ourselves need daily mercy as we need our daily bread. "Blessed are the meek." Matt. 5:5. "The servant of the Lord must...be gentle unto all." 2 Tim. 2:24.

The Young Christian

The Welcome

"This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." Luke 15:2.

Sinners Jesus will receive—

Say this word of grace to all

Who the heavenly pathway leave,

All who linger, all who fall!

This can bring them back again,

Christ receiveth sinful men.

Four Dreams of Joseph

How God guides when there are not definite scriptures to direct us

W Brockmeier

Joseph, the son of Jacob, had two dreams that are recorded in Scripture. Joseph, the husband of Mary the mother of Jesus, had four.

God often speaks through dreams. "For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; then He openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, that He may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man." Job 33:14-17. However, God's primary means of speaking to man today is through His Word. "The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath My word, let him speak My word faithfully." Jer. 23:28. We should never rely upon a dream for direction when God's Word gives definite instruction. To be governed by dreams is to be guided by circumstances and is not walking by faith (2 Cor. 5:7). There are many things in our lives, however, for which we do not have a specific scripture to guide us. To know God's mind requires humility and nearness to the Lord. "The meek will He guide in judgment: and the meek will He teach His way.... What man is he that feareth the Lord? him shall He teach in the way that He shall choose.... The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him." Psalms 25:9-14.

In the four dreams of Joseph who is introduced in Matt. 1:16, we see some principles of Scripture illustrated as to how God guides when there are not definite scriptures to direct us. In each of Joseph's dreams he was directed to do something, and in each case he did not move until he received a word from God. He did not act on impulse, but rather waited patiently upon God.

FIRST DREAM

When Mary, his espoused wife, was found to be with child of the Holy Ghost, Joseph was unaware that she was the chosen vessel to bear "the desire of women," that is, the Messiah. (Dan. 11:37.) "Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost." Matt. 1:19, 20.

As Joseph pondered the matter before God, he was given instruction that must have thrilled his soul. How tragic it would have been if he had acted hastily and rashly, being guided only by appearances. "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment." John 7:24. The evidence seemed indisputable, but Joseph did not act until God spoke to him.

SECOND DREAM

The second dream Joseph received was like the dream the wise men received from God who warned them to return to their country another way. The wise men had been given definite

direction from God to return to the East. Joseph did not follow their lead, but waited until God spoke to him by a dream and told him to take Mary and the child Jesus to Egypt.

How often we see others guided in a certain way which may very well be the mind of God for them. We may be tempted to follow them, rather than wait for God's special direction for us. We should not follow others in their exercises, but must be before God ourselves. It may be God will guide us similarly, but the will of God must be taken up individually.

Joseph obeyed the heavenly direction, and as a result Jesus could come forth out of Egypt and so fulfill prophecy (Hos. 11:1).

THIRD DREAM

While Joseph was in Egypt, Herod died. It would seem that Joseph would now feel clear to return to Bethlehem as the threat of danger was past. But again, Joseph waited to be directed of God. How often we presumptuously assume providence is ordering for us because of favorable circumstances. Sometimes this is the case, but sometimes it is not, as seen in Jonah who in disobedience fled to Tarshish. Joseph was not moved by favorable conditions, but waited in dependence upon God. "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Rom. 14:23.

When he arrived back in the land of Israel, he heard Herod's son Archelaus was reigning. This caused him fear, but as he was led of God to return to the land of Israel, not being governed by favorable circumstances, he now waited for another message from God. He did not move in fear because of unfavorable conditions. Often we move in fear and not in faith, but this is not how God guides. "The fear of man bringeth a snare." Prov. 29:25.

FOURTH DREAM

Perhaps it would seem only prudent to go elsewhere, and so it was. Joseph's departure to Nazareth, however, was not merely a move based on sound logic, but in subjection to the Lord.

Joseph was led of God at each step, moving in dependence and obedience. How we need to wait upon God in lowliness and humility seeking His direction rather than being guided by appearances, the movements of others, presumption, or fear.

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and

lean not unto thine own understanding.

In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and

He shall direct thy paths.

Prov. 3:5, 6

Christ's Kingdom

J. N. Darby

In Psa. 72 we have Christ as King. This takes us back to Psa. 2. Jehovah's determination is to set His kingdom in Zion. The kingdom is not confined to this setting up of the King.

In Matt. 13:43 we have the "kingdom of their Father." There we get its heavenly character, not setting aside the kingdom on earth which is to be established, but it goes farther and higher. "Every scribe... instructed...bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old." The scribes had the old things concerning the kingdom, but they stumbled at the Christ having to suffer. If they had received Christ, man would not have been proved to be such a sinner. But they hated both Him and His Father, and so proved there is no good in flesh. There would have been something good in flesh if they could have received Him. The kingdom was not set up then through their not receiving Him.

What Is the Kingdom?

Two things came out after that: the mystery of the kingdom of heaven, and the Church. What is the kingdom? It is very simple, if we take the word as it is. It is the sphere of the reign, or where the King reigns. If I take the word church as "assembly," which it really means, I can never confound "church" and "kingdom." Compare the word "reign" with "assembly," and the difference is easily seen.

Another thing often not understood is the difference between the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God. If the kingdom of God had been accepted on earth, it would not have been the same as now, not the actual form of the kingdom of heaven. Matthew takes up the change in consequence of the King's rejection, and also speaks of the "Father's kingdom" for the heirs who follow Christ in His rejection, because He takes it from His Father when rejected. He is set down, not on His own throne (and so the judgment in this Psalm brought in), but for the present on His Father's throne. Divine righteousness is shown in God's setting Him there and justifying us according to all He had accomplished.

There was righteousness due to set Him on the throne of God. "I have glorified Thee on the earth: I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me," etc. Christ then sits down there, and there is no judicial kingdom at all now—it is postponed and known only to faith. The kingdom of the world is not become that of our God and of His Christ.

The Kingdom of Heaven

The kingdom of heaven is likened to a sower, etc. He has altered the ground on which He deals with the people-He sows; He brings something with Him, instead of seeking something from man. The King is obliged to take this mysterious character of sowing in the world. Then, notice, He does not sow only on Jewish ground; as to outward nearness to God, that was gone. God does not look for fruit. He is going on ground that is settled by judgment. Therefore He is not seeking fruit from man. This goes against man's good opinion of himself. Man is cut down as the good-for-nothing tree, in spite of all culture from God. The trial has been made of all men in the Jew. All flesh is grass, and the grass is withered. He sows; He is not exercising His royal title in sowing. It is a new work, different in kind. All are given up (Matt. 12) and He sows (Matt. 13).

The field is not the Jewish people, but "the world." God goes outside guilty Judah to begin a fresh work everywhere. The time of the harvest is the judicial time of the kingdom—not the sowing time. Christ lets all go on as if at the beginning and He saw nothing of the corruption, but then He begins a judicial character. Personally He deals with it on earth. That is the kingdom in the mysteries of it, or hidden. Its outward character is a great tree; the sowing is in the world. Pharaoh was a great tree, and the Assyrian was another. Christendom is now a great tree-an influential power in the earth. It is ruled from heaven, if it be the kingdom of heaven, but the sphere is this earth. The sowing, the field, the harvest, the search for the treasure or the pearl, the net, are not in heaven, but on earth.

The Kingdom of God

When the joy of the kingdom is spoken of, it is the kingdom of God. "The kingdom of God [not of heaven] is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." The kingdom of heaven is dispensational; the kingdom of God is sometimes a moral thing.

Christ is not taking possession of the kingdom on the earth now. He is not sitting on His own throne yet. It is the Father's throne where He is. He is perfectly accepted in divine righteousness, which is now being ministered by the Holy Spirit to faith, and which is better than any other portion, but there is no execution of judgment. If He had executed judgment when He went away, there would have been no dealings in grace. He must have extinguished the wicked from the earth at once.

The word is, "Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool." There He is sitting down and doing nothing as to the kingdom, but sowing, etc., in this mysterious way. Meanwhile the mustard tree, in which the birds of the air (the emissaries of Satan) may lodge, is being produced. The leaven is spreading in the three measures of meal; that is, formal doctrine extends itself through Christendom. At the close Christ brings in the execution of His power.

Where Does the Church Fit in?

This has nothing to do with the Church. Instead of His having immediate power on earth, He is "expecting till His enemies be made His footstool." During this time of waiting the Church is being gathered, and when He comes in judgment His glorified ones come with Him. He has accomplished righteousness before this gathering began, and has sent down the Holy Spirit, by whom we have the revelation of that righteousness. We are "made the righteousness of God in Him." This divine righteousness is established on the throne and revealed to us in the gospel and therefore by faith.

While the kingdom is in abeyance, the Holy Spirit has come down to make us know the righteousness of God in Christ, which is fit for the throne of God. We share that righteousness; we do not sit on the throne of the Father where He is now. This seat He has by virtue of His personal title as the Son of God, and God Himself indeed.

The kingdom of heaven in mystery takes in all Christendom, professors as well as true Christians. Now there are no signs of the kingdom. What sign is it for a king to suffer? But if we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him. Suffering is no sign of a kingdom at all, but it is likeness to the King. The same thing that made Him suffer on earth made Him glorified in heaven. So it is with us. But instead of His reigning over the Church, the Church will reign with Him. He is the Bridegroom of the Church, not the King of the Church.

We have the same place as Christ Himself, and when we shall see Him, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. We could not now see Him as He is and live, but then we shall be like Him, and therefore can see Him. We shall appear with Him and be glorified together with Him. The heavenly saints are to be like Christ and be with Him forever. We shall take the heavenly places which spiritual wickedness has now (Eph. 6). We shall be "caught up... to meet the Lord in the air." In the parable of the talents in Matt. 25, there is no allusion to the rule of the kingdom, while in Luke, the use of the pounds is rewarded with cities to reign over. In Matthew all the servant's reward centers in the joy of his Lord.

The King Reigns

Jude speaks of the Lord coming with ten thousands of His saints. So in Rev. 19:14, "The armies which were in heaven followed Him upon white horses." The saints come with Him when He comes to execute judgment. (See Rev. 17:14.) They are associated with Him in the glory He brings, as also in what is much better, in the Father's house. While He is on the Father's throne, the Church has no throne, but suffers with Him. When He takes His own throne, we shall be with Him and share His glory when He appears.

It is wonderful to be associated with Him in His glory, but better to be associated with Himself. It is better to be thinking about Himself than about Him as a King or a Lord, important as this too may be. When Christ comes to reign, there will be perfect human righteousness, because Christ will execute it. But now it is divine righteousness, ministered by the Spirit in grace (2 Cor. 3), grace which associates us in the effect of divine righteousness. When He comes back as King, at first it will be the David character of reign. So it is in Psa. 101, "I will sing of mercy and judgment"; mercy always comes first.

Divine Love in Righteousness

Psa. 72 states prophetically the character of Christ's kingdom. When He takes the kingdom, all will be judicially set up in righteousness. It will be seen by all that God has laid hold upon this mighty One for His people's salvation and the world's blessings. There will be real righteousness here below, but human as to its measure, and divinely ministered. It will be Messiah and the new covenant. The law will be written on their hearts. The law never required the death of Christ; this is entirely outside and above all that the law could righteously demand.

By the grace of God He tasted death. Divine love was in it; God (not law) "made Him to be sin for us." It was the unspeakable, unfathomable love of God who was glorified in it about sin. For God to be glorified, everything in God was to be made good in spite of sin, yea, and in respect of sin.

Where and how would love be manifested if all His enemies were destroyed now? The cross glorifies God above all law. The announcement of the Man who was God, dying for sinners, is that righteousness? No, it is beyond right; it is love—infinite, divine and sovereign love.

When once we come really to know God, we know Him as love. Then, knowing that every- thing comes to us from Him, though we be in a desert—no matter where, or what the circumstances—we interpret all by His love. What is deepest is simplest, that is the perfect love of God.

Living Christ in the World

Eph. 4:17-29

The believer, "through the law," as shown by the Apostle Paul, is "dead to the law," that he may "live unto God." He can say, like Paul, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." This is his standing before God, and the result upon his outward conduct should be, as with the Apostle, "The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." (Gal. 2:19, 20.)

He no longer has the law, but Christ for his standard. To live Christ, that is, to reproduce, as it were, the life of Christ in our own, is true Christian walk. Christ always walked in the Spirit, and if we are walking in the Spirit we "shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh," but shall bring forth the fruit of the Spirit—that "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance" which adorn in such rich clusters the life of the blessed Lord. (Gal. 5:16, 22, 23.)

It is impossible to gather grapes from the thorns of the old nature. Christ is the true vine, the one stock from which fruit for God can be brought forth. Only as we are branches abiding in Him can we bear fruit like His own; only thus is it possible for us "so to walk, even as He walked." (John 15:5; 1 John 2:6.)

Conduct of the Believer

These truths are beautifully brought out in the passage now before us. The Apostle, having shown how a believer can walk worthy of the vocation wherewith he is called in the Church, next goes on to indicate how he should carry out the same principle in his conduct toward his fellow men, whether believers or unbelievers. He does not put these Gentile converts under law, but while not bringing them onto Jewish ground, he carefully removes them from the Gentile ground.

This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness (or hardness] of their heart: who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. Eph. 4:17-19.

Such is man, as fallen and left to the guidance of natural conscience and reason. Truly he is "without excuse," for the ignorance is not a guiltless one. (See Rom. 1:20, 21, 28.)

Another Guide

The Ephesians had, through grace, been brought out of this state of things. They had another guide, as widely removed from mere natural conscience on the one side as from law on the other. The Apostle says in Eph. 4:20-24:

Ye have not so learned Christ; if so be that ye have heard Him, and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: that ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness [holiness of truth].

These Ephesians had learned not law but Christ. They had by faith heard Him and been taught by-or rather in-Him, according to the truth of which His own life as man had been the perfect and divine manifestation. The truth as it is in Jesus does not mean the doctrinal truth of salvation, but the perfect, holy walk of truth as shown in His Person, for when Jesus is spoken of in this way, it refers to His life and walk here in the world.

The Hearing Ear

The Ephesians had "learned Christ" in the only way in which He can be learned. The natural man may learn of Christ; the spiritual man alone can learn Him. For "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. There must be the hearing ear before Christ's words can be understood. As Jesus said to the Pharisees, "Why do ye not understand My speech? even because ye cannot hear My word." John 8:43. The Ephesians had heard Christ, and been instructed in Him. The words that He spoke, "They are spirit, and they are life," and they had produced their quickening power on the hearts of these saints. Hence they knew the truth as it showed itself in the spotless, holy life of Jesus.

This was to be practically manifested in their own lives. They belonged no more to the flesh, and therefore their walk was not to be according to the old model-"the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts." They were finished with the old creation as to their standing before God, and were seen in a new creation as quickened together with Christ. This then was to be their new model. Being "renewed" in the spirit of their mind, they were to walk after a new fashion, not according to the law of the old nature, but as having "put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness [holiness of truth]."

The new man is man in the new creation-the creation which has its head in Christ, the creation which draws its character from Christ. To walk as having put on the new man is therefore to walk as Christ walked, for this new man is created according to God's nature in righteousness and holiness suited to His own truth.

Practical Results

This standard once acknowledged, practical results are to follow. It is interesting to see how even the most commonplace acts are submitted to this new test. Thus the Apostle says, "Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another." v. 25. Moral philosophers have discussed the question of why men should not lie, and wide differences have existed among them on the subject. But moral philosophy never assigned as a reason anything like what is given here. The life of Christ is to be our rule, not worked out through imitation, but worked out by the fact that we are quickened together with Him, and created anew after His model. This settles the whole question. Who can imagine falsehood from the lips of Him whose words were the words of God, and whose truth was the truth of God? Just as little could falsehood be found in the lips of one who walked in His spirit, showed forth His life.

There is, indeed, another reason given, also characteristic of this epistle: "For we are members one of another." How practical the "one body" is. No man would lie to himself; no man would imagine the hand trying to deceive the foot, or the ears trying to deceive the eyes. Just as little should believers in Christ deceive each other. Being members of Christ, "we are members one of another"-parts, as it were, of the "one new man" which Christ has made us "in Himself."

T. B. Baines

Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, Unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages.

Eph. 3:20, 21

Bible Challenger-04-April V.06

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the word which describes the habitations which await those who have made friends of that which is unrighteous. [The number in brackets indicates the number of words in the answer.]

1. That which some may do at the cost of being maimed because they have refused the alternative. [3]
2. A double affirmation to the truth of how a safe passage from death unto life is secured. [2]
3. The word signifying the first habitation which certain created beings did not keep, resulting in a darksome confinement. [1]
4. That which one is sure to do when the time of sowing to the flesh is completed. [2]
5. A truth of old testifying with what God ever draws His people to Himself. [1]
6. A prophetic truth as to what multitudes who presently sleep in the dust shall yet do. [1]
7. That which is to flee away when the ransomed of the Lord shall return. [3]
8. That which will never be experienced by anyone accepting the spiritual drink given by Jesus. [1]
9. A unique possession of the one abiding in the light which no man can approach. [1]
10. That which Abraham called on after planting many trees. [4]
11. That which is called upon to be lifted up in view of a glorious entrance. [1]

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

Bible Challenger-03-March Answers V.06

1. K now ye Luke 21:31
2. I nfallible proofs Acts 1:3
3. N eedle Matt. 19:24
4. G lad tidings Luke 8:1
5. D iscreetly Mark 12:34
6. O ne eye Mark 9:47
7. M orning till evening Acts 28:23
8. O bservation Luke 17:20
9. F ellow workers Col. 4:10,11
10. G reater Luke 7:28
11. O ther cities Luke 4:43
12. D ay and night Rev. 12:10

"But Jesus called them unto Him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not: for of such is the KINGDOM OF GOD." Luke 18:16.

The Object of Faith

Jesus—the One who revealed God's heart

On the tables of stone, the command was written by the finger of God, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image." Nothing that the mind or heart of man could conceive could be a representation of the everlasting, triune God, "The blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see." The law could not declare God, but pointed onward to One to come who alone could make God known and through whom the heart of God would be manifested, and His sinful creature, man, could be won and held fast in the bonds of eternal love.

The Word became flesh. Jesus in perfect manhood, Son of God and Son of man in humiliation, suffering, shame and death, has told out the heart of God. By His atoning sacrifice He glorified God and obtained eternal redemption. Raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, the fruits of His work are now secured in the glory of His Person. On earth He was the delight of God the Father; now ascended above all the heavens, He is the Father's joy and the object of the faith and love of His redeemed.

He comforted His disciples saying, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me." From His glory He sent the Comforter to abide with His own forever, to occupy their hearts with

Himself and His glories. Sealed with the Holy Spirit, the believer is led into the conscious knowledge of the perfections of the Person and work of Him in whom he is sealed. Even here on earth he is changed to His image, to which, in the purpose of God, he will be fully conformed in glory.

Greatness and Meekness

"The man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of... the people." Ex. 11:3.

"Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth." Num. 12:3.

Nothing is more sad than to witness a pushing, bustling, forward, self-confident spirit and style in those who profess to be followers of Him who was meek and lowly in heart. It is utterly impossible for anyone to indulge in this spirit if ever he has really measured himself in the presence of God. To be much alone with God is the sovereign remedy for pride and self-complacency. May the Lord keep us truly humble in all our ways, simply leaning on Himself, and very, very little in our own eyes.

O keep us, love divine, near Thee,

That we our nothingness may know,

And ever to Thy glory be

Walking in faith while here below.

EDITORIAL: The Approaching End of the Age

According to present plans, the "Chunnel"—the rail link between Europe and England—will open in 1993. Already the two tunnels under the English Channel are connected and the huge task of completing the project is going forward. When completed, trains will travel from Paris to the tunnel at 180 miles an hour, and proceed through the tunnel at 100 miles an hour and on to London. Europe will then be all linked together by rail with high speed passenger trains, and freight will move swiftly also.

Surely this will influence the revival of the coming Roman empire. The prophecy of Dan. 7 gives the political view and Rev. 13 shows the moral aspect of this empire. Both the empire and its head are termed "beasts", because like a beast they know not God.

The personal beast, called the little horn in Dan. 7, will take control. His government will be one of the seven forms of government of ancient Rome, but also he will be the eighth as getting his power directly from Satan. For one hour (a short period) he will have contemporary with him the ten horns of Europe. Horns are a symbol of power, and in Dan. 7:24 it says: "The ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise."

At the present time it seems that action is steadily, and under great pressure, pushing toward the time when prophecies concerning the earth will be fulfilled. European federalism was an influence in bringing down Margaret Thatcher from her position as Prime Minister. For about 12 years she had ruled mostly for England and resisted European power or merging with Europe. But we see that man is driven by his own lusts and fear, and so political power is driven by economics. It is in the economic interest of Europeans to unite.

As the end of the age approaches, we see both in eastern and western Europe the will of the people rising up to have their way. We should remember that this is not to be the spirit of the assembly. In this regard, Margaret Thatcher made a most interesting statement in a speech to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Nowhere in the Bible is the word "democracy" mentioned. Ideally, when Christians meet, as Christians, to take counsel together, their purpose is not (or should not be) to ascertain what is the mind of the majority, but what is the mind of the Holy Spirit—something which may be quite different.

We fully agree with this statement. The Church (assembly) is not a democracy. It is the Lord, by the Spirit, who is in charge and He always guides us by the Scriptures and in them "we have the mind of Christ." 1 Cor. 2:16.

C. Buchanan

Worship in Spirit and in Truth

Ex. 30:34-38

The delicacy of fragrance and the savor of the four principal spices were for God only. We cannot make the same composition for ourselves. It is "holy for the Lord," that ever blessed Lord Jesus, God's own Son. The incense rises when the priest puts it on the fire drawn from the brazen altar. The fourfold perfume, beaten small, was burned upon the golden altar next to the veil.

If we put the symbol of the perfume in New Testament terms, we have a lovely picture to consider. We approach God as saints fit to stand before God in "the holiest". Before that point it is all of self and none of God, but when we are worshipers it is all of God and none of self.

When we are born again, we get a sense of need and we ask for what we want, that is, we pray. Then as His mercies abound and we become conscious of His loving recognition and supply of our need, we thank Him for mercies received. Learning more of our God, the Father of the Son, through the Spirit we recognize His greatness, His glory, the glories of redemption, creation, and preservation, and so we praise.

Higher than prayer is when we are consciously in "the holiest by the blood of Jesus," and God is before us. We bow before Him for what He Himself is, self forgotten, so we do not pray or thank Him, but we worship and adore. We worship when our hearts overflow in adoration to God and Christ. It will be our glad employment in heaven. Our worship here is mingled with praise, its nearest companion, and often, too, with remembrance of self-what He has done for us. So we thank Him also with prayer. Lev. 1:6:12, 13

The brazen altar typifies the cross, which is the ground of all approach to God. To this altar the priest comes and takes the fire, that is, the judgment of a holy God upon sin was borne by His Son our Savior. Upon His own intrinsic holiness the fire can be safely laid, and upon it the incense is placed, and the perfume thereof is God's portion. On that one great day when the high priest went within the veil, his hands full of beaten incense (filled hands mean consecration), its smoke protected him from the judgment of Israel's Holy One, as he presented Israel to his Jehovah.

Now, Jesus—His person and His death—is before us and with but "one mind and one mouth" we glorify God (Rom. 15:6). Our hands are "filled with" Him beaten small, for the apprehension of one may be greater than of another. It is not a question of how much of Jesus we can receive; little as we can hold of Him, we are full. The aged, tried saint who has walked for years with Jesus and knows Him intimately is filled; the babe who has just started on his way is also filled. Jesus fills every capacity great or small.

C. H. Hall

The Second Advent

The second advent is simply the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to this earth, which naturally implies that He has already been here once. "Now once in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.... And unto them that look for Him shall. He appear the second time without sin [or apart from sin] unto salvation." Heb. 9:26, 28. The second advent therefore is clearly a scriptural expression. Scripture speaks of many momentous and solemn events connected with the second coming of Christ.

Two aspects of the coming of the Lord Jesus should never be confounded: His coming for His saints, and His coming with His saints. These events may be thus illustrated. Suppose a large city revolted from allegiance to its sovereign, and refused to acknowledge his authority. After many warnings the sovereign raises an army to punish the rebels, but he knows that in that city there are many true subjects who loyally acknowledge his title and claims. When approaching the city, he secretly calls out all those loyal ones who gladly go out to meet him. He storms the city, and entering with those who have already joined him, he punishes the rebellious and rewards those who had been faithful.

Now as the coming of the sovereign would be a day of joyful deliverance to one class, so it would be followed by judgment on the others.

We find both these aspects of the coming of the Lord Jesus plainly revealed in the Scripture.

1 Thess. 4:15-18 speaks of Christ coming for His saints to their everlasting joy, and Jude 14,15 speaks of Christ coming to execute judgment on His enemies.

Notice also when Christ comes for His saints, including both the living and the dead, He will not actually come to the earth for them. The passage in 1 Thessalonians says that the saints will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. This is often called the RAPTURE. It will be a meeting far too sacred for the eyes of the wicked to behold—it will be in the clouds. No separation will ever take place: those that are thus caught up will be forever with the Lord.

The important aspect of the resurrection and rapture of the saints is that it is God's answer to those that believe in the all-glorious worth of His own Son. It is the bright hope of the Christian. There is no event revealed in Scripture that must take place before the rapture of the saints. They should, therefore, be expecting the return of the Lord at any moment to catch all His saints away together. (John 14:1-3; 1 Thess. 1:9, 10.)

In other Scriptures it is revealed that there will be an interval between the rapture (the catching away of the saints), and the Lord's coming to the earth. For instance, in 2 Thess. 2 we learn that the day of the Lord cannot come till the Antichrist is revealed, because the Lord is going to destroy that wicked one when He comes. Then in Rev. 13 we find that the Antichrist will cooperate with another "beast", the head of the future Roman Empire. In Dan. 9 this latter power will make a covenant with Israel, and will break the covenant in the middle of Daniel's prophetic week. All of

this intimates that this apparent triumph of wickedness will spread over at least seven years, otherwise spoken of as the last week of the seventy weeks of Daniel.

That the Lord Jesus will actually come to the earth is plainly revealed in Acts 1:11, "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." In Zech. 14:4 we read that "His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east," and again, "The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple.... But who may abide the day of His coming?" Mal. 3:1, 2.

Bible Dictionary

The Abomination of the Egyptians

The Christian's friendship, service and worship are hated by the world

THREE times in Scripture we read about "the abomination of the Egyptians." (Gen. 43:32; 46:34; Ex. 8:26.) In order to gain a practical application of these three passages, it is helpful to see what the Egyptians represent in a spiritual sense.

In Moses' day Egypt was marked by learning, pleasures and treasures (Acts 7:22; Heb. 11:25, 26). Surely a parallel can be drawn with the conditions of materialistic lands today. Entertainment, luxury, possessions and education govern the lives of many people. The Nile River was the great water supply which sustained life in this desert land. The people of God in the land of Israel looked heavenward for rain; the Egyptians looked downward to the river for their refreshment.

Today God's people always need to realize that the source of their blessing is from above and to be in present dependence upon God rather than looking for sustainment from this world, which walks in independence from God. While much could be said in regard to Egypt, it is easily ascertained that its general character in Scripture is typical of the world in its boasted but empty glory going on in a course of independence from God.

In writing to the Galatians, Paul speaks of the world's being crucified to him, and he to the world (Gal. 6:14). Any person who was crucified was an object of contempt as well as being one whose career on earth had come to a close. While the force of Paul's expressions in Galatians are primarily in reference to the religious world, this truth can also be applied in broader terms.

In Crucified to the World

The Christian should view the world system in its course of independence of God as an object of contempt. The believer is in the world, but not of it and so should not be seeking to find his pleasure in that which does not want his Savior. Our citizenship is in heaven, not on earth, and we should desire and seek to deliver souls from the coming wrath, rather than link up with them in earthly pursuits.

The world looks upon the Christian with contempt because he belongs to Christ and to heaven, and desires to walk according to the principles of Scripture. Being "crucified to the world" relates to "the abomination of the Egyptians." There were certain things that were abominations to the Egyptians, and so there are with the ungodly today. "An unjust man is an abomination to the just: and he that is upright in the way is abomination to the wicked." Prov. 29:27.

The first mention of an abomination to the Egyptians is about eating with the Hebrews "They set on for him [Joseph] by himself, and for them by themselves, and for the Egyptians, which did eat with him, by themselves: because the Egyptians might not eat bread with the Hebrews; for that is an abomination unto the Egyptians." Gen. 43:32.

The Hebrews are the same people as Israelites but looked upon with disdain rather than with favor. (Compare 1 Sam. 14:11.) It is quite easy to behave as the godless about us and miss any reproach for Christ's sake. If true to the One who died for us, however, and desirous to walk with Him in separation from this world, it will bring reproach. Eating may be taken literally but it also embraces the thought of social life in general. If we meet the world on its ground, there will be no reproach; but if we stand and speak for God, our company will not be courted for long.

The second reference to abomination is in Gen. 46:34, "For every shepherd is an abomination unto the Egyptians." The Lord Jesus Christ is spoken of as the good Shepherd, the great Shepherd and the chief Shepherd. The announcement of His birth was made to shepherds, and it is to those who faithfully carry on the work of shepherding that a special reward will be granted (1 Peter 5:2-4).

How God values shepherds! But shepherding care is distasteful to the ungodly. Have the opinions and views of this unbelieving world tainted our outlook as well? Selfishness marks this present age and is diametrically opposed to true shepherding care. For one to spend and to be spent for others for the sake of Christ is a manifestation of a shepherd's heart.

The third mention of an abomination to the Egyptians is in Ex. 8:26, and is used in connection with worship to Jehovah. Egypt was filled with idols. For the Israelites to join in this pagan idolatry, they did not need to leave Egypt. Pharaoh sought to detain them in Egypt, not by offering them idols but by suggesting they worship God there. How many dear Christians have, in type, listened to this subtle advice. They have refused the idols, so to speak—empty formalism and ritualism—but have taken up the worship of God without separating from that which is incompatible with the true character of Christianity.

Outside the Camp

The path for true worship and service will lead the believer to go outside the camp, which is Judaism or the parallel of such, and to separate from vessels to dishonor (2 Tim. 2:20, 21; Heb. 13:13). To go along in fellowship with those who do not deem it necessary to judge and deal with evil teaching or immorality is sad compromise. To separate from evil and to follow on with those that call on the Lord out of a pure heart is the path to which God calls us. Such a path will be unpopular, misunderstood, and held in ridicule, but it is the path of obedience and blessing.

May our thoughts, then, be governed by the Word of God as to our social life, our service, and our worship. If such makes us "an abomination to the Egyptians," may we esteem it the reproach of the cross and rejoice to be counted worthy to suffer shame for His name (Acts 5:41).

W. Brockmeier

Christian Blessing

by H.E. Hayhoe

Eph. 1:10, 11

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: in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will.

This 10th verse is the key to all the ways of God: the ultimate, the finality, the consummation, and the eternity that is in the mind of God. The 10th verse gives us the purpose of God; the 11th brings the Church into association with Christ in that coming day of glory. Oh, that wonderful day that is coming!

God as God could not die, but God became a man in the Person of Christ, took a life capable of death (although not subject to it), and yielded up that life on the cross. The pathway of His sufferings is the only way for two things: first, it was the only way that we could really learn the depth of that divine bosom; second, it was the only way that sin could be put away. If the Lord Jesus has not won your heart and mine, what more could He do to win them? For every Christian blessing is a gift, and every child of God on the earth is blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. I do not possess more than you, and you do not possess more than I do. Blessing is not attained by our own efforts.

Every Christian blessing is the gift of God and every believer is equally blessed of God, but the enjoyment and apprehension of it depend upon the state of soul. All your happiness and all your intelligence are not the fruit of a brilliant mind. The more brilliant your mind is the more you are going to go wrong if you trust it. A verse to substantiate that is 1 Cor. 3:20, "The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain." The Greek word for "vain" is "vacuum". There is not anything there at all.

Learning God's Thoughts

"If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise." 1 Cor. 3:18. What does that mean? We get the habit of reading the Bible and we think we have done a nice thing, but we do not stop to think what it means. So to become a fool means to take the place of knowing nothing and letting God teach us.

Do you know why children learn so rapidly? It is because they have nothing to unlearn. When they go to school there is no inner resistance to learning. What about grown-ups? They have to get rid of their own thoughts to get God's thoughts. Always remember this as a principle in the things of God, that even the natural mind in a Christian will always resist the truth. Scripture says the carnal mind is enmity against God. The carnal mind is our own mind. That is true of every unconverted person in the world, no matter what the nationality or who they are, and it is true of every Christian that their natural mind will resist the truth.

Our Coming Glories

Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. 1 Cor. 2:9, 10.

There is not a, glory that Christ has acquired as a man that does not belong to the believer, but your entrance into these things depends upon your state of soul. We need the work of Christ for our consciences; that is, we need to learn that the work was finished on the cross. We need the Person of Christ for our meditation, and we need the coming glories of Christ before us to separate us from this world.

Why is it that Christians go after the world? Because the devil has robbed even Christians of the glory that is coming. We, by the Spirit, should live in heaven before we get there. That is why the Spirit was sent down. It is not a brilliant mind, but a state of soul that enjoys Christ. Each of us gets as much of Christ as we want, and our lives show how much we want. There should be more diligence to learn of Christ and of what is ours in Christ.

Guidance from the Bible

What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. 1 Cor. 2:11, 12.

There is not a man on earth, wonderful though he maybe, who would know the things of God except he be taught of God. The only thing that will pierce through the horizon of this world is the Bible. How much do you read it? You should read the Bible until you are so saturated with it that you think and speak in the very language and wisdom of Scripture.

Many forget that the Bible tells them how to live as husband and wife, how to conduct their family, and how to run their business. There is not a path for the child of God but what the Word of God is there to guide him. If you are reading the Word of God and letting your mind become saturated with it, when any problem confronts you in life, you will have the wisdom of the Word to guide you.

In Prov. 28:14 it says, "Happy is the man that feareth always." This means that we are afraid to take a step without the Word of God to guide us. In Jer. 10:23 it says, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." You cannot take a right step or bring your family up correctly without the wisdom of the Word of God to guide you. Some of the most brilliant people in the world and even some gifted Christians have had most unhappy lives without the Word of God guiding them.

The Divine Guest

"That we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." He wants us in the good of Christian Blessing I these things and has given us the Holy Spirit that we might know. We should be careful how we treat the Divine Guest within us. If we grieve Him, He will not leave us, but we will miss the things that are freely given us of God, for it is the Spirit that unfolds these things to us.

May each of us see that the Bible is the wisdom of God and man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. Oh, that each of us could learn that the wisdom of God is the only path for our feet.

God's Thoughts

"How precious also are Thy thoughts unto me, O God!" This is a blessed theme, the theme of God's thoughts-higher, as the heavens are higher than the earth, than our thoughts, the theme of God's fathomless and illimitable grace. Here is real liberty. Do we know what it is to have our own thoughts, so narrow, so beggared, so mean, beaten down by God's high, generous, liberal thoughts-His thoughts of us as to what we are in Christ? Jesus is the great thought of God-God's thoughts are expressed to us in Him. It is not an unfallen angel but a sinner quickened by the Spirit of God who can thus get into the deep thoughts of God.

Vessel in Potter—Potter in Vessel

God was pleased to create a world, to set it revolving in space among the countless orbs which shine in the heavens around us. He was pleased to allow sin and death to enter that fair scene. Who can argue with God? He was pleased to choose and to call a people out of the world, and to permit them to destroy themselves while He, with long-suffering, bore with them "till there was no remedy." He was pleased to send His Son to endure the cross and to bear His wrath.

Who was before Him in all this? Not one! In all things He wrought, He permitted, He ordered, and it is He who challenges the stubborn heart which would say, "Why doth He yet find fault? For who hath resisted His will?" Rom. 9:19. It is He who deigns to reply, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to Him that formed it, Why hast Thou made me thus?" Rom. 9:20.

Have you ever stood in the potter's house and watched him as he performed on the wheels? The workman takes the lump of clay; he presses it to the wheel; the wheel revolves before his eye. Where is the vessel now? It is in the mind of the potter. Before it is formed, the design is there. His fingers shape the mass before him, and gradually it grows up before his eye. Gradually the thought in his mind is transferred to the clay and it rises up before him, and the thoughts hitherto unexpressed grow into the vessel which his fingers mold.

He sees a flaw, an imperfection in the clay. Others looking on have not detected it as did the artist's eye. He crushes the clay under his hand into a shapeless mass again. Again his fingers mold and fashion it into his design. Again and again defects appear. Again and again the clay is reduced to a shapeless mass until at last it rises in perfection of design before him. His eye surveys it with satisfaction and pride and he removes it from the wheel to take its place with the choice things of the earth around.

Where was the vessel before he began his work? It was in the potter! Where now is the potter? He is seen in the vessel! All that his mind designed and wrought is seen there. The vessel is fit for that which he had intended.

This is the history of man. The clay is in the Potter's hand. God's fingers fashion it but it is marred; the clay needs more of His patient manipulation and skill. It is not yet smooth and even, nor pliable to His hand. He crushes it time after time. The perfect vessel stood before His mind and purpose before His hand had taken the clay and placed it on the wheel. But when all is done, He has transferred His thought with unerring skill to the clay. The Potter is now seen in His own handiwork. It is a vessel of mercy which He has prepared for glory.

How important, as these crushing's take place, is the need of the interpretation of these skillful workings of the hand of the Potter! How often are the lessons misunderstood or not apprehended at all! In the history of men in the Word of God these actions are seen and the results are reached. In them we read the history of His dealings with our own selves and the handiwork of God. We look, then, for the lines of beauty resulting from His hand. We yield ourselves to the things which

happen and see the end of the Lord. We know how it is that all things work together for good to them that love God, who are the called according to His purpose.

As a Potter, the Lord God took of the dust of the ground, in the first creation, and fashioned it into a man. Then "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." But the vessel was marred. Again the divine Potter takes of the same lump and puts forth afresh His skill to form a vessel of mercy for eternal glory: a new creation in Christ.

F. G. Patterson

Cannot I do with you as this potter?

saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay is in

the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand

Jeremiah 18:6

God Is Love

We cannot always trace the way

Where Thou, our gracious Lord,

dost move;

But we can always surely say,

That God is love.

When fear its gloomy cloud will fling

O'er earth—our souls, to heaven above,

As to their sanctuary, spring,

For God is love.

When clouds hang o'er our darkened path,

We'll check our dread, each doubt reprove;

For here each saint sweet comfort hath,

That God is love.

Yes, Thou art love—a truth like this

Can every gloomy thought remove,

And turn our tears and woes to bliss;

Our God is love.

White as Snow

Good character is nothing with God. There is not a man that would have all he has done, thought, or said written on the wall of his house. But it is all out before God.

An unsaved man, left alone with his thoughts, would never turn them to Jesus Christ. When you come to know the real condition of man's heart, Christ has no place in it. It is not Christ he loves at all. Christ came and passed through this world to carry God's love to everyone. He came to sinners in their sins because they needed Him. Christ comes and shows us what we are. The law shows us what we ought to be. If the light comes in, the person is convicted, but Christ is there in perfect grace. We were under death, sin, the curse, and wrath. He came under death, sin, the curse, and wrath.

When we come before the judgment seat of Christ, whom shall we see there? The Man that put away our sins.

God would have us happy: happy in a holy walk, happy with Himself; in order that we may be happy, He has put away all our sins and made us white as snow. Then we can walk with God happily.

But we all, with open [unveiled] 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.

The glory is in the Person who bore our sins. We like to look at the glory now; every ray of it is the proof that our sins are gone. We look at it, think of it, delight in it, and then we are changed into the same image from glory to glory.

Our hearts have confidence in Him. That is faith, and then we follow Him and see where He is and get practically like Him. God has proved His righteousness by taking Christ to His right hand. Our sins are not only put away, but we are in Christ, made the righteousness of God in Him. We have sins, but God says: "I have righteousness for you." Don't tell me we can't know it. Why, Christ says we shall. "At that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you." I believe what Christ says.

Christ is coming, and I believe the moment is hastening on. Supposing He came tonight. Well, I say, "Thank God, His first coming redeemed me. He is coming again to take me to be with Him in the same glory as Himself."

What we want to learn is the wonderfulness of this love. "We have known and believed the love that God hath to us." 1 John 4:16. We shall see Him face to face whose visage was more marred than any man's. He washed us from our sins the first time He came, and He is only waiting to come and take us to Himself.

Have you seen Christ in glory in this way? God Himself has interfered, and made us as white as snow. Christ took the fruit of what we did, and we get the fruit of what He did. We are the fruit of

the travail of Christ's soul. He is our everything, and we must seek to please Him in everything we do. The more we look at Him, the more we shall see what poor, weak creatures we are. But let those of us who are Christians make it our business in everything to glorify Him who loved us, and gave Himself for us.

J. N. Darby

How great is His goodness, and how great is His beauty!

Zech. 9:17

Bible Challenger-05-May V.06

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the word which describes the habitations which await those who have made friends of that which is unrighteous. [The number in brackets indicates the number of words in the answer.]

1. That which some may do at the cost of being maimed because they have refused the alternative. [3]
2. A double affirmation to the truth of how a safe passage from death unto life is secured. [2]
3. The word signifying the first habitation which certain created beings did not keep, resulting in a darksome confinement. [1]
4. That which one is sure to do when the time of sowing to the flesh is completed. [2]
5. A truth of old testifying with what God ever draws His people to Himself. [1]
6. A prophetic truth as to what multitudes who presently sleep in the dust shall yet do. [1]
7. That which is to flee away when the ransomed of the Lord shall return. [3]
8. That which will never be experienced by anyone accepting the spiritual drink given by Jesus. [1]
9. A unique possession of the one abiding in the light which no man can approach. [1]
10. That which Abraham called on after planting many trees. [4]
11. That which is called upon to be lifted up in view of a glorious entrance. [1]

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

R. Erisman

Bible Challenger-04-April Answers V.06

1. E nter into life Matt. 18:8
2. V erily, verily John 5:24
3. E state Jude 6
4. R eap corruption Gal. 6:8
5. L oving-kindness Jer. 31:3
6. A wake Dan. 12:2
7. S orrow and sighing Isa. 35:10
8. T hirst John 4:14
9. I mmortality 1 Tim. 6:16
10. N ame of the Lord Gen. 21:33
11. G ates Psa. 24:7

"And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into EVERLASTING habitations." Luke 16:9.

The Lord's Presence

Mary, at the grave on that notable morning of the resurrection, and John, in his epistle to the saints, had such a conscious closeness of the Lord's presence that they did not even name Him, Christ of God. It was He alone, as if there were nobody else to speak of. "When He shall appear, we shall be like Him."

In John 17:19, how precious to find, "For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified [set apart for God] through the truth." What a wonderful thought! How our souls should pause and in solemn, silent meditation in His presence ask ourselves how much we each one individually understand and realize this wondrous fact.

In James 4:8 it was needful to warn the saints, for the spiritual condition of the saints had become so corrupted: "Purify your hearts, ye double-minded." It is the moral power of purifying our souls in His presence for His glory. God's standard of holiness is the state and measure in which Christ is, in all His perfect purity in glory. He never knew anything else but companionship with God, except when sin was imputed to Him on the cross. It was His voluntary act to bring guilty man's case into God's presence and settle it by laying down His own life's blood. But in the believer's walk, God sets forth a glorified Christ as His standard of purity and we are to purify ourselves even as He is pure.

What a wonderful thought—a man on earth and a man in glory—Christ Jesus, and to know ourselves united with Him! Knowing ourselves united with Him is effective in producing practical holiness.

EDITORIAL: Do We Really Expect Him Momentarily?

Recently a brother in the Lord wrote the following in his letter: "World conditions continue to change rapidly, and the focus centers more and more on the Middle East, where the majority of prophetic Scriptures will be fulfilled. And yet, there is not a single event or world condition which needs to happen before the coming of our blessed Savior and Lord to take the Church home to the Father's house."

This cheers our hearts as we find others who understand the times in which we live, and who are not troubled about world events, but who are looking for our Lord to return at any moment.

Exhortation based upon the above quote is very timely. He writes: "What needs to burden our hearts more than world conditions is our own spiritual condition so close to the Lord's return. May we all, both young and senior, encourage ourselves in the Lord, holding that fast which we have (Rev. 3:11), supping with Him and He with us (Rev. 3:20), occupying till He comes (Luke 19:13). Thus shall we have happy, fruitful lives."

Concern about our own spiritual condition so near to the Lord's return might be helped if we were more aware that the Lord's coming really is very imminent, for it says in 1 John 3:3, "Every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." If we really expected the Lord momentarily, our very thoughts would be on Him, and our words would be of Him and correspond to Him, and what we do would be for Him.

What is the great thing that we have to do in our day? Certainly it is to live for Christ. "The love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again." 2 Cor. 5:14, 15.

The question is, who is living for Christ and who is not? If your heart is set on Christ, you will have the enjoyment of Christ before He comes, and you will meet His face with joy. Our Father's thought for His children is that as Christ is for us up there, so we should be for Him down here.

C. Buchanan

Jesus answered and said, I thank Thee,

O Father, Lord of heaven and earth,

because 'Thou hast hid these things

from the wise and prudent, and hast

revealed them unto babes.

Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in 'Thy sight.

Matt. 11:25,26

Seven Testimonies of God's Son to the Jews

W Brockmeier

In Matthew's gospel we find the Lord Jesus presented in seven distinct ways before He began His earthly ministry: Son of David, Son of Abraham, Jesus, Emmanuel, Governor, Nazarene, and the Father's "beloved Son." God would give a complete testimony of His Son to His earthly people before He came forth in public service.

As the Son of David:

The Lord Jesus was the legal heir to the throne which was being usurped by the Gentile king Herod. The Jews knew from their Scriptures that Christ, their Messiah, would be a Son of David. (Matt. 22:42.) David was the second king of Israel, replacing Saul who represents the first man-man in the flesh. God has set aside the first man. All blessing for man is connected with the second man, the Lord from heaven. David was not of the house of Saul, but a son of Abraham, the one to whom the promises of blessing were made.

As the Son of Abraham:

The genealogy of Jesus in Matthew is traced, not from Adam, as in Luke's gospel which emphasizes the Lord's perfect humanity, but from Abraham who was sovereignly chosen and separated by God to be the recipient of the promises of God. Those promises looked forward to Christ. "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Gen. 22:18. The Jews boasted that Abraham was their father, but John the Baptist reemphasized the truth of God's sovereign election by telling them "that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." Matt. 3:9. God could sovereignly call the Gentile just as He had called Abraham. Man's blessing is not determined by human relationship or natural ability, but by the call of God. Man cannot earn, nor is he entitled to the blessing of God. If we are to be eternally blessed, we must first come to God as those that need a Savior.

Jesus:

The angel told Joseph that Mary "shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name JESUS [Jehovah the Savior]: for He shall save His people from their sins." Matt. 1:21. Jesus is Jehovah, the eternal God, the eternal Son. He is a Savior God and has come to save. The Lord Jesus saves not only from the penalty of sins, which is eternal hell, but He saves from sins themselves. As we are occupied with Jesus, we are practically kept from actual sins. He came to save "His people," those who were in outward relationship to Himself, as well as the lost. For those who are not only in outward but inward relationships to Him as well, His desire would be nothing less.

Emmanuel:

After a soul comes to know Jesus as Jehovah the Savior, he then should come to know Jesus as Emmanuel, "God with us." In Prov. 30:1 we read of a man named Ithiel, "God with me." This is an individual blessing. Every believer should understand the truth that he is indwelt by the Spirit of God who will abide with him forever (John 14:16; 1 Cor. 6:19). The Lord Jesus Himself has also said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Heb. 13:5.

Emmanuel is a collective blessing. We sometimes sing of heaven as being "Emmanuel's land." While it is most happy to think of our being with Him, it is a different thought from His being with us. The Spirit dwells collectively in the assembly as well as individually in the believer (1 Cor. 3:16; Eph. 2:22). The Lord Jesus has promised His presence individually to each individual believer and also collectively to those who are gathered together unto His name (Matt. 18:20). When believers are gathered together on the ground of the assembly, even if there be but two or three present, they may take up the thought of Emmanuel's land. God is with them, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself in the midst.

In a coming day when the Assyrian hordes sweep into the land of Judah, the cry is made, "The stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of Thy land, O Immanuel." Isa. 8:8. As gathered together in assembly, cannot the assembly take the same ground? It is His land. When the enemy moves in, how comforting to be privileged to realize that God is "with us."

God's desire has always been to have His people together that He might dwell among them. "Let them make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them." Ex. 25:8. In the eternal state we read of new Jerusalem coming down from heaven to the earth. "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them." Rev. 21:3. His desire is the same for us now; may it be ours as well.

Governor:

If indeed the Lord is with us, He is there to guide and direct us. As Governor or Leader, He rules and feeds His people. Often in Scripture, shepherds and rulers are closely connected. Joseph, Moses and David are some who had seasons tending flocks before taking an administrative place. Peter develops this line of truth in the fifth chapter of his first epistle. These examples are needful to follow in order to have effective oversight. Compare also Acts 20:28, 29.

All are not overseers, but regardless of this, we all have to do with Jesus as our Lord, our Governor, our Leader and our Shepherd. We are not in this world to do according to our own thoughts, or to fend for ourselves, but to know and to do the will of God.

To be in the current of God's thoughts will bring us into collision with the philosophies, wisdom, and objects of this world. If we are true to the Word of God, we will in measure experience reproach and contempt.

Nazarene:

The Lord Jesus knew rejection and derision as none other and this is brought out by the title of a Nazarene, or the "despised One." This was a stumbling block to the Jew. There are many references in the prophets to the Lord Jesus as being despised and rejected.

Additionally, the Hebrew word for Nazareth is Netzer, which means a branch or germ. Another has written, "Nazareth is called a germ from its insignificance, yet it shall through Him fill the earth with importance." All the references in the Old Testament to the Branch refer to the day when Christ will reign on earth. The Nazarene, the despised One, will be glorified.

Paul was labeled a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes. A ringleader he was not; a sect they were not, but Nazarenes they were indeed. Many Christians have tasted deeply of the reproach connected with following a rejected Christ. It is the privilege of all who love Him to know the fellowship of His sufferings. To be identified with Jesus in any way is a great privilege when we contemplate who He is.

Son of the Father:

As man, Jesus is the Son of David and the Son of Abraham, but He is eternally the Son of God, the-Son of the Father. As Jesus was baptized by John in the Jordan identifying Himself with the repentant Jews, the Father announced that Jesus was His beloved Son in whom He was well pleased.

Jesus was ever the Son of the Father's love (John 17:24). He had come from God the Father (John 13:3; 16:27, 28). He did not become the Son at some point in a past eternity, nor at Jordan, nor at His incarnation; He is eternally the Son which is in the bosom of the Father (John 1:18).

As the Father eternally delighted in His Son, so He would have us to delight in Him as well, and contemplate Him in every way in which He is presented to us in Scripture.

John 1 and Proverbs 8

Open the veil into eternity, and the mysterious existence of God is revealed. In the gospel of John we see the majesty of the two Persons, in Proverbs we see the delights and joys of the two Persons of the Godhead-self-sufficiency. From all eternity the Father and the Son co-existed, and the corresponding relationship existed and was enjoyed by both. But, in time, the Son entered into that relationship as man (see Luke 1:35), into the divine and eternal relationship of Son with the Father. But He was the only-begotten Son in eternity. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Out of His Treasure

SELF-RENUNCIATION

"Men shall be lovers of self."

2 Tim. 3:2 JND

The Holy Spirit has no fellowship with self. The heart is not delivered from it until the Spirit has guided our thoughts to Jesus. The effectual presence of the Spirit crucifies egotism and gives freedom of thought about ourselves... it occupies us with but one object—Jesus.

Low at Thy feet, Lord Jesus,

This is the place for me;

Here I have learned deep lessons:

Truth that has set me free.

Free from myself, Lord Jesus,

Free from the ways of men;

Chains of thought that have bound me

Never can bind me again.

None but Thyself, Lord Jesus,

Conquered this wayward will,

But for Thy love constraining,

I had been wayward still.

Son of God

The title "Son of God" is asserted of the Lord Jesus Christ in three different applications.

First: He is "Son of God" in incarnation.

"Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten Thee." Psa. 2:7. Here it is in connection with His kingship in Zion, presented to Israel at His first coming, but postponed till His second, because of their unbelief then and now. So Jehovah's King was Jehovah's Son before He was begotten in time. So also in Isa. 9:6: "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given."

Compare Luke 1:32: "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David." And further in verse 35: "Therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."

Second: He is "Son of God" as risen from the dead.

Acts 13:33, 34 shows Jesus in two positions: verse 33 as raised upon earth and verse 34 as raised up from the dead. See also Col. 1. where verse 15 seems to refer to His birth into the world, and where He necessarily was the firstborn or chief of every creature as being the Creator. In verse 18 the reference is to His place of preeminence as risen, "who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead." Heb. 1:5 speaks of Him in the first of these two positions; verse 6 probably in the second, especially if the marginal reading (which is most likely the correct one) be taken. This would connect His introduction into the habitable world with His second coming. Rev. 1:5 may confirm this.

Third: Heb. 1:1-3 evidently speaks of our Lord as Son in the highest sense, that is, as divine.

So it is almost everywhere in the gospel and epistles of John. "The only begotten of the Father" does not refer to His place as born on earth or risen from the dead, but expresses His eternal relationship as a divine Person.

Son of Man

John 5 shows us the Son quickening whom He will in virtue of His divine glory, and it declares that all judgment is committed to Him as Son of man. This title refers to His assumption of that nature in which He is first rejected, and secondly, exalted as universal Lord and Judge. (See Psa. 8 compared with Heb. 2, Dan. 7, and the Gospels.) Also He is seen as "the Son of man" in connection with the judgment of the seven churches in Rev. 1. That is why cherubim as the witness of judgment were wrought on the veil, the type of His flesh.

Bible Witness and Review

Humanity of the Son

Spotless perfection in a confused world J. G. Bellett

How perfect in all its sympathies was the humanity the Son had assumed! Surely, indeed, it was the common humanity apart from sin. There is with us a temptation, in the time of confusion, to give up all as hopeless and gone, to say, It is endless and needless to be still making a difference. All is in disorder and apostasy, why then attempt to distinguish?

But this was not the Lord's way. Being in the world He was in the confusion, but not of it just as He was in the world, but not of it. He met all sorts of people in all sorts of conditions, here some and there some when all should have been compact together, but He held His even, narrow, unsoiled and undistracted way through it all. The pretensions of the Pharisees, the worldliness of the Herodians, the philosophy of the Sadducees, the fickleness of the multitude, the attempts of adversaries, and the ignorance and infirmities of the disciples, were moral materials which He had to meet and deal with every day.

The condition of things, as well as the characters of persons, exercised Him. The coin of Caesar was circulating in Immanuel's land, partition-walls all but in ruin, Jew and Gentile—dean and unclean—confounded, except as religious arrogance might still retain them after its own manner. His one "golden rule" expressed the perfectness of His passage through all—"Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."

The remnant in the day of captivity, a like day of confusion, carried themselves beautifully, distinguishing things that differed, and not hopelessly giving all up. Daniel would advise the king, but not eat his meat. Nehemiah would serve in the palace, but not suffer the Moabite or the Ammonite in the house of the Lord. Mordecai would guard the king's life, but would not bow to the Amalekite. Ezra and Zerubbabel would accept favors from the Persian, but not Samaritan help, nor Gentile marriages. The captives would pray for the peace of Babylon, but would not sing Zion's songs there. All this was beautiful, and the Lord in His day was perfect in this remnant character.

All this has a voice for us, for ours is a day in its character of confusion not unlike these days of the captives, or of Jesus. And we, like them, are not to act on the hopelessness of the scene, but know still how to render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.

In the Lord's Company

The next day after, John stood, and two of his disciples; and looking upon Jesus as He walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God! And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto Him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest Thou? He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where He dwelt, and abode with Him that day. John 1:35-39.

"Come and see." What simple words, and yet what depth there is in them. And how like the One who spoke them: God's perfect, sinless, spotless Lamb. But what was the question that called forth that loving invitation, "Master where dwellest Thou?" Those two disciples of John were attracted to the blessed Person of the Lord Jesus. As they heard from the lips of their master those words, "Behold the Lamb of God," they immediately left John and followed Jesus.

We then read, "Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye?" Yes, He knows if any of us seek to follow Him, and if that is our desire He will surely lead us into a closer knowledge of Himself. We are not permitted to know what passed between Him and those two disciples as they responded to His invitation, and came and saw where He dwelt and abode with Him that day. We may be sure that each moment spent in His presence revealed to their wondering gaze some perfection of His blessed Person.

Do these words not speak to us? Is He not saying to us, "Come and see?" Yes, surely it is so, and where is His dwelling place now? In John 1:18 we read, "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." The bosom of the Father was His dwelling place from all eternity, and even when here on earth He could speak of Himself as "the Son of man which is in heaven." He still occupies the same place, but having been to Calvary's cross and now gone back to the Father, He brings us who once had "no hope" and were "without God in the world" into association with Himself and relationship with God His Father. He would have us enjoy with Himself the Father's love, and enter into His purposes of grace for us.

Let us now see what effect that time spent in the Lord's presence had upon those disciples. We read of Andrew: "He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus." That little time spent with the Lord Jesus made Andrew a soul winner. The Lord Jesus had become so precious to him that he thought he must find someone else with whom he could share this joy, so he went right away and brought Peter to Jesus. In later years when Peter was so wonderfully used to the salvation of souls, how glad Andrew must have been that the Lord had allowed him to be the vessel used for his brother's blessing.

The more we respond to the invitation, "Come and see," and seek to enter into something of God's heart of love, the more anxious we shall be that those around us should be brought to the knowledge of the Lord Jesus as their Savior. And they, too, can enjoy all the blessings that are to be found in Him. May we be kept so near to our blessed Master that we, like Andrew, may be the

means of bringing others to Jesus.

The Raising of Lazarus

by W. Fereday

Bethany was always a sweet spot to the self-emptied Son of God. It was one of the few places on earth where He was loved, and where His spirit found rest. Lazarus and his sisters constituted a delightful home circle. They loved each other, and they were one in their faith in the despised and rejected Messiah. Sickness invaded their home, for the wisdom of divine love does not always shield its objects from this visitation. Lazarus was laid low, to the deep distress of his devoted sisters (John 11).

The Lord was at that moment in retreat beyond Jordan. There the appeal reached Him: "Lord, behold, he whom Thou lovest is sick." The sisters did not definitely ask Him to come to their aid, assuming apparently that the news would bring Him without delay. He could have healed the sick man from a distance by His word (as in the case of the centurion's servant), but He did not do so. Nor did He hasten to Bethany, but remained yet two days where He was. Were we not persuaded that such a One as He could never err, His conduct in this instance would amaze us. He was walking in the light, and saw perfectly the course He should pursue to the glory of God.

Presently He announced to His disciples that Lazarus was dead, and that He was glad for their sakes He was not there, adding: "Nevertheless let us go unto him." Their warning that perhaps martyrdom awaited Him in Judea the Lord passed by without concern.

A stupendous miracle was about to be performed. He had already restored two dead persons to life—Jairus's daughter, and the son of the widow of Nain. The one was just dead, and the other was on the way to burial. But Lazarus had been buried four days when the Savior reached Bethany, and his body was already advanced in corruption.

Martha met Him with the remark that if He had been on the spot her brother had not died. When He spoke of resurrection she replied: "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." She did not realize that she was addressing the Resurrection and the Life, who has power to raise His own sleeping ones when He pleases, and to stay the march of death upon His living ones so that they will never die at all. With all the light given in the New Testament epistles since Martha's day, few in Christendom are at this hour beyond her poor notion of a general resurrection at the last day.

Mary followed her sister to the feet of Jesus. Touched by the scene of grief, the Savior groaned and wept-precious proofs of the reality of His holy humanity. Coming to the tomb, the stone was removed at His word in spite of Martha's remonstrance. A few words of prayer to the Father were followed by the loud summons: "Lazarus, come forth." Soul and body were united once more. Liberty followed: "Loose him, and let him go." Wonderful outshining of the glory of God in Him whom men were about to crucify! Should not this marvel have convinced His adversaries of the futility of their designs against Him?

He is the Quickener of the dead. At the appointed hour He will raise His own for glory with Himself in the Father's house. At the dissolution of all things He will call forth His foes for the resurrection of judgment. Meanwhile He quickens men's souls. Those who heed His voice in the gospel message, pass even now from death unto life, and have the blissful assurance that they will never come into judgment (John 5:24-29). Life and liberty are the present blissful portion of all who believe in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

God's hand is always better than man's; His seeming harshness even is better than the world's favor; the spring which guides it is always love, and love directed by perfect wisdom, which we shall understand by and by.

The Lord with the Jewish Remnant

by F. G. Patterson

John 21

In John 21 the disciples had gone into Galilee, according to the commandment of the Lord (Mark 14:28; 16:7) to meet Him there. In Galilee the Lord was in relation with the poor of the flock—with the Jewish remnant, and this chapter considers this relationship.

In Luke 24, we find that the Lord ascends into heaven and blesses the disciples while departing from them. There He commissions them to preach repentance and the remission of sins among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. Luke's gospel has to do with heaven, therefore we are told that Christ ascended into heaven. The gospel that the Apostle Paul preached, corresponded to this mission, although the Spirit through Paul joins with it the revelation of the union of believers and consequently the Church.

Matthew does not give us the ascension of Christ into heaven, nor does John. In both He is found in Galilee. All the disciples saw Him ascend up into heaven from Bethany, but the evangelists, Matthew and John, are not occupied with that subject. They take up the relationship of the Lord with the Jewish remnant.

Thomas, a figure of this remnant, recognizes the Lord when he sees Him, at which point the Lord declares that those (Christians) who believe without seeing are specially blessed (John 20). Now in John 21, the Holy Spirit puts the subject altogether aside. The remnant of the Jews are now found gathered together, and the net is cast into the sea to gather other fishes. This is, in type, the gathering of the Gentiles and of the children of Israel for the millennium. Here the net does not break, in contrast with what had happened when the Lord called the disciples in Luke 5 where the net did indeed break—that is, it showed in a figure that the gathering together of believers at that time could not be accomplished. But in the millennium, of which we have a figure in John 21, it will be accomplished, because the personal presence of the Lord will prevent the work from coming to ruin. The figure being used before in Luke's gospel makes it easy to understand it again in this chapter. The Lord had fishes already on land (v. 9). The supper signifies that the Lord and His own are again in company on earth. In chapter 13 He had left the table in order to become their servant, and to wash the feet of His disciples. By His grace, this is what He is now doing in heaven for us. Here again companionship with them is renewed.

This is the third time that Jesus appeared to His disciples after His resurrection. He alludes to the first two times in the preceding chapter and now His eating with them is the third time. He appeared once to found the Church, and to send His disciples into the world; the second time when He appears Thomas believes because he sees, a figure of the Jews in the last days. Now, the third time, He is seen in association with His own, and gathering together all the spared Israel and the Gentiles under His authority.

In verse 15 He gives Peter the care of the sheep of the circumcision. It is not a question of the gospel sent forth into the world, but He gives to Peter, under circumstances very instructive, the care of persons already gathered. He does not reprove him for his fall, nor speak of his denial of his Lord, but He searches his heart to show him the root of his failure. Peter had said, "Though all men shall be offended because of Thee, yet will I never be offended.... Though I should die with Thee, yet will I not deny Thee." The Lord says to him, "Lovest thou Me more than these?" With these words He destroys the false foundation, the heart is made bare, and Peter is made fit to feed the sheep.

Peter's weakness was manifested, and in perfect grace, Jesus confides His beloved sheep, the most precious objects of His love, to him who had learned his weakness and to have no confidence in himself. Peter had found a love in which he could have perfect confidence. What a lesson he had to learn in order to be fitted for the Lord's service! Notice in what way the two great apostles Peter and Paul were educated. Peter denied the Lord when he knew Him, and Paul would have destroyed His name if he had been able. Their mouths are closed unless they speak of the grace which they specially have tasted. But it is beautiful to see how in the moment in which the Lord shows what His servant was, He confides to his care that which was dearest to Him.

Then the Lord shows the end of the earthly career of Peter, and does it with deepest grace. Peter is forced to see that the will and good pleasure of man are worth nothing. He had wished to go to death for Jesus, but in the hour of danger the voice of a servant girl was enough to frighten him. Therefore, when he would be old, another would bind him and lead him whither he would not. The privilege would be granted to him, when human will would be no longer active, of dying for the Lord, which he had not the courage to do when he had a wish to do so. He had lost a precious opportunity by unbelief, and he might never have had an opportunity of recovering it.

The Lord having restored him in grace, gave him back what he had lost and power to accomplish it when human will was no longer present. Then when he has learned what he is, and the grace of the Lord, the Lord could say to him: "Follow thou Me." The instruction is personal, but in this account I do not doubt that we find an intimation of the result of the service of Peter. The service of the Lord in the midst of the Jews has not gathered this people. Peter must follow the Lord in the experience of a fruitless work in respect of the people, although many souls have been brought to the knowledge of the Lord.

John had another service. Peter, seeing that John was also following the Lord, wished to know what would become of him. The Lord answers in words purposely obscure—"If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" The disciples thought from this that John would not die, but the Lord had not said this.

Not only did John live a much longer time than the others (when the hopes of Israel were closed, on to the coming of the judgment executed on the people), but his ministry extends on to the return of the Savior. That is what is found in his epistles and in the Revelation. It is not here a question of Paul's ministry which began after the death of Stephen (this introduces the Church united to Christ in heaven) but of the testimony of the Holy Spirit in relation with the earth, and the hope of establishing on the earth a people owned of God.

This result has not been brought about by means of Peter; therefore, John as an apostle must declare that many antichrists were there already. It proves that the last times had come, and as a prophet, he declares the fall of the Church and the judgment of the world.

Bible Challenger-06-June V.06

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the words denoting the daily frequency with which one of old praised the Lord because of righteous judgments. [The number in brackets indicates the number of words in the answer.]

1. Something often tried in a furnace which would remind us of the quality of certain words. [1]
2. The sad way in which a mighty monarch was to act similar to the beasts of the field. [4]
3. The form of that which was changed in a furious man towards a certain trio of non-conformists. [1]
4. Something belonging to someone not very old which opened, indicating the prayer of a prophet had been answered. [1]
5. The quantitative part of an answer which a servant gave his master when commanded to report on what his gaze seaward revealed from a lofty lookout. [1]
6. The device which a septet of priests once used to initiate the leveling of a formidable barrier. [1]
7. The words which one who has wronged his brother repeatedly can say and still receive forgiveness on scriptural authority. [2]
8. The title given to the prophet who was instrumental in causing a part of a grown man to become as a little child. [3]
9. The direction the high priest faced when ministering before the mercy seat. [1]
10. The bright color much in evidence at the time of cleaning a house of a plague. [1]

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

Bible Challenger-05-May Answers V.06

1. Key of knowledge
2. Newman
3. Obedience of Christ
4. Wise
5. Life
6. Eyes of the Lord
7. Dew
8. Grace
9. Every good work

1. Luke 11:52
2. Col. 3:10
3. 2 Cor. 10:5
4. Prov. 18:15
5. Eccl. 7:12
6. Prov. 22:12
7. Prov. 3:20
8. Ruth 2:10
9. Col. 1:10

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of KNOWLEDGE: but fools despise wisdom and instruction."
Prov. 1:7.

The Lord Is Coming!

WHEN?

It may be today! The Word of God does not tell us, but we read that "the coming of the Lord draweth nigh" (James 5:8), and again, "Surely I come quickly." Rev. 22:20.

WHY?

To take His blood-bought ones, dead and living, to be where He is. "The dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds... and so shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thess. 4:16, 17. And, "I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:3.

HOW?

"The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." 1 Thess. 4:16. "Behold, I come quickly." Rev. 3:11. He comes in person—"the Lord Himself."

MEET WHERE?

The meeting place shall be in the air, and not on earth. The Lord shall descend: they shall "be caught up... to meet the Lord in the air."

GO WHERE?

To the Father's house on high, the heavenly home of the children of God, to the prepared mansion above, and the joys of the eternal presence of the Lord. (See John 14:1-3.)

EDITORIAL: The Church in the Millennium

First of all, we want to thank each one who has contributed articles for use in this monthly periodical, and also for information that has been helpful. We appreciate the many who have sent these to us and we apologize that we cannot reply more personally to each one who has helped us.

"Heaven" is the primary subject this month, so we want the editorial to be of the same subject. Frequently we have written about the seven-year tribulation period that precedes the thousand-year kingdom and reign of our Lord Jesus Christ. Surely the nearest event is the coming of the Lord Jesus for His Church; then will be the tribulation period. The millennium will come next, and so let us think of that time and of how near it is.

For this we think it good to let you read a little from the pen of C. E. Lunden.

The Millennial Heaven

In the book of Revelation an angel calls John the apostle to see the bride, the Lamb's wife. He was shown the 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. 21:10-17.

Think of a jasper stone, transparent, clear as crystal, radiating in various hues the light of the glories of the Lamb, the Redeemer. Just think, dear brethren, that the grace of God has put the Church in the position of making known the glories of God and the Lamb to the earth below (Eph. 3:21). The bride will dwell in the Father's house in uncreated light, yet she is the city descending from heaven (above the earth) and will have the glory of God. She is not divine; she is the Church, the city, the holy Jerusalem, the heavenly center of government: She is the "mother of all living," as was the type "Eve", so named by Adam in faith (Gen. 3:20).

All who have died in faith down through the ages until Pentecost, also the martyrs of Rev. 20:4, will dwell in the holy city. The babes who will have been raptured will be there with mature, heavenly bodies (Psa. 110:3; 1 Cor. 15:51-54; Matt. 18:11).

Of Abraham it is said, "He looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Heb. 11:10), and of other men of faith, children of Abraham, it is said, "They that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country." Heb. 11:14. "But now they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for He hath prepared for them a city." Heb. 11:16. These are the heirs of righteousness by faith, the generation of the children of faith from the Old Testament.

The full overflowing of blessing to the earth from this glorious millennial heaven is symbolized by the pure river of the water of life (Rev. 22:1), clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb—a fixed channel of blessing, through Christ and the Church (Eph. 3:21; Mic. 5:7; Hos. 2:21-23).

The tree of life is Christ in the midst of the plaza and of the river. The heavenly saints, in communion with Him, will enjoy the continuous fruits, food for the heavenly ones, and the leaves are for the healing of the Gentiles on earth (Rev. 22:2). How much needs to be healed in the earth in the hearts of His people. The result will be a millennial paradise, a permanent healing from heaven.

We "shall see His face" suggests personal, intimate communion; it is the "white stone" of Rev. 2:17. We shall carry our Redeemer's name on our foreheads (Rev. 22:4). There will be no night in heaven, no artificial or created light (Rev. 22:5).

The glory of the Gentiles shall be brought to the holy city which will reign over the earth (Rev. 21:24). Only those whose names will be found written in the Lamb's book of life will dwell within the holy city, the new Jerusalem: "The Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it." Rev.

21:22.

After the rapture of the saints to heaven, the kingdom of heaven, in heaven, will be spoken of as the kingdom of the Father (Matt. 13:43). Such will be its character and place for the duration of the heavenly millennium.

"For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." Rom. 8:19. The sons of God are the Church (Heb. 12:23).

The manifestation is the Church coming visibly to reign with Christ over the earth.

The kingdom on earth in which Christ reigns will be known then as the kingdom of the Son of man. It will continue for 1000 years, when "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." Isa. 11:9. The gospel of the kingdom will be preached for this period until all men have heard it individually (Isa. 66:19).

"That in the dispensation of the fullness of times [the end of the millennium] 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. This will include all believers and elect angels everywhere. All wicked men and angels will be judged at the great white throne and will be cast into the lake of fire. Then will begin the eternal state with God all in all (1 Cor. 15:24,28), and will result in a new universe.

C. Buchanan

Behold, I Come Quickly

Rev. 3:11, 12

The Church's hope is to be with the Lord in heaven, and the Church ought to be looking for it. Surely the cry is now going forth, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him." I ask you, have you gone out? There were those who not only believed when they heard the cry, but went out. Have you left everything that you know—not what I know—to be contrary to Him? If so, you need not be afraid. Be assured that anything your poor will wants to keep is not worth keeping. It is gain to go out from all to meet Him, gain to be in the path of the Lord.

Has that cry filled your heart? Do not be content with saying, I have oil in my vessel, and it does not much matter where I am. The Lord grant that may not be your feeling. He has saved you that you may think of Him. He wants you to go out to meet Him, to value this precious thought of His coming. Now, are you keeping His Word? You know. This is a question between your own conscience and the Lord.

When you have kept what you do know, you will know more, and find it joy and liberty to be serving Him.

"Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." This is a precious word. The Lord does not speak of coming like a thief, as He does to Sardis which had taken the world as its mistress; the unpurged world was allowed the place that belonged to the Lord. Here He comes as one who has a crown to give. The Lord Himself coming to meet us is the jewel He has given us to keep. The Lord grant us to hold that fast, that it may not be taken away from us.

We are weak now, but the Lord says to those who are content to be weak now, "Him... will I make a pillar in the temple of My God." A pillar is the emblem of strength, that which supported the temple, contrasted with weakness. It is a very hard thing to be content to be weak. It is comfortable to feel the world's strength under us. But if we are content to be weak now, the Lord tells us what He will do for us then: "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of My God."

For those who have thought of Christ now, Christ will think of all the joy He can give them then. The Lord grant that this may be our hope while we wait for Him!

Bible Treasury

Loops and Taches

Seemingly insignificant, they gave unity to the tabernacle.

C. H. Mackintosh

Ex. 26:4, 6

In contemplating the structure of the tabernacle in the wilderness, we may observe what an important place was assigned to the "loops of blue." By means of them and the "taches of gold," the curtains were joined together, and the manifested unity of the whole structure preserved. These loops and taches might seem to be very insignificant and unimportant, but without them there would have been no unity. The curtains, however beautiful in themselves, would have hung apart one from the other, and thus one grand feature of the manifestation would have been lost.

Looking at the tabernacle as a figure of Christ, as surely we may, we can easily trace the beauty and significance of those loops of blue and taches of gold. They typified that perfect unity and consistency in the character and ways of the Man Christ Jesus which were the result of His heavenly grace and divine energy. In the life of the blessed Lord Jesus, and in all the scenes and circumstances of that life, we not only see each distinct phase and feature perfect in itself, but also a perfect combination of all those phases and features by the power of that which was heavenly and divine in Him.

The curtains of the true Tabernacle were not only beautiful in themselves, but they were beautifully combined—exquisitely linked together by means of those loops of blue and taches of gold. These can only be discerned and appreciated by those who are, in some measure, instructed in the holy mysteries of the sanctuary.

That which is true of the Divine Living Word, is equally true of the divine written Word. The spiritual student of Holy Scripture will readily discern the "loops of blue" and "taches of gold". This is only what we might expect. The Living Word is the divine embodiment of the written Word, and the written Word is the divine transcript of the Living Word. Hence, we may look for the same heavenly unity, the same divine consistency, the same rare and exquisite combination in both the one and the other.

In 1 Cor. 16 we have a very lovely and a very practical illustration of our subject. In verse 13 the Apostle says, "Quit you like men, be strong." Here we have one fine feature of the Christian character—that manly strength which is so desirable. But this, if taken by itself, might easily degenerate into a rough, rude, high-handed way in dealing with others, the very opposite of what we find in our divine Exemplar. The Spirit in the Apostle forms a loop of blue, and by means of a golden tach, links onto this manly strength, another feature which is so needful, namely, love. "Let all your things be done with charity [love]." Most precious combination! Strength and love. Love and strength. If you untie this heavenly loop, you will either have a high, haughty, inconsiderate style, or a soft, pliable, enfeebled mode of acting which will sacrifice everything for peace and

quietness.

Again, look at that noble definition of pure religion, given at the close of the first chapter of James. There the Apostle uses the loop and tach in order to connect together the two phases of divine religion. "To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction" is looped with unspotted separation from the world. In other words, active benevolence and personal holiness are inseparably linked together. Untie the loop, and what do you have? Either a sort of benevolence which can go hand in hand with the most intense spirit of worldliness, or a rigid pharisaic separation without a single generous emotion.

It is only the presence of that which is heavenly and divine that can secure true unity and consistency of character. And let it never be forgotten that true Christianity is simply Christ reproduced, by the Holy Spirit, in the life of the Christian. Dry rules will never do; it must be Christ in all.

The Heavenly and His Heavenly Ones

We should recognize that Christianity in its very essence is as heavenly as He who inspired it. Many who accept its divine authorship have never adequately apprehended it to be an absolutely heavenly thing, though in an earthly locale. Practically we find that the less it is apprehended as heavenly, the less also will be its divine aspect before the soul. It is impossible to understand its character and its scope, unless in its origin, operation, and end it is seen to be altogether a heavenly product for a heavenly purpose.

Rarely do we meet a Christian who understands his parentage and occupies, according to God, his present portion! How contracted and how erroneous are the commonly prevailing thoughts of what Christianity is. How little is it accepted as the reflection of a heavenly Christ in a heavenly people redeemed from the earth, who are here only for Himself and looking for translation at His coming!

"The first man is of the earth, earthy" (1 Cor. 15:47); he had been running his carnal and material course for forty centuries on the earth before "the second man" paid a visit of thirty-three years to the same earth, having been sent into it in grace to "the first man". As man, He was with "the earthy". In God's reckoning He was the "second man", for all before Him God counts as one. He was the "last Adam", for there could be no more, after. But more than this, He was from (or out of) heaven just as the first man was out of the earth and made of dust. Refused, cut off from the earth, and having nothing, He is now the risen Man in the glory of God, and alike in incarnation and in resurrection He is "the heavenly"—then, now and eternally.

As He is "the heavenly one, such also the heavenly ones." v. 48 JND. There is another aspect of Christianity in which birth and profession give status, and wherein are certain privileges and answering responsibilities. But what is now before us is a matter of race, and as to this we are born of God, are partakers of the divine nature, and just as truly as the angels we are one of the heavenly families. The one who lived, who died, and who lives again, has redeemed unto Himself a chosen race of which, as the risen man, He is the glorified federal head.

This word—"As the heavenly one, such also the heavenly ones"—so constitutes Christianity in its very essence that every bit of it expresses in word or in deed the cardinal truth that man is in the glory of God, and God is glorified thereby. One who was once visible upon earth, "in the likeness of sinful flesh" (Rom. 8:3), now sits in a glorified, but no less real, positive, human body in the Father's throne. From the glory of God, from the throne of the Father, the risen and exalted Man fills all heaven with His peerless presence.

"When He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high"; this marks the starting point, both as to time and place. It is thus "the heavenly" gone back to heaven, the man in the glory of God. It is this fact—the parent truth of Christianity—which imparts to it its distinctive character. It is a divine thing as He is divine. It is heavenly as He is heavenly: He is its sure foundation, its tried corner-stone, its immovable keystone, its crowning top-stone. It is all and

altogether for His glory.

When He was here in the days of His flesh, knowing He came from God and went to God, He took a towel and girded Himself, and washed the feet of His heavenly ones, and in principle that word applies (in a lower sense, of course) to us. We, too, may say that we have come from God and are going to God, and when He who is coming returns in the air, we shall be eternally with God, and in the likeness of the bosom-Son of the Father. Meanwhile, we blessedly experience His tender solicitude in removing with a practiced hand every defilement that we contract in passing along an earthly scene. Nor will He cease this heavenly service of His faithful love and unwearied grace, until we assume "the image of the heavenly" at His return.

If we look at the origin of Christianity, we see that it sprang from the heart of the Father, as it takes its title from Him who adorns His throne. It is most interesting to trace how in every step of its delineation in the Word, the Spirit of God indicates its wonderful and varied relations to the Father.

It was the Father who sent His Son to be Savior of the world (1 John 4:14). In Him the glory of the only-begotten of the Father was beheld (John 1:14). His place in the bosom of the Father made Him competent to declare Him (v. 18). Here He was about His Father's business (Luke 2:49). What He saw the Father do He did (John 5:19). The will of the Father alone was what He sought to fulfill (v. 30). The Father's works were given Him to finish (v. 36). The Father's name it was in which He was come (v. 43). The Father gave to us the true bread from heaven (6:32), and gave us to Him (vv. 37, 39). It is learning of the Father that brings us to the Son (vv. 46, 65). The life everlasting is the Father's commandment (12:50). The words, also, the Son affirms to be the Father's (14:10-24), and when He goes away it is to prepare a place for us in the Father's house (14:2). The Father holds the sheep in His hand (10:29), is the husbandman who purges the fruit-bearing branches of the vine (15:1, 2), that He, the Father, may be glorified in our "much fruit" (v. 8). The Father is to be asked in the Son's name, and that which we ask, the Father will give, for He Himself loves us (16:23, 27). The glorified Son shows us plainly of the Father (v. 25), and is now glorifying Him (17:1). The eternal life is the knowledge of the Father and the Son (v. 3), and those who have it are kept in the Holy Father's own name (v. 11), are sanctified through the Father's word which is truth (vv. 17-19), have the Father's name declared unto them, and are loved of the Father's heart, even as He is loved (v. 26). By the glory of the Father has He been raised up (Rom. 6:4); to the Father's throne has He been taken (Rev. 3:21), and from thence has He sent down "the promise of the Father"-the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4;2:33).

These are only a few of the scriptural marks of the Father's relations to Christ and His body of which we speak. All of these are of incalculable value, as forming an essentially divine bulwark to Satan's present efforts to terrestrialize Christianity. And he has made efforts to humanize its Author, but clearly the Father is neither earthly nor human.

Christianity, then, is the revelation of the Father by the Person and work of the Lord Jesus, His eternal Son, in the presence and power of the Holy Spirit as "the promise of the Father." Coming forth from His blessed heart according to eternal purpose and counsels, it is based upon the atoning work and acquired glories of the eternal Son. And it has its unfolding by the living energy of the Spirit of God dwelling in us. By Him is its heavenly character wrought out, through and in "the heavenly ones" whom grace has reached for this precious character of blessing, as the associates in eternal glory, and in heaven of Him who is emphatically, "the heavenly."

Two Question

Two questions naturally arise here. (1) Have we truly accepted the fact that generically we are as heavenly as He who adorns the Father's throne? (Compare John 17:16 with Heb. 2:11.)

(2) How far does the character and order of our lives make obvious that our former earthly standing has been eternally abrogated to make room for the new and indissoluble relations we hold to the Man through whom God has gratified His own heart in exalting Him to highest glory? If believers could answer these questions satisfactorily, it would be utterly impossible that they should go on in practical fellowship with the course and current of this world, or that they should be governed by its principles, giving utterance to its maxims, aiding its objects, adopting its practices, and accepting its patronage. The fruit of this is as the apples of Sodom whose reaping shall ever be leanness and poverty and wretchedness of soul.

May He, "THE HEAVENLY," so blessedly connect with Himself the hearts of those who have accepted His heavenly call, that our Christianity may not conform with that of this poor, faithless world. But may they be, through grace, ever acquiring in an increasing degree a character suited to its divine origin: a character expressive of its celestial destiny and redolent with the graces and the virtues of a glorified Christ!

A Door Opened in Heaven

Neither joy nor trouble will
occupy the heart that is
centered upon Christ.
Here is his comfort...

Rev. 4 and 5

The connection of the first verse of chapter 4 with the addresses to the seven churches is most significant.

After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter.

A door is opened in heaven to John, and he sees the throne of God in government, when everything is according to God's mind. John's spirit had been troubled by the display of the utter failure in testimony just witnessed in the churches. He had seen the Lord walking amidst the golden candlesticks, investigating their condition, and all is entire failure—so much so that their end is such that Christ will spue them out of His mouth.

What grace at a moment like this, to open to the tried heart of the prophet a door into heaven, and to show the poor saint of God—tempest-tossed amid the ruin of all which God has set up in the hands of man—a scene introductory to the coming day of glory, where no failure can come.

Purposes of God in Heaven

Such is the comfort of the child of God who walks in communion with God. He is shown the purpose of God in heaven, and though he may scarcely know how to steer his course amid the waves and storms as they grow more and more tempestuous around him, the Spirit of God carries his heart into a scene where no evil or failure can come. Whatever the Church may be now, God will set a throne in heaven, and One will sit thereon, displaying the glory of God's government, where not even the spray of the storm can reach! This is the stay of the heart.

If the Church is all in confusion and disorder, God shows His saints for their comfort that even now the government is in the hands of One who sits upon the throne. The display of glory here is dispensational and governmental—Jehovah-Elohim Shaddai—in connection with creation, as the One for whose pleasure all things are and were created.

Yet, I am sure that a heart touched by sovereign grace will not fail to discern Jesus in the scene as the One by whom all things are upheld. The eleventh verse is still unfulfilled:

Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created.

Fallen creation is anything but an answer to God's pleasure, being under the permitted rule of Satan, except as by Providence all things are overruled. Jesus is the sustainer of what was created for the Divine pleasure. And He will, in a new heavens and a new earth, bring all things into subjection to Him who sits upon the throne.

Redemption

The fifth chapter unfolds redemption. It is not the question then who Jesus is, but what He is, and for the comfort of the saints the heavenly drama is shown. John in a mortal body is a picture of the weakness of the present condition of the saints in communion with God. Though in heaven, John displays his weakness, and weeps much. The saint carrying about with him a body of sin and death, always displays his weakness in God's presence.

In spite of this, all the grace of God is shown forth in this scene for the comfort of John's heart. Why should John weep at what man is? Had he forgotten there was a Man who was worthy? He shows his bewilderment in God's presence and weeps much, because he had forgotten the Lamb who was worthy to take the book and to open the seven seals thereof. And notice, it is not only His personal worthiness, but the redeemed worship Him in new song. They declare His worthiness because He was slain, and had redeemed them to God by His blood. This is His worthiness. He glorified God in shedding His blood for us. He was not content to abide alone. He redeemed us to God by His blood, and we shall reign with Him.

Praises

Lower down in the chapter, the countless multitude of angels celebrates His praise, but the angels are lower down in another sense too. An angel cannot speak of Him as the One "who loved me, and gave Himself for me." They praise Him for what He is to the saints. As the servants at the welcome of the prodigal son, they praise the master for what they learn him to be as a father, in his welcome of his long-lost son. But this does not change their position; they are still the servants.

Then John hears every creature in heaven, and in earth, and under the earth, taking up the praise. This is anticipative, but it was given to John to know it beforehand for the comfort of his and our hearts. Peter had been with the Lord in the holy mountain, and had seen the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. But in point of fact that day is future. And so it is with John. It is the grand result before his eyes, as a sample and pledge of what it will be when the blessed One shall have risen up from His Father's throne to banish the adversary from the universe. No place will be left for Satan in the scene God had created for His glory.

What grace of our God to show us this glorious future! This is the time when all the mind in heaven and earth shall be one in worshipping Him who sits upon the throne, and in adoring the Lamb.

The Mind of God

And now for a practical word. Do you know this mind of heaven, the mind of God? As Christians you have the mind of Christ (1 Cor. 2:16), but whether you are displaying it in your everyday life is quite another thing. If I look around upon professing Christians and ask whether they are displaying the mind of heaven, I would have to say that they show anything but that. I see professing Christians seeking their own good things down here, laying up for themselves treasures upon earth, and in no sense waiting for God's Son from heaven.

Let me then ask you, Is the Lamb the center of your heart? This is the mind of heaven. If so, you will not seek your own joys now. You will say that you wait for the Son of God from heaven for your portion. As for trouble, you will not be striving to get out of it. You will take it as a pilgrim does the rough roads on his journey home.

Neither joy nor trouble will occupy the heart that is centered upon Christ. Such in spirit wait for the scene of this chapter to end their sorrows and bring in their joy.

Words of Truth

Self-Occupation

Whether in heaven or earth, Christ is the center of all God's plans and means of blessing. The reason why souls very often do not have peace is because they are occupied with themselves, for they do not find what they think ought to be in a Christian. If I am looking at Christ, there is no difficulty. The question then becomes: Does Christ deserve that such a one as I am should be saved? Can I deny it? The effect of this is that I am happy, and God can use me in His service. But if I am troubled about the salvation of my own soul, how can I be occupied in the service of others? The great question of self never will be settled till Christ is the center of everything to us. May it be so! He is the center of all God's thoughts of love and righteousness as well as of glory.

William Kelly

Our Citizenship Is in Heaven

We were nearing the end of what had been a very exhausting journey on a frosty morning, with the thermometer ranging about -25 °F. Already one of our little party had in a measure succumbed to the influences of the weather. We urged our horses on through a village, beyond which there remained some little distance still to travel on a road that by no means improved as we proceeded. Every one of us was already anticipating the moment when, beyond the piercing cold, the snow drifts, and all the other surroundings incidental to our onward way, we would reach our destination. There a hearty welcome was awaiting us from dear ones who, knowing we were on the way, had been thinking of us, and on the lookout for us from the early morning.

There was an unusual stir in the village as we passed through it, for our goal lay beyond, and we were greeted with the cry, "Your vote, please!" The one who hailed us thought that we were of the same intent as himself, that being the day of their election. The answer came simply enough in a shake of the head, and pointing forward as those who had their destination beyond, and who would take no part in the affairs of the village for the simple reason that we did not belong to it. We had no rights of citizenship to maintain in it; all our business was to press on in diligent haste until the journey was over.

There could be nothing congenial in our surroundings, nothing to tempt any one of us to settle down short of our destination.

As children of God, we can learn from this story that earthly cries raised, however loudly, have no meaning for our ears as we pass through as strangers and pilgrims in this world, because we are citizens of heaven. Let nothing tempt us to stop short of the goal, but the "one thing" characterizing us: "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark [goal] for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Phil. 3:13, 14.

"They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." John 17:16.

Young Christian

Ambassadors for Christ

Who are these who come amongst us,
Strangers to our speech and ways?
Passing by our joys and treasures,
Singing in the darkest days?
Are they pilgrims journeying on
From a land we have not known?
We are come from a far country,
From a land beyond the sun;
We are come from that great glory
Round our God's eternal throne:
Thence we come, and thither go;
Here no resting-place we know.

Hearts Fresh with Heavenly Streams

Are your souls, I would ask, familiar with that grace of the Father in having chosen and accepted you in the Son of His love before the foundation of the world? Do you find power in it that separates you from the world? I believe we are now in a very peculiar stage of its history, the powers of darkness letting loose a vortex of evil of every kind, and many a child of God will be caught in it if not walking with God. Some, like Lot, may have to be dragged up out of Sodom. Not that God will not keep His people, in one sense, but it is not only that: He also wants them to have the experience of what His love is, in such largeness that it will keep their hearts fresh with heavenly streams, fresh in blessed and divine thoughts. They who know all that Father's divine love, have a fountain overflowing from heaven. Are you drinking of it?

G. V. Wigram

Whosoever drinketh of the water that

I shall-give him shall never thirst; but

the water that I shaft-give him shall

be in him a well of water springing up

into everlasting life.

John 4:14

Bible Challenger-07-July V.06

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the word ascribed to the Lord Jesus which is aptly defined by a Greek letter. [The number in brackets indicates the number of words in the answer.]

1. The descriptive word for the wind that cut short a remarkable experience for someone with wet feet [1].
2. The comparative age of the one who led a mass exodus of those who were convicted by a down to earth message [1].
3. Two words of endearment for a certain captive spoken by an out-of-this-world instructor [2].
4. One of two things despised by those that are void of understanding [1].
5. That which we can very well expect regarding truth from the one who is called the father of lies [4].
6. Those who rise up against each other in a coming time of earthquakes and famines [5].
7. That which may sometimes be secured in haste, but which later may be void of blessing [1].
8. That which one of the Bible writers expressly did not write about [2].
9. A practice unique to an early church regarding timely communications with their benefactor [2].

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

Bible Challenger-06-June Answers V.06

1. Silver Psa. 12:6
2. Eat grass as oxen Dan. 4:25
3. Visage Dan. 3:19
4. Eyes (of the child) 2 Kings 4:35
5. Nothing 1 Kings 18:43
6. Trumpets Josh. 6:4
7. I repent Luke 17:4
8. Man of God 2 Kings 5:14,15
9. Eastward Lev. 16:14
10. Scadet Lev. 14:51

"SEVEN TIMES a day do I praise Thee, because of Thy righteous judgments." Psa. 119:164.

Perfect Submission

A little deaf-mute at an examination at an institution in London, on being asked, "Who made the world?" immediately wrote: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

He was asked in a similar manner, "Why did Jesus come into the world?" Again the little boy, with a bright smile indicating delight and gratitude, wrote: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."

A third question was then asked, evidently to produce the most powerful feelings: "Why were you born deaf and dumb, while I can hear and speak?"

"Never," said an eyewitness, "shall I forget the peace which settled upon his countenance as he took up the pencil and wrote: 'Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in Thy sight.'"

Submission to the will

Of Him who guides me still,

Is surety of His love revealed;

My soul shall rise above

This world in which we move;

I conquer only where I yield.

Not what I wish to be,

Nor where I wish to go,

For who am I that I should choose my way?

The Lord shall choose for me,

'Tis better far I know;

So let Him bid me go, or stay.

EDITORIAL: Money Is a Defense

Money is a defense." These four words are found in Eccl. 7:12. A large-print headline stated this: "Money is behind Moscow's shift in Mideast policy." Money apparently was also one of the great driving forces that foolishly led Saddam Hussein to invade Kuwait.

For the coalition forces to drive the Iraqis out of Kuwait, the cost was estimated at 50 billion dollars (\$50,000,000,000.00).

In connection with this subject we quote Douglas Berry: "The weakness in the North American banking system that we have discussed previously is now all very evident, and at great cost to our governments. The war has taken the focus off the severe financial crisis, however. America looks so strong and admired for its decisive lead in the Gulf war now, that I fear that other financially strong nations (Japan, Germany, etc.) will probably resume their support of America's deficit, and the necessary financial discipline may be put off. I don't know where this all fits in with the Scriptures and God's plan at the moment. The Gulf crisis is probably not over. It is interesting to see how quickly things can flare up in any area, and produce some unexpected affiances and enemies. The Gulf war developed and has waned in only seven months."

Agreeing with the above quote, a leading financial newspaper projects its estimates into the next decade and says, "Global banking competition is increasing and the Europeans have the advantage."

All these things are interesting to the believer as they may relate to the final years before Christ comes in power and glory to set up His kingdom. To us it seems that there is some shift of power toward the north from whence the king of the north will come (Dan. 11:40). Turkey and Syria have both gained influence and strength as allies with the coalition forces. Most notable, though, is the respect, admiration, and strength of the West. Perhaps money will be the great mover in the near future as we expect the revived Roman Empire to arise. This doubtless will be after the rapture, but some gaining of power is already seen in Europe.

Have we already seen a sample of what is stated in Rev. 13:4, "Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?"

C. Buchanan

Sevenfold Blessing

Deuteronomy 33

"The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and
He addeth NO SORROW with it." Prov. 10:22.

Yea, He loved [loves] the people; all

His saints are in Thy hand: and they.. SAT DOWN at Thy feet; every one shall receive of
Thy words. (Verse 3.)

The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in SAFETY

by Him; and the Lord shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between His shoulders.
(Verse 12.)

Him that was SEPARATED from his brethren. (Verse 16.)

There they shall offer SACRIFICES of righteousness. (Verse 19.)

O Naphtali, SATISFIED with favor, and full with the blessing of the Lord, possess thou... (Verse 23.)

As thy days, so shall thy STRENGTH be. (Verse 25.)

Happy art thou... who is like unto thee, O people SAVED by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and
who is the sword of thy excellency.

(Verse 29.)

"There is none like unto the God of

Jeshurun, who rideth upon, the heavens to

thy help, and in His majesty, upon the

cloud. The ETERNAL GOD is thy refuge

[dwelling-place], and underneath are the

everlasting arms."

(Verse 26 JND; verse 27.)

It is a great thing to know what the "blessing" is

(1 Peter 2:9), and to see that we get it for ourselves in its fullness, not seeming "to come short of it"
(Heb. 4:1), or missing it (Heb. 12:17). The wonderful things revealed in this chapter have not yet

been secured by those to whom such words were particularly addressed, and that through failure on their part, but a soon-coming day will see the fulfillment of all such promises.

But we, in our day of enlightenment when the Spirit of God is working on every hand, may prove the deeper reality of this blessing in its spiritual and far more wonderful aspect. Let us see to it that we miss nothing of it, for we may have it all IN CHRIST. (2 Cor. 1:20.)

The Blessings of a Trial

D. R. Macy

In John 11 we have a touching account of a sore trial that God allows to come into the home of some very dear friends of the Lord Jesus. Now we know that sometimes the difficulties in our lives are the chastening hand of the Lord because of failure and sin that we have allowed. But this is not the purpose or the reason for the problem here. He uses this severe test to show His own more of His glory as well as the depth of His love and care for them.

What do we know about this home in Bethany? We know that it is a home where the Lord Jesus is welcome, where His presence is appreciated and enjoyed. He often goes there with His disciples. Each in that home is conscious of the Lord's love for him or her. And we know that they are active in worship and service, as we know that Mary anointed the feet of Jesus with her ointment and twice we find Martha serving Him.

It is into this home that the Lord allows a very severe trial and test. We might have thought that everything is in order, spiritually, in this home and that there is no need for such sorrow to enter this household. But, no, God has purposes of love and blessing that go far beyond human thoughts of what is good, and He will not stop short of full blessing for His own.

He allows Lazarus to become sick. His sisters send to tell the Lord Jesus, their dear Friend, so that He might help them. They don't boast of the good things that Lazarus had done, to give the Lord reason to act. Rather, they plead a known relationship of love, between the Lord Jesus and the one who was sick. "Lord, behold, he whom Thou lovest is sick."

That touches the Lord's heart, and He gives a word of encouragement to them. "This sickness is not unto death." What a wonderful promise these words are! He's not going to die-what a relief! But that's not what the Lord is really saying here. "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby." He says that the end result of this trial is not to cause death, with its deep sorrow and grief, but the purpose of this sickness is that God and His beloved Son might receive more glory from the lives of those whom He loves and who love Him. He wants our fullest blessing, and that will always result in giving honor to and exalting the Lord Jesus Christ.

"Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus." A trial usually affects others—close relatives and friends—besides the one who is directly the subject of the test. Very quickly the Lord assures us of His love, not only for Lazarus, but also for those who were dear to Lazarus—Martha and her sister.

That love for all three is going to motivate His every action as the circumstances of this trial unfold. It may not always seem to be going exactly as we would order, but, remember, the goal that the Lord Jesus always has before Him is the honor and glory of God. There is no higher object.

But why, when He hears that Lazarus is sick, does He remain two days where He is? This is the Son of God, and He could speak a word, right from where He is, to heal the sick. Or He could go and touch him so that he might recover. No, had He used one of those methods, we might never read those touching words, "Jesus wept." He is the Man of patience, and He waits. It's all part of His perfect plan for the blessing of His own.

The Key to Blessing in Trial

The Lord Jesus then speaks to His disciples, and at first glance His words might seem to be unrelated to the matter at hand—Lazarus's sickness. But what He says is a key to blessing in our lives, especially as we go through a trial. "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world." Who is the light of this world? We know that He told us Himself earlier in this book, "I am the light of the world" (ch. 8:12). We must keep our eyes on Him if we are to have a proper perspective on the situations of life. He is the only One who can properly illuminate every step of our lives and thereby guide us through the difficult circumstances so that we do not stumble.

He then tells the disciples plainly that Lazarus had died, but mingled with these sorrowful words are words of hope and comfort.

Upon learning the Lord's intention, Thomas says, "Let us also go, that we may die with Him." Every person's trials and circumstances of life are uniquely ordered by the Lord and perfectly suited to that individual person. He does not give my trials to you nor yours to me. And so we dare not think that we would do better or have it easier if we had the circumstances that He has, in perfect wisdom, given to someone else. Remember the promise in 1 Cor. 10:13—"God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." He does not promise to remove it immediately when we think we have had enough, but He can and does give grace to go through the trial for His glory.

When Jesus arrives at Bethany, Lazarus has already been in the tomb for four days and many Jews have come to comfort Martha and Mary. Martha, hearing that Jesus is in the vicinity, runs to meet Him. Relatives and friends can be a tremendous help and comfort in time of trouble and stress, but who can fully sympathize with us like our Lord Jesus Christ? The One who says, "This thing is from Me," is the One who wants to comfort us at such a time, even when no other help is in sight.

Jesus' Dealings with Mary and Martha

Martha's first words to the Lord Jesus are, "Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died."

Is that an expression of faith in His power, or is she scolding Him for not coming right away? The Lord alone knows her heart, and He also knows that our faith may falter at a time of severe testing. He patiently leads her along by teaching her the truth as to His Person, the resurrection, and life through Himself that is beyond the power of death. Ultimately, she makes a beautiful confession: "I believe that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world." Is not this true worship?

Worship is the out flowing of the heart in adoration, from being occupied with the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ. It doesn't require perfect circumstances (according to our estimation). Some of the sweetest worship has ascended to God and His beloved Son from those who are terminally ill or in other situations that we would consider very undesirable. All that is necessary is that our hearts be completely absorbed with Him as our Object.

Once Martha reaches this point, there is no further conversation between her and the Lord. She just goes to get others to worship Him too. In John 1, two of John's disciples heard the result of his occupation with the Lord, "Behold the Lamb of God," and they followed Jesus. And when you and I spend time in His presence, we won't be able to keep it to ourselves either. Others will be affected and stirred to have similar fellowship with Him. Is not this too for the glory of God?

Mary runs quickly to meet Jesus, and her first words to Him are the same as Martha's. "Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." He alone knows both of their hearts and so, in perfect wisdom, He instructs the one but says nothing to the other. Instead, the Spirit of God records for us those touching words that speak of the Lord Jesus entering into the sorrow of His own at that moment. He groans in His spirit and is troubled as He sees the power that sin and death hold over man. Then, as the great High Priest, He is "touched with the feeling of our infirmities" and He weeps with those that weep. How precious and sacred those tears are! What love they communicate to our own hearts as we realize that this same blessed Son of God loves and cares and sympathizes with us in our trials.

The awe that resulted in those who witnessed this scene was a testimony to the depth and genuineness of His love for Lazarus His love and sympathy were felt in the midst of the trial, not simply by His removing it.

In time it is the Father's will that this trial be removed and so Jesus instructs them to take away the stone. Martha says, "Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days." Sometimes it seems that trials get worse before they get better. Unbelief raises doubts about the goodness that is in God's heart by questioning why He allowed the trial in the first place: Could He not have prevented it from happening? Yes, of course; He who controls everything in each of our lives could have ordered a different set of circumstances in Lazarus's life at this time. But faith leans on Him

who is over all and looks beyond the circumstances to the heart of love that is directing all for God's glory. "Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?"

We know Rom. 8:28 so well and love to quote it, at least to others, when faced with a difficult circumstance. "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." What is His purpose? The next verses tell us. God desires that we might "be conformed to the image of His Son." He wants us to be just like His Son and be with Him where He is. So He has predestinated us to this blessing. He calls us and justifies us to make us perfectly suited to His presence, and ultimately He glorifies us—He brings us to Himself to enjoy all His splendor and excellence. Let us not be shortsighted in our view of a trial, but rather enter into this goal that God has in mind when He allows these things in our lives.

The Lord Jesus in Power and Dependence

Before raising Lazarus, the Lord Jesus first prays to His Father—what a beautiful example of the perfect blending of the deity and the humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ. As God He was about to raise one to life from among the dead; as a perfect Man, He makes every movement at the direction of, and in dependence on, His Father. It is also instructive to notice that in His prayer He says, "Because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that Thou hast sent Me." It is important to be sensitive to those who are listening when we pray publicly. They, too, need to enter in to what we are saying.

The Lord Jesus calls with a loud voice, and he that was dead comes forth. What a display, not only of His power, but also of His love, compassion and grace! This causes others to believe on Him, when they see the results of His working blessing through the trials that He allows in the lives of His own.

One more word is necessary, for Lazarus is still bound with grave clothes. "Loose him, and let him go." The result is complete liberty. This suggests the final, full deliverance that we read about in Rom. 8:21. "The creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty [or, liberty of the glory] of the children of God." At the rapture, when we will be given our new bodies that are not subject to the bondage of corruption, we will forever enter into and enjoy the liberty of the glory that is ours as the children of God. Until then, may we keep our hearts focused on the greatest purpose—His glory—for which He allows the trials in our lives, and may we always remember that He also works all things together for our blessing.

Consider Your Ways

G. C. Willis

"Consider your ways." All of us need that word in this day of softness. The Apostle could write, "Endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." It is a day when we are tempted not to endure hardness. It is a day when we make everything as easy as we can, and I think it is time for all of us to consider our ways.

About the temple that was built in the days of Ezra, and its lack of silver and gold, Haggai could say it was nothing compared to the old temple. Whose fault was it? Turn to the 6th chapter of Ezra and we will see whose fault it was. There was a document giving authority for this house, but they did not know where the document was, and they did not know what was written in that document. We read in the 17th verse of the 5th chapter of Ezra:

Now therefore, if it seem good to the king, let there be search made in the king's treasure house, which is there at Babylon, whether it be so, that a decree was made of Cyrus the king to build this house of God at Jerusalem, and let the king send his pleasure to us concerning this matter.

Next, in chapter 6:1-5 of Ezra it says:

Then Darius the king made a decree, and search was made in the house of the rolls, where the treasures were laid up in Babylon. And there was found at Achmetha, in the palace that is in the province of the Medes, a roll, and therein was a record thus written: In the first year of Cyrus the king, the same Cyrus the king made a decree concerning the house of God at Jerusalem, Let the house be builded, the place where they offered sacrifices, and let the foundations thereof be strongly laid; the height thereof threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof threescore cubits; with three rows of great stones, and a row of new timber: and let the expenses be given out of the king's house: and also let the golden and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took forth out of the temple which is at Jerusalem, and brought unto Babylon, be restored, and brought again unto the temple which is at Jerusalem, every one to his place, and place them in the house of God.

That was the document, but we have to look back a little bit to get the setting. You remember that King Cyrus and what he was about to do were foretold in the prophet Isaiah. Daniel was the prime minister at this time and he would probably tell Cyrus that his name was foretold. The dimensions given here seem to be greater than those of Solomon's temple. King Cyrus had conquered Babylon and he had conquered the Cretans. There was a saying, "as rich as the Cretans," and this untold wealth had fallen into the hands of Cyrus. He gives orders for the building of the temple, "and let the expenses be given out of the king's house."

The enemy hindered them all the days of Cyrus; they did not have the faith to draw on that bank, the richest on earth. The days passed and their golden opportunity was gone. The house was built, but it was nothing in comparison to that of Solomon.

The Lord Is There

I think of a meeting where there are three: a dear old lady who has to be carried into the meeting, a dear old man whose voice has failed and he cannot even read a verse anymore. The last time I was there I wondered if it was right for this little meeting to be like that? Then there came to my mind the last four words of Ezekiel, "The Lord is there." May those words be a comfort and strength to every one of us. There is another place where there is only one brother and his sight is so far gone that he cannot see to read anymore. But these things are answered by those four words: "The Lord is there." In the margin you will see that is one of His names: Jehovah-Shammah—the Lord is there.

We want to get our eyes on the Person who is there. What does it matter if we cannot read a verse, or if an old sister has to be carried to the meeting if the Lord is there? What we need, all of us, is to get our eyes turned away from one another and to see the One who is there.

There is another little meeting; about five are there. We might think if that is the right place there would be more than five; sometimes at prayer meeting they do not get two or three, but again "Jehovah-shammah" answers the question. That meeting of five has had a lot of reproach, but the Lord gives encouragement in Rom. 11 about the little remnant. Elijah thought he was the only one left; he did not know about the seven thousand away in the hills and valleys of Israel. The Lord had counted them even as He does the hairs of our heads. Seven thousand were not many out of all the millions of Israel, but that was the remnant.

I remember an old brother telling me that all giving up was of the devil. I have never forgotten it. Another remark a dear old man in China made: he was sick and his son came in and said that he was so discouraged, he was just going to give it all up. The father turned to him and used almost the same words. All giving up and discouragement is of the devil. God is the God of all encouragement.

Haggai and Philipians

In connection with this little book of Haggai, I was thinking of the 2nd of Philipians. The Apostle could write the Philipians about Timothy, "All seek their own, and not the things which are Jesus Christ's." Also verses 19 and 20: "But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state."

Matters had grown worse; not only did they seek their own, but had forsaken their own leaders and teachers, the ones who had brought them to Christ. Turn over to 2 Tim. 1:15-18:

This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me.... The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain: but, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me. The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day: and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well.

I believe it does not matter how few there are; the twos and threes are not to be despised, are not to be ashamed of, no more than Onesiphorus was ashamed of the Apostle's chain. If the Lord is there, I want to be there too.

Suppose you knew that in this city, on Lord's Day at 11 o'clock, the Lord was going to be visibly present in a certain place. What would you do? I would let everything else on earth go, and be there at any cost. Surely any true-hearted Christian would answer the same thing. The Lord is there, only we do not look at Him with these eyes; we see Him with the eye of faith. May we have the eye turned more than ever on that blessed Jehovahshammah—the Lord is there.

In Gen. 22 the Lord makes Himself known to Abraham as Jehovah-jireh—the Lord will provide; in Ex. 15:26, we find the Lord the Healer, and in Psa. 23, the Restorer of our souls. In the battle with Amalek we have him in Ex. 17 as Jehovah-nissi—the Lord my banner, and His banner over us is love. May we inscribe on that banner in golden letters, "God is love." Many times we have come off the worse in the fight, but may we remember Jehovah-nissi is there.

In Judg. 6:24, we find Jehovah-shalom—the Lord send peace. "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly." 1 Thess. 5:23. In these dark days, when everywhere we look there is trouble and unrest, what we need is Jehovah-shalom. And in Jer. 23:6 we have Jehovah-tsidkenu—the Lord our righteousness. We have none of our own, all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.

A mere boy used the name of Jehovah-sabbaoth—the Lord of hosts. David said to Goliath, "Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts"—Jehovah-sabbaoth. The expression "Lord of hosts" is found some 80 times in Jeremiah. Everything is gone and he clings to Jehovah-sabbaoth. Haggai uses it 14 times; Zechariah, 50 times; Malachi, 25 times, and the Psalms, 80 times. The prophets at the end turned not to things around; all was gone, but they turned to Jehovah-sabbaoth—the Lord of hosts.

The Savior Jesus

Then we come to the name more dear than all other names, Jehovah, the Savior Jesus. God has given us a series of pictures to show us Jesus. We all shall be satisfied when we awake in His likeness, but we shall be truly satisfied here on earth if we are occupied with Him. If we get our eyes away from those around and look off unto Jesus, we shall be satisfied.

How we look forward to the meeting in the air! How we love to meditate on that day when we are going to see His face for the first time, when we are going to gaze on those wounded hands. The Apostle writes in 2 Thess. 2:1, "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto Him." Of course, it is unto Him up there. Every blood-bought soul is going to be caught up in a moment and gathered together unto what? A doctrine? Unto Him!

That word signifying gathering is used again in Hebrews and is only used twice in that way. We are gathered together unto Him in the air, and gathered unto Him when we remember Him. "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together." Heb. 10:25. It is the very same word, linking together the meeting in the air soon to come to pass, and the meeting on Lord's Day when we come to remember the Lord in His death. To me the Lord is just as truly there on Lord's Day as when we are going to meet Him in the air when we shall see Him with our own eyes. It is the same Lord and He is there in both places; that is why you and I should be there also.

Compromise

J. T. Armet

A time to love, and a time to hate. Eccl. 3:8.

He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that
hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life
eternal John 12:25.

Compromise here has ruined the testimony of many. They once made a fair start, but the fear of man, or the love of ease, or of social standing, or of the approval of kindred or acquaintances has come between them and the Lord. It is a poor exchange, but many have made it, and adhered to it to the end. It should break our hearts as we think of it, and make us hate the thought of compromise.

Let us trace the way of departure. Perhaps the family is in opposition to a faithful testimony. Simplicity and faithfulness to Christ are derided, a name of reproach is given to true Christians, and the soul is caught in the snare, because he is not abiding in Christ. Fearful of reproach or discomfort, the soul gives way and steers a middle course. Men call it moderation and wisdom, but the soul has been damaged and is adrift.

God is merciful, but the Word and communion with God and with His people are less and less enjoyed; trials and chastenings are too much for the heart. The peaceable fruits of righteousness do not follow. What a sad witness for Christ! Such bear witness in their family and in the world that godliness is only a name, not a reality.

If not altogether so, still the course is vacillating, and the heart not at rest, the testimony correspondingly marred.

The fear of man is, however, closely connected with our love of the world in some form. We are not weaned from the world in some way when the fear of God is displaced by the fear of man, and Satan has power with us. The pride of life—how weak our hearts are that it should ever ensnare us!

Should not a glance at the life of the Lord make us ashamed? What pure joy is lost by love of social standing; how withering to the soul is such a preference and such an atmosphere. Self-love and idolatry are thrusting Christ from the heart.

In such cases there is also this grave danger of the hardening of the heart by the continuance of religious forms and outward service and utterances. But either way, the soul has made an evil choice, and has turned from the narrow way. Jesus is still knocking at the door, standing there, but He has been left outside. Friendship with the world is enmity against God.

Christian, let no one come between your soul and Christ. Let nothing turn you aside from the cross. Christ has redeemed you by His blood, and has given you the Holy Spirit. By this great redemption you are separated to God from all worldly friendships, alliances, and purposes. Christ has joined you to Himself forever, and He has joined you to His people, for we are members of His Body and members one of another. His sheep can never perish (John 10:27,28). Let that encourage your heart to rise up and follow Him. He loves His own and loves them to the end (John 13:1). He washes their feet, cleanses away defilements, for if He washes them not, they have no part with Him. So He restores their souls, never forsaking them.

Let us flee, then, from half-heartedness and world-bordering and compromise, in family, business, and in the inward exercises of the soul. As Christ has died for us, let us live for Him (2 Cor. 5:15), and we shall realize the word, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Rom. 8:31.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. Rom. 8:35,37.

"In all these things." In the midst of fiery trials, Christians can be more than conquerors through Him who loves us.

With such a word, may we forsake all carnal seeking and carnal shrinking, and go forth "on the water" to Him-go forth to Him without the camp, bearing His reproach. Let us boldly take faith's reckoning: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Rom. 8:18.

By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out [through faith], not knowing whither he went.... Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the seashore innumerable. These all... confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for He hath prepared for them a city. Heb. 11:8-16.

Christ Is All

More and more I am made to feel that Christ does not have His proper place among the children of God. He is not the object. It is either a doctrine, a dogma, a party, or our experience-something besides Christ. We seem possessed with much the same spirit that led Peter on the mount to say, "Let us make here three tabernacles." The Father solemnly rebukes this:

While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him. And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid. And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only. Matt. 17:5-8.

Have you ever been in the "cloud," heard the "voice," been on your "face," or felt the "touch"? Then, have you heard another voice say "arise"? Do your eyes see "no man save Jesus only"? Many, perhaps, have reached the top of the mount, but few, very few have been in the cloud and have heard the voice. Few have been on their faces and have risen to see Jesus only.

"Christ is all" (Col. 3:11). Do we make Him this? Is it a question of my salvation? "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31). Is it a question of relationship with God? "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:26). Is it a question of experience? "For to me to live is Christ" (Phil. 1:21). Is it a question of service? "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13). Is it a question of my path? "I am the way" (John 14:6). Is it a question of heaven, or the place where my path leads?

He would define it as "where I am" (John 14:3). Oh, may we know more of that blessedness which comes of making Christ all, of seeing Jesus only. Our prayer should be that we know Him. In our selfishness we cry and beg for blessings. It is the Blesser we need, HIMSELF. He is the joy of the Father's heart. Let us taste with Him the delight He takes in His Son. Christ is infinitely higher than doctrine or experience. Experience we shall have, but only with Him can our hearts be delighted and raptured.

Why is it we are not changed more from "glory to glory"? The veil has been rent, the blood has been sprinkled, and the Spirit has been given. The reason is that we are occupied with ourselves and the work of the Spirit in us, rather than with Christ alone. This is the weakness in the wide-spread holiness movement, so much of which is superficial. Let us look more in that unveiled face, from which streams the light of the knowledge of the glory of God. All else will pale and fade if we will only linger there.

When in communion, the Spirit of God does not occupy us with His work in us. The word is, "He shall not speak of Himself.... He shall glorify Me." John 16:13,14. And to go further, the work of Christ, wonderfully blessed as it is, can never be the object of my heart; it gives my conscience peace, sweet peace. But only His Person can satisfy my heart. Oh, how His Person does that!

The Father directs our attention to His beloved Son (Matt. 17:5). The Holy Spirit would occupy us with Him (Acts 7:55,56). The Word of God testifies of Him (John 5:39). He is the object of faith, the object of love, and the object of hope. The faith, love, and hope that do not make Him the object are spurious and unreal. He is all for my path, service, and worship. Blessed be His name. F. C. Blount

"I am Alpha and Omega, the BEGINNING and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." Rev. 1:8.

Bible Challenger-08-August V.06

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the word identifying something wherein sorrow is greatly multiplied in bringing forth, but which eventually may be a source of joy and rejoicing. [The number in brackets indicates the number of words in the answer.]

1. Something consumed under the table that brought encouragement at once to a distraught mother [1].
2. The name of a wicked king who caused great lamentation when he thought he was being mocked [1].
3. That which might tempt a true Christian to desire the fashions of his former lusts [1].
4. The double abilities that resulted from a twofold gift to a certain quartet in a strange land [2].
5. That which characterizes those who now walk in step with the world and in tune with its prince [1]
6. Something great promised to those whose love extends beyond those who are naturally lovely
7. Something fathers have done according to an ancient proverb which affected their direct descendants [3].
8. The curt response by seven weary fishermen to a pointed question as to the productivity of their night-long endeavor [1].

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

R. Erisman

Bible Challenger-07-July Answers V.06

1. B oisterous Matt. 14:30
2. E ldest John 8:9
3. G really beloved Dan. 9:23
4. I nstruction Prov. 1:7
5. N o truth in him John 8:44
6. N ation shall rise against nation Matt. 24:7
7. I nheritance Prov. 20:21
8. N ew commandment 1 John 2:7
9. G iving ... receiving Phil. 4:15

"I am Alpha and Omega, the BEGINNING and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." Rev. 1:8.

The Gospel

Oh how unlike the complex works of man,
Heaven's easy, artless, unencumbered plan!
Inscribed above the portal, from afar
Conspicuous as the brightness of a star,
Legible only by the light they give,
Stand the soul-quickenings words-BELIEVE AND LIVE.
Too many, shocked at what should charm them most,
Despise the plain direction and are lost.
W. Cowper

Our Spiritual Appetite

The more we eat, the more we want

With our natural appetite, the more we eat, the less we want. It is quite different with our spiritual appetite—the less we eat, the less we want, and the more we eat, the more we want.

You find that the less you read Scripture, the less appetite you have for it. The thing to do is to control the mind. For instance, I might say that I am tired of reading. Then I must tell myself that even so, I am going to read a little longer. That is one way hindrances can be overcome in cultivating an appetite for Scripture.

Most of God's people today are defenseless; they are not sufficiently acquainted with Scripture. It is not used rightly—not in its connection. They are like the Israelites in the days of Saul: "It came to pass in the day of battle, that there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people." 1 Sam. 13:22. They were defenseless in the presence of their enemies; they had no weapons at all to meet them; consequently, they were helpless under the Philistines' power.

Habitual reading of the Scriptures would bring about: "that ye might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding." Col. 1:9. What is the use of talking about being led of the Spirit if you do not read the Word! If you are led by the Spirit, you will read the Word. If He has His way, there is the craving for the Word of God as a little child craves milk. That is all the spiritual appetite has to feed on in this world. W. Potter

EDITORIAL: What Sustains Our Souls?

Do you by experience know what it is to be hungry? Surely the answer from nearly everyone is, Yes. Next in experience is the pleasant, gratifying feeling of eating and being filled and satisfied, wanting no more. The desire to eat and be filled is analyzed this way in Prov. 16:26: "He that laboreth, laboreth for himself; for his mouth craveth it of him." In Solomon's next book, Ecclesiastes, we learn more: "All the labor of man is for his mouth, and yet the appetite is not filled." Eccl. 6:7.

The natural life is sustained with food and we cannot live without it. As in the natural, so it is in the spiritual. That which sustains our souls is the Word of God. Job had the correct inner longing when he remarked, "I have esteemed the words of His mouth more than my necessary food." Job 23:12.

The first article in this month's Christian Treasury tells us of the amazing fact that we have a spiritual appetite that increases as we feed it. We cannot eat too much. We do not become too full and uncomfortable, but rather, as we learn of Him who is revealed in God's Word we find that "He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness." Psa. 107:9.

No doubt it is more like our mother's home cooking instead of the school lunch that many will have beginning this month of September. "O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in Him." Psa. 34:8. What God supplies for our souls is always good. It never varies like our daily material food which sometimes is good and sometimes not.

Many of us would be delighted if we could sit down at a table full of our favorite foods and just keep on eating, but we cannot. Our stomachs will not allow us to do that. What a contrast to the enjoyment of spiritual food which has no limits, and the result of enjoying spiritual food is always good with pure contentment.

For all of us who are parents, may we have the loving care for our children that is expressed in the poem Birthday Cake on page 250 of this issue.

C. Buchanan

Thy words were found, and I did
eat them; and word was unto
me the joy and rejoicing of mine
heart: for I am called by Thy
name, O Lord God of hosts.

Jeremiah 15:16

Cultivating the Right Nature

The result of cultivating our old nature is sorrow; yet, we find sometimes even aged believers attempting to bring a clean thing out of an unclean. They attempt, after a long life of religious disappointment, to bring themselves into a fit state for God's presence, and, perhaps, looking to Christ as a means for effecting their desires.

A little while ago, an unskilled hand had trained a rose tree over a porch. The leaves of the tree were green and the growth was strong, but not a flower was there. "Why is this?" the owner inquired of a skilled gardener. The answer was given by an act, not by words, for, taking out his pruning knife, the gardener in one moment leveled the rampant growth to the ground. "What have you done?" cried the owner.

"Don't you see, sir," was the reply, "your man has been cultivating the wrong shoot!" At the same time the gardener pointed out the grafted rose, which had barely struggled two inches above the ground, and which the wild shoot had completely overwhelmed. In a few months the graft, set free from the encumbering growth of the wrong shoot, sent out in vigorous life its beautiful branches, and covered the porch with its luxuriance.

All the cultivation or training in the world could not have made that wrong shoot become a beautiful, flowering plant. Neither will the efforts of a whole life succeed in making our "old man" (the Adam nature) like Christ and fruitful towards God. God has condemned our old nature in the cross of Christ. He has judicially cut it down, and no fruit fit for God shall grow upon it forever.

The practical word, then, for those Christians who are seeking to produce out of self, fruit acceptable to God is: "Do not cultivate the wrong shoot!"

Young Christian

A Building for Himself

In the midst of the instructions concerning the chambers in 1 Kings 6, we find these remarkable words: "The house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither: so that there was neither hammer nor ax nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building." A colossal work wrought without noise! How unlike man's methods! God is preparing a building for Himself today. It is composed of living materials—sinners saved by grace. "All the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord." Eph. 2:21. In the midst of all the clamor and turmoil of earth, this work of God is proceeding. Unostentatiously, but surely, the work grows, and it will be seen in glorious result at the Lord's return. Unlike Solomon's temple, it will never be overthrown.

Born like a Wild Ass's Colt

Job 11:12

As the Lord needed the colt on which He rode into Jerusalem, so He needs every sinner. "Not a very complimentary simile to compare us to an ass!" someone may say. We often find that man is compared to animals in the Scriptures. He is compared to a sow for uncleanness (2 Peter 2:22), to sheep for stupidity (Isa. 53:6), to a dog for an object of contempt (Matt. 15:26), and to an ass for wildness and willfulness (Job 11:12). I am, therefore, warranted in using an ass to illustrate the condition the sinner is in, and what the Lord is willing to do for him.

1. IN BONDAGE. As the ass was "tied" (Mark 11:2; Matt. 21:2), so is the sinner under the bondage of sin (Gal. 3:22; Rom. 6:16).
2. WITHOUT GOD. As the ass was "without" (Mark 11:4), not in a comfortable stable, so the sinner is without God in the world (Eph. 2:12).
3. PLACE OF DECISION. As the ass was in a place where two ways met (Mark 11:4), so the sinner is where two paths are found in this life-the broad and the narrow way (Matt. 7:13, 14).
4. USELESS TO GOD AS A SINNER. As the colt had never been ridden on, and therefore had been of no use (Mark 11:2), so the sinner is useless to God, for they who are in the flesh cannot please God (Rom. 8:8).
5. KNOWN BY CHRIST. As the colt was known by Christ before it was brought to Him (Mark 11:2), and He directed where and how it would be found, so Christ knew us before we knew Him. He gives in detail our natural character in Rom. 3.
6. GRACE OF GOD. As the colt was loosed by a power outside itself (Mark 11:2), so the grace of God is the only power that can free us from the consequence and control of sin (Eph. 2:5).
7. POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. As the colt was brought to Christ (Mark 11:7), so the Holy Spirit is the power that leads us to the Lamb of God who takes away our sin (1 Thess. 1:5).
8. USED BY CHRIST. As the colt was used by Christ (Mark 11:7), so those who are brought to Christ are used by Him (Col. 1:29).
9. NEEDED BY CHRIST. As the colt was needed by Christ (Mark 11:3), so He needs all His people to carry out His purposes, even as the Head needs the members of the body to accomplish its will (1 Cor. 12:12).

F. Marsh

The Cool of the Day

The cool of the day suggests the period of the day when we are free from our secular obligations and the usual demands placed upon us. It is a time of refreshment after a stressful day. The Lord God came to enjoy fellowship with Adam and Eve in the cool of the day (Gen. 3:8). Likewise, the Lord Jesus desires that we would spend at least a few moments of quiet fellowship with Him at the close of the workday. Do we grant Him and ourselves this brief season of joy?

Adam and Eve did not eagerly anticipate the cool of the day on one occasion, but rather sought to hide themselves. It was sin that had brought a lack of desire to meet the Lord. How often, during the course of the day, sin comes into our lives by means of thoughts, words, and actions. Instead of confessing it to the Lord at that time, we often immerse our energies in the responsibilities before us, resisting the tugs on our conscience. Then when the cool of the day arrives we are uncomfortable in the Lord's presence.

How often the enemy successfully comes in when our chores are completed to further occupy us with valueless pursuits. Perhaps these pursuits are not evil in themselves, yet they cause us to continue in a bad state of soul simply because we put off judging those sins we have allowed. This course only hardens our hearts further. We may even seek to correct our failures and make up for our errors by our own efforts rather than simply confessing them frankly and openly to the Lord. He stands ready to forgive and restore our souls (Psa. 78:38, 39).

When the Lord called "Where art thou?" Adam's response indicated he had a bad conscience. He then sought to transfer the blame for his failure to Eve and also to God Himself: "The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me." How much better to honestly own, "I have sinned." Communion is then restored and we can once again enjoy the cool of the day.

The Heat of the Day

Abraham sat in the tent door in the heat of the day (Gen. 18:1). The heat of the day is early afternoon and would indicate a time of pressure, deadlines, rush, tension and the like. As the Lord appeared to Abraham during this time, so He desires to have a moment of fellowship with us during the heat of the day.

Though an old man, Abraham showed energy and diligence in providing food and refreshment for his visitors. How often older ones put younger ones to shame by their selflessness and zeal while not having the same youthful abilities or strength.

Do we make use of opportunities during the busy day for fellowship with the Lord? Abraham desired to provide something for his guests; likewise, it is our privilege to minister to the Lord by communing with Him. These times can be real feasts for our souls, and yes, for His heart as well. It need not be worship, but simply the mutual enjoyment of like interests.

Many times throughout the day the Lord "knocks at the door" in order that He may enjoy fellowship with us. If there is that sensitivity to His voice during the heat of the day, we will happily anticipate the cool of the day when are free to spend more than just a moment in contemplation upon those things concerning Himself.

Behold; I stand at the door, and
knock' if any man hear My voice,
and open the door, I will come in
to him, and will sup with him,
and he with Me.

Rev. 3:20

Journeys to Jerusalem

J. G. Bellett

The journey of the wise men from the east (Matt. 2), and the journey of the queen of the south (2 Chron. 9) shine with something of kindred beauty and significance before us. All of them go to Jerusalem, but the wise men of the east began their journey under the sign or preaching of the star. The queen of the south began her journey simply on the ground of a report which had reached her in the distant land.

At times the Lord has visited and guided His elect by signs, visible tokens, dreams, voices, angelic visits, and such like. At other times He has simply caused them to hear a report, as in the case of this illustrious lady. But let Him address us as He may, faith recognizes His voice. "My sheep hear My voice... and they follow Me."

The wise men went to worship, and took offerings with them. The queen of the south went to inquire at wisdom's gate, and to learn lessons of God, searching for that which was more precious than gold or rubies. She took with her some of the choicest treasures of her kingdom.

The journey of the wise men is rich in illustrations of the life of faith. Jerusalem did not satisfy them. In the earlier journey of the queen of the south, Jerusalem answered all expectations. In it we may find some striking moral characteristics which carry several helpful and significant admonitions to our own souls.

First Admonition

In the first place, notice that the report which had reached her touching the king in Jerusalem at once makes her dissatisfied with her present condition, wealthy though it was, and extraordinarily honorable. She sets out immediately, leaving behind her own royal estate with all its advantages in the flesh and the world. The fact of her journey shows the uneasiness and dissatisfaction which the tidings about Solomon and Jerusalem had awakened.

This speaks to us of the effect upon our hearts which the report that has gone abroad about a greater than Solomon should produce. In like spirit and in this day the quickened soul, under the report it has received about Jesus, is convicted and made restless in that condition in which nature has left it. And this report has found us. We have been upset by it—turned out of all the ease and satisfaction which before we may have found in ourselves and our circumstances.

Second Admonition

As soon as the queen reached Jerusalem, she set herself to survey all the estate of the king there. She came for that business and did it. She was not idle, but acquainted herself with everything. She put her hard questions to the king, listened to his wisdom, and surveyed his glories. The very sitting and apparel of his servants did not escape her, nor surely did the ascent by which he went up to the house of God.

This again speaks to us. When we reach Jesus, our souls make Him their object. We learn Him, we talk of Him, and we search the secrets of His grace and glory. We carry the sense of this one thing, that our business is with Him; He is our object.

Third Admonition

After this stranger-queen had acquainted herself with all that belonged to the king in Zion, she was satisfied. Her soul was satisfied as with marrow and fatness, and knew not what to make of herself. She did not understand her new condition; the joy was overwhelming. She says that the half had not been told her, and that Solomon exceeded the fame that had reached her about him. There was no more spirit in her. She returned to her land and to her people filled. She left Solomon, as did the woman of Sychar who left Jesus, emptied of all beside, but filled and satisfied with her new-found treasure.

Such had been her wondrous path. Her journey had begun in the restless, uneasy sense of need, with all her former fair surface of flattering circumstances being broken up. She had acquainted herself with the vast, mysterious treasures of the place where her journey had led her. She had done this carefully, with a heart only the more engaged and interested as she went onward in her search. She ended her journey and returned to her own land as one filled to the very brim with all her expectations and desires.

The Journey to Southern Gaza

The journey of the eunuch of Ethiopia from the south to Jerusalem, recorded in the New Testament, has much the same character (Acts 8). He begins his journey with an unsettled conscience. He had gone to Jerusalem to worship, but he left the city of solemnities still unsettled—that city of the temple and service of God with its priesthood and ordinances.

We see him as an anxious inquirer on his way from Jerusalem to southern Gaza. Nothing in that center of religious provisions and observances had given rest to his soul. He was dissatisfied with the worship he had been rendering there. His conscience was not purged. He had as yet no answer for God; there was no rest in his spirit. Jerusalem had disappointed him, as it had the wise men.

But if, like the queen of Sheba, he was at first uneasy and dissatisfied, he became deeply absorbed with what God was providing for him through His witnesses and representatives. The Word of God was addressing his soul through Philip and the prophet Isaiah, in taking the eunuch out of himself. He was not surprised at the stranger's voice in that desert place. All he cared for, all he thought of was the secret of the Book. He was inspecting that witness of God's grace, as the queen had once inspected Solomon's estate, the witness of glory. And Philip let him into the secret for which he was searching.

His heart is then satisfied and, like the queen of Sheba, filled with what had now been discovered to him. He pursues the second stage of his journey from Gaza to Ethiopia "rejoicing". Philip may leave him, but he can do without him. The woman of Sychar left her waterpot when she found that Jesus was everything to her. With a soul satisfied as with marrow and fatness, the eunuch can go on his way. He and the queen both return to the south, to Sheba and to Ethiopia, with hearts rich in the discoveries they made on their visit to Jerusalem.

These kindred characteristics are easily traced in these narratives. But it was the conscience that set the eunuch on his journey; it was desire that moved the queen. She came in contact with glory in the court and estate of Solomon, the eunuch with grace in the words of the prophet Isaiah. But whether God addresses us with a revelation of His grace or of His glory, whether He addresses the conscience or the heart, it is His high and divine prerogative to satisfy us as He does these two distinguished individuals. He satiates the soul with a manifestation of Himself, let that manifestation take what form it may, or adapt itself to whatever exigency or demand of the soul it please. Such satisfaction we get differently, but very blessedly, and exemplified in these two cases.

No Begrudging or Envy

Another feature that is common to both: their spirit was free of all grudging. The queen surveyed the glories of Solomon and could look on his higher and more excellent estate without the stir of one single jealous, envious movement. She was too happy for that. She could congratulate the king in Zion, his servants that waited on him, and his people who heard his wisdom. She could return home as one who was privileged only to visit him, but she did not begrudge them the richer portion they were enjoying. Her own share of blessing filled her, though her vessel was comparatively small.

The eunuch, I am sure, was willing to be a debtor to Philip—to know that it is the less that is blessed of the better. Let it be so, his spirit would say. He was happy and he was filled. If there was no void in his spirit, so we may assure ourselves there was no grudging there.

What joy there ought to be as we look at such samples of divine workmanship! The soul is disturbed by reason of its own condition, fixed in earnest searching for Christ, satisfied by the discovery of Him, and then too happy to dwell amid the tumults and jarring of that nature that lusts to envy! How noiselessly the process is conducted. It goes on in the spirit of a man by the power that works after the pattern of the wind that blows where it will, but whence it comes and whither it goes we know not.

The Disappointing Great City Jerusalem

There is, however, another thought upon this subject of the journeys to Jerusalem. At times we find, as in the case of the queen of Sheba, that great city answered all the expectations that had been formed by the heart respecting it. But Jerusalem has at times grievously disappointed the heart. It did the wise men from the east who went there looking for the King of the Jews. They had to pass it and put themselves on another journey down to Bethlehem in the south.

It disappointed the eunuch also, as we have observed. He had gone there to worship, but he left unsatisfied in spirit. He searched for rest which all the religious provisions of that city of the temple and priesthood did not and could not give him.

It disappointed the Lord Jesus likewise. Instead of finding His welcome and His place there, He wept over it, pronounced its doom, and met there in His own Person what we may here rather remember than mention.

It will in the last days, as it were, revive and take again the character that it fulfilled in the first days. It will answer all the richest expectations of those multitudes who will then, like the queen of the south, go up there to see the King in His beauty. The highways will then be thronged with joyous visitors, and the hearts of the thousands of the nations will repeat again what they have found in the holy city.

All nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem, shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord. Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem. Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together: whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord. Isa. 2:2, 3; Zech. 14:16; Psa. 122:1-4.

These are among the divine witnesses of the satisfying virtue of these journeys to the city of the great King in the day of the kingdom. The day is coming when the pledge which the journey of the queen of Sheba has given us shall be blessedly redeemed in the joy of the hearts of the thousands of the nations who, in the coming day of Zion's restoration, shall wait there to do willing service to the Lord of the earth.

The Value Is in Christ

The sequel then is simply weighed. Journeys to Jerusalem either satisfy or disappoint, and it is the Lord Himself who has to determine which it is. His glory was at that time displayed or reflected there, and therefore her visit satisfied the queen of Sheba. His grace was not then ministered or testified there, and therefore his visit disappointed the eunuch of Ethiopia. And thus the value of that city of solemnities was to be measured by the presence of Christ there.

Of all ordinances and services, Jerusalem is but a "city of the Jebusites" if Jesus was not the life and glory of it. It is "the joy of the whole earth," if He is. So, too, with Mount Sinai, or Horeb. It is but "mount Sinai in Arabia," or it takes the dignity of "the mount of God" according as the Lord adopts it or not. The ordinances of the law were shadows "of good things to come," the furniture of God's beautiful house, or mere "beggarly elements," as Christ used them or disowned them.

Ready for the Rapture

I find the Lord never ends a dispensation without giving it a closing worthy of Himself. How beautiful it is in Luke to find hearts brimful of God's thoughts, and looking out for the Messiah. Mary and Elizabeth talk of Him, and His ear is near to hear, as in Mal. 3:16. If Christ acts now as He always acts, we may expect, despite all the ruin, to have some with whom the Spirit can say to Him, "Come."

What is the great thing that we have to do in our day? To live for Christ. People have a vague idea of living for the glory of God, but the only way of living for the glory of God is to have the love that is in Christ's heart so dwelling in us, as it dwelt in the soul of the Apostle Paul, that he said that "Christ shall be magnified in my body." Phil. 1:20.

Is that my earnest expectation and hope? If I am living for myself, those around must see that the light is marred, and does not shine out. They might say of me, "If all the light that shines out is the measure of the Christ that shines in, He must have very little." But more than living as a testimony to others, I should want to shine for Christ. It is the One whose love has never passed from me for a single moment who wants me to live for Him whatever comes.

It is impossible to go through this world without suffering. You may choose which kind of suffering you will have—suffering for Christ, or suffering for yourself. If you are living for Christ, you will suffer for Him. If you are living for yourself, you will have God's rod close behind you.

Lot had God's mark, as did Abraham. God had not forgotten Lot any more than He had Abraham, but which of their troubles was it better to have? Is it better to have one's heart tried as Abraham's was, or to be chastened as Lot was?

Abraham's son was the center of the promises. Would he reckon that God was the keeper of the promise and not himself? Would he trust God to make good His promise, while God was teaching and testing his heart? Yes! And can I not say, "O, Lord Jesus, give me Abraham's trial and his portion, and not Lot's trial and his portion"?

My conviction is that it is the mind and purpose of God to make as complete a split between flesh and Spirit in these last days as He did in the days of Pentecost. The question is, who is living for Christ and who is not? If your heart is set on Christ, you will have the enjoyment of Christ before He comes, and you will meet His face with joy.

The Father's thought is that as His Christ is up there absolutely for us, He will have us here absolutely for Him. Say in your heart: "Through His grace, I will work out what He has worked in; I will live to the Christ whose eye is looking down from heaven on me. I will make apparent to others the One for whom I live." Young Christian

Questions and Answers

QUESTION: Why does Paul say, "I have laid the foundation" if it began at Pentecost?

ANSWER: If you had asked Peter on the day of Pentecost, "Is this the birthday of the Church?" he would not have known what you were talking about. I suppose those baptized on the day of Pentecost would have formed the nucleus of restored Israel had the nation repented. In the third chapter of Acts, Peter preaches and tells them that God would send Jesus Christ to set up the kingdom according to the Old Testament prophets if they had repented of the crucifixion of Christ. The stoning of Stephen sets aside the nation, and the raising of Saul of Tarsus is thus the opening out of the blessed truth that the day of Pentecost was really to become the nucleus of the Church, but it was not known until God gave it to Paul by revelation. It was not until Paul got the truth of it by revelation that we have the truth established that Pentecost was the birthday of the Church.

No one can understand what the Church is apart from Paul's ministry; he is the only one who gives us the truth of the Church. Satan's work in the hearts of God's people turns them aside from that truth. Paul's ministry is a most neglected ministry.

Sometimes you see Bibles where the gospels and the Psalms are almost worn out, but the epistles are neglected. The heavenly calling is not known and you find many Christians, dear children of God who know their sins are forgiven, mixed up in the world and the world's politics, and there is no testimony as to the truth of separation from the ungodly world.

Two truths recovered in the middle of the last century were these: the truth of the one body and the truth of the heavenly calling of the Church. These truths God brought to light—a remarkable recovery. Without question, it was a work of the Spirit of God.

Go back to the beginning and you will always find a clean path for your feet. On the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit came down and united 120 believers into one body. It was not the apostles forming a new group or system, but the Spirit uniting them to Christ in glory and thus they were bound together as one by the Holy Spirit.

Suppose one of those 120 should take a little offense and rent another hall in Jerusalem and put a loaf and a cup on the table. We will say that they hold no evil doctrine, but they are disgruntled with the rest. That other table is an independent table. The simple test is, how did the group originate? How did the group originate where I remember the Lord? Was it the Spirit of Christ gathering to Christ, or was it an independent group? To my own soul that has helped me through many a difficulty that has taken place. Keep a large heart for all the saints of God everywhere, but always keep your feet in the way of truth.

"Unto the woman He said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth CHILDREN; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." Gen. 3:16.

Bible Challenger-09-September V.06

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the picturesque words that define the all-inclusive domain where human efforts are seen in their unflattering reality. [The number in brackets indicates the number of words in the answer.]

1. A trait some men possess who might naturally expect riches in this life, but who are often disappointed.[1]
2. Something not found among things or actions out of the past, or even yet to be in the future. [2]
3. Something the heart may experience from over much labor. [1]
4. Something good and comely a person might do to enjoy the benefits of labor. [4]
5. Something that might properly be expected in the place where iniquity was found. [1]
6. Something often seen on the faces of those who have no comforter. [1]
7. Something undesirable befalling those who hoard riches. [1]
8. Something not seen by someone not yet living. [2]
9. Something to which the spending of days in a vain life is likened. [1]
10. The universality of an unwelcome event befalling those in the human race. [2]
11. A disappointing message on the balance sheet after much work and labor. [2]

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

R. Erisman

Bible Challenger-08-August Answers V.06

1. C rumbs Mark 7:28
2. H erod Matt. 2:16
3. I gnorance 1 Peter 1:14
4. L earning ...wisdom Dan. 1:17
5. D isobedience Eph. 2:2
6. R eward Luke 6:35
7. E aten sour grapes Ezek. 18:2
8. N o John 21:5

"Unto the woman He said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth CHILDREN; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." Gen. 3:16.

The Birthday Cake

I mix and I stir and I sift and bake.
What goes into a birthday cake?
Eggs and butter and all things sweet,
Only a mother can make this treat—
As I am working, I think and pray
For our dear little boy who is one today.
I think, as I mix with a steady hand,
How God the Father has mixed and planned
A life for our boy with its tears and song;
Its perfectly wise and it can't be long.
It leads to Home in the glory-land,
If only he'll follow where God has planned.
And now, as I sift the fine white flour,
I pray for our son in temptation's hour:
Teach him to come to the throne of grace
And seek Thy help in the humble place.
He may be sifted, but cannot fall
If he comes unto Thee as his all in all.
I stir in the milk, like Thy holy Word,
Which from a child his ears have heard,
And I pray that his soul thereby may grow
And be stirred to care for Thine own below
With tender love of his little heart,
Of Thy loving-kindness the counterpart.
I kneel to commit this birthday treat
To the oven's fervent baking heat,

And my heart goes up to another One
Who has a beloved and only Son.
The fire of judgment, His loved one bore,
That our sin might be pardoned evermore.
I mix and I sift and I stir and bake;
Love goes into a birthday cake,
And if here I must brush a tear with my hand,
The love that He gave He will understand,
As I am working, I think and pray
For our dear little son, who is one today.
"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth." Eccl. 12:1.

Our Children

Adonijah was apparently a spoiled child. The Holy Spirit says, "His father had not displeased him at any time in saying, Why hast thou done so? and he also was a very goodly man." 1 Kings 1:6. The handsome Absalom, slightly his senior, was similarly treated by David his father. Good-looking children are in special danger when in the hands of foolish parents. The wise king's words in Prov. 19:18 are true for all time: "Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying." There are many broken hearts among God's people due to the neglect of parental discipline. The dishonor to the name of the Lord is still more serious, for the house of the Christian should be like unto the house of God, where the divine will alone should be done.

Ministry of the Gospel

In 1 Cor. 9 we see the Apostle Paul in the ministry of the gospel. It was committed to him, and he was devoted to the Lord and to pleasing Him in His service. He made himself the servant of all, that he might gain the more.

When he spoke to Jews, he put himself into their place to make it plain to them that they were under the curse of law, and guilty of the death of Christ. He had been the same once, but was now delivered.

To the Gentiles, he showed them their guilt as away from God, without hope. He suited himself to those he spoke to, and this our blessed Lord also did perfectly. His all-seeing eye knew what was in their hearts. The woman at the well in John 4, the Pharisee and the woman in Luke 7, the woman and her accusers in John 8 and the Pharisees and lawyers in Luke 11, all felt that God was speaking to them. On the other hand, making ourselves all things to all men does not mean that we should go with them to their sources of entertainment. We need to walk in wisdom toward all and so gain them for Christ.

Paul told of his conversion in Acts 22 to the Jews to meet their condition, and then in Acts 26 to bring the gospel before the Gentile king and judge. He wanted them also to share the blessing that he had received.

With hearts lifted up to the Lord for guidance, may we in our little measure walk in the same path.

J. T. Armet

The Object of Our Hearts

The Holy Spirit presenting Christ to us—for our highest and deepest enjoyment.

The Spirit of God always seeks to present Christ more attractively to us, and to enable our hearts to be engaged with Him as the very One to suit us at every hour. If in joy, He helps us in our joy; if in sorrow, He sympathizes with us. Then the heart is drawn out more adoringly and absolutely to Christ Himself as the only One who in every way satisfies it.

The Lord when on the earth was a very beautiful object, and no one saw beauty in Him. Now the Spirit of God not only shows us beauty in Him, but also gives us a capacity to appreciate and enjoy Him as the real and sufficient object of our hearts.

The heart, delighted by an object that supremely satisfies it, is in the very highest and deepest enjoyment. That object is Christ. The ministry of the Spirit of God is to present Him to us, and to enable us to see who He is. This joy is unspeakable and full of glory.

EDITORIAL: Now in Time, Soon in Eternity

A calendar is a system of fixing the divisions of time, as years, months, weeks, and days. Civil life operates on this schedule.

One of the articles in this month's magazine is called "Time". We are quite sure that our readers will need to concentrate much when they read and perhaps re-read it, but we believe it will be worthwhile to try to understand as much as possible.

For an example, we quote from the second paragraph: "As events only proceed from God, 'I Am' to Him never changes. He is in Himself always. Events come from His will, and are relative, not absolute."

If we can learn that our God is the eternal God, that He is infinite, we have surely learned something very great. Other articles in this issue are from Hebrews and in chapter 3, verse 4, we read, "He that built all things is God." Our God is not only infinite, but also He is the Creator of all things. "All things were created by Him, and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist." Col. 1:16, 17.

The Christian, of course, lives in time as well as everyone else, but we have eternal life and soon we shall be in eternity.

We now date time as the year 1991. That is supposed to be the number of years since Christ came the first time. The Bible is a very interesting and practical book. In chapter 3 of Ecclesiastes, time is mentioned 31 times. You may want to read it.

Peter also refers frequently to time. He speaks of "the time of your sojourning here," and of the "last times," and of "the rest of his time," and then of "the time past of our life."

What are you and I doing with the time given to us? A very straightforward exhortation is found in 2 Cor. 5:15. It says, "They which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again."

C. Buchanan

Faith and Infidelity

Christian faith, or the faith by which a man becomes a Christian, is the subjection of the soul to the testimony of God. It is believing what God has spoken to us in His Word. It is based on confidence in God Himself, and what has been revealed is believed on God's authority. If a person does not believe what God has spoken, he does not believe God, and is practically an infidel. "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." Believing on God's authority, and on it alone, is believing God-nothing else is. True faith is faith in what God has said, because God has said it. If you require the church's sanction of it, you have not faith in God. You do not bow to His Word, and that is infidelity.

Foundations of Christianity

by C E Lunden

The subject of Hebrews can be spoken of as "the way into the holiest." First of all, we call attention to the Person of the Lord Jesus. In Hebrews the name Jesus often comes before us. "Thou shalt call His name JESUS."

Hebrews brings before us a Man. Walking down the corridor of a university building one day I saw on the bulletin board these words: "Give us a man." This world wants a man, and they are going to have a man after their own hearts. But if they knew Jesus, they would know that they had a man, and that Man is now seated in the heavens-the man Christ Jesus.

The Person

We have in Heb. 1 the glory of that Person, the Son of God. "In Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in Him." Col. 2:9, 10. What tremendous truth we have in the book of Hebrews: the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ-Jesus!

The foundations of Christianity!

We have them all here in Hebrews. About fifty years ago I was talking to an engineer who was beginning to construct one of the tallest towers on the Pacific Coast. It was so great they had to build a railroad to bring in the aggregate, cement and steel to build the foundation for this tower. It was to be a tremendous tower, but he did not tell me much about the tower; all he talked about was the foundation. If you want to have a tremendous tower, you will have to have a tremendous foundation.

Can you imagine a concrete foundation several yards thick, and spread out over a vast area? It was because it was built on sand. God says not to build anything on sand, because it will not last when the floods come. There are some foundations that are everlasting, foundations that will last when everything else passes away. We have them here in Hebrews.

Angels

We notice that the angels are spoken of in this first chapter, because it is written to the Jewish people and they admired angels. They had seen angels, and God had spoken to them by angels. But now we find that the Spirit of God is setting all the angels aside and Jesus is taking their place. He was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, but now He is exalted to the highest place.

In God's sight He is exalted, but not yet before the world. We have to wait a little while, and then the whole world will see the glory of that Person. In the second chapter, after we read "not yet" it says, "but we see Jesus" (v. 9). We don't see all His glory yet; we are going through the world in a path of rejection. "But we see Jesus." Is that enough for your heart, or do you want something else? Do you want someone who can fill and satisfy your heart now and for all eternity? That one is Jesus who is the manifestation of all the power and glory of God in His own Person as a Man. Think of it, Jesus!

Jesus Is Jehovah

"Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever" (v. 8). This is Jesus. Do you want any better foundation? Jesus is Jehovah, the Creator-God known to Israel. Over one hundred times He is referred to in the Old Testament. Yes, Jesus is the Jehovah of the Old Testament.

At the beginning of chapter 1, we find that He is the creator, the very One who made purgation for sins. He is the One who undertook that you might have eternal life. Then it says, "Being made so much better than the angels." That word "made" really is not the thought. He was never made; He was always the eternal God. But He could say to God, "A body hast Thou prepared Me." He prepared Him a body; He did not change His Person. He is the same Person, but He took on a body. The angel said, "Thou shalt call His name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins."

He Sat Down

We read also at the beginning of chapter 1 that when He was finished with this work, He sat down in His own right at the right hand of God. As the Son of God He sat down. But at the end of the chapter we see that He is invited to sit down as Man beside the Father. You and I will never sit beside the Father, but we are going to sit beside Jesus, on His own throne! "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever." That is Jesus. What are you trusting in? Is it that which endures forever and ever? In Hebrews we are given that which is forever and ever.

In the second chapter, the angels are entirely set aside. In that coming, millennial day, God has not put the authority in the hands of angels. No, He has put it in the hands of Jesus. There is a day coming (ch. 12) when the power of all those angels will be transferred to Jesus and the Church. Marvelous truth! They are called "His angels" (Matt. 13), when He sends forth His angels and He comes forth to cleanse the earth for the millennial day. A man, a race below angels, He took part with them. But now God has exalted Him above angels, His angels, and His servants with the Church. Oh, how marvelous!

There are four reasons why He came to die:

- (1) atonement,
- (2) to fulfill the counsels of God,
- (3) to annul him who had the power of death,
- (4) and to become a faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God. That really introduces the subject which follows—the priesthood.

Priesthood

He is a Priest, but He could not be a priest after the order of Aaron for He was not of the family of Aaron. He is after an entirely new order, not the order of a commandment, but in the power of an endless life. That is the difference in the two priest-hoods. The priesthood is seen in three types:

First: Phinehas (Num. 25), where it is a question of atonement and everything rests upon this. In Heb. 8, if one were to be a priest he would have to have something to offer. In chapter 7 it says that this He did, when He offered Himself. He is the priest, and He is the sacrifice, the man Christ Jesus.

Second: after, not the order, but the type of Aaron. Why? Because of our infirmities. We have infirmities and He is acting now after the type of Aaron.

The Lord Jesus was here and He entered into the very things that you and I enter into and He felt them. We know, of course, that He is God, but I am speaking now of the practical side of things. Was He ever deceived? He said of Judas, "Mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted... hath lifted up his heel against Me." Have you had that experience-a good friend suddenly turns against you? He has had that. Have you had sorrows that you can hardly bear? He had them; He knows how you feel. Have you had the loss of a loved one? He felt it. Think of His weeping at the grave of Lazarus! Yes, the Lord Jesus knows how to comfort those who have infirmities, trials, and difficulty.

Third: the priesthood is after the order of Melchisedec. He is a Priest who has made atonement and who now is here taking care of our infirmities. But Melchisedec is a priest that has no beginning or end. He abides a priest continually, and does not die as Aaron died. We have eternal consolation from this, because the foundations are secure in this Priest who will never die.

When Melchisedec met Abram, he was in the position where he had a tremendous decision to make. He looks and there is Melchisedec. Does Melchisedec say anything to him about what he has to do? Not one thing. He just spreads out the bread and the wine. What does that mean? The sovereign grace of God comes in to meet us in our need and He brings us that which we need for all eternity! The wine speaks of joy, eternal joy; the bread speaks of eternal sustenance. It is all eternal in its character. Melchisedec spreads it all out before Abram, the father of faith. That is our portion; our Melchisedec abides a Priest continually.

In chapter 6, God gives us two immutable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, that "we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us" (v. 18). Then in chapter 7 verse 17 He swore for that forerunner, "Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec." He never swore in the other priests; but this priest was sworn in for eternity-the Man Christ Jesus, "after the order of Melchisedec." Are you resting on solid foundations for your faith, on a priest who made atonement?

A Royal Priest

One thing more about Melchisedec: he was a royal priest. He was king on a throne at the same time, King of righteousness and King of peace. And Jesus will be that for all eternity!

In chapter 8 we see that if there has to be a priest after a new order of an endless life, there would have to be a new covenant also. Because the old covenant depended on men down here in weakness, and they failed. The new covenant depends upon the priest who comes after the power of an endless life. This has a special application for Israel. The book of Hebrews was written to Israel, but it is for us.

Forever

Would it not be nice to be in a position where you would never again think of nor remember one single sin that you had ever committed? I will tell you something: God does not remember them-He said so! "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." But do you know what you have in virtue of what Jesus has done? You have a purged conscience (Heb. 9:14). What does it mean to have a purged conscience? It means that all which was on the conscience is gone forever! In Hebrews we have what is forever—a purged conscience. Unless we realize this, we have no liberty in the holiest.

In the first chapter the Lord Jesus sits on an eternal throne. In the fifth chapter we have eternal salvation. In the seventh we have a priest—eternal. In the eighth it is a covenant for Israel. We do not have covenants in heaven. In the ninth chapter notice verse 12: "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood." Oh, how precious the thought, by His own blood! "He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." Redemption is the completion of all His works. It is the fullness of Him that filleth all in all. The bride is spoken of in that way too, because she is connected with that redemption (Eph. 1:23). Yes, redemption completes all His works. Oh, what a Savior we have.

Eternal Things

In chapter 9 there are three things that are eternal. We have eternal redemption—brought back and set free (v. 12). We have an eternal Spirit (v. 14). And we have an eternal inheritance (v. 15). We have in Hebrews that which is eternal. It never changes!

Eternal inheritance, what is that? There is a day coming when we will be His companions. It is not the bride here; that is Ephesian truth. In Hebrews it is companions. Is it not blessed! Can you picture yourself going with the Lord Jesus out over the vast universe that belongs to Him as a man? He became a man so that you and I might share it with Him. Can you picture that—going hand in hand, shall we say, with that blessed Savior out over that vast inheritance of all created things that belong to Jesus? You might be in it tomorrow. Yes, you might if He came today! Is it going to be a real disruption in your life—a tremendous change that takes place? Or is it a part of your everyday life already?

In this book of Hebrews, when the Lord Jesus comes, He just sets aside everything that belongs to the old Jewish order. Figures and ordinances are all gone. The tabernacle is gone. He is the tabernacle, Priest, King; He is everything. What do we have left that we can see? The natural heart wants something religious to see, but is it all gone? No, there is one thing left, one thing that you can see. Turn to chapter 13:10, "We have an altar." That is Jesus. You might ask how we can see that? Chapter 2:9 says, "We see Jesus."

Heavenly Things

In Hebrews we have heavenly things. The Jew was occupied with earthly things. In the third chapter we have our Apostle and High Priest in connection with heavenly things. The Lord, when He speaks to Israel in this book, does not say, "Who were dead in trespasses and sins"; He says "brethren". Why? Because they were already in relationship with Him. But they needed something better; they needed heavenly things. The remnant of faith in Israel belonged to Him, but they did not know about heavenly things. He calls them brethren. Then He shows them by the Apostle Paul that all these types and shadows have to do with heavenly things. "We see Jesus" by faith; He is now in the heavens.

This is the heavens as they are now. In the Old Testament the heavens were clothed in thick darkness: there was no revelation to man. But now the heavens are opened. We see a man seated in the heavens, surrounded with glory on every hand. His very Person is the fragrance that fills all heaven-Jesus, the man Christ Jesus. What will the heavens be like in the eternal state? Still Jesus, and all because He fills all things. Would you want to have your hearts filled? You have a longing now for satisfaction. There is not one thing in this world that will satisfy your heart. If Jesus is going to satisfy your heart forever, can't He satisfy it now?

Rest

I purposely skipped something in chapter 4, and will call your attention to it now. "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." Heb. 4:9. This verse may not mean as much to some of the younger ones as it does to many who are older. Rest! The Sabbath day was the connection of the Jews with their Messiah. In the fourth chapter we find that after God had done all His work, He rested on the seventh day, but our rest is on the eighth day. It is the new day, where everything is new. When we get to heaven, everything will be new, except that we know that Jesus will be there. Rest! Oh, how precious is the thought of rest.

We can speak of all those precious truths in connection with the Father's house from Ephesians, but here we have it from another aspect entirely. It is a rest that remains for the people of God. It is not a rest of conscience; we have that already, because in the tenth chapter we learn that the way into the holiest is through the blood of Jesus. That is all, the blood of Jesus; there is no other way. You say, how can I get into the holiest? You are there! You are there if you are under the blood of Jesus. Do we act like we are in the holiest? How we need to hang our heads. That is our home—our eternal home.

But what about the rest? It remains for the people of God. Are you one of the people of God? Are you resting on these solid foundations we have been speaking about, that are immovable? In Heb. 12:28 we have a "kingdom which cannot be moved." Are you looking for something else in this world? You won't find anything that will equal this, that there remains a rest for the people of God. How precious for the laborer on his way home as he gets nearer that rest, he thinks of that fireside, he thinks of the table set with a lovely meal, he thinks of those arms around him, and the kiss of his loved ones. That is what we are going to have. "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God."

The Priesthood and Advocacy of Christ

His Present Services for the Believer Contrasted

Priesthood

1. His Priesthood is for a time of need (our temptations and infirmities: Heb. 4:15,16).
2. His High Priestly intercession is that we might behave well (Luke 22:32).
3. His Priesthood is to keep the believer from failing (Heb. 7:25).
4. He is a High Priest with God (Heb. 2:17; Heb. 7:25).
5. As a Priest He sympathizes with our weaknesses and infirmities (Heb. 2:17, 18; 4:15,16).
6. As a Priest it is His life on high that saves the believer from falling into sin (Rom. 5:10; Heb. 7:25).
7. In connection with His Priesthood, His service is referred to as "Merciful and Faithful" (Heb. 2:17).
8. His work as a High Priest interceding for us is continuous ("ever liveth to make intercession": Heb. 7:25).
9. In time of temptation and trial we go to Him as our High Priest to find help (Heb. 7:25).
10. Because of His work as a High Priest, the believer can come boldly to the throne of grace to find mercy and grace to help (Heb. 4:15, 16).

Advocacy

1. His Advocacy is for a time of failure and sin (1 John 2:1, 2).
2. His intercession as an Advocate is if we do not behave well (sin: 1 John 2:1, 2).
3. His Advocacy is to restore the believer if he fails (Luke 22:61).
4. He is an Advocate with the Father. If sin enters the life of the believer, his relationship to God is still as "Father". This shows he has not lost his link with God as one of His children. His link of relationship is a fixed and eternal one. No power of evil can nullify or break it (1 John 1:1, 2).
5. As an Advocate He does not sympathize with our sin; He grieves over it (Luke 22:61).
6. As an Advocate it is His death that He pleads for the failing believer on the grounds that propitiation has been made once and forever (1 John 2:1, 2).
7. But in regard to His Advocacy He is "Faithful and Just". This is because Advocacy has to do with Christ's finished work on the cross (propitiation). God is faithful and just to forgive because it has all been taken care of in Christ's death. God would not be just to demand it of us when Christ has paid the penalty of it already (1 John 1:9).
8. His work as an Advocate is not ongoing but only active when the believer sins. It begins when the believer sins, not when the believer repents of his sin or confesses his sin. The result of His Advocacy leads him to repent and confess his sin (1 John 1:9-2:1, 2).
9. In the time of sin and failure, we do not go to Him. Left to ourselves we would never turn back to Him, for we cannot restore ourselves. Neither does He come to us but rather He goes to the Father about our state and the Spirit goes to our conscience bringing to remembrance the love of Christ and the Word of God (Luke 22:61; John 13:4,5, "water"). The result is the believer turns and confesses his sin, thereby his communion with the Father and Son are again enjoyed (1 John 1:9).
10. Because of His work as an Advocate, the believer repents and comes humbly in confession of his sin to the Father and thus is restored (1 John 1:9).

B. Anstey

Time

by J. N. Darby

I do not think we have any knowledge of time as time is in itself. I measure from one event to another and so enclose periods, but cannot without facts with intervals. Distance is not exactly the same, because I discern it by a sense which sees an interval at one time. All I know of time is "I am now." When I compare this with events, I am conscious it is not "now", and there is time.

As events only proceed from God, "I am" to Him never changes. He is in Himself always. Events come from His will, and are relative not absolute. When I speak of an event before what happened today, I look at it as having happened in a "now" which is not present. This I extend by invented measures.

"Infinite" I admit of course we cannot know, though we know it is not "finite infinite". But without existence I do not understand time or eternity—but God is. When I begin to count time, I count necessarily from "now", for I am now. I then speak of times not finishing in thought. Ante and post make no difference whatever, except by events, and if I look post I must imagine events or I cannot take a step beyond now. The starting point in both is "now", and I go on both ways from that and cannot finish.

When Christ's eternal nature is spoken of it is said, "In the beginning," all events and phenomena by which time had an existence being supposed—"was the Word." That is existence per se—eternal, divine.

When historical creation is spoken of, it is supposed God created; for example, all phenomena egeneto (things made came into being) by One who "was", but it is not stated and this was fitting. Creation being, there must be a Creator. What we wanted to know was Creation. The highest, holiest way of speaking of God was thus saying nothing about Him but that He acted. As to Christ, it was of the utmost importance to know that He was before and eternal.

All this talk about "bounded" or "unbounded space" is a mistake. I know what "bounded space" is very well indeed—a field is a bounded space, because I know what a bound is, being bounded. That I can negative, but I never conceive any negative proposition. I cannot conceive "not", for there is nothing to conceive. I can deny a bound when a bound is supposed, but it is no idea of the opposite at all.

I cannot conceive all space as a known whole. My only conception of it is that it is not within the limits of my finite conception. But that is what "infinite" means. It is no positive idea, for then it is finite-has bounds.

If it be said that "we cannot conceive God," I answer "certainly not by an idea." If I did it must be adequate, and He would not be God. But I do know He is not within the range and capacity of my idea, and that is something very material in our knowledge. When it is said, "He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love," that is another thing. It is not an idea, but a moral nature

morally apprehended. Space, time, and measures have no place in it at all.

It is another order of things. Affections, even human, are not ideas.

Past time without a commencement is not possible thought, because when I say "past" I have already commenced with the "now". I do not see why infinite division cannot be thought of, because the parts are bounded.

I remember a teacher of mathematics sought to show by a tangent, an indivisible angle, but he had only to make a circle with a longer radius and division was made.

The only idea I have of time is bounded by events which are not "now". But as far as without, then I seek to know it. I have no idea of time, but the principle of eternity only contradicted by experience. "I am"—that is not time as having duration, but in a point, but with a notion excluding bounded time, so leading up to God who is necessarily "I AM", which is the nearest approach to conceiving eternity, which in itself I cannot conceive at all. I conceive God existing, and never doing anything but existing.

I repeat, my only idea of space, except bounded or enclosed space, is practically infinitude, not conceived as so much for then it is finite, but as simply endless, for example, negatively. I do not say "existing time"—nothing properly exists in time which exists consciously. For example, consciousness is not cognizant of time. But I exist in space. So I do not begin it here as I do time by "now". I cannot conceive when a body cannot be, unless when one is; for example, I only conceive space as space without measurement, but room where.

"Nothing" cannot become, because there is nothing to become, but that does not say God could not speak and it be made—created.

Son of God and Son of Man

Son of God

That Christ has been the Son of God eternally is a truth most carefully set forth in Scripture and to be faithfully maintained and insisted upon. It is of paramount importance and crucial to Christianity. He was God's Son before coming into the world (1 John 4:14), continues to be so now (v. 15), and was so even when here on earth (John 1:14). There has never been a time when He was not the Son of God. He is such eternally.

But there did come a time when He was begotten of God as a man. This is something quite distinct from His eternal sonship, but depends upon that truth. As a man, He was conceived in Mary's womb by the power of the Holy Ghost and, as such, was called the Son of God. "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." Luke 1:35.

I believe that it is in this sense that God says: "Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee" (Heb. 1:5), and that He refers to Him as "My Son" in Psa. 2:7, 12. He is there the King (the Messiah), who will receive of God the heathen and the uttermost parts of the earth and will rule over them with an iron rod. He is also thus owned in Heb. 1:5; 5:5. It is something that begins in time and with His humanity— though He personally has been the Father's Son from everlasting

and will always be such.

There are, then, two ways in which the term "the Son of God" is applied to the Lord. One is what He has been eternally, and the other is what He also became as man. As I said, used in the latter sense, it is something quite distinct from the other, but is dependent upon its being true of Him. In other words, of whom else could it possibly be said that He would be conceived in the womb by the power of the Holy Ghost? Surely, it could be said of none other than Him who had ever been the Father's son, dwelling in His bosom and declaring it to man, "daily His delight." Prov. 8:30.

Son of Man

The Lord is seen as "the Son of man" in at least two respects. To begin with, it is in His humiliation and suffering that He is viewed as "the Son of man". Then, and in answer to all that, He is seen as such in His exaltation and universal headship. In general terms, these are the two aspects, in which He is presented as "the Son of man".

Of course, in order to have such a title, the Lord must become a man. He "made Himself of no reputation [emptied Himself]... and being found in fashion as a man." Phil. 2:7, 8. "A body hast Thou prepared Me." Heb. 10:5. As a man, He was capable of suffering all that we suffer, so that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God.

And though not subject to it, He was even capable of experiencing death. Had He never taken part in flesh and blood, these things never could have been so of Him.

He was a man of a moral order quite apart from that of fallen man. He was "in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." "Unleavened... fine flour mingled with oil." "The second man is the Lord from heaven." "The Son of man which is in heaven." "He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground." Though on earth, He was from heaven; His life was there and His sustenance was from thence. He was, in short, not that "first man", but the "second Man".

Now, as "the Son of God", He was rejected (Psa. 2). And so He has been exalted and given universal headship (Psa. 8). "But now we see not yet all things put under Him" and before we do, Israel must suffer and be sifted and refined (Psa. 3-7). Then His "people shall be willing" (Psa. 110:3), and He will manifestly take His place as Head over all that He has created (John 1:50, 51). I say "all that He has created," because "it is manifest that He is excepted, which did put all things under Him."

On earth He was "despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief" Isa. 53:3. "I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people." Psa. 22:6. And it was on earth as the Son of man that He was put to death: "The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again." Mark 8:31. It will be in this very scene of His humiliation, death, and sufferings that He will be seen, not only over Israel (though that is true enough), but as "the Son of man" over all things! As such, He will execute judgment on the living and the dead (John 5:27; Acts 17:31; 1 Peter 4:5; etc.). It is fitting and just that it should be so.

In Acts 3, God pleads with Israel one last time through Peter, but they resist the strivings of the Holy Spirit. Then in Acts 7, He testifies against them through Stephen, and the door is swung shut

on that nation for the time being. As they are about to stone him to death, Stephen looks up and sees not the Son of God or the Son of David, but "the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." After that the Lord is seen as "the Son of man" in just three places: Heb. 2 where His universal supremacy in the kingdom is the thought, and in Rev. 1 and 14 where He is about to execute judgment. Never in the epistles proper is He thus spoken of.

D. Graham

"I have seen all the works that are done UNDER THE SUN; and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit." Eccl. 1:14.

Bible Challenger-10-October V.06

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the word that tells in what the righteous shall be everlastingly held. [The number in brackets indicates the number of words in the answer.]

1. Something a king's son had done with a pillar for his own name's sake. [2]
2. That which some early Christians had done in the first days of their illumination. [6]
3. Something which was part of a people beloved, and viewed in a state of purity, yet needing to be stirred. [1]
4. A certain mother having unfeigned faith, whose son seemingly inherited the same quality. [1]
5. Peter's addressee upon beholding a withered tree. [1]
6. Something written before the Lord because of certain thoughts and fears. [3]
7. Something those who are righteous are called on to do as they give thanks for the Lord's holiness. [1]
8. Something given by a prayerful centurion and not forgotten. [1]
9. The uncomplimentary conclusion that follows a course characterized by strife over words. [2]
10. The acts of a faithful assembly that formed part of the good tidings which were conveyed to an interested apostle. [1]
11. The words Peter used that described fellow believers' fidelity in the present truth. [5]

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

Bible Challenger-09-September Answers V.06

1. U nderstanding
2. New thing
3. Despair
4. E at and to drink
5. R ighteousness
6. T ears
7. H urt
8. E vil work
9. S hallow
10. U nto all
11. N o profit

Eccles. 9:11

Eccles. 1:9

Eccles. 2:20

Eccles. 5:1 8

Eccles. 3:16

Eccles. 4:1

Eccles.5: 1 3

Eccles. 4:3

Eccles. 6:12

Eccles. 9:3

Eccles. 2:11

"I have seen all the works that are done UNDER THE SUN; and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit." Eccles. 1:14.

Redemption

Redemption supposes taking us out of one condition, and putting us into another. In Christ's death we get two questions—God's glory, and our sins. Redemption is eternal, but not universal. We get the blessings of the new covenant, but there is no covenant with us: the letter of it is for the Jews.

There is universal purchase, but not universal redemption. The believer is the only one who owns the purchase, and acts upon it. Everyone may come as to the presentation of the gospel, but this does not interfere with God's sovereignty. Men will be judged for not believing the gospel, and for sins.

Questions and Answers

QUESTION: Does 2 Cor. 5:10 apply to saved and unsaved alike?

ANSWER: All, both saved and unsaved, must appear before the judgment seat of Christ, for He is the appointed Judge. (John 5:22, 27; Acts 17:31; Rom. 14:10-12; 2 Tim. 4:1.) But all will not appear at the same time, nor for the same purpose.

The "resurrection of life" (John 5:29) or first resurrection (Rev. 20:5), includes all the heavenly saints who have been raised or changed and who are there in bodies of glory, like Christ's body of glory (Phil. 3:21). These are manifested before the judgment seat of Christ, to see what grace has done for them, and to receive tokens of Christ's approval or disapproval of their ways.

When the unsaved dead at the resurrection of judgment (John 5:29) shall stand at the judgment seat, it is called the Great White Throne. There they receive their sentences for their sins and are cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 20).

In Matt. 25:31-46 we get some of the people of the nations living on the earth who took part in helping or persecuting the godly Jews in the time of their tribulation. These are brought before the King who has come in His glory. He divides them: those on the left hand are sent into eternal punishment and those on the right go into eternal life in the Kingdom on earth.

In 2 Tim. 4:1 Christ is the Judge all the way through.

Early Training

"A time to plant" "In the morning sow thy seed."

Many years ago a company of Indians was captured on the western frontier. Among them were stolen children who had been with the Indians for years. Word was sent throughout the region, inviting all who had lost children to come and see if, among the captives, they could recognize their own. A long way off was a woman who had been robbed of a boy and a girl. With mingled feelings of hope and fear she came and with throbbing heart approached the group, but they were strange to her. With a dull feeling of despair in her heart she was turning away, when she paused, choked back her tears, and in soft, clear notes, began a simple song she used to sing to her little ones of JESUS and heaven. Not a line was completed before a boy and a girl sprang from the group, exclaiming, "Mamma! mamma!" So lives a mother's early influence in the hearts of her children.

EDITORIAL: The Focal Point of the Middle East

Now that the Jews are again in their own land, it is not surprising that the nations who formerly surrounded them are there in their old places. Dan. 11:40 speaks of "the time of the end" and of the king of the south and the king of the north. Doubtless these are Egypt and Syria. Verse 41 speaks of Edom, Moab and Ammon. The descendants of these three are now east and southeast of Israel.

One thing that has been outstanding in the shifting of power in this region in the past year has been the great increase of influence of Syria and also Turkey. This surely fits into the prophetic plan for the king of the north.

The present Syrian president, Hafez Assad, is a shrewd, energetic and patient politician. Steadily in the last 15 years he has maneuvered to gain control of Lebanon. He has been in control of Syria for 21 years and now, with the signing of the Brotherhood Treaty, he has largely extended his power. Effectively, the agreement puts the Land of the Cedars (Psa. 104:16) under his dominion, marking the fulfillment of a carefully planned strategy of creating a Greater Syria.

In the Gulf war, more Americans died in a scud missile attack than in combat. Recently Syria has bought 150 North Korean improved scud C missiles. These have a range of 400 miles, and are more accurate and carry three times as heavy warheads as those used in the Gulf war.

In the face of all this there is a feverish attempt to get the Arab nations together with the Israelis and the Palestinians for a peace conference.

In Dan. 11:27 it says, "And both these kings' hearts shall be to do mischief, and they shall speak lies at one table; but it shall not prosper: for yet the end shall be at the time appointed." These histories are both typical and prophetic. They have been given for the guidance and comfort of the Jews in the days of the Maccabees at the time of the wars between Syria and Egypt. They are also for the instruction of the godly, earthly remnant in the last days.

The time of the end—the last days—is the last part of the tribulation period. It is called "the time of Jacob's trouble" in Jer. 30:7.

With the present world situation as it is, and especially the struggle in the area of Israel, it is not difficult to envision a war breaking out again with Israel as the focal point instead of Kuwait.

We can then understand that the time must be very near that is called "the time of the end". For us who are waiting for our Lord to return and take us up to be with and like Him, the present world conditions indicate that the rapture may occur at any moment. We need not be alarmed at world struggles, and wars and rumors of wars, but rather look up and say, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Rev. 22:20.

C. Buchanan

The Vision

The writing of the vision begins in verse 4 of Hab. 2 "Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith." It is a vision of blessing to faith, but of judgment to deviousness.

The foregoing scripture could be applied to any man so characterized, but Habakkuk had Nebuchadnezzar and his wicked treatment of the three princes of Judah in mind. We refer to Dan. 3:19-26 where the form of his visage was changed towards Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego. Habakkuk says of them: "The just shall live by his faith." This comment is indelibly etched into the pages of the Old and New Testament.

The Apostle Paul applied it to the "called of Jesus Christ" at Rome. It is the thesis of the book of Romans, and therein is the righteousness of God revealed on the principle of faith to faith. The righteousness of God-it is that kind of righteousness which justifies the believer in Christ. While the Lord was dealing with Israel under law, neither righteousness of God nor wrath of God from heaven was known, but they are now made manifest. The full force of the wrath of God against Gentile ungodliness and against Israel's unrighteousness is impending.

In verse 2: "Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it," that is, he that readeth may run with the good news of the gospel of Christ. The vision did not tarry; it was realized about 2000 years ago in the Person of the Christ. Did not John the Baptist send two of his disciples to inquire of Him, "Art Thou He that should come, or do we look for another?" The Apostle Paul recounts it to the saints at Rome (Rom. 1:16, 17). The urgent need for the dictum is stated in Rom. 1:18;3:20, 21 and 2 Tim. 1:10.

Faith or Works

In the Epistle to the Galatians (3:11), the Apostle Paul emphasizes faith in contrast to works of the law. The promise of God was to Abraham and his seed which is Christ, who came to set all things right (Heb. 9:10 JND).

Second Coming of Christ

In Hab. 2:3, 4 the reader is to wait earnestly for the vision to materialize, because it will surely come. The writer to the Hebrew Christians quotes Habakkuk in Chapter 10, verses 37,38 as follows: "For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, My soul shall have no pleasure in him." Here the application is to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ to catch up the Hebrew saints at His second coming, therefore the emphasis is on "live".

Hab. 2:3, although similar, is not quoted in the Roman and Galatian epistles. The Gentile saints of this dispensation await the coming of the Lord to take them to be with Himself. For them it will be a first coming, if we may so speak. On the other hand, Hab. 2:3 is quoted in the epistle to the Hebrews (10:37), so that their aspect is to a second coming of Christ although it is one and the same coming for all the saints.

Charges against Nebuchadnezzar

We turn now to Habakkuk's charges against Nebuchadnezzar. Five woes are leveled against him. His ambition knew no bounds and kept him in constant warfare. He was never content unless he was abroad, and all for violence. He drank wine to the point of insensibility, as did his grandson after him. He gathered all nations to himself, as though they were his rightful possessions.

SADDAM HUSSEIN, a modern ruler of the old Babylonian territory has appeared on the world scene. He claims descent from Nebuchadnezzar, and true to character, he has taken that which is not his. He seized the wealth of Kuwait, devastated the land, and polluted the ocean and atmosphere for thousands of miles around. His violent exertions are for one purpose: to destroy completely the people of Israel.

First Woe (Hab. 2:5-8)

"Woe to him that increaseth that which is not his! how long? and to him that ladeth himself with thick clay!" to engrave it with willful pledges that fall back on himself. This comment of Habakkuk seems to refer to the unreasonable decree of Dan. 3:10.

Shall not the subjected people rise up suddenly and shall bite, exact usury from their former oppressors, and plunder the plunderer. (Germany paid indemnities to Israel for the Hitlerian oppressions.)

A remnant of the destroyed people shall spoil their enemies because of their constant blood shedding. The violence done to the land of Judah, to the city of Jerusalem and its inhabitants shall be avenged. "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."

Second Woe (Verses 9-11)

"Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his house." The tyrant plans to avoid the destruction, devastation, and bloodshed which he had violently imposed on others. So he boasts, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty?" Dan. 4:30. As the voice of Nebuchadnezzar died away into silence there fell a voice from heaven saying, "O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee." Dan. 4:31.

The great city was 15 miles square; the walls were 350 feet high and 87 feet thick and 35 feet into the ground. It had 250 towers, 100 brass gates, 53 temples and 100 altars to Ishtar.

Third Woe (Verses 12-14)

"Woe to him that buildeth a town with blood, and establisheth a city by iniquity!" All the peoples' labor is for the fire, and the nations exert themselves to no purpose. The purposes of God will be superimposed on all the failure of mankind (Hab. 2:14; Dan. 4:35; Isa. 11:9).

Fourth Woe (Verses 15-17)

"Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink." "Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hand, that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad." Jer. 51:7. Babylon is filled more with shame than with glory. Habakkuk, speaking for Jehovah, calls upon Babylon to drink as it had made others to drink, that it may be exposed as a nation of uncircumcised heathen, whose glory will be reviled and the kingdom taken from them. (Dan. 4:31, 32; Jer 25:26, 27.)

Jehovah holds Babylon responsible for the violence done to Lebanon, the destruction of beasts, and for the violence done to the land, to the city, and all that dwell there. The king of Babylon squandered the forests of Lebanon. He cut down the cedars to make forts against the cities he attacked (Isa. 14:6-8). Nimrod is the prototype of all tyrants, and Nebuchadnezzar followed in his steps.

As to Lebanon, on May 22, 1991, a treaty of friendship between Syria and Lebanon was concluded. It is called the Treaty of Brotherhood, Cooperation and Coordination. In effect, Syria has "annexed" Lebanon, and is presently using a Lebanese Arab army to consolidate control. The domain of the future "king of the north" is expanding after the pattern of pretended peace (Dan. 8:21-25).

Fifth Woe (Verses 18-20)

"Woe unto him that saith to the wood, Awake; to the dumb stone, Arise, it shall teach!... What profiteth the graven image?" The time will come when the workmen shall be ashamed of their images, and though all stand up in defiance of God, they shall be afraid of the consequence (Isa. 44:10,11). Nebuchadnezzar, when his reason was restored, confessed God (Dan. 4:37).

"But the Lord [Jehovah] is in His holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before Him." Hab. 2:20.

W. N. Bothwell

The Arabs

What is their origin and their relationship to Israel?

Shall we ask who the Arabs are? Through the centuries there has been a mingling of the peoples of that area, but basically they are the descendants of Abraham and Isaac through Ishmael and Esau.

How strange that they should have such open enmity toward their brethren! And yet, it was so from the beginning. Did not Ishmael mock at the time of Abraham's feast at the weaning of Isaac? Were not he and his Egyptian mother cast out of Abraham's house at that time (Gen. 21)? And before Ishmael was born God said, "He will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him." Gen. 16:12. Is not the wild man now preparing to display his characteristics?

What of Esau? He was the elder twin brother of Jacob; he sold his birthright to the grasping Jacob, and when he lost the blessing too, he determined to kill Jacob. But as time elapsed, peace was made between them. In the last book of the Old Testament, Malachi, God refers to the unrelenting hatred of the descendants of Esau (or Edom) to the children of Israel.

Two other peoples, descendants of Abraham's nephew Lot, are also included in the present enemies of Israel—the children of Moab and Ammon (Gen. 19:37, 38). Their hostility to Israel in bygone days can also be traced in the Scriptures. At present, the capital city of the nation of Jordan is Amman, and in Old Testament times it was called Rabbah of the children of Ammon (2 Sam. 12:26). It was there that Uriah the Hittite was slain by the sword of the children of Ammon (v. 9).

In Psa. 83:4 where the future alignment of the neighboring enemies of Israel is given prophetically, we find the descendants of all four, among others, mentioned as saying, "Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance." Steps leading up to this confederacy have been in the making for some time. Every fresh incident of trouble between the West and the Middle East propels the forces forward which will unite in their attempts to eliminate Israel. Nothing short of it will satisfy the Jihad agitators.

In all likelihood, it will be such a war for the extermination of Israel (together with other international events) that will force the formation of the revived Roman Empire whose armies will rescue the Jews. Their armies will give them back their land, including Jerusalem and its shrines, under their protection in a solemn compact for a period of 7 years. For, "he", the head of the revived Roman empire, "shall confirm" a covenant with the mass of the Jews who will be placed back in Palestine for a period of "one week", or a period composed of 7 years. It is decreed and it will come to pass.

P. Wilson

Marks of the Local Assembly

A. H. Rule

In Matt. 16:18 Christ builds His Church. In John 11:52 He gathers together in one the children of God. In 1 Cor. 12:13 all believers are baptized by one Spirit into one body. In Eph. 4:4, "There is one body, and one Spirit." All this speaks of unity. The Church which Christ builds is one; the children of God which He gathers are one; the body is one. This is what God, in the power of the Spirit, has worked through Christ.

We find, too, in Scripture that the local assembly in a city or country place was a local representation of this one body, the Church. It was the assembly of God in the place, and gathered together on the principle that the assembly of God is one. The name of the Lord Jesus was that to which the saints were gathered. They were gathered to this Name in the power of the Spirit, and in obedience to the Word, and when gathered, Christ was in the midst of them. (Matt. 18:20; 1 Cor. 12:12, 13; Eph. 4:3,4.)

Such was the local assembly as set up of God at the beginning. The marks are plain, and show that in no sense was it a mere voluntary assembly formed by man's will. Let this be well noted. Man's will has no place in it, except as it may be introduced by the working of the flesh and contrary to the Spirit of God. An assembly formed by man's will would not be an assembly of God at all, even though a perfect imitation as to outward form and action. Alas, we know well the flesh may display itself in a shocking way, even in God's assembly! But, I repeat, a voluntary association is not God's assembly, no matter how perfect the imitation may be.

Now we know that God allowed the assembly to be tested, and it was not long till sad failure came in. The flesh displayed itself in various ways and in schisms growing out of the carnal state which was allowed to go unjudged. And these schisms were connected with heresies, that is, schools of opinion which God allowed to arise among them in order to manifest their state. "For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you." 1 Cor. 11:19. But these heresies are distinctly declared to be "works of the flesh" (Gal. 5:19-21). They are in no way the "fruit of the Spirit."

1 Samuel 7

It is one thing to be a Christian; it is another thing to be a happy Christian. To know the scriptural doctrine of the believer's position and privileges is very different from having the possession and enjoyment of them. The fact is, we are slow to enter upon and make our own the blessings God has graciously given us in Christ.

In Samuel's day, the people were characterized for a long time by lamenting after the Lord; this, we fear, describes the state of heart of thousands of Christians now. They are desiring rather than possessing, longing for instead of enjoying fellowship with the Lord Himself. They are hoping to have, instead of entering into God's thoughts and purposes and tasting His joys. Why is this?

The Single Eye

In Israel's day there was unjudged evil among them and the eye and heart were not single. So they were told to "put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth," and also to "serve Him [the Lord] only." So now there are "strange gods": some things occupying the heart contrary to the truth, something between the soul and the Lord. It may be the world, its pride, wealth, honor, or pleasure in some shape or other. Or it may be pet lusts, self-love, self-exaltation, or something else cherished or allowed which the Word of God positively condemns.

If this be so, the eye cannot be single, nor the heart only desiring the glory of God-serving Him only. The affections are not set on heavenly things. The eye and heart are not exercised in the life and walk of faith, and things of time and sense so occupy the soul that there is desire to have, rather than present possession and enjoyment. So, like Israel of old, they go on year after year lamenting after the Lord (1 Sam. 7:2, 3).

Rejoicing in the Lord

The truth is that we are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. We have been made alive, raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ. Observe this word "made". It is done. We are already associated with Him who is exalted at God's right hand. We have the present possession of life eternal in Christ, we are in Christ in heavenly places, we are fully blessed in Him, we are sons of God. Marvelous blessings!

Should we then be lamenting after the Lord? Certainly not, but rejoicing in the Lord, seeking the things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Our minds should be set and fixed on things above, and not on things on the earth. In short, possessing and enjoying all that God has made us and given us in Christ.

And there is more: joying in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received these amazing blessings. You may ask, How can I possess and enjoy all this? We reply: Not by efforts and resolutions, but by simply believing God's own statements as to His rich mercy in blessing us in Christ.

Snares of Unbelief

Beloved fellow Christians, let us beware of the snares of unbelief, whoever they may be presented by, or in whatever shape. Let the Scripture be the sole and exclusive authority to our hearts and consciences. What can be worse than not to receive implicitly what God has written? Let us watch against the Christ-dishonoring, soul-damaging ways of false humility and doubt. When Scripture gives us the plainest possible statement, what but unbelief could suggest the question: What does it mean?

In these days of growing rationalism, we need to guard against every insinuation which refuses the direct and absolute authority of the written Word of God. Let us not take lower ground than it gives us, notwithstanding the scorn of unbelief, and charge of presumption that skeptical minds may intimate.

"Let God be true, but every man a liar" was, and still is, the motto of believing souls. To have "strange gods" among us—the heart set on things of earth—and to be faithfully serving the Lord, is simply impossible. To be consciously and happily one with Christ, and to be practically taking a place as one with men in the flesh, cannot be. No man can serve two masters. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." If the world, and men in the flesh are worthy, or if the interests of self in your estimation have the first place, let it be so, and honestly abandon Christian ground saying, "Baal is my god."

But if Christ be worthy, if He who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood has, in our estimation, most justly the first and only claim, then let us serve Him only. Let us follow Him closely and walk worthy of the Lord who has called us unto His kingdom and glory.

H. H. Snell

1 Sam. 17

David had been preparing for public service in the secret school of God. God will always have to do in secret with that person whom he intends to serve Him in public. In the desert he had learned the resources which faith has in God. He had slain the lion and the bear.

Are not our failures invariably because we have not been in secret with the living God? This is the essential and primary matter. Do we esteem communion with God our highest privilege? Our strength is in walking in fellowship with the living God. David had already gone through trial, and had therefore proved the God in whom he trusted. There had been dealing between his soul and God in the wilderness.

Secret of the Closet

Where is it that the Christian really learns to get the victory? I believe it is where no eye sees us except God's eye. The hearty denying of self, the taking up the cross in secret, the knowing the way in the retirement of our closets, the casting down of imaginations and everything that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, these are our highest achievements. The closet is the great battlefield of faith. Let the foe be met and conquered there.

He who has much to do with God in secret, cannot use carnal weapons. This should show us the importance of coming forth from the presence of the living God into all our service, that we may be prepared to detect and to mortify all the pretensions of the flesh. It is sad to see a Christian trying to fight in the Lord's name, but clothed in the world's armor.

David said, moreover, "The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, He will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine." He knew that one was as easy to God as the other.

When we are in communion with God, we do not put difficulty by the side of difficulty, for what is difficulty to Him? Faith measures every difficulty by the power of God, and then the mountain becomes as the plain.

Little Things

Too often we think that in little things, less than Omnipotence will do, and then it is that we fail. Have we not seen zealous and devoted Christians fail in some trifling thing? The cause is that they have not thought of bringing God by faith into all their ways. Abraham could leave his family and his father's house and go out at the command of God, not knowing whither he went. But the moment he meets a difficulty in his own wisdom, and gets down into Egypt, what does he do? He constantly fails in comparatively small things.

Faith discerns our own weakness so clearly that it sees nothing less than the power of God can enable us to overcome in anything. Faith never makes light of the danger, for it knows what we are. On the other hand, faith never faints at the danger, because it knows what God is. Things New and Old

Loins Girded and Lights Burning

Luke 12:35-48

This world is in a state of ruin, the result of man's having distrusted God and sinned and of his being driven out of Paradise. No one can shut out the fact that the evil is here. Outward things prove it. What is the magistrate for if there is no evil to stop? There it is, and God has dealt with it. He called out Abraham, He gave a law, He sent prophets, and He sent His Son. Yet the world has gone totally wrong. There has been great development in it, no doubt, such as telegraphs and railroads, arts and sciences, and so on, but all that is just what Cain set out to do because he was away from God. People will tell you that there is no harm in it. Why no, of course, there is not. The harm is in the use we make of such things. The trees in the garden of Eden were good enough in themselves, but they were not intended for Adam to hide himself from God behind them. If I strike a man dead, the harm is not in my strength in itself, but in the use I am making of it. What is wrong in music? The sounds are beautiful; just look around in this great city and see the purpose music is serving.

Adam sinned against God, and Cain sinned against his brother, and then he builds a city in order to make himself as comfortable as he can without God. Workers in brass and iron and music are found therein. And the difficulty now is that Christians do not understand that they are to be witnesses of grace in a world that will only last for a time and then it will be given over to judgment.

People talk of the progress of the world! Well, I do not deny it, but what will that be to you when you are dead? For the next generation? And where will you be when the next generation comes? All sorts of conveniences have been made, but then are people morally nearer to God by these things? The moment they are used to make the need of reconciliation to God less important to people's souls, they are simply Cain's works. There may be hundreds of things yet to be found out, but can anybody say that my soul is in a better state before God because of these inventions? But when my soul learns that I have got to do with God forever, I have a sense of what I am.

The truth is that God has brought light into this world, which tells me everything that concerns me for eternity, while it leaves other things where they are. And in the Christ of God I find that which gives me a relationship that shall last forever. Thus God has dealt with this world as with a world that has departed from Him, and yet He has dealt with it in perfect grace.

And Christ coming into this world has become a servant for the believer. He says, "I am among you as He that serveth," that is to say, to glorify God and to save us. As taking up our cause, He has set Himself to carry this out, and to be, eternally, the minister of blessing to us according to God. Alone with God He has done all that which was needed, for He has been "made sin". God cannot allow sin, and so Christ gave Himself for our sins that instead of putting me away for my sins He might put my sins away for me.

The effect of this is that Christ has become everything to us who believe, and our hearts are taken out of this world altogether. Christ is sitting at the right hand of God and faith follows Him there in

Spirit, so that now we do not belong any more to this world. Quite true, we have to go through the wilderness, but it is with the consciousness of belonging to Christ outside of it.

Well then, Christ has redeemed us from this present evil world, and the more we see the world making progress, the more we need to learn that Christ looks for the distinct and full confession of Himself in word and deed.

Christianity consists in our being Christ's and not the world's. The world that I am in, but not of, is the world that has rejected and crucified the Son of God. The Christian is to be gracious in the world as Christ was, but his heart is with Christ. How blessedly this works! It brings hearts down that have had too much of this world and it lifts hearts up that have much of sorrow and trial. "Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted: but the rich, in that he is made low." Christ fixes our hearts upon Himself, outside of this world.

And we are to be as men that wait for their Lord. The meaning of "lights burning" is that we have a distinct, definite profession so that men should know what we are. "Your loins... girded" is the practical application of the power of the Word. Christ looks for the distinct and full confession of Himself in word and deed, and also that your hearts should be all right and in order. Loins girded and lights burning should characterize Christians in the world—truth in the heart and a good confession of Christ. It is an astonishing fact that nobody with a false religion is ashamed of it. A Mohammedan will say his prayers while he is making a bargain with you. And yet how many a true Christian is ashamed of Christ! But the Lord wants us to be as men that wait for their Lord. Are our hearts really waiting for God's Son from heaven? I do not talk of understanding the prophecies—very blessed in their place—but the Morning Star is what belongs to us, a heavenly Christ who has given His life for us. As, then, we are found looking to be with and like Christ forever, this helps us to go through this world. The character attaching to the Christian is, then, that of watching. It is not understanding prophecy, but it is attachment to Christ as having got the promise that He is coming so that we are waiting for Him. Such have found Christ precious to them, and they say, "Oh, that He would come!" Are we Christians, then, as men that wait for their Lord? If the Lord were to come today, would He be able to say of each one of us, "There is a blessed servant"? Remember He is waiting more truly than we are. Christ has become our servant—love likes to serve, and selfishness likes to be served—and He never gives up His service. In this wicked world we must keep our loins girded, while so watching, but when He comes He will gird Himself and make us sit down. Not merely shall we have the best in heaven, but we shall have Christ Himself to minister to us.

He adds another thing. "Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing." Here we have the service of Christians. We have had the state, now it is the service; we have just to fill up the little niche He has put us into. So, accordingly, the promise here is different: "He will make him ruler over all that he hath." This is not the best of heaven ministered by Christ to us, but it is the kingdom; "you must come and reign with Me." The perfect love of Christ is not merely satisfied with ministering to our happiness, but all that is His own He makes ours.

Now what has brought in the evil around us? Just this, "My lord delayeth his coming." If we were really waiting for Christ, would we be heaping up money and property here? Would we be really glad if Christ came today, I mean as to the state of our hearts? Ah! the shaking that will next come will be the shaking of the things that can be shaken, so that the things which cannot be shaken

may remain. The Lord give us to have our loins girded and our lights burning, and ourselves to be as men waiting for their Lord!

The Lord give us to know Him in His love as manifested down here in the efficacy of His work on the cross, and then, while waiting for Him, to have our hearts looking up to Him and longing to be like Him! J. N. Darby

Bible Challenger-11-November V.06

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the words that identify the one who is always close at hand and ready to perform special delivery services. [The number in brackets indicates the number of words in the answer.]

1. An animal that turned aside, out of the way, because of what she saw. [1]
2. The time at which an uncommon release was made for those confined in a common place. [1]
3. That which shone around certain watchers who were sore afraid. [4]
4. The command to a discouraged prophet after arising to fortify him for a great journey. [1]
5. The means of heavenly ascent and descent, as seen in a dream. [1]
6. The tree under which an interested observer watched a single-handed threshing operation. [1]
7. The place by which a servant girl was found after she fled from the harsh treatment of her mistress. [3]
8. The place where a destroying hand was stayed, after being sent forth, because of a king's ill-advised command. [3]
9. The ready reply of a man with weapon in hand as his name was called forth in tandem. [3]
10. The ignoble cause that terminated a remarkable performance of a man of noble bearing. [3]
11. Something shut, precluding any hurt, because of personal innocence. [2]
12. That part of a title of the Lord Jesus that gives evidence of His humanity and His link with a royal line of kings. [3]
13. Something a sitter did to a great barrier before the dawning of a notable day. [4]
14. That which was seen in the morning light in place of the proud army that set up camp the previous night. [2]

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

R. Erisman

Bible Challenger-10-October Answers V.06

1. R eared up
2. E ndured a great fight of afflictions
3. M inds
4. E unice
5. M aster
6. B ook of remembrance
7. R ejoice
8. A ims
9. N o profit
10. C harity [love]
11. E stablished in the present truth

"Surely he shall not be moved for ever: the righteous shall be in everlasting REMEMBRANCE."
Psa. 112:6.

God's Care and Discipline

"As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him." Deut. 32:11, 12.

These well-known, glorious verses from the song of Moses, which picture the untiring care of God for His earthly people, the Jews of old, re-echo an object lesson for us in the ways of a mother eagle towards her young.

An eye-witness reports the following incident of the remarkable actions of this bird:

"The old eagle was soaring around the site of the nest, seeking to encourage the young eagle to leave it. At last the young bird followed its mother's coaxing, raising itself with great effort, fluttering on the outer edge of the rocky crown of the mountain peak. For a little while it looked from its new position down to the world below with thoughtful meditation, then it fluttered back to its nest, remaining deaf to the further entreaties of its mother.

"Suddenly the old bird rose upward as though tired of coaxing. I held my breath, for I knew what was to follow. The little fellow was sitting at the edge of the nest, looking downward into the abyss, into which it dared not descend. All at once a piercing cry sounded through the air, and in the next moment the mother bird shot toward the nest, catching both the young bird and the entire nest with its large claws, throwing them right out into space.

"Now the young eagle had to fly whether it wanted to or not, and it did flutter for dear life. At one time above, and then again below, or beside it was the mother bird, encouraging the same by tender calls, seeking to make it understand that she was at hand. But terror seemed to rob the young bird of its sense. Its fluttering became more unsteady and agitated, and it sank faster and faster. Then losing its balance and consciousness it went headlong downward with the wings drawn close to its body into the depths below, where it must inevitably smash on the ground.

"But just then the mother eagle shot like lightning under its baby bird thus exposed to danger. The feet of the little one just touched the broad back of the mother, and it balanced itself. Then resting itself for a moment, seemed to regain its consciousness. Shortly after this the old one again darted away from the young one, leaving it afresh to the strength of its wings. Finally I lost sight of them, and when by means of my field glasses I had found them, the little eagle was sitting in the top of a tall pine tree, being fed by its mother.

"As I still looked at the actions of the birds, suddenly it became plain to me what the prophet meant by the words at the beginning of this article. God carries His own upon the strong wings of His love through the greatest dangers and hardships. He stirs up our nest so that we may not settle down in this doomed world as though this were our home. The many trials and difficulties that come upon us are sent by Him in great love to exercise and strengthen us that we may know Him better as the One who sustains us and carries us through the difficult places. Surely we can say, 'We

know that all things work together for good to them that love God.'

"Yet how often we flutter and go down like the young eagle, only to find that, after all, 'underneath are the everlasting arms' to hold us up. Oh, for grace to trust Him more." The Young. Christian

Prayer

In the course of the day, in this wicked world, you will find a thousand causes of agitation. But, if you are spiritually exercised, alive to see the things from God's perspective, everything will become a matter of prayer and intercession according to the mind of God. Thus humbleness and dependence should be marked on all of a saint's actions. Instead of being full of regrets at what we meet with, if walking with Christ we shall see His interests in a brother or the Church. What a blessed thing to carry everything to God! to take all to Him, instead of constantly murmuring over failure! This is our position—to have on the whole armor of God, and not to be tripped up of Satan. Unless walking with God ourselves, we cannot make intercession for others.

A Tale of Long Ago

Illustrating the power of the Word of God

An authentic story has come down from the pioneer days of this country, which illustrates the fact that although men may ridicule the Word of God, and deny its solemn authenticity, yet in their hearts they have more confidence in it than they are willing to admit. As today, so there were then, evil adventurers in many parts of the country, which because of its newness and vastness could not be properly policed. These men preyed upon travelers, often stealing their valuables and murdering them. There were no railroads, and horseback was the usual mode of travel.

A Virginia banker, who was chairman of a noted infidel club of that day, was once traveling through a part of Kentucky, having paper money secreted on his person in the amount of \$25,000. When he came to a lonely forest through which his track led, he recalled that he had heard of murders and robberies thereabouts, which were reported as occurring quite frequently.

After penetrating the woods for some distance, he made the startling discovery that he had missed the path and was lost! It was almost dark, and he did not know where to turn to escape the threatened danger. In his alarm he suddenly noticed a dim light in the distance. Urging his horse on, finally he came to a poor-looking cabin built of logs. He knocked at the door, which was opened by a tall, rough-looking woman. In his nervous state he found her appearance alarming.

In answer to his inquiry about lodgings, she replied that her husband was out hunting and would presently be home. Meanwhile, she directed him to where he might stable his horse. Having cared for his beast, he entered the house with feelings that can better be imagined than described. Here he was with a large sum of money, and perhaps in the house of one of the desperados who were the terror of that district! Around the room on the walls were several guns, pistols and knives, and the sight of these things did not quiet his feelings.

In a short time the man of the house returned. Clad in a deerskin suit with a bearskin cap, he was the typical frontiersman of that day. He had not been very successful in his hunt, and was wearied with his search and therefore in no talkative mood. The traveler was anxious and fearful, so he secretly felt for the pistols in his pockets, and fixed them so as to be ready for instant use. He determined to defend himself as best he could.

Bedtime was comparatively early in those parts, and when pointed by the man of the house to the bed he was to occupy, and asked to retire, he declined, saying he would sit by the fire all night. The man urged, but the more he urged the more alarmed the infidel became. He surmised that this was his last night on earth, and that the pressure being brought on him to retire was only part of a scheme to place him where he could not protect himself. His infidel principles gave him no comfort. His fears grew into perfect agony. What was to be done?

Finally the backwoodsman arose; reaching up to a wooden shelf, he took down an old book and said: "Well, stranger, if you won't go to bed, I will, but it is my habit to read a chapter of the Holy

Scripture before I do so."

What a change these words produced! Alarm was at once removed from the skeptic's mind. Though calling himself an infidel, and the chairman of the infidels' club, he found that after all he believed in the Bible. He felt safe! He felt sure that a man who kept an old Bible in his house, who read it, and bowed his knees in prayer, committing himself and his household to God's protection, was no robber or murderer! He listened to the Scriptures, and the simple prayer following the reading. At once he dismissed all his fears and that night lay down in the rude cabin and slept as calmly and soundly as he ever did under his father's roof.

Furthermore, from that time he stopped reviling the Bible and became a sincere Christian, often relating the story of that eventful night to illustrate the folly of infidelity.

An infidel of note said on his deathbed, "The only argument against the Bible is a wicked life." How true! The Bible and a wicked life can never agree, for when the Word of God gets a place in a man's heart, sinful ways disappear. They cannot dwell together. The Psalmist said, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee." Psa. 119:11.

EDITORIAL: Led by the Holy Spirit

Rather than writing about some current event this month, perhaps it will be of profit to Christians to be pointed to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. In the Gospel of Luke we see Him especially as a man among men—the Son of God who is the Son of man.

First, we call attention to a verse in Rom. 8 that applies to believers. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." v. 14.

Now we trace Jesus in Luke's Gospel. To Mary the angel said, "Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call His name Jesus." Luke 1:31. And in Luke 1:35 it reads, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."

In chapter 2 it tells of His birth and of one event when He was 12 years old. The Lord's reply to His mother in verse 49 is significant. He said, "Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?" He fully knew His mission here on earth. "The Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world." 1 John 4:14.

Luke 3:22 tells of Jesus at 30 years of age and that "the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon Him." Then we take notice of how Jesus was led by the Spirit.

Chapter 4:1, "And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness." There He defeats the devil (the archenemy of God and man). The Word of God vanquishes Satan and he departs for a season. The Lord Jesus must go to the cross and take away his armor (Luke 11:21,22).

Jesus, the dependent man, steadily goes on in His ministry toward the cross. He allows Himself to be taken by the multitude with Judas at the forefront (Luke 22:47).

"Then took they Him, and led Him, and brought Him into the high priest's house." Luke 22:54. Notice Jesus, the meek and lowly, obedient Man submitting and still led of the Spirit, but permitting His rebellious creatures to lead Him at their will.

Again in chapter 22:66 He is led. "And as soon as it was day, the elders of the people and the chief priests and the scribes came together, and led Him into their council."

In the next chapter, 23:1, "And the whole multitude of them arose, and led Him unto Pilate." Whether in the high priest's palace, before the council, or before Pilate, or Herod, or back again before Pilate, Jesus receives the same treatment: shame, scorn, spitting, mocking and smiting. Perfect Savior He was-obedient unto death. Nothing could turn Him back from completing redemption.

Next in chapter 23:7 it says, "And as soon as he knew that He belonged unto Herod's jurisdiction, he sent Him to Herod." Pilate would not lead but sent Him.

Likewise does Herod in verse 11, "Herod with his men of war set Him at naught, and mocked Him, and arrayed Him in a gorgeous robe, and sent Him again to Pilate."

Last of all, in verses 26 to 33 we read how they led Him away to Calvary where they crucified Him.

For us as believers, there is no value in a dead sacrifice, but as the sons of God led by the Holy Spirit, we can and will be a living sacrifice (Rom. 12:1).

C. Buchanan

Faithful to God

O Lord! when we the path retrace
Which Thou on earth hast trod,
To man Thy wondrous love and grace,
Thy faithfulness to God;
Thy love, by man so sorely tried,
Proved stronger than the grave;
The very spear that pierced Thy side
Drew forth the blood to save;
Faithful amidst unfaithfulness,
'Mid darkness only light,
Thou didst Thy Father's name confess,
And in His will delight;
Unmoved by Satan's subtle wiles,
Or suffering, shame and loss,
Thy path uncharred by earthly smiles,
Led only to the cross:
We wonder at Thy lowly mind,
And fain would like Thee be,
And all our rest and pleasure find
In learning, Lord, of Thee.

Worship: in the Flesh or in the Spirit?

Worship that is acceptable with God is only that which is produced in our hearts by the Spirit of God. Any other source of worship is merely flesh, which is not acceptable with Him. Mere human emotions do not constitute acceptable worship.

Judaism was a religion suited to man in the flesh. Such devices were employed in Judaistic worship as musical instruments, trained singers, imposing clerical vestments and architecture, striking rituals, etc. It impressed the eye, the ear, and other senses and drew out the emotional responses of nature. The enjoyment of it all depended on neither the new nature nor the ministry of the Spirit. It was for man in the flesh.

There is much in Christendom today that bears the stamp of Judaism on it. The name of Christ is put on it, but it is not truly Christian. Such devices as those listed above are employed, and the awe and enjoyment resulting from it are called "worship". It is, however, nothing more than Cain offering to God the best produce he had. God can accept nothing less than Christ in worship.

The introduction, then, of anything that is Judaistic is from the flesh and, therefore, merely carnal. We may deceive ourselves that God is accepting it as worship, but Christ is not in it. He is not in Judaism. Let us look at some scriptures that bear on these principles.

It is possible to worship God in vain: "But in vain they do worship Me." Matt. 15:9. But it was not so with the Lord's offering to Him: "Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God." Heb. 9:14.

The Spirit—the Power for All That Is of God

In all spiritual questions, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." John 6:63. It was so when we first began with God: "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." John 3:5, 6. And it is no less so in worship: "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." John 4:23, 24.

And so, we are invited to "draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith" and offer our worship to Him in just this character: "By Him [Christ] therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name." Heb. 10:22; 13:15. It must be, then, in the power of the Spirit that we approach to God for life or for worship: "For we are the circumcision, which worship God in [by] the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." Phil. 3:3. "But be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." Eph. 5:18, 19.

Judaism is a religion suited to man in the flesh. Man under the law and in the flesh has proven himself to be a dismal failure. Reality before God and blessing from Him begin with the power of God through the Spirit: "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." Gal. 2:16. "This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" Gal. 3:2, 3.

The Flesh-Opposed to the Spirit

The flesh is neither justified nor is it any part of the spiritual life. If anything at all, the flesh and the Spirit are in total opposition and could never be found in agreement: "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot [should not] do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law." Gal. 5:17, 18. "God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." Gal. 6:7, 8.

A thing, therefore, that is to be done in the power of the Spirit-whether in service or in worship-can never be done in the flesh with God's approval: "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual [communicating spiritual things by spiritual means]. 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. 2:13, 14. "Though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds;) casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." 2 Cor. 10:3-5. The anointing oil was never to be poured upon the flesh of a man nor was there ever a counterfeit to be made of it: "Upon man's flesh shall it not be poured, neither shall ye make any other like it, after the composition of it: it is holy, and it shall be holy unto you." Ex. 30:32.

Judaism—or, a Foreshadowing

In the Old Testament the law had only a foreshadowing of Christ. Now Christ has come, and God forbids our occupation in those things which are less than Christ. To be so occupied is to present something to God other than Christ Himself: "Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ." Col. 2:17. The natural man prefers the things of Judaism and the flesh, but the Lord tells us that the new and the old cannot be mixed up together, as they so often are: "And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish. But new wine must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved. No man also having drunk old wine straightway desireth new; for he saith, The old is better." Luke 5:37-39.

Whatever, then, is brought forward out of Judaism into Christianity is mixing the old with the new. Man in the flesh has been condemned in the cross. To bring in Judaistic things is to resurrect the old man and to set aside the cross. Judaism in any form is an affront to Christ, who suffered, bled, and died upon Calvary's cross. It is a dishonor to God, and He cannot accept it. "The flesh is flesh." John 3:6.

Any effort "at all" to present Christ to God in the energy of the flesh He calls "abomination" and "iniquity": "And if any of the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace offerings be eaten at all on the third day, it shall not be accepted, neither shall it be imputed unto him that offereth it: it shall be an abomination, and the soul that eateth of it shall bear his iniquity." Lev. 7:18. Christ is what the true worshiper presents to God—and especially, Christ crucified. He does so in the power of the Spirit. Our hearts, unstable as they are, may become distracted in the very midst of so worshiping. The distraction may be merely the wanderings of the mind or externally induced. Then the heart's impulse is generated by the flesh, rather than by the Spirit. Any further effort to maintain worship is carnal. He may be praising God in audible prayer or in song or quietly in meditation. To simply carry on thus without judging the departure answers, I believe, to what is called "abomination" and "iniquity" in this passage. Carnal devices can only produce carnal worship. They are themselves distractions.

D. Graham

Stephen

The stoning of Stephen in Acts 7 is especially important in two ways.

First: It shows that the Jewish people rejected the Christ, and resisted the testimony of the Holy Spirit. They would not have this grace. This shows what man's heart is when left to itself. They had sinned against God, despised His law, and rejected the grace of Jesus. Now they resist the testimony of the Holy Spirit. The stoning of Stephen is the last grand act of their sins.

Second: This puts the first person of the Church of God into heaven. The heavenly company is now beginning. The first soul has gone into heaven, consequent on the full redemption of Christ. Here all is bright. It is not now as in the Psalms, "In death there is no remembrance of Thee." Thus we have the contrast between those who were resisting the Holy Spirit, and one full of the Holy Spirit.

The burden of Stephen's testimony was that whatever God had sent in grace they had rejected. The temple in which they trusted, God had prophesied against. For example, they had rejected Joseph, and when Moses came they rejected him in the same way. And so with Christ. It was always the same. Whenever God had sent a person in a remarkable way, they had rejected him. Thus on the one hand we get them resisting the testimony of God, and on the other trusting in that which God had rejected.

What Is in Everybody's Heart

This shows us what we are as to our natures. Scripture always takes a remarkable case and by means of it presents to us what is in everybody's heart. The same principle governs man now as it did then. There is the same resistance to the present testimony of the Holy Spirit as there was then, and the same trusting in ordinances. The Holy Spirit gives us by the mouth of Stephen a picture of human nature in its most advantageous circumstances. What the Jews were doing then, is just what men are doing now. Men are as rigid about ordinances now as ever the Jews were, and as determined in rejecting the testimony of the Holy Spirit. God must have life and holiness; ordinances cannot give these things.

The testimony of Stephen cut the Jews to the heart, and "they gnashed on him with their teeth. But he, being full of the Holy Ghost." Here Stephen was full of the Holy Spirit, not merely as a prophet, but for himself. Here he takes part in the sufferings and rejection of his Master. The power of the Holy Spirit puts him in the place of testimony and this draws down the hatred of men.

Full of the Holy Spirit

Wonderful is the state and testimony of this man full of the Holy Spirit. Everything is changed by it. "But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." This opening of heaven is a wonderful fact; it has not been closed.

We read of heaven being opened four times. On the first two occasions—as to Sonship (Matt. 3) and angels seen in service (John 1), it was confined to Him. But on the occasion before us, as well as on the last occasion (Rev. 19), it is opened through grace to us too. Christ having been rejected, heaven cannot open on any object here, but it opens and we see the object there. Heaven does not open on us, but to us. When heaven was opened to Jesus He had no object. He was the object. Heaven opens to us, for the object is given to our hearts up there. "He, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God." The principle of this is true for us all. When full of the Holy Spirit (not merely having the Holy Spirit), He so takes possession of all our faculties that nothing else intrudes.

Christ in Heaven

The first effect on Stephen of being full of the Holy Spirit is that he sees only one thing—Christ in heaven. Another effect follows, namely, the capability to persevere. We all know how liable our thoughts are to wander, but why do they? We are not full of the Holy Spirit. When He takes possession of the soul it is not so. Often a person occupied all day long with his business or family, or pleasure, finds when he goes to pray for ten minutes, instead of devotion of soul in the presence of God, a mind swarming with all the thoughts that are in the heart. This is a test of the condition of the heart. The house is a little empty and the door left open to Satan.

When the Holy Spirit is there it is not so. Then the heart is steadfast in the things of God. When there is not this devotedness, we ought to recognize it as failure.

When heaven is opened, Stephen sees a Man in the glory of God. Never had such a thing been seen. It was prophesied about, but now was the thing itself. How did He come there—this Man? He came there by perfectly accomplishing redemption. The Holy Spirit is the seal of our union with Him. The eye of Stephen was fixed on that. Glory is natural to heaven, but Stephen now saw the Son of man in the glory of God.

The Perfectness of Redemption

We too by faith see the One with whom we are united there in the glory for us, and we know the perfectness of redemption. This is because, if He as a man is standing where redemption has brought Him, He gives the Holy Spirit as the seal of our full participation in this place with Him. We have to be filled with the Holy Spirit in order to know and enjoy it.

"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." The effect on Stephen of seeing Christ in glory as the fruit of accomplished redemption is that he is changed into the same image. What did Jesus say on the cross? "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit." What did Stephen say? "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." He does not say, "I commend," but he can say, "Receive my spirit." Thus we see the same spirit animating Stephen. He has the same unhesitating confidence in the Person he was looking to.

What is death here? "Absent from the body, and... present with the Lord." Thus we see the Spirit of Christ in Stephen as he looks upwards. And when he looks down on those who were stoning him, what does he say? Jesus said, "Father, forgive them," and in the same spirit Stephen says, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." It is lovely to see that the moral effect—grace—is just the result of looking up steadfastly at Jesus.

The Child's Home

The home of a child is where its father and mother are. The One we know better than any mortal being is in heaven. The poor thief had his heart on Jesus.

Jesus told him he would be with Him. He had a hold on his heart. So also with Stephen, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." So in two other passages which speak of our portion in dying. "We are willing rather to be absent from the body, and... present"—in heaven? No, but "present with the Lord." Paul desired to depart and to be with Christ which was far better, where our Forerunner is for us entered.

How we should bless God that He has given us a known object in heaven. The Holy Spirit has come down to tell us of all His glory, and fix our hearts upon Him. He is, moreover, the seal and assurance that we belong to heaven and not to earth. May we so walk that the Holy Spirit can occupy us with heaven. If we fail, He must occupy us with ourselves and that is not Christ.

Present Testimony

The Secrets of the Lord

"Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets." Amos 3:7. The morning comes, but alas, for a sleeping world in moral darkness, also the night! The following appears to be the order of events subsequent to the close of the Church's history on earth:

1. The rapture.
2. The judgment seat of Christ.
3. Presentation of the Church.
4. Marriage of the Lamb.
5. King of kings comes forth.
6. The holy Jerusalem descending.
7. Millennium.
8. Eternal state.

It is important to remark that 2 Thess. 2:1, "the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," and 2 Thess. 2:2, "the day of Christ," are two different and very distinct events. The former word meaning "presence" does not necessarily mean manifestation; whereas the latter word "day" is constantly used in the Old Testament in connection with judgment.

At the coming of Christ for His Church, not one believer will be left behind. This wonderful, undated moment—except that it comes before all ulterior events and the war in heaven (Rev. 12)—is in connection with our privileges. Moreover, all the Old Testament saints will be raised with those of the present dispensation, and all will be changed in a moment (1 Cor. 15:51, 52). Both companies will together be caught up to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thess. 4:16-18).

Judgment Seat of Christ

The judgment seat of Christ will follow the rapture (2 Cor. 5:10). Notice well that the saints will be glorified before this moment. This arraignment before Him bears no relation whatever to the question of guilt. It will be a survey which will remove everything offensive, that the bride may be presented to Himself "not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing." We sometimes speak of it as a time when rewards will be given for what has suited Himself, and all else will be consumed. We shall then be in the full light of His presence. Thus the majesty of God will have been maintained by His judgment at the same time that the perfection and tenderness of His dealings will be the eternal recollection of our souls.

Brought Into the Light of God's Presence

Light without cloud or darkness will be understood in its own perfection. To understand it is to be in it, and light is God Himself. How wonderful!

Man become One of Us”

What love is that which in its perfect wisdom, in its marvelous ways overruling all evil, could bring such beings as we are to enjoy this unclouded light. Such beings have had testimony enough in their conscience as to the judgment of God, making them avoid Him and be miserable, but nothing in them to draw them to Him who alone could find a remedy! What love and holy wisdom which could bring such to the source of good, of pure happiness, in whom the power of good repels absolutely the evil which it judges.

Presentation of the Church

Next comes the presentation, "not having spot, or wrinkle." Eph. 5:27. Where is it that the bride is presented to the Bridegroom? Naturally it would be in the Father's house.

Marriage of the Lamb

The marriage of the Lamb follows the presentation of the Church (Rev. 19:7). The "marriage supper" of the Lamb is then referred to, which seems to be rather the manifestation of His companions in glory (Rev. 19:9).

King of Kings

The King of kings now comes forth as "The Word of God" (Rev. 19:13), accompanied by the saints. He executes judgment upon the great confederacy gathered at Armageddon (Rev. 19:11-21).

The Holy Jerusalem Descending

In the progress of these heavenly wonders, we now see the bride under the figure of a city. She descends to take her place over the millennial scene (Rev. 21:10). We know this city is the bride, verse 9 clearly tells us this—"the bride, the Lamb's wife."

Millennium

The thousand years of peace intervenes, Satan is bound, and Christ reigns (Rev. 20:6).

Eternal State

Here we see the "new Jerusalem" still the bride in all her freshness after 1000 years (Rev. 21:2). The sun which measures our little day sets forever. The new heaven and new earth, wherein God dwells with men, come into view (Rev. 21:1-8).

A word Fitly Spoken

"A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." Prov. 25:11.

A word fitly spoken is both beautiful and precious, like golden fruit seen through the pure frosted network of a silver basket. The marginal reading for fitly spoken is, "on its wheels"-not flung in nor pushed in, but glided in at the fitting opportunity and suited to the person to whom it is addressed.

Such a word was once spoken to the great Emperor Theodosius, who at one time was disposed to waver in his belief in the divinity of our Lord. One day he was seated on his imperial throne in the great hall of his palace at Constantinople. By his side, sharing his throne and splendor, was his little son Arcadius, on whom he had just bestowed the title and honor of Augustine.

An aged bishop approached to salute his sovereign. He bowed with all reverence to Theodosius, but turned away without seeming to notice Arcadius. The Emperor, thinking it an oversight, called him back, and in a friendly manner pointed to the prince, upon which the bishop coolly went up to the child, stroked him on the head, and said with the familiar air he might have used to a peasant, "God save thee, my son."

The Emperor's indignation rose in a moment. Raising his voice he angrily commanded his guards to drive the insolent old man from his presence. But as he was being led to the door, the bishop found time to say: "Thus, O Emperor, will the Lord of heaven do to those who fail to obey His commands, and to honor the Son even as they honor the Father."

The lesson was rude and simple, but it was striking and well fitted to impress the mind of him to whom it was addressed. Theodosius never forgot it.

"The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which hath sent Him." John 5:22, 23. Young Christian

Delight in God's Glory

If we delight in God's glory, we shall delight to honor those whom God honors.

When heaven was opened up on Jesus, it looked down with delight—we look up and are changed.

Doctrinal Definitions

1. PURCHASE means that Christ's blood or death has bought the world, and all that are in it to Himself and to God (Matt. 13:44; 1 Cor. 6:20; 7:23; Heb. 2:9; 2 Peter 2:1; Rev. 5:9; 14:3). But there is this difference: the believer recognizes the purchase, the unbeliever disowns it and denies Him who purchased all by His blood.
2. REDEMPTION is by power founded on the shed blood of the Lamb, as we see in Ex. 12-14. By the resurrection of Christ, the Christian now knows this for his sin. That is, he knows it for his soul and will know it for his body when Christ comes again. He will make it good for Israel in the day of manifestation.
3. RECONCILIATION is the bringing back to God of what had been severed by sin. This is applied to both persons and things, as we see typically in Lev. 16, and doctrinally in Col. 1.
4. ATONEMENT consists of the two parts: united for us in the bullock, analyzed for Israel in the two goats of Lev. 16. They set forth Jehovah's part in propitiation-the people's in substitution.
5. JUSTIFICATION means that the believer in Jesus, though in himself ungodly and confessedly so, is accounted righteous with God by virtue of the work of Christ, the full measure of which is Christ risen from the dead (1 Cor. 1 and 2 Cor. 5).
6. FORGIVENESS is the remission of the sins of those who believe in Jesus through faith in His blood. It is not merely by their passing over, as of old, but their remission (Rom. 3).
7. SANCTIFICATION of the Spirit is the setting apart to God of all that are born of God, to obey as Christ obeyed, and the sprinkling of His blood (1 Peter 1). This personal or absolute sanctification is followed up by practical sanctification in the measure of their faith and therefore relative. It should also be progressive. There is also a position of sanctification by blood (Heb. 10) which might not be vital in the soul, and so the position be lost.
8. ADOPTION in the Christian sense is the sonship which the believer receives as his new relation to God through faith in Christ Jesus.
9. PERFECTION means that full growth which is the characteristic of the Christian who goes on from the elements of truth in Christ after the flesh, to Him, dead and risen and ascended to heaven, and our place in Him.
10. GLORIFICATION means the application to our bodies of that power of Christ risen. This will conform us completely to His image in glory (Rom. 8; Phil. 3).
11. REGENERATION goes beyond "new birth" in John 3, which is a change purely subjective, and was always true of saints since the fall. That change of place only enables one to say, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

W. Kelly

"The ANGEL OF THE LORD encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them."
Psa. 34:7.

Bible Challenger-00-December V.06

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the word telling of something an apostle had, which gave assurance of continued by of faith. [The number in brackets indicates the number of words in the answer.]

1. Something a man endowed with wisdom does to the strength of the mighty. [2]
2. The quality, once looked for, in one whose departed servant had become transformed in his absence. [1]
3. A desirable negative promise to those who abide at the time of another's coming. [3]
4. Something of equal dubious value as a broken tooth in time of trouble. [4]
5. The words of the Holy One of Israel, as to how that nation should ultimately be saved. [4]
6. Something not usually associated with the mouth that should be kept even in intimate relationships.
[4]
7. Something said of the earth, which signifies the universal extent of certain terrible things. [1]
8. Something said regarding external resistance to a certain preacher and teacher holding forth from his own hired house. [4]
9. Something a proper relationship with God will never cause the Christian's heart to do. [2]
10. Something Israel's God will have done to the surrounding nations which will give rise to much building and planting. [2]

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

R. Erisman

Bible Challenge-11-November Answers V.06

1. A ss
2. N ight
3. G lory of the Lord
4. E at
5. L adder
6. O ak
7. F ountain of water
8. T hreshingplace of Araunah
9. H ere am I
10. E aten of worms
11. L ions' mouths
12. O ffspring of David
13. R oiled back the stone
14. D ead corpses

1. Num. 22:23
2. Acts 5:19
3. Luke 2:9
4. 1 Kings 19:7
5. Gen. 28:12
6. Judges 6:11
7. Gen. 16:7
8. 2 Sam. 24:16
9. Gen. 22:11
10. Acts 12:23
11. Dan. 6:22
12. Rev. 22:16

13. Matt. 28:2

14. 2 Kings 19:35

"The ANGEL OF THE LORD encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them."

Psa. 34:7.

Communion and Obedience

Communion and obedience go together. "If ye love Me, keep My commandments." The Spirit has been sent here in order that, in communion, in relationship and affection, we might be in the good of the place in which He has set us. Let us not forget that obedience and communion go together.

Out of His Treasure

Faith should pierce through and see the things that are not seen. Things get their true value in another world, and faith when vivid sees them there.

The Christian has no future but glory. All he has to do is to do God's will at the moment, and the rest is all in God's hands; only we know that glory awaits us.

He tells us the place He is going to take us to—it is the Father's house. And what makes the Father's house of importance to the child—if he has right affections? It is that the Father is there. However feebly we may enjoy it now, when we talk of "going to heaven", it is going to the Father.

"I will come again, and receive you unto Myself." This is the language of affection. He does not say, I will send for you. No, that would not satisfy the heart—"I will come." He would not be content without having them where He is, and without coming to fetch them.

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