

CHRISTIAN TREASURY VOLUME 9

by Unknown

A collection of articles and writings from Christian Treasury Volume 9, covering various biblical topics and Christian teaching.

167 Chapters

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Healthful Discipline

Discipline, the discipline of a child, is healthful and does good like a medicine. If we need it, then it is the only thing for us. In the days of Samuel when Israel asked for a king, would it have been well for them if the Lord had given them David? The Lord had David in reserve for them, but would it have been seasonable, would it have been healthful for them if David had been given to them at once, when with a rebellious will they were asking for a king? Surely they must first be made to know the bitterness of their own way.

A Saul must be given when Israel asks for a king. This was discipline, and this was the only thing that would have been healthful for them. But when they have tasted the bitterness of their own way, taking pity on their misery, the Lord will bring out that which He has in reserve for them, the man after His own heart, who shall fulfill all His pleasure.

How perfect was all this! Had David been given to Israel in the day of 1 Sam. 11, the whole moral of the story would have been lost to us. But the love is the same, whether it be discipline or consolation, medicine or food. "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Prov. 22:6.

J. G. Bellett

The Church: The House of God and the Body of Christ

Privileges in the Church have never been greater than they are now in 1994. Also evident failure surely has never been more manifest. Understanding about the Church as the body of Christ and as the house of God would have prevented some failure, therefore, we write the following: Judgment and discipline are connected with the house of God and not with the body of Christ.

"The God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory... hath put all things under His [Christ's] feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all." Eph. 1:17, 22,23. "For through Him [Christ] we both [Jew and Gentile] have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." Eph. 2:18, 19.

The Church as the body of Christ has Christ as its head and is the fullness of Him who is over all things. Each member of the body is linked to the head and to one another by the indwelling Spirit (1 Cor. 12:12, 13). God has set the members in their place and function in the body as it has pleased Him, tempering them together into one whole (1 Cor. 12:18, 24). The Church as the body of Christ is the object of His love and care and He is the Savior of it, laboring that He may present it to Himself a glorious Church, holy and without blemish (Eph. 5:25-30).

On the other hand, the Church as the house of God is the place where God dwells among His people, a place of individual and collective responsibility where holiness is to be maintained and failure is judged. "Ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit." Eph. 2:22. "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." 1 Tim. 3:15. "Judgment must begin at the house of God." 1 Peter 4:17.

When the Church is viewed as His body, it is relationship to Christ which is paramount. When it is the Church as the house of God, it is relationship to God. Privileges and responsibilities result from these relationships. As members of the body of Christ, I believe we are the most privileged people who have ever lived, particularly in view of the nearness of the Lord's coming. But with this privilege comes our responsibility to "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith [we] are called."

Not only is there privilege and responsibility in the body, but in the house of God too, because we are builded together for an habitation of God by the Spirit! God by the Spirit dwells both in His house collectively and in us individually.

The Church as the House of God

1 Cor. 3 takes up the Church as a building, the house of God.

"For we are laborers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire." 1 Cor. 3:9-15.

This chapter instructs us as to our responsibility in God's building. The foundation has been laid by Paul as the wise master builder. Every man builds on that foundation. The results of his labors are varied; some, when tested, receive the approval and reward of the Architect and some do not, the laborer suffering loss.

In Matt. 16, Christ said, "Upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." He is that rock! When He finished His work, He returned to the glory and sent down the Holy Spirit. Since then ministry by the Spirit has been carried on in the building. All that is of the Spirit is of Christ and is perfect.

Paul speaks of himself as a wise master builder. How did Paul build? By his doctrine and teaching, with Christ using him to complete, as to doctrine, the Word of God. The foundation is laid; it is the apostles and prophets; it's the New Testament epistles; it is Jesus Christ.

With the foundation laid and the mind of Christ made known through the Bible, we are responsible builders in the house of God. We are exhorted, "Let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon."

How are we building? Are we building with those truths that come down from the apostles and prophets? That is the only construction we can do that will pass the test of fire. It has to be according to God's Book!

We have failed much by not understanding that judgment is in the house of God, not in the body of Christ. Peter, addressing believers, establishes this fact when he says, "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God." 1 Peter 4:17.

Simply put, believers in the house of God come under the administration of that house. My own father's house illustrates the point. In my father's family were nine children, so eleven of us sat at the same breakfast, dinner and supper table for many years. I thank God for that. There I learned that if I displeased my father or mother, I would be sent away from the table and not be permitted back until I met their approval. My father and mother had discipline in their house and at their

table. God does too.

The Church as the Body of Christ

The Church viewed as the body is a different thing from the house. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." 1 Cor. 12:12, 13.

Our entrance and place in the body of Christ is absolute. You and I did not bring it about; it is all of God. What I do and what you do, and what I say and what you say can never ever change that.

The truth of the oneness of the body of Christ started to come out when Saul of Tarsus was on his way to Damascus to persecute the Church! When God arrested him, he fell on his face before that light from heaven and said, "Who art Thou, Lord?" Jesus answered, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." To persecute the believers was to persecute Jesus, for Christ and His body are one.

We may suffer persecution, but it's not from Christ. What Paul was doing was not from Christ. Christ does not persecute His own body. He does not judge His own body!

Discipline is not in the body of Christ-it is in the house of God. We must keep these things separate. God by the Spirit judges His house, and our conduct in it is very important. We have heard much truth. It makes us exceedingly responsible, being under the authority of the Lord, in His house. We come under His government. Yes, the time has come when judgment must begin at the house of God. The more light one has, the more responsible one is to walk according to it. Those who have more truth get more discipline, for they are more responsible, having the privilege of enjoying more of the sweetness of the intimate communion that goes with obedience to the Word of God.

Believers come under that government, but, "What shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?" When God takes up unbelievers in judgment, you know what their end will be.

Authority Comes From Above

Authority comes down from the head; it does not come up from the body. Consider your natural body. The members of your body obey the head. The power of authority is from the head. Your hands will do what the head tells them to do when there is a good connection. A spastic person has an interference in the commands that come from the head and cannot control his body well.

Authority and direction in the body of Christ come from the head in glory. Have the members of the body of Christ gotten mixed up in their connection with the Head in glory and not known how to perform well? You know the answer to that question.

Authority in the Household

When a young man and a young lady think of getting married, it's good for them to remember that the head of every woman is the man. Adam was created first, then Eve. God, speaking to Eve, said, "Thy desire shall be to thy husband," and she was subject to her husband. There's authority in the marriage; it is still God's way. The world has sought to throw that authority overboard, and is a catastrophe in every home where it's not practiced.

Young man, if you are going to get married, take your place as head of the home. Young lady, if you're going to get married, submit to your husband.

"Children obey your parents in the Lord." When children are born into a home, they likewise are under authority. They are under the authority of their parents and come under their discipline and training. I know of nothing better in this world than to be brought up in a faithful, Christian home. The home and the assembly are two sanctuaries that God has put here to help His people through a wicked world.

Authority in the World

When young people grow up and find work, they immediately learn that their employer, who gives them the paycheck, is the boss. That's another authority: the relationship between masters and servants.

When born in a land, we are immediately under the authority of the government that rules it. The Lord has put authority in the civil government, and we are definitely instructed to obey these "powers that be." That is another authority. God, the supreme authority, has delegated authority to man.

Authority in the Lord's Ministry

When the Lord taught the people, "He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes." Matt. 7:29. Later, while teaching in His Father's house, they quizzed Him about His authority, saying, "By what authority doest Thou these things? and who gave Thee this authority?" Matt. 21:23. Though unrecognized, He was the Lord of that temple. Do we recognize the Lord in His house today? Do we submit to His power and authority there?

Authority in the Assembly

In a democracy the people choose who they want to rule over them. Authority in the assembly is not democratic. It doesn't come from the members of the body of Christ. Authority comes from the Lord. He delegates it. We dishonor His name when we seek to take away His authority or put it where it does not belong.

In Matt. 16 the Lord said, "I will build My church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." In Matt. 18, He put authority and responsibility in the collective hands of the builders in the house. He decreed that His authority would remain in the house and would be exercised with His sanction even by just two or three gathered unto His name with Himself in the midst.

In 1 Corinthians from chapter 1:1 to chapter 10:15, the view put before us is the assembly as the house of God. It is a holy place and those things not suitable to the One who dwells in that house are to be removed. There we submit to the Lord who is the supreme authority. In His name and by His power all is to be kept in an unleavened state, suitable to His table and presence.

Heb. 13:17 says, "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account." This verse teaches that we are to obey living persons-the guides who know and can show us the way and walk with us in it. In verse 7 it says to remember those-persons now dead-who have spoken unto us the good Word. We are instructed, "Whose faith follow." We are to think about them and follow their faith.

The Results of Mixing Authorities

In the early days of the Church, bishops (overseers) began to give to themselves additional authority. They decided to have archbishops over groups of bishops. Inverting God's order that authority comes from above, these archbishops chose to put over themselves cardinals and finally a pope. Such organization loses sight of the sovereignty of the Lord in raising up those who should take the oversight to administer in the house of God locally. It is man usurping the Lord's authority in His house.

When Constantine converted to Christianity, he used his power as emperor to set up a worldly rule in the Church. He mixed the Church with the world and in the process mixed the two authorities as well. What confusion he introduced by mixing God's civil authority with His authority in His house. The mixture was not of God at all. It was complete ruin for the Church.

Through Constantine the world ruled in the Church. Through the pope the Church started to rule in the world and still does. If you notice what happens in the world, you know that Rome has great power in many nations to rule religiously and politically. It's a horrible mix-up, worse now than in Constantine's day. We need to leave authority where God has put it and submit to it.

Don't interfere in the headship of a man with his wife. A man has authority over his wife and they have a beautiful relationship; leave them alone. Don't try to interfere between parents and their children. They have beautiful responsibility and privilege in that relationship, and you have no business to assume authority in it at all, nor does the assembly. The assembly is not to rule in the home, and the wife is not to rule over the assembly, over her head, or over civil authority.

While authorities are not to be mixed, they may have to deal with the same person at the same time. But each must do so only within the sphere of its own God-given authority. Suppose a boy living at home robs a bank. His father may discipline him in the home. The assembly may have to put Him away from the Lord's Table. The local government may have to put him in jail. But notice that none have the authority to do what the other can and should do. And none of the authorities are to try and set aside or interfere with the authority of the others.

Agreeing with the Lord

Matt. 5 gives us a verse that is very helpful in understanding the importance of receiving doctrine from the Lord and agreeing with Him.

“Agree with thine adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.” Matt. 5:25, 26.

The Lord presented Himself to Israel as their Messiah. He came preaching and teaching about the kingdom. But finding they would not agree with Him, He took the place of an adversary, teaching them the need to repent and subject themselves to the King in order to enter into the kingdom which was coming. Yet they rejected and cast Him out. In spite of His rejection, He finished His work on earth and returned to heaven.

The Lord is coming back to deliver that people to the judge (Himself). The judge will give them to the officer (Himself), and they will be cast into prison (the great tribulation). They will pay the ultimate price nationally to get out of that place.

While waiting to return, He is working in another way. He is building His house down here. We are to agree with His teaching for the house now It's the teaching of the New Testament; it's the mind of Christ as revealed in the Word of God and we are to agree with it. It's a serious matter to oppose Him by agreeing with men's reasonings. I believe that when we obey His Word, we are "endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

I Will Be a Father unto You

We will conclude by looking at 2 Cor. 6. The exhortations are beautiful, especially because, when we heed them, we enjoy our relationship with God our Father and our place as His sons and daughters.

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness?" None! "What communion hath light with darkness?" None! "What part hath he that believeth with an infidel?" None! The Lord Almighty has said, "Touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters."

It is a difficult day, but let's walk with God and agree with Him. Let's get our pure doctrine out of His Book and practice it. More than once I have heard some say, "Why can't we just agree to disagree?" Brethren, let us never agree to disagree, and let us never agree to agree. Let us agree with the One who wrote the Book!

Ed.

The Hebrews

The epistle to the Hebrews opens the heavenly calling. It associates us with Noah, Abraham, Moses and others. Read chapters 11 and 12. The earth at the beginning was given to the children of men. What did they do with it? They forfeited it. Then what did God do with them? He opened heaven to them! He gave them the earth to enjoy-they soiled and lost it by sin.

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

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

J. D. S.

The Condition of Christianity

Phil. 3:15-19

Paul truly followed Christ, but the form of his life was peculiar, on account of the way in which God had called him; and it is thus that Christians possessing this revelation ought to walk.

Accordingly, Paul speaks of a dispensation committed to him. It was not to turn their eyes from Christ; it is on having the eyes constantly fixed on Him that he insists. It was this which characterized the Apostle, and in this he gives himself as an example. But the character of this looking to Jesus was special. It was not a Christ known on earth who was its object, but a Christ glorified whom he had seen in heaven. To press ever forward to this end formed the character of his life; even as this same glory of Christ, as a testimony to the bringing in divine righteousness and to the assembly's position, formed the basis of his teaching. Therefore he can say, "Be followers together of me." His gaze was ever fixed on the heavenly Christ, who had shone before his eyes and still shone before his faith. The Philippians were thus to walk together, and to mark those who followed the Apostle's example; because (for evidently it was a period in which the assembly as a whole had much departed from her first love and her normal condition) there were many who, while bearing the name of Christ and having once given good hope, so that the Apostle speaks of them with tears, were enemies of the cross of Christ. For the cross on earth, in our life, answers to the heavenly glory on high. It is not the assembly at Philippi which is the subject here, but the condition of the outward, universal assembly. Many were already calling themselves Christians, who joined to that great name a life which had the earth and earthly things for its object. The Apostle did not acknowledge them. They were there; it was not a matter of local discipline, but a condition of Christianity, in which even all were seeking their own interest; and, spirituality being thus lowered, the Christ of glory little realized, many who had no life at all might walk among them without being detected, by those who had so little life themselves and scarcely walked better than they did. For it does not appear that they who were minding earthly things committed any evil that required public discipline. The general low tone of spirituality among the real Christians left the others free to walk with them; and the presence of the latter debased still more the standard of godliness of life.

But this state of things did not escape the spiritual eye of the Apostle, which, fixed on the glory, discerned readily and clearly all that had not that glory for its motive; and the Spirit has given us the divine judgment, most grave and solemn, with regard to this state of things. No doubt it has grown enormously worse since then, and its elements have developed and established themselves in a manner and in proportions that are very differently characterized; but the moral principles with regard to walk remain ever the same for the assembly. The same evil is present to be avoided, and the same efficacious means for avoiding it. There is the same blessed example to follow, the same heavenly Savior to be the glorious object of our faith, the same life to live if we desire to be Christians indeed.

That which characterized these persons who professed the name of Christ was that their hearts were set on earthly things. Thus the cross had not its practical power—it would have been a contradiction.

Their end therefore was destruction. The true Christian was not such; his conversation was in heaven and not on the earth; his moral life was spent in heaven, his true relationships were there. From thence he expected Christ as a Savior, that is, to deliver him from the earth, from this earthly system far from God here below. For salvation is always viewed in Philippians as the final result of the conflict, the result due to the almighty power of the Lord. Then, when Christ shall come to take the assembly to Himself, Christians, truly heavenly, shall be like Him in His heavenly glory, a likeness which is the object of their pursuit at all times. (Compare 1 John 3:2.) Christ will accomplish it in them, conforming their bodies of humiliation to His glorious body according to the power whereby He is able to subdue all things to Himself. Then the Apostle and all Christians will have attained the end, the resurrection from among the dead.

J. N. Darby

Bible Challenger-01-January V.09

The first letter of each of the following responses (Bible quotations with one or more words to complete) will form an expression of time during which David felt the Lord's hand of correction on him. [1] The number in brackets indicates the number of words in the answer.

1. "But his_____ is in the law of the Lord; and in His law doth he meditate." [1]
2. "Let Thine ear now be____, and Thine eyes open, that Thou mayest hear the prayer of Thy servant." [1]
3. "Let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and _____ [1]
4. "Saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God _____, which was, and is, and is to come." [1]
5. "About fourscore and four years,_____ which departed , but served God with fastings and prayers." [4]
6. "The Lord went before them by_____ in a pillar of a cloud." [1]
7. "This book of the law shall_____ out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein." [2]
8. "Who worship the beast and his_____, and whosoever receiveth the mark." [1]
9. "He that gathered ten homers_____ : and they spread them all abroad." [2]
10. "While the earth remaineth, seedtime and_____ cold and heat, and summer and winter." [1]
11. "Fast ye_____ for me, and neither eat nor drink" [2]

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

Bible Challenger-00-December Answers to V.08

1. Mourned Gen. 37:34
2. Ahab 1 Kings 18:1
3. Name of Jesus Christ Acts 16:18
4. Younger son Luke 15:13
5. Desireth life Psa. 34:12
6. All Acts 27:20
7. Years Eccles. 6:3
8. Shut thou up the vision Dan. 8:26

"And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat MANY DAYS." 1 Kings 17:15.

The Lion of the Tribe of Judah

The names and titles given to the Lord Jesus in the Word of God are many and varied in thought. They speak of His attributes, His glories, and His dispensational relationships. The One whom God delights to honor is thus placed before man according to the varied glories which are and will yet be His. And these varied names and titles, so full of significance, call forth worship and homage from hearts that are won to Him when their meaning is entered into.

The Lion of the tribe of Judah is one of His titles and is given to us in Rev. 5:5. "And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." Here we have the Lord Jesus introduced in connection with the earthly purposes of God. David, the son of Jesse, was the one whom Jehovah had chosen to be king of Israel. "He chose David also His servant, and took him from the sheepfolds." Psa. 78:70. David was marked as the king and this title brings before us God's purpose as to Christ in connection with Israel on earth.

In Rev. 5:5, the One who can step forward when all others have failed—not one in heaven, in earth, nor under the earth being worthy to open the book and loose its seals—is the blessed One who comes in the royal line of Judah according to God's purpose. Because of this He is termed "the Lion of the tribe of Judah." He alone can take the book, open its seals and unfold those things which are coming to pass on the earth. He is the worthy and powerful One, but not manifested as such till all others have been proved unworthy to undertake such a work. How suitable and appropriate is the name, "The Lion of the tribe of Judah."

We know Judah was the tribe from which Christ, or Messiah, came, and the name "Lion" gives the thought of majesty and power. Jacob compared Judah to a lion in Gen. 49:9, "Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up?"

The same symbol is used in connection with Israel and awaits fulfillment in a future day. "Behold, the people shall rise up as a great lion, and lift up himself as a young lion: he shall not lie down until he eat of the prey, and drink the blood of the slain." Num. 23:24.

The Lord in His character as the Lion of the tribe of Judah is the One who will bring this about. At present He is still despised and rejected by man, but accepted of God and seated at His right hand. He waits the time when He will make His enemies His footstool, and all things shall be put in subjection under Him. Then His lion-like character of power and majesty will be manifested.

Another very important point which this portion brings before us is that He does not take the place of opening the book because of His divine glory, or because He is worthy, but because He "prevailed." His victory through His death is what is made prominent.

The Lord might at any time have taken that book and opened the seals because of His personal worthiness, but had He done so on that ground we could not have known the wonderful unfolding

(or secrets) of the book. No, He would not thus open the seals, but by having become man, and still being a divine person, He had power to go down into death and to rise victoriously. He overcame, He conquered, or as the Scripture says, "He prevailed." On that ground He takes the book and opens the seals and can unfold to us through John what is to take place on this earth after He will have His Church with Himself in the glory.

Do you rejoice that the Lord Jesus Christ will yet have that place of honor and glory, or do you fear as you think of this? If you know Him in His Lamb-like character, that is, as the One who has been a sacrifice for sin and can say, "He died for me," you will rejoice that He will have His rightful place. But if you are not able to say so from the heart, you may well fear and tremble at the thought of His coming power and glory. Man must have Him as his Savior, or as his Judge. Which will it be with you?

J. T. Armet

The Secret of the Lord

I have set the Lord always before me.

Psa. 16:8

Discerning the Lord's mind is largely a question of the state of soul. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him." Is the eye single? Do I desire only His will? Am I not blinded through self-interest or self-will in some way? Do I refer all to the Lord, and wait on Him to know His will? If so, He will guide.

We do not expect any revelation or anything extraordinary, but by laying on the mind what is pleasing to Him, or by some providential way, He will indicate His will. This may be so distinct that it virtually amounts to a certainty in the mind, though we may not be able to prove it to another. The great thing is nearness to the Lord, and a subject mind with the desire, "Show me Thy way." He sets before us an open door, with something to indicate that we may enter. We see His hand in it, recognize it and act accordingly.

This is something we have to learn experimentally. It is not easy to teach it to another, because it is not a mere mental or intellectual operation. Some years ago I passed through a great exercise of soul as to how I could know the Lord's will to go here or go there. I spoke of it to J. Darby once when I met him at Alton, Illinois. The answer I got was, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him." I never forgot it.

I have found since that when I could get no light, there was some cause-something in my state-or something that hindered full communion. Often there has been more or less misgiving as to whether I had His mind, but generally I have found that when any step was taken in His fear, sooner or later it became manifest that He had guided. Sometimes it is "bit and bridle," some restraint, some hindrance, but this is where mere nature is working, or will, and the eye is not clear. It is a mercy to be restrained rather than to have our own way. The simple, normal thing is, "I will guide thee with Mine eye." Psa. 32:8.

God's Word gives us the great principles. God's Spirit forms our hearts in these principles, and the little details fall into line with them. We exercise our judgment, but it is the judgment of a "sound mind," that is, a mind formed in its workings by the Word of God. Then, "I have set the Lord always before me." This Object forms and governs the motives. It is akin to "the fear of the Lord." He gets His rightful place in the soul, and He forms our thoughts and desires, and we act for Him.

A. H. Rule

Pardon and Justification

Pardon and justification are not the same thing. The latter relates to righteous judgment, the former, to kindness. In the case of the sinner before God, they approach one another, and run together in fact, but are not the same, nor is the effect the same in the heart.

Pardon is the favor and kindness of a person wronged passing over faults against himself, an act of prerogative goodness, so that kindness flows forth unimpeded by the wrong-thought in the case of the sinner it is by the blood of Christ.

Justification is holding one as not chargeable with guilt. Justified, I do not fear judgment; pardoned, my heart returns in comfort to Him who has pardoned me, but by His blood we have both. It is another aspect, not another act.

When we connect our risen position with justifying, it is not exact. The justifying is always holding discharged from accusation. Our standing is not simply that we are held to be clear of guilt, but by the resurrection of Christ, we have been put in a new position in Christ. God by the resurrection has acknowledged the satisfaction made in Christ's death and He has therein justified us.

But what Christ did for our justification implies more than pardon, for we have been introduced into God's presence as Christ stands there. If Christ is not raised, we are yet in our sins, but if He is, we are cleansed by a work which brings us into the glory of God in perfect acceptance. We are justified by being the righteousness of God in Him, and are warranted practically in taking what Christ is as the measure of our justification, because it is that which will be recognized in the Day of Judgment.

"Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the Day of Judgment: because as He is, so are we in this world." 1 John 4:17. The Day of Judgment pronounces that we are as the Judge-clearly justified therefore. But the Lamb is the judge, so we appear before Him who bore our sins. Their being put away, then, covered (in virtue of which work all is pardoned), is our justification too, for "we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins." Eph. 1:7.

Righteousness and Peace

It is only God Himself who could bring home a banished one, or provide salvation for a sinner, for to accomplish this, there must be a ransom, a price adequate to the redemption. God alone could furnish that. All the angels in heaven would fail in the attempt: an eternal value must be paid for an offense against God. God alone can yield an offering which shall carry infinite value in it, such as sin demands. Power cannot supply it; love cannot supply it; it is God Himself, whose person has infinite value, that can alone supply it. Power once attempted this, and failed awfully. David on the throne of Israel undertook, by a simple word or decree of power such as his throne carried, to bring back a banished one. But this ended in greater mischief, and the throne that had attempted this was, as it were, forfeited by the act.

God has, however, done it—because He can sprinkle blood on the throne, such as the throne can accept. He can and has allied righteousness with peace in this great matter, and His banished are brought home under sure and clear title to see His face, and to walk in His presence; His own throne is not only guiltless but glorified. New powers array it. Mercy and truth with their several glories, and that too in their brightest shining, adorn it; they have met together, and righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

The Way of Salvation from Evil

The true way of non-association with evil is to be occupied with the Lord. In such occupation, sin which is still in you lies silent, and other things are in abeyance. There is nothing that deadens more than the habit of not minding. A person, for example, is seeking association with you. He calls, but you are occupied; he calls again, and you are occupied. He repeats his call, still you are occupied. He knows you prefer being occupied, to him and he is mortified. The energy which first marked him is broken. Thus it is with the flesh. To be spiritually minded is life and peace; minding the things of the Spirit, being occupied with them, becomes a practical mortification. This I believe is the power of a true, personal holiness-separation unto God being the greatest power in separation from evil. J. D. S.

Set your affection on things above,
not on things on the earth.

Col. 3:2

Editorial

Popular Opinion

Popular opinion is one of the two things that control the natural man. Man's own lust is the other. In the Epistle of James he clearly tells us of lust and its result in the very first chapter. "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man: but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."

Herod was controlled by popular opinion when, because of those who sat eating with him, he commanded John the Baptist to be beheaded. Pilate also, even after saying three times, "I find no fault in Him," still delivered Jesus to be crucified because of public opinion.

Sometimes popular opinion is a restraining factor to prevent evil. Thieves do not want the public to know what they are doing because they know it is wrong. As the moral standards decline, this partial hindrance to evil declines also. This has been so very evident in the last two or more decades. General moral standards are lower and lower every year. What was considered wrong and even repulsive a few years ago is first casually accepted and then taught.

To Christians the exhortation is, Let not fornication, and all uncleanness or covetousness be once named among you. This is God's standard. It never changes. As to the unfruitful works of darkness in the world, the word is: "It is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret." Eph. 5:12.

As popular opinion gets lower it is less and less of a hindrance to evil. As Zephaniah the prophet wrote: "The unjust knoweth no shame." Zeph. 3:5. What men formerly blushed at is now laughed

at. What was formerly done in secret is now done openly. Next, it is taught and commercialized for filthy lucre. In the world, lewdness and immorality are accepted as the natural course. Popular opinion has lowered and the general standard of conduct is down accordingly.

Is it necessary to ask what the Christian's conduct should be, or even what his attitude toward these things should be? The Word of God is clear. "Keep thyself pure." 1 Tim. 5:22. "Be ye holy; for I am holy." 1 Peter 1:16. We are called to "glory and virtue." 2 Peter 1:3.

Defiling influences are found in schools, colleges, offices, factories, houses of the world, and even homes of believers, if care is not taken to preserve holiness in the home. How very important it is for the Christian to seek to walk with God. Enoch did this in the wicked world of his day, and he was not found, for God took him. This is our hope also, yet while we are still here in the world may we not be of it (John 17:14).

If we often read the Holy Scriptures so that our thoughts are formed by the precious Word of God, our standard will be God's standard and not that declining standard of men.

Ed.

The Feasts of the Lord

Leviticus 23

by R. Wilson

In Lev. 23 the Lord gave directions through Moses to the children of Israel concerning certain yearly feasts which they were to keep unto Him. But before outlining them, He told them to keep one weekly celebration—the Sabbath. This Sabbath was not a part of the yearly feasts that follow, but it is important that it should be given first. The first mention of the Sabbath is in Gen. 2:1-3 when the Lord rested on the seventh day after His work in making the earth ready for man, but His rest in creation was soon broken by the sin of Adam and Eve.

God again began to work and prepared coats of skin for the guilty pair; even so, the Son of God could not take His rest in this sin-spoiled creation when He came. He could not rest from His work even on the Sabbath day, for all around Him He found the effects of sin and the works of the devil, but He came to undo the works of the devil. So on one occasion, when He was chided for healing a man on the Sabbath day, He said, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work" (John 5:17), thus referring to God's rest having been broken by sin.

But a chief reason for the introduction of the Sabbath at the beginning of Lev. 23 is that God still purposes that there should be a period of rest for this creation. It was ever before Him, but inasmuch as it could not come in at first by reason of sin, God shows in this chapter how it will be brought in as we shall see later.

These seven yearly occasions, when the people would hold religious observances, were not equally divided throughout the year. Normally, three were held in the first month, one in the third month, and three in the seventh month. It was not God's plan to divide the year into three equal parts, but to teach us lessons about His dispensational ways.

The Passover

The foundation feast was the Passover. It was the basis on which all God's ways would be established, for man was a sinner, and his being sheltered by blood must come first. It took place in the first month. We need to go to Ex. 12 to learn more about the Passover. God's earthly people, the people of promise, were slaves in Egypt, and the Egyptians defied the Lord when He asked them to let His people go. Nothing was left for God but to execute judgment on that rebellious people and land. But when He was going to visit the land in judgment, His earthly people were amenable to judgment, for they were sinners and had fallen into the ways of the Egyptians. But God said that He would make a difference between the Egyptians and the Israelites. It was not a difference founded on parentage or previous privileges, but one which He would make—one founded on the blood of the lamb.

The secular year had been running its course, but God interrupted it and said, "This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you." There was to be a new beginning and it was to be founded on redemption. A lamb without blemish was to be taken on the tenth day and kept until the fourteenth day. On that fourteenth day it was to be killed and its blood put in a basin; then the blood was to be applied with hyssop to the outside of their houses—to the two doorposts and the lintel above the door. After this was done, they were to enter into the house and take shelter under the sign of that blood—a mark that a substitute had died. God said, "When I see the blood, I will pass over you." Wherever this was acted upon, there was security, but not necessarily peace, for that depended on faith in God's word. They were safe under the blood, for God had spoken; they should have been in perfect peace about it, for His word should have dissolved every doubt.

The Passover pointed on to the "Lamb of God," and was a type of Christ, the true Lamb of God's providing. We are not left to our imagination on this point, for the Word of God says, "For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." 1 Cor. 5:7. What a blessed privilege it is for us who believe to rest in His work, His blood-shedding, and the Word of God who cannot lie. Nothing else secured those in Egypt from the destroyer that night, and nothing else secures the sinner now but faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and His shed blood. Truly this is the foundation of all God's ways of blessing, both now and forever.

The Feast of Unleavened Bread

The next feast in the yearly calendar was that of "unleavened bread." It began on the very next day after the Passover and was directly connected with it. The two could not be separated. They are often referred to as one, as in Luke 22:1. We may inquire what lesson God would teach us in this feast, and here again we are not left to conjecture, for we read in 1 Cor. 5, along with the statement about Christ being our Passover, "Therefore, let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." v. 8.

Here it is not Israel but we who are exhorted to keep this feast, but not in the outward manner as many Jews do to this day, making diligent search in the house to remove all leaven before the Passover begins. We are to put away "the leaven of malice and wickedness." Leaven is used throughout Scripture, without exception, as a type or symbol of evil. There is the leaven of Herod, of the Pharisees, of the Sadducees, etc. It is evil that works secretly, corrupting and assimilating to itself. It may be in practice (1 Cor. 5:6) or in doctrine (Gal. 5:9), and frequently the practice becomes a doctrine to support the practice.

So it is plainly evident that the Christian who is sheltered by the blood of Christ, "as of a lamb without blemish and without spot," is called upon to put away evil, and that immediately after conversion, for the feast of unleavened bread followed the Passover immediately. There is still another point: that is, the feast lasted for seven days. Seven is a number always used to signify completeness, and indicates that the complete period of our lives should be marked by "the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." There is never a time when the Christian may carelessly sin; he is to remember that he is "unleavened."

The Feast of the Wave Sheaf

The next yearly feast is the "wave sheaf." We read: "Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest: and he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it." Lev. 23:10, 11. They were not to eat of their new harvest until the very first sheaf of it was presented before the Lord, as was said, "to be accepted for you."

Now we are not left to devise some means of explaining the typical meaning of this feast, any more than the preceding ones. In 1 Cor. 15:20 we read: "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept." Also, "Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming." v. 23. The Christ who died as our Passover also rose from the dead. He had said, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." He was the true "corn of wheat" who died as "our Passover" and rose again as the firstfruits of a new harvest. This feast definitely represents Christ in resurrection as the firstfruits of them that slept. And in resurrection He is accepted for us. We are "accepted in the beloved." We are seen in Him before God-in Him in resurrection.

The very day that the Lord Jesus died, the priest and the people were keeping the Passover, not realizing that in His death the type had come to its completion-that type had met antitype. Then on the very day in which He arose, the priests were waving the wave sheaf in the temple. Little did they realize that as they sought to bribe the soldiers to falsify the report of His resurrection, they themselves were actually doing that which for 1500 years had foretold His resurrection.

Another singular thing is that this was done on the "morrow after the Sabbath"—the first day of the week, the Lord's Day. He was not only the firstfruits of a new harvest, but He arose on the first day of a new week. Let the Jews (and those who say they are Jews) explain why this departure from the Sabbath was written into their own Scriptures.

The Feast of Weeks or Wave Loaves

Next comes the "feast of weeks," which took place fifty days later than the waving of the sheaf of the firstfruits. "And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the Sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven Sabbaths shall be complete: even unto the morrow after the seventh Sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the Lord. Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven; they are the firstfruits unto the Lord." vv. 15-17.

The harvest from which they offered the wave sheaf had now had time to be made into flour, and they were to present "two wave loaves" unto the Lord. Fruit of the same harvest, but offered fifty days later. Are we left to our inventions as to the meaning of this feast? No, in no wise. In Acts 2 we read, "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come." Pentecost means fifty, or fifty days. Therefore on the very day when the priests in the temple were presenting the wave loaves with their necessary offerings, a new offering was being presented unto the Lord, not now in the temple, but in the upper room.

The disciples were assembled there awaiting the promised coming of the Holy Spirit. On that very day, another first day of the week, He descended from heaven and dwelt in each believer individually, and in all collectively. Thus was something new formed, something never before known—the Church on earth united by the Spirit to Christ the Head in heaven. The fourth of the yearly feasts had its fulfillment in the inauguration of the Church on earth by the Spirit from heaven.

It is worthy of note that in these two feasts (the wave sheaf and the wave loaves), and these two only, the first day of the week is the day on which they were performed. The one speaks of the resurrection of Christ, and the other of the formation of the Church of God. Should not this silence the Seventh-Day Adventists and all who would have Christians keep the seventh day, that in those feasts which foretold of this period of time, the first day of the week should be preeminent? It should forever resolve any doubt in the minds of those who are subject to the Word.

Another important point to notice with regard to these two feasts is that there was no sin offering presented with the wave sheaf, but there was with the wave loaves. How accurate is Scripture! How could a sin offering be offered in connection with that which spoke of Christ in resurrection! But how fitting that it should be offered with that which spoke of the Church. The wave sheaf needed no preparation; it was presented as it was taken from the field. The wave loaves prefigure the Church (two perhaps referring to ample testimony on earth, or to its composition of Jews and Gentiles), and there is sin in it. There is leaven baked in the loaves, therefore the need of the sin offering. Other offerings were also presented at both times, but we shall not go into them. Leaven was never burned on the altar; it is used here as a type of sin in the Church. On another occasion it is used to represent sin in the individual offerer (Lev. 7:13). The leaven in the loaves was baked, indicating that it was not seen as active before God.

Gleaning the Harvest

There was a long interval between the feast of weeks and the next feast—from the third month to the seventh month. This no doubt illustrates the period of the Church's history, for just before the next yearly festival there is a strange statement in verse 22: "And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleaning of thy harvest: thou shalt leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger: I am the Lord your God."

This seemingly has no connection with the seven feasts. It appears to have been dropped in almost at random, but its very position is full of instruction for us. How will the Church's history on earth end? With the harvest—the gathering of the redeemed of this age into the heavenly garner. What a blessed hope we have! This verse is undated, just as the hope of the Lord's coming is undated in the New Testament. Nothing intervenes between the offering of the wave loaves and this verse 22. There is also an answer here for those who say that the Church must go through the great tribulation first, if only they would see it.

Soon the Lord shall come and gather the Church home, but there is going to be a little grain left in the field, in the corners. The poor Jew and the stranger Gentile who will believe in the coming King during the tribulation period, and suffer martyrdom, will also have a heavenly portion. Rev. 20:4, in the JND translation, gives the account of the two classes which will be raised from the dead for heavenly blessing at the end of the tribulation period. This is before the fulfillment of the fifth feast of Lev. 23. The grain left in the corners of the field may also indicate the food of these tribulation martyrs who will apprehend the truth of the Scriptures regarding Christ as coming King.

Feast of Trumpets

Now let us return to our chapter. The next feast in order took place in the seventh month, in the first day of the month. It is commonly called the "feast of trumpets." Directions were given more completely in Num. 29:1-6. It signaled a new beginning, a calling together by the trumpets. This feast has not yet had its typical fulfillment; it and the next two are still future.

This feast signifies the time when Christ will return to the earth with His heavenly saints and recall His earthly people, the Jews, to Palestine. When the Son of man appears in power and great glory, "He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Matt. 24:31. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown." Isa. 27:13. The Jews are now going back to Palestine in unbelief to accept the antichrist, but then their Messiah will call them back to settle them in their own land with His blessing.

The Day of Atonement

The next unfulfilled feast (that is, in its typical meaning) is the "day of atonement," which took place on the tenth day of this seventh month. This feast prefigures the day of Israel's mourning when they look on Him whom they have pierced, and shall mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him. In that day there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem, the land and every family shall mourn (Zech. 12:10-12): Thus our chapter says, "For whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people." v. 29.

This was also typified in Joseph's dealing with his brethren when he had them recall their sin concerning their brother. It will be a solemn time for Israel when they go through in reality the fulfillment of the type of the Day of Atonement. After it is over they will say, in the language of Isa. 53 "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities." (Lev. 16 gives the details of the Day of Atonement and the offerings to be offered.) Then the repentant remnant of Israel will be ready to fulfill the type of the next feast.

The Feast of Tabernacles

The "feast of tabernacles" prefigures the Millennium (which will be the Sabbath for the earth), founded on Him who was the true Passover. Here we see the rest which will come in, not on the basis of creation, but on that of redemption. This last feast is a feast of gladness and joy. It, like the feast of unleavened bread, lasts for seven days, that is, a complete period of time. "And ye shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days." v. 40. In that day all the promises made to Abraham and to Israel respecting their ultimate blessing will be fulfilled in detail. Israel shall be made a rejoicing, and blessing will flow out from the earthly Jerusalem to the whole earth. Space does not permit a more detailed examination of this wondrous scene of joy and blessing, not only for Israel, but for the nations and for the whole animate creation. "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." Rom. 8:19.

There is something special connected with the feast of tabernacles which is not found in any other feast: that is, that after the feast runs its allotted seven days, an eighth day is mentioned. This brings before us another new beginning, and that without an end being mentioned. We may call the eighth day the day of eternity, or a hint that God will then bring in a new and final scene of blessing.

In Deut. 16, the three times that all the males in Israel should go up to God's center were mentioned as Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles, but they were so arranged that in doing this they could keep all seven of the feasts. They were the times when God gathered the people around Himself. But while they kept them unintelligently, not realizing what they pointed onto, it is ours to rejoice in the knowledge of their typical meanings. We have this knowledge not only in those that have already been fulfilled as part of our blessings, but of those yet to be kept in their real meaning for the blessing of Israel, the nations, and the animate creation, when Christ shall have His rightful place.

With Delight

If we delight in God's glory, we shall delight to honor those whom God honors. When heaven was opened upon Jesus, it looked down with delight-we look up and are changed.

Bible Challenger-02-February V.09

The first letter of each of the following responses (Bible quotations with one or more words to complete) will form the word defining the place where the light of men shines, but is not comprehended. [1] The number in brackets indicates the number of words in the answer.

1. "Where is the way where light____ ?" [1]
2. "Bind him hand and foot, and take him ____." [1]
3. "A chosen generation, a priesthood." [1]
4. "The fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his ____ [1]
5. "The children of the day: we are not of the." [1]
6. "If thine eye be____ , thy whole body shall be full of darkness." [1]
7. "Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own____ ." [1]
8. 'Thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a ____." [1]

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

R. Erisman

Bible Challenger-01-January Answers V.09

1. D elight Psa. 1:2
2. A ttentive Neh. 1:6
3. Y ears Gen. 1:14
4. A lmighty Rev. 4:8
5. N ot from the temple Luke 2:37
6. D ay Exo. 13:21
7. N ot depart Josh. 1:8
8. I mage Rev. 14:11
9. G athered least Num. 11:32
10. H arvest Gen. 8:22
11. T hree days Esther 4:16

"For DAY AND NIGHT Thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah." Psa. 32:4.

Frankincense

"He shall bring it to Aaron's sons the priests: and he shall take there out his handful of the flour thereof, and of the oil thereof, with all the frankincense thereof; and the priest shall burn the memorial of it upon the altar, to be an offering made by fire, of a sweet savor unto the Lord." Lev. 2:2.

The perfectness of Christ in all His path was that He never did anything to be seen of men; it all went entirely up to God. The savor of it was sweet to the priests, but it all was addressed to God. Serving man, the Holy Spirit was in all His ways, but all the effect of the grace thus was in Him, was in His own mind, always towards God, even if for man it was to God. And so with us; nothing should come in, as motive, except what is to God.

We see in Eph. 4:32; 5:1, 2 the grace toward man, and the perfectness of man towards God as the object. "Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children." In all our service as following Christ here, we get these two principles: our affections towards God and our Father, and the operation of His love in our hearts towards those in need. The more wretched the object of service in the latter case, the truer the love and the more simply the motive is to God. We may love down and love up, and the more wretched and unworthy the persons are for whom I lay myself out for blessing, the more grace there is in it. "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." But while that is true, yet as to the state of my heart, the higher the object, the more elevated the affection. With Christ it was perfect.

How can a poor creature like me be an imitator of God? Was not Christ an example, God seen in a man? And we are to "walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God." He gave Himself for us, but to God; it was God's grace towards poor wretched sinners.

If we look at ourselves, we shall soon see how motives get mixed up and things come in, even where there is right true-hearted purpose, and that is where we have to watch. In Christ all was perfect; all, every bit of it, as to spring and motive, was for God's glory in this world. No thought of men as to pleasing them, but that singleness of eye which looked to God alone, though full of kindness to man-loving down in that sense, but ever looking up with His God and Father before His eye, which made Him perfect in everything. He was, of course, perfect, could not be anything else.

Now it is not that the priests could not smell the sweet savor, but it was not offered to them, it was all burned to God. As regards His own path, not a feeling that was not entirely to God; it was for us, but to God. It was that which was perfectly acceptable to God.

J. N. Darby

Faith gets hold of the object; hope desires it;

love enjoys it.

The Lord Jesus reveals the secrets of the heart
(John 4). The Scripture does this also, and the
gathered assembly in the power of the Spirit
(1 Cor. 14:23, 24).

The Hand of God upon His Own

How little there is among the dear saints of God of bowing in heart to that word in 1 Peter 5:6,7: "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time: casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you."

In how many ways does God, in the exercise of His government among His own, put His hand upon us in sickness, in infirmities, or it may be by bringing us into tight places. But our hearts are slow to lose sight of second causes, and to own Him in all that comes into our lives. Why are we so slow? Is it because we cannot trust Him?

It is not the hand of a judge smiting me that brings me down, for notice the sweet connection: if I own that mighty hand of God upon me, I own also the effect. It is not to drive me from Him, but rather to draw me closer to Him-so close that with the consciousness of His hand upon me I can cast all my care upon Him and rest in the everlasting arms of the One who assures me, "He careth for you." What a sweet lesson to learn that the hand that brings me low, at the same moment draws me near!

Listen to the remnant cry again: "For Thy sake we are killed all the daylong; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us."

The following heart-stirring words are ascribed to the French Huguenots in the days of their bitter persecution: "If perish we must under Thy justice, we shall perish adoring Thee. Thy wrath, would it extinguish us? Then we shall flee to Thy heart. Is extermination Thy design for us? We shall make that new cause to fear Thee. In spite of life, in spite of death, we shall bless the stroke Thy hand applies. They are the blows of a tempest, but they bring us into port." Surely this was a verification of the concluding verses of Rom. 8 "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Proverbs

Simon Patrick on the Proverbs

1683

1. "The Proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel;"

This Book contains some notable and very useful sayings of that wise Prince, King Solomon, the son of that devout Prince, King David: by whose special appointment he succeeded him in the government of God's peculiar people Israel, for which (according to David's prayer in Psa. 72, and 1 Kings 3:9) God endued him with an extraordinary degree of understanding.

2. "To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding;"

The scope of them is to make a man know what it is to be truly wise, and instruct him how to avoid those errors which men are apt to fall into, or to correct them if he hath been misled and run into them, and to make him understand when good advice is given him, nay, to be able to give it unto others.

3. "To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity;"

For they will furnish him with the most excellent notions, and make him capable to understand things of highest concernment: both how to be just and good in all private transactions, and in public trusts and offices, to judge and act according to right and equity, and every other way, to be upright and exactly virtuous.

4. "To give subtlety to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion."

The most unskillful and incautious persons, may here learn to be circumspect and wary, and they who are childish and inconsiderate get so much knowledge, as to behave themselves with prudence and discretion.

5. "A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels:"

As for him that is wise already, he will not lose his labor in reading this Book, which will make him still wiser. And indeed it is principally designed for the improvement of him that is so wise, as to be willing to learn more: who shall both gain a clearer knowledge of what he understands, and also make such additions, that he shall be fit to be a counselor to kings, and govern the affairs of State in the greatest kingdoms.

6. "To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings."

He shall comprehend the most useful maxims, and be able to express them also with the greatest elegance: the weightiest sayings of wise men shall be easy to him, and their most abstruse notions shall not be hidden from him.

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

In the first place then, let all, both simple and wise, look upon an awful [reverent] sense of God, a devout affection to Him, and fear to offend Him as the chiefest point, and the very foundation of all wisdom, without which men are but fools, and having no regard to their Creator, will despise the wisest instructions that I can give them.

8. "My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother:"

Next to God let me advise thee, my son (or whoever thou art that comest to learn of me in this Book) to reverence thy parents. And not only to hearken unto thy father, when he teaches thee to fear God, or tells thee that thou dost amiss, but to let thy mother's commands be a law to thee, especially when she bids thee observe the directions of thy tutors and public instructors, unto whom she commits thee.

9. "For they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck."

But value their counsels more than the fairest ornaments thy parents can put upon thy head, or the most precious chains wherewith they can adorn thy neck: for they shall add a far greater grace unto thee, and make thee more acceptable both with God, and with all worthy men.

10. "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not."

There will be those who will make it their business to seduce thee from obedience, but remember, my son, that none can love thee so well as they, and therefore if lewd persons (who have no respect to God, or to their pious parents and instructors) persuade thee to bear them company, by no means yield to their greatest importunities, but flee their society.

11. "If they say, Come with us, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause:"

They may represent perhaps what advantage it will be to thee, to join with them in the breach of the very next commandment, to that of honoring thy father and thy mother, saying, Come along with us to our lurking places, where nobody can see us, and from thence set upon a wealthy traveler, who is to go that way, and take away his life; what though he be innocent, we shall the more easily dispatch him, when he suspects no danger and hath given us no provocation.

12. "Let us swallow them up alive as the grave; and whole, as those that go down into the pit:"

And though he should have many servants or companions with him to defend him, let not that affright thee, for (they say) we are enough of us to kill them all with ease and in a moment, or to strangle them and bury them alive: so that none shall escape to tell any tales; nor shall they make any noise; nay, it shall not be known what is become of them.

13. "We shall find all precious substance, we shall fill our houses with spoil:"

The booty shall be great (they say), for we are sure to find vast treasures, and all manner of precious things: enough to enrich us all, and furnish our houses bravely; that we may live splendidly all our days.

14. "Cast in thy lot among us; let us all have one purse:"

Come in for a share of it, and thou shalt have as much of it as we, who have been longer at the trade, for we live like friends, among whom all things are common; there is but one purse among us all, in which everyone hath an equal interest.

15. "My son, walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path:"

But, my son (or whoever thou art that wilt learn of me) let them not prevail with thee, to go along with them, or to betake thy self to such a course of life, but if thou findest an inclination to it, stop it immediately, and stir not one step in their company, or after their example.

16. "For their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood."

For it is not one single murder (or robbery) in which they will engage thee (though the guilt of that is too horrid to venture upon), but they will be always hurrying thee to some new mischief or other, and as soon as one mischief is over, they will be ready for, and make haste to commit another.

17. "Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird."

Flee from their society therefore, now that I have given thee this warning, and be not so foolish and incautious as the silly birds, who use to run into the snare or the net, which they see the fowler lay before their eyes (Ch. 7:23).

18. "And they lay wait for their own blood; they lurk privily for their own lives."

For as he doth not lay his net in vain, but they are caught therein, so assure thy self these men are setting a trap for themselves, when they lie in wait to take away the lives of others: for they shall not always escape the hand of justice, but at last be taken and suffer, either by a special vengeance of God, or by His ministers, what they have deserved.

19. "So are the ways of every one that is greedy of gain; which taketh away the life of the owners thereof"

Such is the fate of him that greedily endeavors to enrich himself by such wicked means. As the bird enticed by a little chass falls into a snare, which it doth not perceive; so he on a sudden loses his life, to satisfy a vain desire of worldly pelf [riches], which then he cannot enjoy.

Questions and Answers

QUESTION: Will you please explain Gen. 9:6: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made He man"?

ANSWER: After the flood, the government of the earth was put in the hands of men. Noah was the first governor; the executive power was put into his hands, and ever since in every country there have been powers that be who are ordained of God. (Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13, 14.)

The Christian is not a citizen of this world. He should not make the laws nor interfere with them, but be subject to them as ordained of God, except where they would come between his conscience and God, being contrary to the Word of God, he then would have to obey God rather than men. (Acts 4:19; 5:29.)

Gen. 9:5, 6 require that a beast or a man that kills a man shall be killed by man. Capital punishment was thus instituted by God and has not been repealed. It is for Jew, Gentile and Christian alike to be subject to that law.

The New Nature

The new nature is one that hates evil. The Holy Spirit dwelling in us is the power to do the good.

Luke 12:35 and 36

“Let your loins be girded about,
and your lights burning; and ye yourselves
like unto men that wait for their lord,
when he will return from the wedding;
that, when he cometh and knocketh, they may
open unto him immediately.”

Is the thought of the Lord's nearness welcome, or is it unpleasant to the soul? Is the expectation of being with Him, without notice or delay, pleasant to the heart?

The true practical walk of a believer gives a right answer to these inquiries. "Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand." "Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door." Moderation, or holy restraint in the use of present things, and gracious, liberal consideration of others, here approved as among the right ways of a saint, are such as would stand the light of the Lord if He were at the moment to appear.

Are our ways, then, such as suit the thought of His nearness, and would abide the light of His presence? Have they, or have they not this voice in them, "Come, Lord Jesus"? Could vanity, could uncleanness, could the desire of gain, could the lust of distinction, or has the haughty look that voice in it?

Has carnal levity, or spiritual sloth? We know that these cannot desire the day of the Lord, for it is to them a day of darkness, and not light.

Our behavior should be such as would introduce us to His presence without disturbance, for He comes, not to regulate, but to gladden us. He comes not to put us in a right path, but to close a right path in glory.

J. G. Bellett

The Rented House

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

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

Editorial

Watching for Our Lord

Many believers today have some knowledge of the kingdom period of 1000 years when Christ will reign. (The length of His reign is stated in Rev. 20.) "He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet" (1 Cor. 15:25), and all the purposes of God concerning His Son—the Son of man—will be fulfilled.

It seems, however, that today the love of many has grown cold; truth is given up and even forgotten. Some that were watching for the Lord's coming have relapsed into earthly ways, and interests are taken up more with things than with the Lord Jesus Christ and His coming. At Thessalonica they had turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven. If they were looking for Him then, how much more ought we to be earnestly looking for Him now.

It is certain that the kingdom period of 1000 years will come. God has determined that and stated it emphatically, even using the past tense as God alone can do. Psa. 2:6 reads, "Yet have I set My king upon My holy hill of Zion." Christ gets the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession: "Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power." Psa. 110:3. Now it is the day of His patience; then it will be the day of His power.

As we now see and consider the sad and sinful condition of this world which is fast filling with violence and corruption, we understand how necessary it is that Christ come and exercise His dominion and bring in righteousness. Isa. 26:9 says, "When Thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." Should we at this present time expect the world to get better? Most world leaders really would like to control violence, but not all leaders are like that. We can thank God that many in power would like to put an end to violence, and some would like to suppress corruption as well. Will such governors or rulers be able to do this?

It is now the day of grace, and what can we expect from this world under grace? The next verse in Isa. 26 tells us, "Let favor be showed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness."

Yet, God is, and will be gracious, keeping His people by His grace, so let us trust Him. We learn that we are "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." 1 Peter 1:5. Surely that salvation is when we are raptured out of this wicked world before Christ comes in power to cleanse this world by His judgments.

Have we stopped watching for Him? Did not the Lord say, "And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch." Mark 13:37. If we are found watching faithfully when He comes, there will be a very special reward given to us. It is written in Luke 12:37: "Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that He shall gird Himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them." Ed.

Proverbs

Simon Patrick on the Proverbs

1683

Chapter 1—Part Two

"Wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets." Let me advise you therefore, rather to hearken to the manifold instructions of wisdom ; whose most excellent counsels you cannot but be as well acquainted with all, as you are with that which is proclaimed in the open streets. For you hear them in the plain dictates of your own consciences, in the laws of God, in the mouth of His prophets and ministers, in the admonitions and examples of good men, and in the course of His providence and wise government; which call upon you more earnestly and loudly, than these lewd seducers, to follow and obey them.

"She crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates: in the city she uttereth her words." There is no place where this cry of virtue and piety is not heard; which is not ashamed of itself, nor lurks in darkness, like those impious seducers, but appears openly in the midst of the greatest crowds. No noise can drown its voice, no business, either public or private, can thrust by its reproofs; but still it interposes itself, and everybody, even those wicked men that flee from it, hear it calling to them.

"How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scornors delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge?" The call to them represents their unaccountable folly and stupidity, in such unanswerable questions as these. Is it not apparent by many examples, that such men as you are deceived and abused with vain hopes? Why then do you continue the cheat? Have you not played the fool long enough, but you will still act against your reason and against your interest? Where lies the pleasure of scoffing at religion and virtue, that you will never give it over? Is any man so wise, that he needs no monitor? Or is ignorance so laudable, that a man should hate those who would inform him?

"Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you." Do not turn away from such checks as these; but repent in time, and resolve to learn your duty. It is not too late, for if you will listen to the secret rebukes of your own consciences, and to the open reproofs of my prophets, and follow their directions, I will plentifully communicate my mind, and infuse the very sense of it into you. It is not hard to find, nor will I conceal anything of it, but plainly show [show] you all that I require of you.

Take your circumstances from the Lord and
your difficulties to the Lord.

Do not look at the people who persecute you,
but at the reason why you are persecuted.

The Kingdom and the Church

by T B. Baines

Up to the cross God was unfolding His plan of earthly government to try man, first alone, then with Christ in his midst to see whether he could carry out the divine purposes of blessing to the world. The result was disastrous failure. Man could neither execute God's schemes himself, nor receive—or even recognize—the anointed One by whom they are to be accomplished.

The first man ruined all he touched; the second Man was despised, rejected, and crucified. This brought God's plans to a close until the people who refused their Messiah shall repent, and He shall again appear for their deliverance and blessing. Meanwhile, even the count of prophetic time stops, the space between Christ's death and the resumption of God's earthly designs being treated as a blank.

How, then, is God filling up this interval? What purposes is He now carrying out? Till the cross, the first man was under trial, but there all was changed. Man proved that in his nature he was hopelessly alienated from God, and could not even receive blessing from Him in whom all God's gracious promises and purposes await their fulfillment. It was not enough, then, for the second Man to appear. The first man must receive a new nature, must be created anew before he could take the blessings which the second Man came to dispense.

How could God effect this transformation? How could man be drawn out of this pit of ruin? It was by the very thing which showed how hopeless his ruin was! The deed which proved man's ripeness for perdition brought out God's power unto salvation. The cross which demonstrated the irreconcilable hatred of man's heart to God revealed the unquenchable love of God's heart to man. That which sealed the doom of the old creation opened the door for the new. The bloodshed upon the cross laid the righteous basis for the reconciliation of all things.

In Christ's death the old creation was judicially set aside, while His resurrection brought in the second Man as the "last Adam," the firstborn of a new creation in each member of which God could find the same delight as in its risen Head. Instead of the single grain of wheat, He had fallen into the ground and died, so that now He could produce much fruit, as it is written, "Behold I and the children which God hath given Me." Heb. 2:13.

All blessing, then, for the Church or the world is based on the death and resurrection of the second Man. But the cross is regarded in Scripture from the side of man's guilt as well as from that of God's grace. All admit the punishment of the Jews for their rejection of Christ. But were the Gentiles without guilt? The Holy Spirit teaches that Christ came as the Light; that "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not." John 1:10. Jesus declares the world's condemnation to be "that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." John 3:19.

The world, therefore, that is, man as a whole, is guilty of refusing the One sent from God to effect its blessing. This crime still forms the subject of God's judgment, both on Jew and Gentile. By this judgment the Jews have been cast out, and the earthly blessings of the kingdom, whether to Jew or Gentile, postponed. Creation is still left groaning for deliverance, until the scepter is given to Christ. And in the meanwhile, God is carrying out other purposes, quite apart from His designs of righteous government and blessing for the earth.

These purposes may be looked at, first as regards the kingdom, and next as regards the Church. The kingdom in its Jewish form is postponed. In outward display, it cannot be set up till Israel shall say, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." But Jesus speaks of "the mysteries of the kingdom," and it is in this mysterious, or unrevealed form, that the kingdom now exists.

During this epoch, Christ, not having received His own throne, is seated on the Father's throne, waiting till God shall give Him the nations for His inheritance. It is the day of His "patience," and not His "power." He is not taking vengeance on His enemies, but beseeching them to be reconciled. Satan is allowed to sow tares in the field without provoking immediate judgment. The leaven is to work in the meal till all is corrupted.

God still tarries in grace, not willing that any should perish, and seeking to gather out a people from the ruin and judgment which are impending. Such is the kingdom in its mysterious form. On God's side, it is the display of perfect grace and matchless forbearance. On man's side, it is but a sadder disclosure of his proneness to depart from God, and to corrupt the best gifts entrusted to his hands.

While the kingdom drifts to hopeless shipwreck under man's pilotage, God has another thought in His heart, a mystery which, as Paul says, "in other ages was not made' known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed into His holy apostles, and prophets by the Spirit." This mystery was disclosed "to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." Eph. 3:5, 10, 11.

Here, then, is God's present work. His schemes of earthly blessing are suspended; the kingdom, in its mysterious form, is filled with corruption and hurrying to judgment. He is carrying out purposes for Christ's glory which He formed before the world was. These are purposes which prophets had not heard, and angels desire to look into; purposes in which, whatever our dullness, the principalities and powers in heavenly places discern the manifold wisdom of God. These purposes are fulfilled by the Church, which thus stands forth, not only as the object of God's most cherished delight, but as the brightest display of His divine wisdom.

The void between the suspension and resumption of God's earthly purposes is filled up by the kingdom in its present form, and by the Church. According to God's institution, these were coextensive consisting of the same persons, though viewed in a different way. Notwithstanding, therefore, the divergence which man's failure has introduced, the kingdom is still occasionally spoken of in Scripture under its narrower, as well as under its wider aspect-according to its institution by God as well as according to its administration by man. Both views appear in the discourse in which our Lord specially treats of the kingdom in its present form (Matt. 13).

When speaking to the multitude, He shows the kingdom as man makes it, tares growing among the wheat and leaven corrupting the pure meal. But afterward He retires with His disciples into the house, and unfolds the mysteries that were given to them only to know. In explaining the parable of the tares, He says, "The good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one." Matt. 13:38. Here the kingdom is looked at in its narrower aspect, as consisting only of the good seed.

The two parables which follow regard it in the same light. "The kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchantman, seeking goodly pearls: who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it." Matt. 13:44-46.

The Moral Beauty of Christ

Luke 9:1-17

Do you think that God has come into the world bringing salvation to surrender His own rights to your necessities? He could not do it, and you, if in a right mind, could not wish it. The glory of the gospel is that He is glorified while you are saved. Could you enjoy a robbery? It would be a robbery if you could get a blessing which took glory from God. You get this in the cross if you read it right. It is the glory of the gospel that God could be just and yet the justifier of him who believes in Jesus. We get a sample of that in Luke 9.

He tells His apostles to take with them neither scrip, nor money, nor bread. He says, as it were, You are going forth with My message; lean on Me. No man goes to warfare at his own expense. I will take care of your necessities, and let your moderation be known unto all. He then says, "Take nothing for your journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money.... And whosoever will not receive you, when ye go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet." While there is a graciousness attached to such ministry, there is a solemnity too.

Now let us look at Herod for a moment. Tell me, do you think you have done with sin, when you have committed it? One thing is certain: it has not done with you. The charm of sin is gone the moment it is perpetrated. That is your way of disposing of sin, but conscience, which makes cowards of us all, lets you know that it has not done with you. Herod had beheaded John long before, but now it was said of some that John was risen from the dead, and he is perplexed. Here the worm that never dies was doing its business. I am not, of course, determining its eternity, but the Lord in such cases lifts the veil from hell and shows us the worm at its work. Herod could not rest. How could he? He was the murderer of the greatest witness of God in the world at that moment!

Now the apostles return and tell what they have done, and we have the scene of feeding the multitude. Here we get the largeness of the heart of Christ in contrast with every human heart. Could you get a sample of the human heart more easy to love than Peter's? He was an openhearted, good-natured man that you could easily have loved, but look at it in contrast with the heart of Christ! They said, "Send the multitude away." "No," said He, "give ye them to eat." And they said, "What! are we to go and buy?" It was said in a sulky mood of mind, but the Lord did not refuse to go on with His sulky disciples. He met with vanity, ignorance, heartlessness, and bad temper.

It is a very interesting study to see how He always overcame evil with good. If my bad temper puts you into a bad temper, you have been overcome of evil. God never gives place to evil and this is a beautiful instance of it. The disciples said, "Send them away." "Make them sit down," said Jesus. Then, being the master of the feast, He must supply the guests.

Now notice something of the moral beauty of Jesus' feast. He sits at the head of the table in the glory of God, and as the perfect Man. As God He puts forth creative powers, and was acting

without robbery. He not only was God, but there was no form of divine glory that He would not assume, no act of divine power that he would not put forth. But He took His place also as the perfect Man. He was an entire contradiction to Adam. What was Adam's offense? He did not give thanks, but assumed to be master of all. It was a man refusing to be thankful.

The Lord gives thanks. I see Him taking His place at the head of the table in the wilderness, as perfect God and perfect Man. The worship that God got in the Person of Jesus was richer incense to Him than if Adam had lived forever as a thankful man. He came to erect out of the ruins a temple for the glory of God that the creation in integrity would never have yielded.

The blessed God would have us know that at His table there is always more than enough. We know what it is to sit comfortably at a plentiful table. When I see very God making the feast and very Man giving thanks and then leaving an abundant overflow of fragments, what can I do but be thankful! We may each, one and all, be full and go away thankful that there is plenty for others.

J. G. Bellett

Questions and Answers

QUESTION: Will you please explain the passage in 1 Cor. 11:5, "Every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head," and verse 13, "Is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered?"

ANSWER: In order to understand the force of the teachings of the Apostle in these verses attention must be given to verse 3, which forms the groundwork of what follows it. "I would have you know," he says, "that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God." We have here the divine order and relative position of man and woman, which was to have its recognition and display in the assembly.

Man praying and prophesying in the assembly did it in the presence of his invisible Head-Christ, whom he represented, and to cover his head would be to dishonor Christ as his Head. A covering being the visible sign of subjection to another, it would have looked as if he were praying or prophesying in recognition of some other head than Christ, and was not conscious of representing Him.

Now the woman's head is man, and in praying or prophesying she was to recognize her visible head, and thus a visible sign of her subjection to him was to be worn. This is the meaning of verse 10 where it is said, "For this cause ought the woman to have power [the sign of subjection to man] on her head because of the angels." Angels, who are the observers of God's ways in the assembly, as well as in creation, should see in the woman the intelligent recognition of the position in which God has placed her with reference to the man.

The point here is not whether the woman may actually pray or prophesy in public, but the outward appearance she is to bear in the presence of men in the assembly while praying and prophesying are going on. To find in these passages authority for women praying and speaking in public, as is often done, is to pervert the plain teaching of the passage. It might with as much reason be inferred that it was only while a man was actually praying or speaking that he was to take off his hat, or, in other words, that all the men in the assembly were to be there with their heads covered except the one actually praying or speaking.

The simple meaning of the Apostle we believe to be this, that, when assembled before God with Christ in their midst, all the men were to be uncovered as the sign of their recognition of His presence as their Head. In like manner, all the women, when so gathered, were to have their heads covered as a recognition of their sense of being in the presence of their head.

Having laid down authoritatively the divine order on this point in verse 13, he appeals to the Corinthians to judge for themselves. From the analogy of nature, was it comely that women, when in the assembly where God was recognized and looked to in prayer, should have their heads uncovered?

And here again, "pray unto God" does not mean audibly addressing God. Women silently lifting their hearts to God, or when joining in the Spirit-given prayer that some man as the mouthpiece for all is uttering, are surely praying to God. They should, therefore, be covered with something in addition to their hair, which according to nature was given them apart from any question of God's presence in the assembly, as a veil or covering before men. From nature itself, then, they should have learned what was fitting in the assembly without the Apostle having to formally prescribe it in teaching.

The Last Days

"Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another." Mal. 3:16.

Emphasize the word "then" to get the force of this passage, connecting it with what goes before. The day is coming when all will be manifested, who is who, and what is what.

That day connects with chapter 4:1, "Behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven." Rev. 22:16,17 says, "I Jesus have sent Mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am-the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning-star. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come." This is fellowship, or companionship and desire to be with Him. "Surely I come quickly: Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." v. 20. How much do our hearts respond with heartfelt desire and say, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus"? Both scriptures in Malachi and Revelation speak of Christ's coming. In Malachi it is His coming to earth for His earthly people, and in Rev. 22:17 it is His coming in reference to His heavenly people.

In the history of Israel there were two revivals-one under Josiah, and the other under Hezekiah. The analogy to the Church is similar. There have been two revivals. The first is the bringing to light of the truth of the soul's relationship to God and justification by faith. The second is the recovery of the truth of the Church of God in its proper heavenly character, which was about 160 years ago. This was more of a corporate or collective nature.

Another Analogy

Another analogy was the state of the people in Malachi's day, the time following their captivity and bondage. This was brought on by the government of God. They should have been a testimony against idolatry, but instead they were the most idolatrous people in existence.

What is the present testimony of the professing Church? Read Rev. 2 and 3 to see how sadly the professing Church has failed. What characterized the people in the days of Malachi was ignorance of their true state. We find repeatedly these words: "yet ye say..." showing ignorance of their state.

What is the last state of God's witness on the earth? It is found in the last of the churches, Laodicea. "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing." They were boasting of their riches. Poor church, but there is One that pities. "And knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed."

It was not evil doctrine that was charged to Ephesus or bad conduct, but "thou hast left thy first love." And to the last church, Laodicea, it was ignorance of where she had fallen. They thought they were rich and needed nothing, yet in God's sight they were miserable, poor, blind and naked. "And anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see." This is the Word of God, that which opens the eyes of the soul to discern the mind of God.

The charge is lukewarmness: neither cold nor hot. May the Lord preserve us from that state. Luke-warmness in a Christian is a heart divided between Christ and the world. "I would thou wert cold or hot," and because she was neither, she was rejected. It is an important thing for us to remember that we belong to, and are part of, an unfaithful Church, taking it as a whole. Rev. 17 shows us the state of the professing church when she joined hands with the world. What pomp and glory! But farther down we see what an end is hers and how sudden and complete is the overthrow (Ch. 18).

In Rev. 19, while that time of wailing and mourning is proceeding on earth, what is taking place in heaven? There is joy in heaven over that overthrow. It is instructive to see how both parts of God's Word, Malachi and Revelation, end in speaking of the coming of the Lord. The book of Malachi speaks of Christ's coming as the Sun of Righteousness, with healing in His wings, and it will be to put down His enemies also. But in Rev. 22:17, while the Lord comes to take His bride home to glory, it is to clear the scene righteously of all its defilement in swift destruction.

At the moment of the apostasy of the nation, Mal. 3, there were a few who feared the Lord, and who spoke often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it. Beloved, let us apply these things to ourselves. Are we not in danger of lukewarmness and apostasy? The Lord is seen in Laodicea on the outside of the door knocking on the heart's door of a lukewarm Church, and may we not say of a lukewarm Christian. We wait for the Lord as He presents Himself in the last chapter of the Revelation, the Bright and Morning Star. The earth looks for Him as the Sun of Righteousness, but to us it will be as the Bright and Morning Star that He will come.

W. Potter

We wait for Thee, O Son of God,

And long for Thine appearing;

"A little while," Thou'lt come, O Lord,

Thy waiting people cheering.

Thus hast Thou said: we lift the head

In joyful expectation,

For Thou wilt bring salvation.

Seven Mountains in Matthew

A mountain in Scripture represents an elevated place above the level of this world. In the book of Matthew we find the Lord Jesus upon seven different mountains. Matthew, of course, presents Him to us as the King of the Jews, primarily in His rejection. Since He was rejected by His people Israel, the Lord Jesus introduces a new dispensation, a dispensation of grace, in which is found the kingdom of the heavens. The rejected King will rule His kingdom from heaven and whosoever will believe are its subjects.

The First Mountain

The first mountain for consideration is in chapter 4:8. After His baptism and His public acceptance by God, the Lord Jesus was led into the wilderness by the Spirit to be tempted of the devil. At this time "the devil taketh Him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth Him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them," and offers them to Him if He will fall down and worship him. The Lord Jesus uses the whole armor of God to defend Himself from the tempter's attacks, and defeats him with the Sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God.

We, too, "wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Eph. 6:12.

Christ would not receive glory from any other than His Father, even though the kingdom could only be obtained through suffering and death. "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow." Phil. 2:9, 10. This principle cannot be understood by the natural man. The Lord Jesus was despised and rejected, becoming the Man of sorrows; his subjects, too, if they were to follow Him, would find this same kind of life.

The Second Mountain

In the second mountain in chapter 5, we find Jesus seated and His disciples came unto Him and He taught them the principles of His kingdom. It was through meekness and lowliness that they would be blessed, not by asserting themselves or claiming their rights.

The Third Mountain

In chapter 14:23, the Lord Jesus goes up into a mountain again to be alone with God in prayer. If the principles of the kingdom are going to be maintained, they would be maintained by dependence and obedience to the Father. This is the power the believer receives from God in prayer, and is necessary in faithfulness and service to Him. In prayer the individual also is alone with God.

The Fourth Mountain

Matt. 15:29 gives us the fourth mountain, where Jesus is found giving His disciples the example of service in meeting the needs of others. No matter how little it is, He can use what we have to feed

the multitude and with much left over. We may feel our contributions are insignificant, but in the lands of our Lord and with His blessing there is an Overabundance.

The Fifth Mountain

When we come to chapter 17, we find a display of the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ as He brings Peter, James, and John into a high mountain apart—a preview of the coming kingdom. In that day He alone will be exalted (Isa. 2:17). The same is true for us how, to honor and hear Him because He is God's Son, and God's delights are in Him. God will not give His glory to another.

The Sixth Mountain

The Mount of Olives is prominent regarding our savior. From this mount He ascends into heaven (Acts 1:12), and upon this mount He will return to earth again (Zech. 14:4). In Matthew, however, the Lord Jesus begins His triumphant procession into Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, and offers Himself once more to His people as their King. They refuse Him again and He ends His final rejection by weeping over Jerusalem in chapters 21 to 23.

From the Mount of Olives in chapter 24:3 through chapter 25 the Lord discourses with His disciples of coming events: the great tribulation, the judgment of professing Christendom and the judgment of the Gentile nations. We do not learn these things from the intelligence of this world, but by being in communion with Him in the heavenlies. "The Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?" Gen. 8:17. It was from the Mount of Olives also that Jesus disclosed to Peter that He could have no confidence in the flesh, and Peter learned this through sad experience. The best intentions can never be accomplished without divine power. The Lord Jesus is a patient, loving teacher, and His desire is to restore those who fall so that they may learn to trust in Him.

The Seventh Mountain

The seventh "mountain" in Matthew in which we find the Lord Jesus was a place that He had appointed to meet with His disciples after His resurrection. "And when they saw HIM, they worshipped HIM." Matt. 28:16, 17. Today the Lord Jesus has an appointed place where He has promised His presence also—Matt. 18:20. The place, however, is nothing apart from His person, but if He is there, it makes all the difference. The Lord Jesus Christ Himself is the gathering center. Do we value and appreciate Him when He gathers us around Himself in the heavenlies above the level of this world? It is there that we learn what is in His heart and what is in our hearts. We learn also to depend on Him, to serve Him, and to learn what He is about to do. But most of all it is there we worship Him.

Although physically His own are still in the world, morally and spiritually we are seen as seated with Him in those mountain heights (Eph. 2:6). May this encourage us to be more faithful to Him while we wait for His return, when we shall be with and like Him in those heights together and never come down again!

R. Klassen

Bible Challenger-03-March V.09

The first letter of each of the following responses (Bible quotations with one or more words to complete) will form the word defining a quality of light which in no wise will be present, for earthlings, in the day of the Lord. [1] The number in brackets indicates the number of words in the answer.

1. "Thine heart was lifted up because of thy____[1]
2. "Then shall that Wicked be _____ whom the Lord shall consume." [1]
3. "Thou, O king, sawest and behold a great____ [1]
4. "Who being ... of His____ , and the express image." [1]
5. "My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; _____ [3]
6. "Cornelius said, Four days ago I was fasting until_____ ." [2]
7. "I looked, and, behold, a whirlwind came out of the____ a great cloud." [1]
8. "I was established in my kingdom, and _____ majesty was added unto me." [1]
9. "They that be wise _____ as . . . the firmament." [2]
10. "At midday, O king, I _____ a light from heaven." [4]

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

R. Erisman

Bible Challenger-02-February Answers V.09

1. D welleth Job 38:19
2. A way Matt. 22:13
3. R oyal 1 Peter 2:9
4. K ingdom Rev. 16:10
5. N ight 1 Thess. 5:5
6. E vil Matt. 6:23
7. S Name Jude 13
8. S eason Acts 13:11

"And the light shineth in DARKNESS; and the darkness comprehended it not." John 1:5.

God's Center

Life flows from the divine center. (See John 7.) He who comes to Me and drinks, the Lord said, "out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." This has a dispensational aspect, but it applies in the assembly at any time for the refreshment of all, taking in ministry to the saints, the young in Sunday school and those out doing the work of the Lord; all are related to the divine center. Notice in the passage about the woman having an alabaster box of ointment and anointing the head of Jesus in Mark 14:3-9, He says "Me" twice. He comes first. "This do in remembrance of Me." And so it is in all Scripture.

What flows outward, flows from the throne of God. "He that is not with Me is against Me; and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth abroad." Matt. 12:30. Which side are we on? Gathering or scattering? There is plenty of scope for the poor, the lost, the thirsting, and His babes, but we have nowhere to lead them without being gathered ourselves, and having come into the truth of Zion. "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." Psa. 132:13, 14. This is God's center. Notice what follows. "I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread." v. 15.

In the future, God's blessing to the whole earth will radiate out from Zion—His heavenly center and the administration of grace. Even now it can be found; let us seek it and never leave it. It is pure grace and not on the ground of our responsibility. We have all failed; every system is a witness to scattering, but there can be, and is, a witness to gathering to God's center through the power of the Spirit. Has the Spirit failed? No! Let us be in the current of His guidance. Today the Spirit gathers us to God's Son, and God is faithful for His Son. (See 1 Cor. 1:9.)

There is the Lord's Table and spiritual plenty, a refreshment for all gathered to His name "till He come." We all believe His coming is very near. Will He find us "gathering" by the Spirit's power or "scattering"?

M. Priestley

We hear much today about

the broad and narrow;

we have to be just as broad

and as narrow as the Word of God

Editorial

What's Ahead?

A recent news headline about Europe is: "IF WHAT IS PAST IS PROLOGUE, EUROPE'S RECENT HISTORY SUGGESTS PLENTY OF DRAMA AHEAD." The Common Market is finally common in more than name.

The tunnel under the English Channel is just ready to speed traffic connecting England with the rest of Europe. The Berlin Wall has been broken down and even sold in chunks as souvenirs. Boundaries in Eastern Europe have changed immensely and are still changing. With the breakup of the U.S.S.R., various new nations have emerged. This is going on in the Balkans also. The top leaders of most of the large nations have altered much in the last few years.

The Apostle Paul writes this in Rom. 15:19. "Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ." Illyricum in our day has become Albania and the area of the city of Sarajevo. It was in the Balkan region that John Huss, the reformer, effectively preached the gospel of Christ in early 1400. For his preaching and teaching of the Scriptures, he was burned at the stake. As he approached the stake, he prayed fervently and then said, "Lord Jesus, I humbly suffer this cruel death for Thy sake, and pray Thee to forgive all my enemies."

Are the horrible atrocities, cruelty and wars in the old Yugoslavian area a prologue of coming events? It is not only that part of the world which has given up the Apostle Paul's doctrine and practice. And it is not only that part of the world which suffers the ravages of war, famine, disease and killing.

For believers, the Apostle Paul wrote: "It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him: if we suffer, we shall also reign with Him." 2 Tim. 2:11, 12. Concerning this scripture we use the words of another: "What an encouragement and a fitting reward for those who suffered in the persecutions of the Reformation period." Martyrs receive a crown of life (Rev. 2:10).

Returning to the headline, we ask: if this is prologue, of what is it indicative? If it is of the great achievements of man and his inventions, and the construction of tunnels, roads, and buildings, is it not also of man's wickedness and the terrible results of war, famine, disease and death?

A common expression is: history repeats itself. In Eccl. 7:10 we read, "Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this."

One certain thing for the true believer is that the best is yet to come! Ed.

Proverbs

Simon Patrick on the Proverbs

1683

Chapter 1-Part Three

24. "Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded." If you refuse this offer, nay, go on obstinately to despise instruction, then hear the doom which God, whose voice wisdom is, passes upon you. Because I have pressed you often to amend [correct], and ye would not yield to me; nay, I have been very urgent and earnest with you (offering you my assistance, heaping upon you many benefits, and when they would doe [do] no good, laying on corrections, as well as showing you the way to happiness) and none of you would so much as attend unto me.

25. "But ye have set at naught all my counsel, and would none of my reproof" But, quite contrary, set at naught all the good advices I gave you, as if they had been but vain and idle words; and slighted all my reproofs and threatening, as if they had been ridiculous, or of no moment.

26. "I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh." Therefore I will repay you in your kind [in the same manner]; and as little regard what becomes of you, in the day of your calamity (which like a dismal cloud I will bring upon you unavoidably). I will be utterly unconcerned, when you know not which way to turn your selves; but are become the scorn of those, who shall see you quake and tremble at that, which before you would not fear at all.

27. "When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you." Though it prove such a dreadful calamity, as will lay all waste, it shall not move me to relieve you, but I will let it sweep you and all you have away like a whirlwind. And when you fall into the most pinching outward distresses, and into the forced anguish of mind, you shall evidently see, it was my pleasure to reduce you to those inextricable straits and pressures.

28. "Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me." For then (hearken all you that have not yet sinned to this degree of obstinacy) it will be very hard for these men not to think of me, whom before they would not regard. Nay, they shall cry to me for help, but I will send them none. They shall seek my favor importunately, but without the least success.

29. "For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord." Because, when time was, they hated that knowledge, of which now they are forced to be desirous, and when they were earnestly solicited to have some regard to God and to religion, they would not consent unto it.

30. "They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof" But (as was said before) rejected my good advice with such disdain, as if it had been a grievance to them, and slighted, nay contemned all those reproofs, whereby I would have reclaimed them from their impiety.

31. "Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices." Therefore, as it is just that men should reap what they sow, and eat such fruit as they plant, so these men shall suffer the punishments, which their wicked doings naturally produce. Nay, be glutted and surfeited [surfeited—indulged to excess] with the miserable effects of their own counsels and contrivances.

32. "For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them." For let them alone and they need no body but themselves to destroy them: their escaping dangers, only making them more audacious to run into them and their receiving daily additions of riches and honors, supplying their folly with means to hasten their undoing.

33. "But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil." Such a vast difference there is between wicked and virtuous men. For whoso follows my counsels, and takes the courses to which I direct him, shall even then be safe, and possess what he hath in peace, when he sees these fools come to ruin. Nay, he shall not be so much as disturbed with the fear of any mischief, but rest secure of a watchful Providence over him.

Priests, Kings, Prophets

The priesthood, since its ruin, had ceased to be the means of a public relationship between the people and God. The king, the Lord's anointed, had been substituted for the priest to fill this office. (See the beginning of 1 Samuel.) All the blessing of Israel, its judgment also, depended henceforth on the conduct of the king. The king failing in responsibility affected the relations of the people with God. But then a phenomenon occurred which persisted throughout the entire duration of the kingdom and even afterward. The prophet came on the scene. His appearance proved that the grace and mercy of God could not be destroyed even when everything was ruined.

Without a doubt, prophecy existed before the time of which we speak. The fall of man had given occasion to the first prophetic utterance. Abraham was a prophet (Gen. 20:7). Jacob prophesied (Gen. 49);

Moses was a prophet (Deut. 18:15), but Samuel inaugurated the series of prophets whom we see laboring from his time on (Acts 3:24). In those dark days the prophet became, in place of the king, the link between the people and God. He was the messenger of the Word; to him were confided the thoughts of God. Immense grace!

Doubtless the prophet announced the terrible judgments which would fall upon the people and the nations. But at the same time he presented to faith grace as the means of escaping. He testified against iniquity and even delivered the people, as did Elijah by the exercise of power in order that the people might begin again, if possible, to walk in God's ways. He taught them and he gave the people the key to the ways of God, incomprehensible without him. He consoled also, turning the attention to a future of blessing, the "times of restitution of all things," a kingdom which cannot be moved, and where the responsibility of the house of David shall be borne by Christ, the Son of David, to the full satisfaction of God Himself.

Fixing the eyes of faith upon the glorious person of the Anointed of the Lord, he announced the sufferings of the Messiah and the glories to follow. He felt at the same time the great gulf which separated the present time from this future "regeneration." He humbled himself on behalf of the people when the latter could not and would not do so. Without him, in the dark days of the kingdom, there would not have remained even one ray of light for this poor people. Though guilty and chastened, the prophet supported and encouraged.

On account of the principles proclaimed under the dispensation of law, the mercy of God immediately acknowledged the monarch when he acted by faith and when he was faithful. However incomplete this faithfulness might be, God appreciated it. Even when the link was ostensibly broken, the blessing of the people was the consequence.

Accordingly, in the period of the prophets, bright days followed on dark days, and respites were granted despite the judgment announced, because the king had looked to the Lord. This faithfulness in the king was chiefly found in Judah, where God maintained yet a lamp for His Anointed, whereas Israel and her kings, having begun in idolatry, continued in this path and soon

became the prey of the demons that they had not wished to remove from their path.

H. Rossier

Marriage Supper of the Lamb

E. Dennett

The last thing to take place, as preparatory to the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, is the marriage supper of the Lamb, as recorded in Rev. 19.

With this, however, must be adjoined, as connected with it, an event of which there is no mention except in Eph. 5. We read there of Christ's presentation to Himself of His bride, "a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." v. 27. The words in italics—to Himself—reveal most fully the character of this event. It is a private and not a public thing. It expresses the joy of Christ in claiming His bride as His own, that bride which ravished His heart when He beheld her as the pearl of great price. It is the Church He loved in all her beauty, and for which He gave Himself, and is according to the counsels of God. Her wilderness sojourn will then be over; the days of her widowhood and mourning will be ended. She will have passed through all needful discipline until, through having been sanctified and cleansed with the washing of the water by the Word, she has been made morally suitable to Christ.

Then it is that He claims her in the joy of His heart, and presents her to Himself arrayed in all the beauty wherewith He has robed her, that she may be His companion forever. This, we repeat, is a private transaction, and no "stranger" will inter-meddle with the joy of Christ in that day. It will be wholly for His own satisfaction and pleasure. For then, if we may borrow the language, He will bring His bride into the banqueting house, and His banner over her will be love.

After this private presentation of the bride to Himself, there will be the public celebration of the marriage in heaven. We find a full account of this in Rev. 19, and we give the whole passage:

"And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye His servants, and ye that fear Him, both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness [righteousnesses] of saints. And He saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And He saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God." vv. 5-9.

The connection in which this scripture is found adds greatly to its significance. The great harlot who had corrupted the earth with her fornication, the false bride, had received her judgment from God. She had been forever set aside and adjudged to be, as she was, the murderess of prophets and saints. For in her, says the Spirit of God, "was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth."

This avenging judgment was the cause of mourning and lamentation in all classes of the inhabitants of the earth, for so far had men departed from the living God. But in heaven, and

nothing could more completely show the antagonism of man to God, it was the occasion of an outburst of universal joy. And wherefore this overflowing gladness which could only find adequate expression in praise and adoration? It sprang from the fact that God, having judged Babylon, the great corruptress of the earth, was about to establish His sovereignty throughout the wide world.

The voice of a great multitude will fill heaven with their ecstatic thunderings of praise as they cry,

"Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." The heart in which Christ is already enthroned will understand this exultant celebration, as it apprehends that the time has arrived for God to publicly glorify His beloved Son in the face of the universe. Now He will exalt, even here on earth, the One who was once rejected and crucified, and cause all the nations of the world to own His blessed sway.

Then will come to pass the saying written, "All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Thee. For the kingdom is the Lord's: and He is the governor among the nations." Psa. 22:27, 28.

The point in this heavenly scene is that He will not be alone in the day of His glory. His bride, the Church, who has been identified with Him in the day of His rejection will, out of His great love to her, be displayed in glory with Him in the day of His exaltation. The marriage of the Lamb is the preparation for this, and hence it is in order that the bride may be a companion for her exalted Lord and Bridegroom that she makes herself ready. She is arrayed before all heaven in her garments of fine linen, pure and white.

It is this union of the Bridegroom with His bride that elicits the admiring praise of the heavenly hosts. So privileged are those who behold it that John is commanded to write, "Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb." It will be indeed a scene nevermore repeated, the joy of the bride in the consummation of all her longing hopes in the possession forever of the Object of her affections. It will only be surpassed by the joy of the Bridegroom in taking into union with Himself the bride for whom He had already proved His love to the uttermost when He died upon the cross.

The love He showed there was but the measure of the love He had borne for her through every step of her pilgrim way. His love is expressed in this scene before all the heavenly hosts in the public celebration of His marriage. It was, and is, and ever will be an everlasting, infinite and perfect love, a love which passes knowledge-and language will ever fail to convey its fullness and intensity.

It must, however, be again repeated that the marriage supper of the Lamb is but preparatory to His coming out of heaven. He will break through the dark clouds of earth as the Sun of righteousness.

Bible Challenger-04-April V.09

The first letter of each of the following responses (Bible quotations with one or more words to complete) will form the words which identified the One having noteworthy eyes and feet, and who brought a singular message to a certain ancient church. [3] The number in brackets indicates the number of words in the answer.

1. "This is not unto death, but for the glory of God." [1]
2. "Who is he that the world, but he that believeth." [1]
3. "And that believing ye might have life through His [1]
4. "And the power of the Highest shall Thee." [1]
5. "Lo, I see loose, walking in the midst of the fire." [2]
6. "Who loved me, and Himself for me." [1]
7. "We have a law, and by our law He to die." [1]
8. "Saying, Thou that , and buildest it in three days." [3]

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

R. Erisman

Bible Challenger-03-March Answers V.09

1. B eauty
2. R evealed
3. I mage
4. G lory
5. H ear ye Him
6. T his hour
7. N orth
8. E xcellent
9. S hall shine
10. S aw in the way

Amos 5:20.

Ezek. 28:1 7

2 Thess. 2:8

Dan. 2:31

Heb. 1:3

Matt. 17:5

Acts 10:30

Ezek. 1:4

Dan. 4:36

Dan. 12:3

Acts 26:13

"Shall not the day of the light? even very dark, and Lord be darkness, and not no BRIGHTNESS in it?"

The Four Judgments

A. H. Burton

What could be of greater importance than the subject of coming judgment. Yet strange to say, there is nothing so little understood and about which there is greater confusion of thought. The first of the four judgments is past and the remaining three are future.

1. There is the judgment of sin. This first one took place at the cross.
2. The judgment seat (or throne), at which all believers shall appear. This second will be in heaven.
3. The throne of His glory, at which all the living nations shall appear. This third will be on earth.
4. The great white throne, before which all the wicked dead shall appear. The fourth will be in space.

It is of the utmost importance to be clear about these judgments in their order, for if we are not clear about the first, it is impossible to be clear about the others.

The Judgment of Sin

That God's severe and righteous judgment for sin fell on Christ at the cross, the following scriptures show: "He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." 2 Cor. 5:21.

"Once in the end of the world [or age] hath He [Christ] appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." Heb. 9:26.

"As it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." Heb. 9:27, 28.

"Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." 1 Peter 2:24.

These scriptures in the New Testament may suffice to show that the blessed Lord bore our sins and the judgment for them on the cross. Then in the Old Testament we will only refer to Psa. 22 and 69, and Isa. 53.

The result of our blessed Lord bearing the judgment for our sins sets us free from it all. In seeing this we can then understand the following scriptures.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation [judgment]; but is passed from death unto life."

John 5:24.

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." Rom. 8:1.

"For by one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." Heb. 10:14.

"Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." Heb. 10:17.

It is important, therefore, to remember that, for the child of God, judgment is past. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation [judgment]; but is passed from death unto life." John 5:24.

If the reader will open his Bible to John 5, he will find the words "condemnation" (v. 24), "judgment" (v. 27), and "damnation" (v. 29). It will greatly help him to understand the teaching of this most weighty passage if he remembers that in each case the word means "judgment."

Before we proceed further in our inquiry, we are anxious that the Christian reader should lay firm hold of this deeply important truth, that not only does the believer in Christ now possess eternal life ("hath eternal life"), but that also, on the authority of Christ's own word, he "shall not come into [judgment]." The same unerring Word that assures him of the first great truth, likewise assures him of the second.

It may be asked, Are we not told that "it is appointed unto [all] men once to die, and after this the judgment"? Certainly not. Let the reader open his Bible to Heb. 9:26-28 and he will see that the word "all" is not in the passage. In verse 27 we are told what is the common lot of mankind, namely, death and judgment. But in verse 28 we find the believer's portion: instead of looking for death, he is looking for Christ's appearing. Instead of waiting for Christ as his judge, he is looking for Him as his Savior, who shall change his body of humiliation and fashion it like His own body of glory (Phil. 3:20, 21).

The blessed Savior appeared once in the end of the world to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. He came over 1900 years ago about the question of sin, to put away sin, to bear the sins of many. Having done the work on the cross which has settled that question on the believer's behalf forever, He will appear the second time without sin, that is, apart from the question of sin altogether. If that question was settled at His first coming, it could not possibly be raised again at His second coming.

For the unbeliever, of course, His coming must be for judgment, but for the believer it will be "unto salvation." In other words, the full results of the work which He accomplished at His first coming will be reaped by the believer at His second coming. He will then not only possess the salvation of his soul that through grace he enjoys now, but then salvation will be completed in the glorifying of his body.

What peace it gives to the soul when once we see that God can never in justice raise the question of our sins with us! Has not Christ once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God?

(1 Peter 3:18.) Did He not His own self bear our sins in His own body on the tree? (1 Peter 2:24.) And has He not, after having offered one sacrifice for sins, forever sat down on the right hand of God? (Heb. 10:12.) Surely the believer will never have to suffer for sins for which Christ has already once suffered! Surely he will never have to bear sins which Christ bore on the cross! Surely he will never have to be judged for sins for which Christ has already offered Himself as a sacrifice!

It is clear, then, beloved Christian reader, that God will never enter into judgment with you as regards your sins, seeing that the Lord Jesus has already borne the judgment that was due to them.

What then does it mean when it says, "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ"? Let us now consider the other three judgments.

The Judgment Seat of Christ

While it is perfectly true that the believer will never have to be judged for his sins, yet it is equally true that he will have to appear before the judgment seat of Christ. See 2 Cor. 5. The word "appear" in verse 10 is the same as made "manifest" in the next, and so we may read it thus: "We must all be made manifest."

It is important to observe that the Spirit of God carefully avoids saying, "We must all be judged." Had it been said in verse 10, "We must all be judged," it would have been a direct contradiction of John 5:24 which says that we "shall not come into judgment," and we may rest assured that one verse of the Word of God could never contradict another. But it says, "We must all be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ." That is, everything that we have done here will be brought to light there, and we shall receive reward or suffer loss, according to what we have done, whether it be good or bad.

What, then, is the judgment seat of Christ for? As we have shown, it cannot be to judge whether we are to be in heaven or not, for we shall be there already. Being there with Christ and in glorified bodies like Him, we shall review, in company with Himself, our whole history in this world. We shall retrace every step, we shall recall every circumstance, and in the unsullied light of His blessed presence we shall weigh every act and deed of our lives in the balance of the sanctuary. We shall see them as He saw them, and judge of them as He judged of them.

He will then show us where and how we failed. Instead of this making us afraid of Him, it will only deepen in our souls the sense of His unchanging love. Such grace it was that He should so long have borne with such failing, erring creatures.

He will also delight to bring to our remembrance every little act of service for Himself. The smallest thing we may have done for Him, a word spoken for Him, or even a cup of cold water given in His name will not be forgotten. Then "every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor." 1 Cor. 3:8.

"Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide... he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved.... If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy." 1 Cor 3:13-17.

Here we have three distinct thoughts in three different workmen. A real Christian whose work is good will receive a reward (v. 14). A real Christian whose work is bad will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved (v. 15). A wicked man, being evil himself and with evil intent can only do evil work, will be destroyed (v. 17).

The Judgment of the Living Nations

We will now consider the well-known passage in Matt. 25:31 to the end—the judgment of the sheep and the goats. "When the Son of man shall come in His glory... then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory: and before Him shall be gathered all nations." It is very clear that Christ here comes in glory to the earth. But when He so comes, we shall come with Him; for "when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory." Col. 3:4.

It is equally clear that He is here seen coming to judge the nations. When He so comes we shall come with Him (Jude 14, 15). Now if at this period we come with Him, He must previously have come for us, and further, He does not here come to judge us, but we believers come with Him to judge the nations. "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?" 1 Cor. 6:2.

Who then are these nations? They are the Gentile nations, or heathen alive on the earth when Christ comes in judgment. They are the very nations to whom the Jewish remnant have preached the gospel of the kingdom after the Church has been taken away. If you study these verses carefully, you will see that the nations are judged according to the way in which they have treated these godly Jews, here called "these My brethren." vv. 40,45.

They are divided into two companies—the sheep are those who have received these messengers of the coming King, and to them are addressed the gracious words, "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." v. 34. That is, they enter the millennium to enjoy all the blessings of Christ's earthly kingdom.

The goats, on the other hand, are those who have rejected these messengers and refused the mercy offered through them. To them are uttered the awful words, "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." v. 41. This judgment of the living nations being over, the millennium will commence, and for 1000 years we (the glorified saints) shall live and reign with Christ (Rev. 20:4).

Carefully observe that in this passage none but the living nations are judged. All here are alive; none of them have passed through death. This in itself is sufficient to show that a general judgment is out of the question.

The Great White Throne

The subject now before us is a deeply solemn one, and we would earnestly entreat you to sit down as in the very presence of God, Bible in hand, and study carefully Rev. 20.

“And I saw a GREAT WHITE THRONE, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of ire. This is the SECOND DEATH. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.” Rev. 20:11-15.

In the first place, Christ does not here come to the earth at all. Instead, we read, "From whose face the earth and the heaven fled away." How different this is from Matt. 25:31, 32 when He comes to the earth! "When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory: and before Him shall be gathered all nations: and He shall separate them one from another."

In the second place, the dead only are here judged, and this again is quite different from Mathew 25 where the living only are judged. But what ghastly throng this will be! They rise from their graves; there sits the Judge and before Him they stand; a guilty conscience loudly accuses them within. The earth they loved so well, the scene of all their pleasures and their sins, the scene too of their rejection of the Savior so often offered to them, this earth has fled away forever. And they stand already in an endless but a lost eternity.

What records! Every thought, every word and deed of the misspent life will then be brought out, exposed in the light of that dazzling glory "And the dead were judged... according to their works." How different from the judgment seat of Christ, where the redeemed will appear to receive reward or suffer loss according to what their works have been!

Here the wicked dead are judged according to their works, and if the writer or reader of these pages were judged according to his works, he would certainly be cast into the lake of fire. If the salvation of the most devoted Christian that ever lived were to depend on his works, he must inevitably be lost, for whose life would stand the scrutiny of His all-piercing eye? "Enter not into judgment with Thy servant: for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified." Psa. 143:2.

It is most important to see that the believer is never said to be judged according to his works. His works are judged, but not his person, and he receives reward accordingly. But at the great white throne, the wicked dead are themselves judged according to their works. With what result? "Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." v. 15.

"Peace I leave with you,

My peace I give unto you: not as the
world giveth, give I unto you.

Let not your heart be troubled,
neither let it be afraid”

John 14:27

The Object of the Heart's Affection

Christ's yesterday was the accomplishment of redemption. His tomorrow is having His Church with Himself in glory. But He is a living Christ for today.

What the mind is most fixed on gives its impress to the mind. If my feelings and thoughts are fixed on Christ, I get the impress of Christ. If I am continually turning to Him in His inexhaustible love, I shall get the impress of it. And if my soul then rises to Christ in that freshness of love which can say, "Come, Lord Jesus," there is His answer in all freshness: "Surely I come quickly."

He does not forget us as we toil through the wilderness and the sands of the desert; He is with us all the way, and all the freshness is in Him. If my heart turns to the heart of the Son of God, I find His heart immeasurably more full of love than mine and it is always fresh in its love. I may be a way worn pilgrim, but in Him I shall find freshness—a spring of cold water—when I am fainting in the wilderness.

Oh, for that love which is in the heart of Christ that knows no weariness, no dragging steps, and no hanging down of the hands!

Editorial

Worldly Associations

The close of 1993 witnessed a landmark agreement to establish full diplomatic relations between the Vatican and the State of Israel. It is looked at as a historic event, enabling the Holy See to play a larger role in the so-called Middle East peace process.

When we consider the past 1900 years and the relations between the Vatican and Israel, the rough road has seen more downs than ups. What will this present association produce?

Scripture contemplates worldly associations. We should watch with interest their spirit, purpose, and working as they form the character and history of the world that is pressing on to meet the judgment of God.

Confederacies of groups such as Jews and Christians must find a common basis upon which to operate in order to stay together and prosper. In the days of our Savior here upon the earth, it was the common enmity against Jesus that brought Jew and Gentile together, as well as Pharisees and Sadducees who were men of different politics and sects. It is remarkable to what lengths enemies will go to reach an accord and form an association when their own interests are in view.

In 1965 the Second Vatican Council repudiated the concept of collective Jewish guilt for the death of Christ. This was done even though Jesus expressly said to Pilate, "He that delivered Me unto thee hath the greater sin." John 19:11. This statement shows that both the Gentiles and the Jews are guilty, but that the Jews have the greater sin in the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. No man or group of men can absolve any of the collective guilt of rejecting Christ. Indeed, the Jews at the trial of the Lord Jesus said, "His blood be on us, and on our children."

Isaiah prophesies this in chapter 8, "Associate yourselves, O ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces; and give ear, all ye of far countries: gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces; gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces. Take counsel together, and it shall come to naught; speak the word, and it shall not stand: for God is with us." vv. 9, 10.

The world's history shows man has made one association after another. It is always an attempt to gain more or to protect the power they have. In these days in which we now live, the common object that often brings people together is the world itself. All are aiding in its advancement and the research and development of its capabilities. Because men do not like to retain God in their thoughts, but rather want to multiply unto themselves desirable and delectable things, associations are formed to achieve their purpose.

The agreement to establish diplomatic relations between the Vatican and the State of Israel is not so surprising when we see that each will probably gain in the present world. This world, not religion, is for them the most important thing.

Isa. 28 tells of "scornful men, that rule this people which is in Jerusalem." v. 14. In that near future day they will make a pact for their protection. What we are now seeing are perhaps just foreshadows of coming events. Ed.

The True Nature of Prayer

The true nature of prayer may be best ascertained from a view of the manner in which it is spoken of in Scripture. It is called: inquiring of the Lord (Gen. 25:22); supplication (Zech. 12:10); entreaty (Ex. 8:8); wrestling (striving) with God (Rom. 15:30); lifting up the soul (Psa. 25:1); pouring out the heart (Psa. 62:8); looking up to God (Psa. 5:3); taking hold of God (Isa. 64:7); crying (1 Sam. 7:8); asking (John 15:16); seeking and knocking (Matt. 7:7). How plainly may we see, from this method of speaking of prayer, the unacceptableness and inefficiency of cold, formal and heartless repetitions before God!

The Church's Last Days

by F. G. Patterson

"The Church of the Living God." 1 Tim. 3:15.

There is found in the Word of God, for example and comfort, a faith which counts upon Him and His divine intervention in the face of man's failure: a faith that finds itself sustained by God according to the power and blessings of the dispensation, and according to the first thoughts of His heart when He set up all in primary power. He connects that power and the Lord's own Presence with the faith of those who act on the truth provided for the present moment, even though the administration of the whole is not in operation according to the order which God set up at the beginning.

For example, the blessing of Asher in Deut. 33:25 ends with these lovely words: "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." But all went to ruin, as the history of Israel unfolds. Yet, at the first coming of Christ, when the godly, pious ones of the people were "waiting for the consolation of Israel," we find one of that same tribe, "Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser [Asher]... a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fasting and prayers night and day," in the enjoyment and power of that blessing of Moses. "So shall thy strength be." The Lord Christ Himself became identified with that obscure remnant of which she was one, a remnant who were ready to receive Him when first He came.

The weak remnant of Judah, who returned to their land after seventy years of captivity, could pretend to nothing but the occupation of the divine platform of God's earthly people. To them we find these comforting words addressed, "I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts: according to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so My Spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not." Hag. 2:4, 5. Their faith is recalled to that mighty day of power when Jehovah said, "I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you to Myself" and removed from their shoulders the burdens of Egyptian bondage. Undimmed in power, He was with them just the same for faith to claim and use. No outward displays were theirs, but His Word and Spirit, which proved His presence to faith, wrought in that feeble few.

To them is revealed the shaking of all things (Heb. 12:27) and the coming of Him who would make the latter glory of His house greater than the former. They are thus the link between the temple of the days of Solomon and that of the day of coming glory, when He shall sit "a Priest upon His throne." The counsel of peace shall be between Jehovah and Him, and He shall bear the glory. (Zech. 6:12, 13; Hag. 2:7, etc.)

He will shake the heavens and the earth and overthrow the throne of kingdoms (Hag. 2:21-23), thus identifying all His power with those who walk in company with His mind. He will make all to come and worship before their feet and know that He has loved them.

Thus, too, it will be with those who answer to the calling which suits His mind, as seen in Philadelphia (Rev. 3). These are His own who are true to that which, though not a perfect state of things, is suited to the state of failure which He contemplates. He makes them the link—the silver cord—between the Church of the past as set up at Pentecost (Acts 2) and the Church of the glory (Rev. 21:9, etc.). The overcomer will be made "a pillar in the temple of [his] God" in the New Jerusalem on high.

Let me here remark that there never was, and never can be, a moment when that which answers to this calling will cease till the Lord comes. In the moral picture presented in these two chapters (Rev. 2 and 3) we find all the seven features together at any moment as they were when He sent the messages and remaining so. In the dark ages and those of more light in later days and now at the end before He comes, all everywhere who answer with perfect heart to the measure of truth which He has given them, such are morally Philadelphia. Others may have more light, but the true heart that walks with Christ in what it knows is known of Him and is what is contemplated in Philadelphia.

Historically there is an unfolding in the state of each of the seven churches, each larger feature coming into prominence and presenting the salient characteristics of the professing church, till the true Church becomes a remnant in the message to Thyatira and develops into those which follow. But morally Philadelphia represents those who answer to Christ's heart at all times and in all circumstances since the Lord gave those messages, till His threat—"I will spew thee out of My mouth"—is finally executed.

In the historical view, Philadelphia comes in after Sardis and is exhorted to "hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." But as long as His voice is heard by faithful souls, such, wherever found, form the link between the Church at Pentecost and the bride, the Lamb's wife in the day of the glory. Every moral state in all of the seven messages remains from the beginning to the very end. There are at this moment, as at the beginning, those who have left their first love, those who suffer for Christ, and those who are faithful where Satan's seat is, and so on to the conclusion of the whole.

Besides all this, we should never forget that John is watching over the decay of that which Paul unfolded, and telling us what Christ will do with that which bears His name. For our own path we get no directions but to listen and "hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." We do not find Church ground unfolded here. It is not John's province to consider this. John never gives us corporate things, but individual.

He never instructs us as to the Church of God, although fully recognizing its existence.

When we are therefore grounded and settled in that which never fails—the one body of Christ, formed and maintained by the Spirit of God on earth and taught by Paul, we may turn with deep profit to John and these messages and learn what Christ will do with all that bears His name. But from Paul alone can I learn what I am to do in the midst of such a scene, and how I am to be an "overcomer" according to the mind of the Lord. This never can be by abandoning that which His Spirit maintains on earth.

How important, therefore, to be thoroughly grounded in the truths of the Church of God, which remains as long as God's Spirit remains and His Word abides. "Till we all come in the unity of the

faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." Eph. 4:13.

Joy will ever rise in proportion to
prayer and thanksgiving.

How Can We Walk Together?

The point with which I shall occupy my reader is that of the idea of union on the principle of mutual concession with respect to the diverse views which are found among Christians, and of conciliation by these means. This principle has a great repute and a very fair appearance, but it is profoundly evil and presumptuous. It supposes that truth is at our disposal.

Phil. 3 teaches quite a different principle: there is no idea of concession nor of any arrangement in expressing the truth so as to reconcile different views. It is said, "Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded." It is not that we lower the truth to the measure of him who has not come up to it; it is not two persons ignoring which of the two has the truth, or content to suppose the possibility of error in giving up more or less what they hold in order to express themselves so as to be agreed. All that is an infringement upon the authority of the truth on us. "And if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you." v. 15. There is no question here of concessions, but of the revelation from God to enlighten him who is not perfect in the truth.

"Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing." v. 16. There is no question here of concessions, but of walking together in the things which we possess, with regard to which, because recognized as being the truth of God, there is no giving up anything, all being subject to it. In that case, there is no concession, either on the one side or on the other, for all possess the same truth, having already attained to it in a measure, and they walk together minding the same thing. The remedy for the diversity of mind which may remain is not to make concessions (how deal thus with the truth?), but the revelation from God in favor of him who is ignorant, as we are all of us on divers points.

But I shall be told, On that footing one will never come to an agreement. Where will you find in the Word such a thing as coming to an agreement? To come to an agreement is not the unity of the Church of God. The truth is not to be modified, and we are not called to force our imperfect views on anyone. I must have faith, and one must have the same faith to walk together. But in the things received as the truth of God by faith, I can make no concession. I may bear with ignorance, but I cannot arrange the truth to please another. You will ask me, In that case, how walk together? Why lay down grounds of unity which require either unity of views, or so evil a thing as concession on such or such a truth? As to the things on which we possess the truth, and with regard to which we have faith, we have the same mind, we walk in them together. If I acquire some knowledge more, I bear with the ignorance of my brother until God reveals the thing to him.

Our unity is in Christ Himself. If unity depends on concessions, it is only a sect founded on human opinions, because the principle of the absolute authority of the truth is lost. The Word supposes the bearing with ignorance, but never concessions, because it does not suppose that men could make a rule different from itself in order to come to an agreement.

I receive a man "weak in the faith," but I do not yield anything to him as to the truth, even on such a point as eating herbs. I might perhaps deny essential truths by so doing. Such a case may

happen, where to observe days might lead to doubt of the Christianity of him who does it. (See Gal. 4:9-11.) There might be another case where I could only say that on this very point, "Let every man be fully persuaded." Rom. 14:5, 6.

J. N. Darby

Instruction

To instruct even the unconverted child in the Scriptures is of great value. It is like laying a fire well, so that a spark alone is needed to kindle it into a flame. It is a good and wholesome thing for Christians to be most particular in the training of their children in a thorough knowledge of the Word of God.

Questions and Answers

QUESTION: Will the Lord reign with His saints on the earth during the 1000 years (Rev. 20:4)?

ANSWER: All the Old Testament saints, with all believers of this present age, and all those who suffer martyrdom during the tribulation period will reign with Christ, not on the earth, but over the earth. Rev. 5:10 reads in a better translation, "And they shall reign over the earth." However, in Zech. 14:4, we are told that in one act of judgment His [Christ's] feet shall stand upon the Mount of Olives.

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

ANSWER: That for which it was intended: namely, as a rule for man in the flesh, not that he could ever keep it, but to demonstrate that he could not. The Christian is not under law, so to put him under it is not a lawful use of it. Nevertheless, he is to walk in the spirit of it and indeed far beyond it (Matt. 5, etc.).

Jonathan and His Times

1 Sam. 14

There is a remarkable similarity between Jonathan in the Old Testament and Barnabas in the New. Both were gracious and affectionate; both were signally used of God in their day, but both manifested deplorable weakness in a moment of crisis. Barnabas broke with Paul, a special vessel of the Spirit in his time. Jonathan parted with David, Jehovah's choice for the throne of Israel. In both cases natural affection was the snare; Barnabas could not give up John Mark, and Jonathan could not give up Saul.

The breakdown of these truly excellent saints is recorded for our instruction. Perhaps there is nothing that so hinders full loyalty to Christ as natural affection. We find it so difficult to give Him the place of absolute supremacy in our hearts and lives. Levi is specially commended in Deut. 33:8-11 because in the day of the golden calf he "said unto his father and to his mother, I have not seen him; neither did he acknowledge his brethren, nor knew his own children."

In Luke 14:26, the Lord Jesus points out a similar path for all who would be His disciples. The natural must be subservient to the spiritual if we would follow him. The rejected One—our God in "the likeness of sinful flesh"—laid it down emphatically, "He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me." Matt. 10:37. What a test for our hearts!

Jonathan means "Jehovah hath given" (as real a gift from God to Israel as Paul to the Church). He came forward at a very evil time in Israel. The king of the people's choice was already a failure. The very enemy from which he was specially appointed to save Israel (1 Sam. 9:16) was oppressing the nation sorely. The people had everywhere been disarmed (the king and his son only being permitted to keep their swords), and even the blacksmiths' shops were closed by order of the Philistines lest they should forge weapons.

God's time had not yet come for David to be brought upon the scene, and the whole position seemed utterly hopeless. The awfulness of this will only be realized as we remember that Israel was God's chosen people for the blessing and guidance of all the nations upon earth. They had become utterly degraded and impotent by unfaithfulness to God. Is there any picture here of the present forlorn and powerless condition of the Church of God?

God is never without resource. In every emergency He has His man. So Jonathan was raised up, that fair flower which God caused to blossom in the wilderness of Israel at that sorrowful moment. In 1 Sam. 14 he so acquitted himself that the people declared "he hath wrought with God this day." v. 45. It is a great thing to work with God, and it must not be confounded with working for God. To work with God is to have His mind for the moment, so that the worker moves as God moves, and along the line that He marks out. We see this illustrated in the Acts of the Apostles, and it is the secret of spiritual success. Such discernment is the fruit of exercise of heart before God. It cannot be acquired otherwise.

Jonathan was distressed by the condition of things in Israel. We doubt not prayer was behind it when he said to his armor-bearer one day, "Come, and let us go over to the Philistines' garrison that is on the other side." It was a step of faith: two men with only one sword between them, marching out to attack a powerful foe encamped on craggy heights, practically inaccessible!

"He Told Not His Father"

There was no real wish to hide anything, but men who have no faith themselves are apt to discourage and hinder those who have. David certainly never would have gone down into the Valley of Elah had he paid heed to Saul (1 Sam. 17:33). It was better to have the cooperation of a lowly soul such as the unnamed armor-bearer if possessed of like faith, than the sanction and support of a monarch who had no faith at all. Saul had the forms of religion about him. Jehovah's priest was there wearing an ephod, and the ark was not far away. But what is the value of forms if power is lacking? The past and present history of Christendom is a sufficient answer.

Let it be noted that both Jonathan and his armor-bearer were young men.

Young Men

We are apt to connect conspicuous faith with age and experience. But Scripture abounds with examples of extraordinary faith in young men. David wrote the majority of his Psalms before he attained the age of thirty. Daniel and his pious companions were still in their youth when they made their stand for God. Elihu gave utterance to more sound wisdom than Job's more venerable friends, and of Timothy Paul was able to say, "I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state.... Ye know the proof of him." Phil. 2:19-23.

We would, therefore, encourage our younger brethren to exercise themselves spiritually about the condition of things around them, and also concerning the deep, deep need. They may then be prepared to say with Isaiah, "Here am I; send me." Isa. 6:8. The only person expressly called a "man of God" in the New Testament was the comparatively youthful Timothy (1 Tim. 6:11). Yet he was a timid, sensitive person, not unlike Jeremiah in an earlier day. But grace knows how to strengthen and make bold the one whose heart is right towards God, and who yearns to be used of Him. Jonathan and his armor-bearer set out that day with very little deliberation.

A Simple Faith

"Come, and let us go over unto the garrison of these uncircumcised: it may be that the Lord will work for us: for there is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few." 1 Sam. 14:6. To Jonathan, the Philistines, whatever their numbers and prowess, were simply "these uncircumcised." They were men not in relationship with God. On the other hand, Israel was in relationship with God, hence the twice-repeated covenant name "Jehovah." Faith in Jonathan, therefore, could see no difficulty. If God was not with the Philistines, they had no real power. If God was indeed with Israel, then almighty power was at hand, if only there were faith to use it. How charmingly simple is all this!

Have we learned the lesson? Do we deplore the lack of power visible in the Church today? Is not the Church still the temple of God, and does not the Spirit of God still abide therein? (1 Cor. 3:16.) What do we want more than just the simple faith to go forward in dependence upon Him?

Jonathan felt, and rightly, that if God were moving, numbers mattered nothing. "There is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few." Gideon accomplished the deliverance of Israel with only three hundred men, furnished, not with weapons, but with pitchers, lamps, and trumpets (Judg. 7). Paul reminds us that "neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase." 1 Cor. 3:7. Two or three humble men, without visible resources, moving about preaching the gospel of Christ, were once described as "these that have turned the world upside down." Acts 17:6.

Moreover, Jonathan had the consciousness in his soul of his link with the people of God—with Israel. Hence his words in verse 12, "The Lord hath delivered them into the hand of Israel." We observe the same feature in David when he went forth to encounter the giant, "that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.... He will give you into our hands." 1 Sam. 17:46, 47. In both cases there was no independent action. The faith was indeed their own, but they acted for and with the nation that God owned as His. Saul was utterly destitute of this feeling, hence his words in 1 Sam. 14:24, "mine enemies."

In all our labors and conflicts, let us never forget that we are part of a great, divine unity, the body of Christ. The mass of our brethren may possibly be in a spiritually low condition, but they are our brethren nevertheless. The Church, whatever its state, is still owned of God in the earth. We serve, therefore, as representing it, and for its edification and blessing.

Jonathan asked God for a sign, and He was graciously pleased to grant it. The two men proposed to discover themselves to the enemy, and if the enemy said, "Tarry until we come to you," they would remain where they were, and see what God would do. But if the enemy said, "Come up unto us," they would accept the call as assurance from God of a complete victory. Let us not miss the lesson of this sign. "Come up unto us" was the language of complacent security. A single boulder would have easily destroyed two men clambering painfully up rugged rocks, yet no boulder was rolled down upon them, so secure did the Philistines feel, and so deep was their contempt for the

two climbers. Nothing is more deadly than a human sense of strength and security. But nothing is more blessed than a spiritual sense of weakness and dependence upon God. Let us cultivate the latter increasingly.

As soon as Jonathan and his armor-bearer reached the top, they began to slay, and simultaneously the Lord caused an earthquake. Panic ensued. The Philistines fled hither and thither, apparently killing one another as they went. Thus did God work for the discomfiture of the insolent foe.

Saul's watchmen reported the commotion, but the king was not in the secret. Neither was the priest, who at the king's bidding brought thither the ark and began to inquire of God, receiving, however, no answer. God was not interested in these religious formalists, but was acting altogether apart from them, as He has frequently done down to our own day.

Success Invariably Attracts Numbers

Those of God's people who had gone over to the Philistines (the inspired writer calls them, in contempt, "Hebrews," not "Israelites"), and others who had hid themselves, now turned out to share the victory. Both traitors and cowards were now willing to identify themselves with God's side, since that side was triumphant. It has always been so, but immeasurably more pleasing to God are the godly minority who cleave to Him, and are willing to accept both reproach and peril for His name's sake. The God-fearing ones of Mal. 3:16 and "the rest in Thyatira" (Rev. 2:24) are examples of this.

The remainder of 1 Sam. 14 is rather the story of Saul than of Jonathan. The poor benighted king almost turned the victory into disaster. The meddling of flesh in divine movements is always to be dreaded. Saul's foolish prohibition of all food until the work was finished led to frightful license on the part of the people, as all unnecessary prohibitions are apt to do. Jonathan had his eyes opened by disobeying his father (for he ate some honey). David says, on the contrary, "The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes." Psa. 19:8. This means that true enlightenment is found in the path of obedience to God.

The forms of religion were still acknowledged by the king. He built an altar (the first he ever built to the Lord), and instructed the priest to inquire of God about the further pursuit of the Philistines. Finding himself divinely ignored, he suspected divine displeasure somewhere. But he was so utterly far from God that the thought never occurred to his mind that he was the offender. How deceitful is the flesh!

When the lot was taken, he positively passed sentence of death upon Jonathan! Ignorance and folly could scarcely have gone further. But the common sense of the people revolted against the king's stupidity. "Shall Jonathan die, who hath wrought this great salvation in Israel? God forbid." So the matter ended. Saul went home, and the Philistines got away without further chastisement.

The whole chapter is deeply humiliating in its exposure of the helplessness and folly of religious flesh, and is blessedly exhilarating in its precious assurance of what God can do with even the feeblest instruments who are right in heart towards Him, and who are able to trust Him wholly.

Bible Challenger-05-May V.09

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the word which describes a certain class of people from whom it is said that God "withdraweth not His eyes." [1] The number in brackets indicates the number of words in the answer.

1. "Shall not the judge of all the earth do____?" [1]
2. "Within ye are full of hypocrisy and____." [1]
3. 'Thou hast rewarded me_____ whereas I have rewarded thee evil." [1]
4. "Pray for one another, that ye may be ____ [1]
5. "He spake this parable unto certain which_____." [1]
6. "The fear of the Lord is clean____, for ever." [1]
7. "Walking in all the commandments and _____of the Lord." [1]
8. 'Therefore the_____ shall not stand in the judgment." [1]
9. "Learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not____ ." [1]

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

R. Erisman

Bible Challenger-04-April Answers V.09

1. S ickness John 1 1:4
2. O vercometh 1 John 5:5
3. N ame John 20:31
4. O vershadow Luke 1:35
5. F our men Dan. 3:25
6. G ave Gal. 2:20
7. O ught John 19:7
8. D estroyest the temple Malt. 27:40

"And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith the SON OF GOD, who hath His

eyes like unto a flame of fire, and His feet are like fine brass." Rev. 2:18.

Proverbs

Simon Patrick on the Proverbs

1683

Chapter 2

10. "When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul."

And when wisdom hath thus taken possession of thy very heart and affections; and thou findest an inward pleasure and satisfaction, by observing the rules of piety and all manner of virtue.

11. "Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee."

This alone will be a sufficient security to thee, and make thee unwilling to depart from them. For thy own experience will teach thee that it is the greatest cunning to go in those plain and open ways; and that no men understand their own interest so well as they that cannot be persuaded by any means to forsake them.

12. "To deliver thee from the way of the evil man, from the man that speaketh froward things."

Though otherwise thou mightest be seduced into a wrong course, yet this will deliver thee from that danger; and not suffer thee to be perverted by the mouth of him, that would subtly insinuate his lewd principles into thee.

13. "Who leave the paths of uprightness, to walk in the ways of darkness."

Though thou shouldst be assaulted by many of them, thou shalt easily discover their folly; in leaving the straight, plain and even paths of virtue, to walk blindly they know not whither in the perplexed ways of vice and wickedness.

14. "Who rejoice to do evil, and delight in the frowardness of the wicked."

Being so mad as to rejoice when they have done any mischief; and having no higher pleasure than to pervert others, and make them as bad as themselves.

15. "Whose ways are crooked, and they froward in their paths."

That is, to draw them aside, and entangle them in intricate ways, directly cross to their own interest, safety, and pleasure; for the whole course of their life is nothing else, but a shameful contradiction to their soberest reason and best understanding.

16. "To deliver thee from the strange woman, even from the stranger which flattereth with her words."

But such is that sweet satisfaction which (as I said in verses 10 and 11) thou wilt find in the affectionate love of true wisdom, that it will deliver thee, not only from the snares of wicked men; but which is more dangerous, of a naughty woman: whose company (though so pernicious that God would have thee perfectly estranged from her, as if she were not of the Commonwealth of Israel, yet) hath powerful charms in it, to flatter thee into her embraces.

17. "Which forsaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the covenant of her God."

Above all other, from that filthy adulteress, who is so lewd as to leave her husband (though a worthy and perhaps noble person) to whom she was joined in her youth, when love is in its greatest warmth, and took him for her guide and governor: but hath wickedly broken the laws of God, and violated the solemn vow of fidelity to him, which she made when they were married.

18. "For her house inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the dead."

The least degree of that discretion which wisdom infuses, will teach thee to avoid her society, who loves no body, now that she hath forsaken him that had her first affection, but seeks the ruin of all that go to her house: where, by one means or other, they are in danger to meet with their grave, and be sent to keep company with those old giants; who corrupted mankind with such filthiness and violence, that they brought a deluge upon the earth (Gen. 6:4,5,11).

19. "None that go unto her return again, neither take they hold of the paths of life."

And this is very remarkable, that it is rarely seen that anybody who is drawn into her impure embraces, ever gets out again: but she holds them all so fast by her enchantments, and they are so blinded and bewildered by her arts; that, like men who have quite lost their way in a strange country, they seldom or never can hit into it, and recover themselves, to a virtuous way of living.

20. "That thou mayest walk in the way of good men, and keep the paths of the righteous."

In which the sincere love of wisdom (verses 11,12, etc.) will so secure thee; that escaping her snares, as well as those of wicked men, thou mayest imitate those excellent persons the patriarchs and prophets; and be preserved in the paths of those righteous men, who followed after

them.

21. "For the upright shall dwell in the land, and the perfect shall remain in it."

Which is as much as to say, that thou mayest be perfectly happy: for men of integrity (according to God's promise, Deut. 11:8,9,21) shall peaceably enjoy this good land which God hath given us; and they that study sincerely to please Him in all things, shall leave it in possession to their posterity after them.

22. "But the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be rooted out of it."

But such impious men, as I spoke of (according to what God Himself hath also denounced, Deut. 11:17 and other places) shall be cut down from the earth; where they may flourish, like a tree, for a time: nay, they that give themselves up to doe [do] wickedly, and keep no faith with God nor man, shall be plucked up, like a tree, by the very roots, and leave none to preserve their memory behind them.

Exhortation to a Preacher

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

Meet for the Master's Use

It is one thing to ask what can I do for Christ and quite another to ask what can Christ do through me. The first is limited by my weakness; the second is limited only by His power and choice. The Apostle Paul says in Rom. 15:18, "I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed."

He recognized that he was only a channel through whom the blessing was flowing. The source was in the Master and not in the servant. It was Christ who wrought; the Apostle was only the means used by His all-wise and all-powerful hand. The work was Christ's. His was the glory and the praise for all that was done through the messenger, though He in grace will credit the servant and reward him for all that He possibly can. These words put the matter in its right form and let the servant be seen in his true place.

The same humility of mind is manifest in Barnabas and Paul rehearsing what signs and wonders God had wrought through them while they were on their missionary journey. The work was God's, but they were the instruments. Today God is willing to employ us as His vessels in that which He is doing in grace in this world. The responsibility of being clean rests with us, vessels unto honor, sanctified, meet for the Master's use, prepared unto every good work. The channel may become blocked, and this will hinder the blessing from flowing.

Shall we not place ourselves afresh in the Lord's hands and ask Him for grace to be fit for Him to work through us? He seeks vessels for His service. They must be clear of obstruction and clean for Him to employ in the blessed service of making known the grace of God among men.

Time

Time was, is past,

thou canst not it recall.

Time is, thou hast,

improve the portion small.

Time future is not, and may never be,

The present is the only time for thee.

Editorial

Angels in Action

A common saying in some parts of the country is, "If you don't like the weather, just wait a while." In many places in this world the weather varies quickly and frequently. Another thing that changes is the government. The past decade has seen one coup after another in various countries, and sometimes more than one in the same country. Sometimes the change of administration is orderly and without outward trouble, but sometimes there is violence and strife.

For the Christian it is good to know that our God is supreme and that He is overruling even though He is now allowing man to have his day. Paul speaks of "man's judgment" in 1 Cor. 4:3. The reading in the Bible margin is "man's day." In this day of God's grace He largely lets man have his way without much overruling. But behind the scene is always God and He uses angels to control.

In chapters 9 and 10 of Daniel we read of the angel Gabriel's being sent to Daniel. He says to Daniel in chapter 10, "Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia."

Certainly our God sees and knows all, and in His wisdom and power He controls all now even as He did in Daniel's day. Another comforting thing to notice is that Daniel's prayer was heard and that the answer was on the way. Is it not even so with our prayers?

Doubtless there is much more of the power of angels in controlling the workings of the governments today than we are aware of, and there will be until the final change of administration of the government of the earth.

The final change of government will be when God gives it to Christ. When the seventh angel sounds, it says in Rev. 11:15, "There were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever."

Meanwhile, we are comforted to know that our God is in full control behind the scenes. Besides this, we rest in knowing that angels are "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation." Heb. 1:14. One special service of angels is for our little ones. It says of the "little ones" in Matt. 18:10, "In heaven their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in heaven."

Ed.

Christ Is Everything

by J. Ryan

Our Lord Jesus ought to have the preeminence, the first place in our thoughts and in our actions too. Col. 1:18 is quoted in this connection: "That in all things He might have the preeminence." Then again we have often heard it said that "Christ is all," or as it is put in the JND translation, "Christ is everything." Col. 3:11.

There is a great deal of difference between these two concepts. In the first it is put as a matter of computing relative values—putting various items into a scale and arranging them in order of relative importance so that Christ has the first place. That process might leave room for a wide variety of other interests and time-occupiers, all of which are subordinated to Himself, each of them in their place on a descending scale. It is indeed a noble objective to seek that He should have the first place. One has to confess that it is often not so. Have we not from time to time placed family, business, or just plain self at the top of our scale of values?

The second statement (Col. 3:11) that "Christ is everything" goes well beyond the question of relative eminence. It eliminates all thought of relative values or a range of priorities. It tells us that our Savior should be so esteemed as to eclipse all other values. Nothing should be in competition with Himself. He is the altogether lovely One beside whom there is none else. We are here brought to a high place where He stands alone.

If we put these two statements together (Col. 1:18; 3:11), we have a call to devotedness and piety that we know so little of as almost to prohibit discussion, but there are two illustrations that come to mind: Paul in the New Testament, and Ruth in the Old Testament.

Paul was not merely a talker; he walked it. The little letter to the saints at Philippi discloses the practical working out, the actual consequences that developed in one who held Christ as preeminent and embraced Him as "everything." On the scale of relative values he could say, "Though I be nothing." 2 Cor. 12:11. Self was wiped out in order that his Lord and Savior might have the first place, and that so thoroughly that there was nothing competing for a slot in his scale of values, nothing but Christ.

Nothing but Christ, as on we tread,

The Gift unpriced—God's living Bread,

With staff in hand and feet well shod,

Nothing but Christ—the Christ of God.

Everything loss for Him below,

Taking the cross where'er we go;

Showing to all, where once He trod,
Nothing but Christ—the Christ of God.
Nothing save Him, in all our ways,
Giving the theme for ceaseless praise;
Our whole resource along the road,
Nothing but Christ—the Christ of God.

Ruth

In the Old Testament one outstanding example of devotedness and piety is Ruth. Four short chapters give us the course of a life that meets the standards of Col. 1:18 and 3:11. In Ruth 1:18 it tells us that "she was steadfastly minded." Her heart was set on the God of Israel. She was not turned aside, come what may. We, too, need a single eye for the Christ of God. Can we so forget self (in all its varied forms), so as to cleave unto the Lord with purpose of heart (Acts 11:23)?

It says "unto the Lord." The expression suggests something about lordship, dominion, and authority. Our own response to that ought to be submission, subjection, and obedience. This is the way that Ruth began. We can make no progress without the same spirit, being steadfastly minded, with purpose of heart. Notice, too, that it is connected with the heart, not merely purpose of the mind. Mental resolve, strong resolutions won't do. Our Lord Jesus is looking for the hearts of His people. "And her mother-in-law said unto her, Where hast thou gleaned today? and where wroughtest thou?... And she showed her mother-in-law with whom she had wrought, and said, The man's name with whom I wrought today is Boaz." Ruth 2:19. Here is the preeminence of the Person of our Savior, the mighty Man of wealth who came down to do us good and sold all that He had in order to do it.

Naomi wanted to know, she was quite insistent about it, "Where? Where?" Ruth was very careful to not answer the question. She could probably have given the street address or otherwise identified the field, but she did not do it. Was it rudeness or impolite to decline to answer? No, she had something else on her mind that made the "where" most unimportant. She spoke of the man whom she had met. Naomi asked "where" "Oh, let me twice. Ruth answered twice about the "whom." The person tell you about of the man she had met was so THE MAN esteemed by her as to render the place and all of its features of no I met today!" significance to her. The affections were so strongly engaged with the man that she could not talk of much else.

The compassion of the foreman in charge of the work, the kindness of those that shared their lunch with her, the arrangements for her safety, the handfuls of purpose, and the welcome to come again to the same field-she could have spoken of some or all of these. But after all, they would have been occupation with things concerning herself. She wasted no time telling Naomi of such things; instead she said: "Oh, let me tell you about the man I met today!"

Do we spend more time with technical questions than we spend in lifting up our Savior, speaking well of Him? Ruth was so absorbed by the man that she spoke of little else. Why do we have so much trouble bringing the name of Jesus into our conversation? Perhaps it is because of the distance at which we walk-too much like Peter who followed afar off. Happily he learned his lesson. Oh, that we might learn our lessons more readily.

Luke writes in 9:32 that "when they were awake, they saw His glory." Do we need to be awakened, to be more sensitive to His presence and more conscious of who He is? If we are alert and awake, then we will see His glory; at best it is through a glass darkly. Abraham altered the whole course of

his life when the God of glory appeared to him. Saul of Tarsus had a similar meeting (Acts 9), and his course was also altered. If we were similarly persuaded in the light of His glory, our course would also be altered. Ruth 3 is the next reference. Here we need to read the whole chapter and count the number of times that the Holy Spirit uses the word "down"—a total of seven times. The number seven expresses a fullness, here suggesting a completeness, and entire giving up of self. Is there anything harder for us to do than to come down? We just naturally resist the idea. All of our natural impulses are to the up side, promotion, elevation. We just cannot come down, particularly if it is perceived that somebody else is trying to put us down. In a burst of decency we might be willing to come down of our own volition, because we want to do it, but watch out when somebody tries to put us down! This chapter tells us plainly of the general area where we belong; it is down and not up!

Then twice in the chapter we find the expression "at his feet." It is not merely down, or down on some random basis, but down to a specific place. Doesn't this remind us of Luke 10? Verse 39 tells us of Mary who "sat at Jesus' feet, and heard His word." We are also told that her part was a "good part" and that it was "needful." She sat, not running about, but in quiet repose with a willingness to wait. "At Jesus' feet" says something about subordination, subjection, meekness, absence of self-promotion, and a deference as to Himself. To hear His Word shows something of a teachable spirit, a willingness to be instructed rather than a striving to be heard.

Ruth 4:10 and 13 is the next reference: "Moreover Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, have I purchased to be my wife.... So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife: and when he went in unto her, the Lord gave her conception, and she bare a son."

In the first three chapters we read much of what Ruth said and did. In the fourth chapter we read nothing of what she said, and little of what she did. That which we do read of her is connected with Boaz. She is so merged with that mighty man of wealth as to be of interest only as she is connected with Boaz. She is now of interest only because of her relationship with the man Boaz. The bride is merged into the bridegroom. It sounds a little like Genesis 5:2 where it is said of Adam and Eve that He "called their name Adam." The two of them were so much one as to be called by one name. Are we willing to give our Lord Jesus the place of preeminence so thoroughly as to be nothing ourselves? Are we so set to give Him the honor that is due to His name that it does not hurt our individual or collective feelings to be in the shade, unnoticed? Do we have to be heard? Self-assertiveness in Ruth is all gone. She didn't even name her own child; other women named the boy Obed.

Here is our proper course illustrated in real life; it has been done!

Ruth 1: A single eye—steadfastly minded. Ruth 2: The preeminence of the Person.

Ruth 3: Coming down, self-judgment, at His feet.

Ruth 4: Self lost sight of, He is everything.

The first three chapters of the little book of Ruth give us the three essential steps in reaching that state of affairs where "Christ is everything" to us. Not one of the three can be omitted. Observe further the sequence that is indicated. It is in order, #1, then #2, and then #3; not #3, #2, #1 or in any other sequence. For example, it is utterly useless to try to adopt #3 without first embracing #2.

And #2 is also beyond our grasp unless we have gone through #1.

A Few Thoughts on the Church

The Word of God shows clearly that there were gifts for ministry of different kinds, but it never intimates that the Church either bestowed the gifts, or gave authority to use them. The gifts are divinely given, and authority flows directly from the Word of God. "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord." 1 Cor. 12:45. Here the Spirit distributes the gifts, and the Lord directs the services. Man's appointment and man's will are both excluded.

Human appointment to ministry has been the source of much evil throughout the professing Church. It has been the means of pushing many into the work who have no fitness for it. And it has hindered the ministry of many who have gift for it, but who were unable to reach the requirements of a human system in order to be appointed. How solemn for men to put themselves between God and one whom He has gifted for ministry, or to appoint to the work of ministry those whom God has never gifted.

May we realize how solemn it is and seek to build with God and in His fear, even though it should separate us from the mass who are building under the authority of man. The Lord's servant is bound to be faithful at all cost, and though he should serve alone, better this with the Lord's approval, than all the praise of men without it.

The world may call it folly, and his brethren may call him mad, but what of that? Was not Paul rejected and hated and persecuted? Did not even those who were the seal of his ministry become ashamed of his chain? All in Asia forsook him, but the Lord stood with him and strengthened him. Has not the servant of the Lord the same resource now? Can he not count upon the Lord? The Lord is faithful, and this is enough for the servant who really knows his Master. The reward is not now; it will come by and by.

No doubt the true servant will find plenty of difficulties. It has always been so, and not less so now. Confusion has come in and his path lies through its midst. The members of Christ have been scattered through many sects, and the servant must hold himself ready and be at the Lord's bidding to go to any of these members and minister to their need. If it interferes with the plans and arrangements of men, he cannot help it. It is before God that he is to justify himself, not before men.

The path is difficult because of existing confusion, and men will seek to make it more difficult, but He who has the key of David, who opens and no man shuts, and shuts and no man opens, is able to set an open door before him which no man can shut. Blessed will be that servant who holds his commission directly from the Head, and who acts as under His eye alone seeking His glory and the blessing of all His members. However his work may appear in the eyes of men, it will be found in that coming day of testing that his work will abide on the foundation and that he has built gold, silver and precious stones that will endure forever.

In this day of confusion and ruin, may we take both warning and encouragement from Paul's last charge to Timothy, his son in the faith: "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom; preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine." 2 Tim. 4:1, 2.

A. H. Rule

The Spirit of Obedience

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

H. E. Hayhoe

The House and the Body

Many confound two things, which are quite distinct in Scripture, the house of God and the body of Christ. Hence, if anyone is refused a place at the table, or put away from it, they speak of "rending the body of Christ," or "cutting off members of Christ." Was the body rent, or a member cut off, when the sinning one was put away from the assembly at Corinth? Clearly not. Neither is it in any such case. Thanks be to God, no one can rend the body of Christ or cut off its very feeblest member. God has taken care that "there should be no schism in the body." The strictest discipline of the house of God can never touch, in the most remote way, the unity of the body of Christ. That unity is absolutely indissoluble. A clear understanding of this would answer a thousand questions and solve a thousand difficulties.

C. H. M.

Proverbs

Simon Patrick on the Proverbs

1683

Chapter 2

1. "My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee."

And now, my son, whose happiness I most heartily desire, let me tell thee for thy further encouragement that if thou dost entertain these exhortations, which I have now given thee, and keep these precepts in remembrance, for the same end that corn is sown and covered in the ground.

2. "So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding."

Listening with diligent attention, not to the enticements of such evil men as I have described, but to the counsels and instructions of wisdom; with sincere affection applying thy mind to understand thy duty

3. "Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding."

And moreover, if thou expresses such a desire of it, as men do of that which they most need, and without which they are in danger to perish: praying those that are able to inform thee, and beseeching God likewise with ardent devotion, that He would bring [make] thee acquainted with it.

4. "If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures."

If thou dost value this wisdom above the greatest treasures, and show [show] thy esteem of it by studious seeking for it, as covetous men do for money: laying hold upon all occasions of profiting in knowledge, and pursuing thy advantages (as they do) when thou meetest with them; not giving over thy labor presently, if thou findest not what thou desirest, but inquiring still, and sparing no

pains to know what the will of the Lord is.

5. "Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God."

Then thou shalt not fail to understand what it is to be truly religious; and that there is no wisdom comparable to it: and shalt find also what reason there is to reverence, worship and solicitously obey Him, who is the Almighty Creator, Governor, and Judge of all the world.

6. "For the Lord giveth wisdom: out of His mouth cometh knowledge and understanding."

For as wisdom, no less than all other good things is the gift of the Lord (without whom all our pains and study about it will be ineffectual) so there is no doubt He will bestow it on those who esteem it above all worldly goods, especially this most necessary part of it: which He hath already imparted to us by His prophets and men inspired, who have given us a true knowledge and understanding of Him.

7. "He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: He is a buckler to them that walk uprightly."

And have assured us, that He hath solid and durable blessings (transcending all the transitory things of this life) reserved in store for upright men: and will protect all those by His Almighty Providence, whose care it is to perform and complete obedience to Him in all things.

8. "He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of His saints."

That so He may preserve them in their integrity, and encourage them neither to swerve from the rules of justice, nor to cease to exercise mercy and kindness: for He hath a great favor to such pious persons, and will be their keeper and defender in such proceedings.

9. "Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea, every good path."

By which thou shalt understand that justice and mercy in thy private dealings, and faithful discharge of thy trust in all public offices, and uprightness in every other virtue; and all of them the best, the most plain, easy, and natural way a man can take to be happy.

Training

Prov. 22:6: "Train up a child in the way he should go."

Satan does not wait till children grow up—why should you?

Bible Challenger-06-June V.09

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the words telling what God has done, giving credence to His righteousness. [2] The number in brackets indicates the number of words in the answer.

1. "According to Thine own heart, hast Thou done all this_____ ." [1]
2. "There were three of the first horns plucked up by the_____ [1]
3. "What one nation in the_____ is like Thy people?" [1]
4. "Fear the Lord, and serve Him in truth with_____ [3]
5. "Even so the_____ is a little member." [1]
6. "God_____ marvelously with His voice." [1]
7. "Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, go _____to thy friends." [1]
8. "Call unto me, and_____ thee, and show thee." [3]
9. "He must suffer for My_____ sake." [1]
10. "Fear not, O land; be_____ and rejoice." [1]
11. "And his_____ came near, and spake unto him, and said, My father." [1]

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

Bible Challenger-05-May Answers V.09

1. R ight Gen. 18:25
2. I niquity Matt. 23:28
3. G ood 1 Sam. 24:17
4. H ealed James 5:16
5. T rusted Luke 18:9
6. E nduring Psa. 19:9
7. O rdinances Luke 1:6
8. U ngodly Psa. 1:5
9. S acrifice Matt. 9:13

"He withdraweth not His eyes from the RIGHTEOUS: but with kings are they on the throne; yea, He doth establish them for ever, and they are exalted." Job 36:7.

Zaphnath—Paaneah

Gen. 41 and John 4

by E G. Patterson

In Jacob's blessing of his sons (Gen. 49), we find those familiar and lovely words about Joseph used by the aged patriarch: "Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall." We know now that a greater than Joseph was before the prophetic mind of the Spirit in the patriarch when he spoke those words, of which I now only cite a part. The whole of the blessing may be seen in reading the chapter. The portion I have quoted will answer my present purpose in calling your attention to it.

If we turn back in the book of Genesis and glance at the lovely narrative of Joseph (Gen. 37-50)—evidently that of one of the most blameless of men whose histories are recorded in Scripture—we find in chapter 41 the moment of his full exaltation over all the land of Egypt before us. At this time he was thirty years of age; he had been shamelessly and heartlessly rejected by his brethren, and sold to his captors. He was oppressed and afflicted, taken from prison and from judgment; the iron had entered into his soul. In all this, as in the many other details of his life, he is a type of Him who was to come.

He had just interpreted the dreams of Pharaoh, and had counseled Pharaoh to be warned of God in preparing for the years of famine that were to come.

"And Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?" v. 38. And Pharaoh raised him to be head over all the land. There was none so discreet and wise as he. He would be over his house, and according to his word should all his people be ruled. Only in the throne would Pharaoh be greater than he. Power over all flesh was his, and all was given into his hands (vv. 43, 44).

He names him Zaphnath-paaneah, or the "Revealer of secrets," as the Coptic is said to indicate, and "Savior of the world," as says another authority. Of course I do not go further here than to notice the double significance of this title which Pharaoh gave to Joseph.

In the seven plenteous years—those years of grace—the earth brought forth by handfuls from the ripened fields. The reaper received his wage, and gathered fruit for the life to come when famine would stalk through the land. Joseph, too, married a wife in the land of his rejection, and to him were born his two sons, Manasseh his firstborn, signifying "forgetting," and Ephraim the second, bearing the name which means "fruitful." He forgot his toil and his father's house, and he was fruitful in the land of his affliction.

When we turn to the Gospel of John (chap. 4), and read of the opening of the public ministry of the Lord, we find His going forth when thirty years of age to Samaria on His mission of grace. "He left Judea"; He left His own to whom He had come, morally rejected by them. He had come to His own, and His own received Him not. He passes on in the fullness of grace to defiled Samaria,

morally now, as actually again, with "power over all flesh," and all things given into His hands by the Father.

There He proves Himself to be the true "Revealer of secrets," the One who told the sinful woman all that ever she did. He forgets His toil and the long, weary journey of that day through the burning heat, till He sat on the side of the well-the most fruitful bough that ever shadowed it. He forgets His thirst, His hunger too, refreshed by the meat to eat of which the disciples as yet knew nothing. He forgets, too, His Father's house, and in the land of His affliction He is fruitful. The woman of Samaria is found by Him who came to seek and to save the lost. His word to the disciples in those years of plenty which now were dawning was, "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest." Many of the Samaritans, too, believed on Him. They said to the woman, "Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard Him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world."

He is the true "Zaphnath-paaneah," now as then. Surely we can say as in 1 John 4:14, "We have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world." We have learned how surely He is the "Revealer of secrets," as did the woman of Samaria, through the window of our souls. The conscience of each can vouch for this. We need no proof or evidence that we have had to do with Christ, and He with us.

I only touch upon those few features of this lovely type. Perhaps it may encourage others to look for the more minute details for themselves. But when we know Christ, is it not a happy task to find some lines of Him portrayed on those who went before, and in whom His grace and Spirit was working? Shall we deem it a less happy task now to trace in those who are Christ's, the lines of His life and ways, as the Spirit of God has done so blessedly in those who have gone before?

Knowing

"Then shall I know even as also I am known." 1 Cor. 13:12. That is, I shall know in God's way of knowing a thing, without having to go through the process of learning it.

New Creation

The death of the Lord Jesus was at the end of the old creation. In resurrection we see Him as the beginning or foundation of the new.

The old was not allowed to pass till it had been fully vindicated, as it was in the Person, character, ways, and life of the Lord. He stood as the immaculate and perfect sample of it, in the midst of all the ruin in which it was involved. But having been this, and done this, He died as under the doom of the old creation—"the Just for the unjust"—and in Himself as risen from the dead, He laid the foundation of the new creation.

His resurrection stands in four relationships: to God, to the world, to sinners, and to believers.

In relation to God, it is the display of His glory and of His purposes. It is His victory.

In relation to the world, it is its judgment. It tells them there is a question between God and them about Jesus—that they cast out the crucified, the One whom God has raised and glorified. And judgment awaits the world because of this, as Peter preaches in Acts 10 and Paul in Acts 17.

In relation to sinners, it tells them of redemption. The sacrifice which puts away sin has been accepted at that very throne which holds the balances that try the claims of God, and weighs the utmost of His demands in righteousness upon sinners.

In relation to believers, it pledges as firstfruits their own harvest, or resurrection in glorified bodies.

It is one thing, but it has these various aspects, and stands in these different relations. The angel that witnessed it in Matt. 28 accordingly changes his aspect, when turning from the keepers of the stone to the poor women. In the sight of the keepers of the stone, he had descended bringing terror with earthquake attending him, and the lightning expressing him. His appearing put the sentence of death into them, for they represented the world which had crucified the Lord of glory. But on turning to the women, this same angel is all gentleness. His terror does not make them afraid. The light is one to guide and gladden, not to alarm. It is the resurrection in the sight of poor, anxious sinners, as the other was the resurrection in the sight of the world.

This twofold aspect of the resurrection may be seen again in the appearing of Christ Himself to Saul of Tarsus. The risen, glorified Lord descended, as in lightning and earthquake, on the road which lay between Jerusalem and Damascus. Saul was then representative of the world's enmity—as the keepers of the sealed stone had been. The glory of the risen Jesus throws him to the earth, and lays the sentence of death in him as it had in those keepers of the stone. But quickly it becomes a guiding, gladdening light, for it tells him of his own hopes and services and securities under this same risen Jesus. (Acts 9, 22, 26.)

The resurrection is the laying of the foundation of the new creation, as we have already said, and such foundations are immovable, as is all that rests on them. It is the Son of God in victory. The old creation rested on the tested Adam, and falling in the temptation in his encounter with Satan,

the creation fell and became a mighty ruin. But the Son of God has come, the Repairer of the breach, and has stood where Adam fell, has conquered where Adam was defeated, has broken the gates of hell, and in Himself and in His victory has laid the foundation of an unassailable creation. It is a new and redeemed creation which is to get its beauty as well as its strength from Him.

J. G. Bellett

Bits and Pieces

All intelligence in divine things depends upon a state of soul.

To have power in prayer you must have purity in life.

You cannot go the way of the cross without having its trial and difficulty, as well as its infinite gain.

The Lord keep us that our growth in knowledge may be healthful. (J. G. B.)

The law told man what he ought to be. It did not tell him what he was, nor what God was.

Faint yet Pursuing

What three little words could be more blessedly descriptive of the Christian than the words "faint yet pursuing"? It is not faint and sitting down, not faint and giving up, but faint, yet pursuing. We have to do with Him who "giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength." Isa. 40:29. It is blessed to use our faintness and weariness to draw out the fullness of the supply of grace and strength in Christ.

It is said, "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might" (Eph. 6:10), but to whom was it said? To the one who has no strength in himself, who would give up his course if strength were not supplied to him. One victory achieved, the conflict goes on afresh. Do we find ourselves fainting in spirit? Still let us go on, for our God giveth strength to the weak.

We do not like this trial of faith. It is very painful, doubtless, to feel day by day our own weakness. We want to feel that the battle is over, but let us remember that now is our time of war. We are called on to fight "as a good soldier of Jesus Christ," and in the daily round of conflicts. Today there has been sufficient grace and sufficient evil, and tomorrow there will be sufficient grace and sufficient evil.

What we need is to live day by day in dependence on God only. He is faithful, and He will supply strength according to the occasion and need.

Editorial

Where Are the Old Paths?

Have you noticed a trend toward the removal of national borders in North America, Europe, Asia, and perhaps Africa also? In North America and Europe it is much easier to pass from one country to another than it was a few years ago. Sometimes frontiers and customs are not even noticed.

The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) has removed many restrictions in the commerce between the countries involved.

After the confusion of tongues at Babel, the great distinction of nations was not national boundaries, but difference of language. Even today the greatest barrier between people of other nations is the different languages. Men have tried to overcome this barrier, but cannot; instead other differences have arisen, such as ethnic, or cultural, and religious diversities.

In present-day Israel all of these barriers to peace are found, but perhaps the least one is language. It is not very difficult to learn two or three languages and so understand one another. But religious beliefs and convictions are deep and strong, and years of strife and hatred between races of people prevent peace being obtained easily.

All people understand money and its power. That is one common denominator. The power of armies and a great arsenal are also understood by men.

Another question: Will people ever agree on these two things, money and might? Who is to have them and who should have them and who shall have them? Men talk much of peace and even have "talks" to discuss peace.

In Jer. 6:14 we read this: "They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of My people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace." The next verse asks them, "Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination?" The Lord answers that in the negative, and then tells them that they shall be ashamed and fall; "at the time that I visit them they shall be cast down."

The Lord speaks of visiting them in chapter 9:8, 9. "Their tongue is as an arrow shot out; it speaketh deceit: one speaketh peaceably to his neighbor with his mouth, but in heart he layeth his wait. Shall I not visit them for these things? saith the Lord: shall not My soul be avenged on such a nation as this?"

The Lord still has a promise for His earthly people. We quote Jer. 23:2-4, "Therefore thus saith the Lord God of Israel against the pastors that feed My people; Ye have scattered My flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them: behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the Lord. And I will gather the remnant of My flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase. And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the Lord."

Still to come, then, we see a visit of the Lord in affliction and judgment upon His earthly people and then a visit of blessing.

Considering again those words in Jer. 6, "Peace, peace; when there is no peace," we find these words in verse 16: "Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls." Surely there is in this an application for us to heed in these days of so much unrest around us on every continent. And even worse, there are riots and terrorism and warfare. Believers in every part of the world can still find the old paths of Christianity. Let us meditate upon the book of Acts-the beginning of Christianity. Let us walk in those old paths.

Sad to say, this last verse we referred to ends with their answering, "We will not walk therein." May we as believers today never say or practice such rebellion. Let us obey God's Word. It is the way of happiness. Ed.

The Eye

If the eye, instead of resting on
our sins and sorrows,
could rest only on Christ,
it would sweeten many a bitter cup,
and enlighten many a gloomy hour.

The Wanderers Restored or Jesus in the Midst

by C. Stanley

There can be no doubt that the last days of difficulty and perplexity are present realities. You meet a friend and almost the first word is, "What a state of confusion everything is in!" His face as well as words seem to say that everything is gone. Some have been expecting the universal spread of Christianity, and the conversion of the world. Others, who have long seen that this thought is unscriptural, have been expecting there to be some great display of the Church in its unity on earth. Instead, they find division and sorrow through the perversity and obstinacy of men. Such become greatly discouraged and have real sadness of heart.

If we turn to Luke 24, we find a picture of the things that are happening in our days. We know the Church, or Assembly, was not yet formed, for the Holy Spirit had not yet come to form it. But the company then gathered at Jerusalem was the very company which was afterward baptized by the Holy Spirit when the Church began.

We find, then, two of them with their backs on Jerusalem-on the assembly there, and their faces toward Emmaus. They were not going far away-about six miles. Now what was their condition, or state of mind? They were occupied with the things that had happened. Intellect was at work, and they reasoned. There does not appear to be any willfulness or stubbornness in their conduct, but they were very sad of heart, and sorely perplexed.

Let us remember they were of the company at Jerusalem, but not in their place. They were walking away, as if all were over and lost. Things had turned out very different from what they had expected, and they were sadly disappointed. Is not this a picture of many in this day? They are of the Church of God, the Assembly; they are members of the body of Christ, but as to their position, they are so sad, by reasoning about the things that have happened, that, though of it, "two of them," yet they are walking with their backs to the assembly, and their faces toward Emmaus. Did the Lord forget these two wanderers as they talked together of all these things which had happened? No, it was while they thus communed and reasoned that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them. Now what is really the matter with souls in this state is just as it was with them-"their eyes were holden that they should not know Him."

How tenderly He inquires of their sadness! Does He not feel the same now? Is His love changed? May we not say, "O teach me more of Thy blest ways"? There was little intelligence in them, and their faith in His resurrection was very weak. How tenderly He listens to every word! One thing He did rebuke was their slowness of heart to believe all that the prophets had spoken! "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." And may not the wandering, sad hearts be rebuked in this matter now? Oh, for the tender love of Christ to open up the Scriptures, and to show that not a single thing is now happening that has not been foretold in Scripture. Yes, all our disappointment and sadness of heart arise from not knowing the Scriptures. They were ignorant of the Scriptures, and they knew

not Him.

And now they want to turn in and settle down for the night, a little independent company, or if you please, individuals away from the assembly. Oh, the love that could not give them up! Though He showed His disapproval of their step, He opened to them the Scriptures, and their hearts did burn, though as yet their eyes were closed. But what a change when their eyes were opened and they knew Him! "They rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them." What a picture!

While our souls are in that moral state not to know the Lord in the midst of the assembly, our backs are sure to be turned to Jerusalem. And the moment we truly know Him, the face is immediately turned toward the assembly. Wonderfully does this picture illustrate the condition of many of the children of God at this time. Doubtless many are sad of heart and sorely perplexed with all the things that have happened, who never yet knew the sanctuary of deliverance revealed in this scripture. They reason in vain; their thoughts turn to convocations, alterations in ecclesiastical law, questions of so-called church and state. They are distracted with discord, jarring, and divisions on every hand. But they are as blind to the true deliverance from these tumults as these two sad hearts were blind to the One who so gently opened unto them the Scriptures.

Others who have walked with Him have been turned aside; not only those who in willfulness have sought to lead disciples after them (Acts 20:30), but like these two sad hearts, such have been so occupied with men and things that they have lost the power of discerning the Person and mind of the Lord. Oh, that such might dwell on the love of the Lord to these two wanderers! Would He not take you to the Scriptures, and show you that all that has happened was foretold? Ah, He would not merely make our hearts burn by His own precious ministry, but He would open our eyes to know Himself. And we cannot know Him without becoming attracted to the Assembly, His body. Is there anything on this earth so dear to the heart of Christ as His Church? Does not the Spirit of God move the heart of the reader to arise, and go to the assembly?

O meditate on that infinite love to the Church, and you will soon find yourselves on the way. We cannot know Him without loving that which He loves. There may be little intelligence, yet we shall soon find ourselves where He delights to reveal Himself.

Soon they arrive at Jerusalem; weariness, and sadness, and disappointment are all left at Emmaus—all uncertainty is now gone. The Lord is risen indeed is the certainty they find in the company gathered together. And the two returned ones are ready to tell their story of deliverance from sadness and disappointment, "how He was known of them in breaking of bread." Is it not sweet also in our day to have returning ones tell the story of restoring love? This touched the heart of Jesus; "and as they thus spake, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you." Surely this was as superior to the earthly sanctuary, the worldly temple with its priesthood and ritual, as heaven is to earth.

Have we been gathered to Christ, the Holy and the True? And are those who had wandered in sadness, a little way from the assembly ground of the twos or threes gathered together unto His name, being now restored by Him? Is it still true that, apart from all worldly sanctuaries, human priesthood, and carnal ordinances set up of man, Jesus Himself is in the midst of those gathered to Him? And does He still speak those precious words to those so gathered, "Peace be unto you"?

Can we not hear, above the roaring tempest of human discord, those tender words, the very voice we know—"It is I; be not afraid"? Mark 6:50.

It is indeed very blessed when He first speaks peace to the conscience through His precious blood, "It is finished"—"Peace be unto you." Eternity will never unfold the infinite debt of love we owe to Him for this character of peace.

Let us see Him and hear Him in the midst of the company gathered in the upper room. They were even afraid of the religious world outside, so the doors were shut. What a contrast with that religious world! It had antiquity, and everything to please the ear and the eye. Shall we say they, the little company, had nothing but Jesus? The fullness of the Godhead stood bodily in their midst risen from the dead—the Head and the beginning of the new creation.

Are you with the religious world, or with Jesus Himself? He speaks in the midst of those gathered to Himself. Truly He is not now present in body. But is He not as really present in Spirit? They were afraid. Yes, though it is unspeakably blessed, yet it is an awful moment when the soul is first separated from earthly religion and brought into the very presence of the risen Lord. He says, "Peace be unto you." What pen or tongue can tell the wondrous peace His presence and His words give in the midst of those truly gathered to Himself? Peace in every sense, both to conscience and heart.

Now since He is risen, since He is present, since He says, "Peace," how searching the question He put to them and to us! "Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?" Troubled ones, what do you answer to the Lord? Why are you troubled? Do you say that we are troubled about our sins? He has borne them on the cross; He shows you His hands and His side. Do you say that we are troubled about the confusions and divisions in the professing church? But He says "peace" in the midst of those gathered to Himself. Nothing can ever break that peace. All the things that trouble you vanish in His dear presence. No need of convocations to legislate or decide in His blest presence. No need of altered prayer books, or learned doctors there.

Oh, the simplicity, the reality there is in His presence! But no man can come there truly to Him unless the Father draws him. It is hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes. From every stormy wind that blows He gives perfect rest. "Peace be unto you." Satan's greatest effort is to keep souls from being gathered thus to Christ. It may be asked, But has not Christ now gone up to heaven? Quite true, but has not the Father sent down the Holy Spirit? He abides with us to the end. How little this is believed.

It may be asked, But is it not all over now? Have not difficulties arisen, and is not this blessed testimony to the Person of Christ all lost? Oh, beware of staying too long at Emmaus. What is lost? Is not Jesus Himself as truly present in Spirit now as at the very moment He was bodily present in the upper room? Is not the unspeakable peace of His presence just the same? Is not the Holy Spirit as truly present to take of the things of Christ as at the beginning? Why then are you troubled? Difficulties may arise, you say, or have risen. There are no difficulties where His presence is owned. Disown His presence and we have human intellect only!

There is always danger in reasoning about the things that have happened. These two had the letter of Scripture for expecting the setting up of the kingdom. They had not spiritual discernment of the times, and hence were really disappointed. Some have trusted and expected the testimony

to be something to be seen in the world, but if we have the mind of the Spirit, what can we expect beyond the sure promise of the Lord? "For where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." It was not at Emmaus that He said, "Peace be unto you," but in the midst of the little company gathered together at Jerusalem-the foreshadowed assembly. Yes, all is perfect peace in His presence, while all is perplexity and sadness with those who have turned their backs on the assembly.

May the Lord teach us more of His blest ways in seeking the sad hearts who have wandered to Emmaus. And may He ever keep us satisfied with Himself.

Government

The establishment of God's covenant with Noah and his seed was connected with the introduction of the most simple elements of judicial authority (Gen. 9:9). To man, in the person of Adam, had been entrusted power over all the inferior tribes of living creatures, but we find no trace of the scepter or the sword among men themselves, as ruling over, or subject to, one another till the days of Noah. Then it was that the solemn principle was established, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." Gen. 9:6.

This power in man's hand over the life of his fellowman, as a restraint upon the violence which would otherwise fill the earth, is the fundamental principle of government. It characterizes all the ages from the flood to the close of the millennial period. In that period the government of the earth will be in the hand of Christ. In what other hands could it be the means of universal blessing?

Passing by the instances in which this power has been based on nothing but military success or human will (Nimrod's kingdom is the first recorded example), it is well known that God has entrusted to man repeated grants of power to be held and exercised in responsibility to Himself, while the nations at large were left to their own ways on account of their idolatry. Abraham was separated by the call of God from idolatry, and the nation that sprang from his loins became the scene of God's manifested government.

While not dwelling on the period during which that government existed as a pure theocracy—God appointing first Moses, then Joshua, and afterward raising up judges from time to time—we need to be reminded of David's elevation to the throne. God made a covenant with him and with his house. To David and his offspring was the power of the sword entrusted, with the responsibility of using it according to the laws and directions of God Himself. But they were not faithful to this deposit. So awfully did they employ this heaven-entrusted power in rebellion against God and slaughter of God's prophets and messengers that they and their land were given up to judgment and desolation. God removed His throne from Jerusalem, the city of His choice.

At that time God made another grant of power to Nebuchadnezzar and his successors among the Gentiles. This was unaccompanied by God's presence and the direction of His laws which had been connected with His throne at Jerusalem. The throne of the Lord was never set up at Babylon, but a man was placed there to whom "the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory" He informed him by the prophet that wheresoever the children of men dwelt, the beasts of the field and the fowls of heaven had He given into his hand, and made him ruler over them all.

His kingdom was to be succeeded by another one inferior to it, and that by a third, and then a fourth which was to be found in existence at the last great crisis. At that time God Himself would set up a kingdom that should never be destroyed. That kingdom should not be left to other people, but should break in pieces and consume all these other kingdoms and stand forever. That is the millennial kingdom.

If it should be asked, "How can a kingdom be said to stand forever which is limited in its duration to a thousand years?" the answer is obvious. The passage itself defines the sense in which it is said to "stand forever." These words do not imply that there will be a kingdom on earth for all eternity, but that as long as there is a kingdom on earth, this one shall endure. It shall not be left to other people. That is, it shall not pass away and be followed by a sixth empire, as the four previous kingdoms pass away and give place to this one. This shall be the last-the final monarchy. When Christ delivers it up to the Father, having put down all rule and all authority and power, it is not that another kingdom may be set up, but that "God may be all in all." All the dispensations having run their course, the unchanging, eternal state will ensue.

W. Trotter

Delay is not denial.

God will come in at the right moment.

"My soul, wait thou only upon God;

for my expectation is from Him."

The Glory of God

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

Rom. 3:23

The path of the glory through Scripture may be easily traced, and has much moral value for us connected with it.

Ex. 13 It commences its journey in the cloud at the deliverance of Israel from Egypt when the Passover blood, in the grace of the God of their fathers, had sheltered them.

Ex. 14 In the moment of the great crisis it stood separating between Israel and Egypt, or between judgment and salvation.

Ex. 16 It resented the murmuring of the camp.

Ex. 24 It connected itself with Mount Sinai

and was as devouring fire in the sight of the people.

Ex. 40 It leaves that Mount for the tabernacle, the witness of mercy rejoicing against judgment, resuming also in the cloud its gracious services toward the camp.

Lev. 9 The priest being consecrated and his services in the tabernacle being discharged, it shows itself to the people to their exceeding joy.

Num. 9 Resuming their journey in company with the tabernacle, the congregation enjoys the guidance of the cloud which now attends the tabernacle while the glory fills it.

Num. 16 In the hour of full apostasy it shows itself in judicial terror in the sight of the rebellious people.

Deut. 31 In the cause of Joshua, an elect and faithful vessel, it reappears in the cloud.

2 Chron. 5 On the temple being built, a new witness of grace, the glory and the cloud reappear to the joy of Israel as of old.

Ezek. 1-11: Again in another hour of full apostasy, the glory takes wings and wheels to itself, and, as it were, leaves the temple.

Acts 7: Stephen, an earth-rejected man, sees it in heaven in company with Jesus.

Rev. 21:9. In millennial days it descends from heaven in its new habitation, the holy Jerusalem, "the Lamb's wife," resting above in the air from whence it shades and illuminates the dwellings of Israel again (Isa. 4:5) as it once did from the cloud in the wilderness, or enters the second temple, the temple of the millennium. (Ezek. 43; Hag. 2.)

Such is the path of the glory, the symbol of the divine presence. Its history as thus traced, tells us that if man be in company with grace, he can rejoice in it, but that it is devouring fire to all who stand under Mount Sinai. It tells us also that while it cheers and guides them on their way, it resents the evil and withdraws from the apostasy of God's professing people.

It is very instructive and comforting to note these things in the history of the glory, which was the symbol of the divine presence. And if that presence displayed itself in other forms, the same lessons are still taught us. The most eminent of the sons of men were unable to brook it in themselves, but in Christ all, high and low, unnamed and distinguished ones, could not only bear it, but rejoice in it.

J. G. Bellett

Order

"Doth not even nature itself teach you" (1 Cor. 11:14) is capable of a wide application. God has in His wisdom put great differences in the physical, mental, and emotional makeup of man and woman. He has most evidently marked them to be distinct, yet complementary.

Man's height and strength and emotional character stand in contrast to woman's natural grace, gentleness and mental nimbleness.

The very fact that woman was "taken out of man" proves her equality. She is not an inferior, but an equal—a helpmeet. Between man and man there is similarity; between man and woman there is equality, but with it diversity.

The very fact that woman was "taken out of man" proclaims the headship God has given man, as also her privilege to accord man the place God has given him. Man and woman are equal morally, but he is the head positionally.

Scripture distinctly states: "The man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man.... Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord. For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman; but all things of God." 1 Cor. 11:8, 9,11,12. How exquisitely guarded and balanced a presentation of the truth this is!

This is all designed to illustrate the relationship between Christ and the Church. In Eph. 5 the relationship between husband and wife is unfolded. Is the wife to submit to the husband? It is on the ground that "the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church" (v. 23). Are the husbands to love their wives? It is even "as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it" (v. 25). Is the man told to leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife as one flesh? We are reminded, "This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church" (v. 32).

From the very first the reader will see woman's place in nature is typical of her place in grace, and a picture of the Church's relation to Christ. How wonderful!

Questions and Answers

QUESTION: What works were finished from the foundation of the world? (Heb. 4:3.) What is the rest which remains to the people of God? (v. 9.)

ANSWER: God had wrought in creation and then rested from His works when He had finished them. But sin entered the creation and now God cannot rest until it is removed, so the rest of God is still future, and believers will enter into it. We are to take care not to appear as though coming short of it. Our portion is to be laboring now as Christians. It will be resting when God's rest comes.

All taint of sin shall be removed,

All evil done away,
And we shall dwell with God's Beloved,
Through God's eternal day.

Power

1 Cor. 14

Power is subject to intelligence. So it is in God. His wisdom precedes His power and guides it. Just so the wisdom and moral guidance of the Spirit go before power and guide its use. It is for profit; the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. This last is a very interesting point. As a divine work it could not be otherwise, for God must be first wise.

Proverbs

Simon Patrick on the Proverbs

1683

Chapter 3:1-12

1. "My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments." Let me then again entreat thee, whoever thou art that comest to learn of me (who loveth thee with a fatherly affection), not to be careless and negligent in the observance of these instructions: but remember them, and love them, and set thy self heartily to do whatsoever I command thee.

2. "For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee." For this is the surest way to that which all men naturally desire, and seek to attain: a long life, in firm health, vigor and strength; with all manner of happiness and prosperity (Deut. 30:18,20).

3. "Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart." Of this thou canst not miss, if thou wilt be steadfastly good and just; for the infinite bounty of God, and His faithfulness to His promises will secure these blessings to thee: therefore let my commandments be ever before thine eyes; fix them in thy memory, and in thy affections, as if they were engraven upon thy heart; and look upon it as the greatest ornament to be obedient to them.

4. "So shalt thou find favor and good understanding in the sight of God and man." Which is as much as if I had bidden thee acquire favor with God; and understand, on all occasions, what is good for thyself: ordering all thine affairs with such judgment and prudence, as to be in high esteem with Him and with men.

5. "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding." And assure thyself there is no rule of prudence like to this, to confide in God entirely; and to depend wholly on His providence for good success in well doing: not imagining that by thine own wit and policy, thou canst contrive such events as thou desirest, and bring about what thou designeth.

6. "In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths." No, in all thine undertakings both private and public, be sensible of His overruling power; observe His laws; and implore His favor and blessing; and He shall guide thee in thy proceedings; and bring them to a happy issue,

as He in His wisdom sees best for thee.

7. "Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the Lord, and depart from evil." Never be guilty of such folly as to conceit about thine own wit to be so great that thou canst manage things thereby in thine own way (neglecting the rules that He hath prescribed thee) to thy satisfaction: but have a religious regard to Him, who can either disappoint or prosper thee, as He pleases; and fearing to offend His Majesty, avoid most cautiously those practices that He hath forbidden thee.

8. "It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones." This is the way to preserve a good habit both of soul and body: and in all conditions to remain un-dejected; nay, cheerful and fully satisfied, whatsoever happens.

9. "Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase." As for example, there are those who think it prudence to save all they can; though it be by robbing God Himself: but, if thou wilt be truly wise and happy, honor Him in His ministers, by paying them their tithes duly; and bringing oblations to His house at the three solemn feasts (Ex. 23:14,15); together with the firstfruits of all that thine estate produces (Ex. 22:29, 30) in token of thy gratitude to Him, and that all thou hast is His, and cannot thrive without His blessing.

10. "So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine." Which He will shower upon thee abundantly; and convince thee, by lading the earth with fruit, and sending a seasonable as well as plentiful harvest and vintage, that this is the way, not to diminish, but to increase the estate which God hath given thee. (Deut. 28:4, 5; 2 Chron. 31:10.)

11. "My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord; neither be weary of His correction." And suppose it be His pleasure that any affliction should befall thee; my son (v. 1), let not that dissatisfy thee; nor make thee, either doubt of His gracious providence over thee, or out of impatience take any unlawful course to remove it from thee.

12. "For whom the Lord loveth He correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth." But rather submit unto it, as a part of His fatherly discipline, which cannot hurt thee; but only correct something that is amiss in thee: for we are sure He loves those that keep His commandments; and therefore nothing that proceeds from His love ought to be despised; or received with an abject mind; but duly esteemed by them, and raise their expectation of some good from the affliction: which should no more make Him suspected of any unkindness, than a tender parent is, when he whips the child in whom he delights; and to whom he wishes so well, that he will not let him be un-chastised.

The Tongue and the Heart

When we do not know ourselves, it is far easier to teach others than to govern self. Now the tongue is the most direct index of what is in the heart. We all fail in many things, and if we assume to teach others, our offenses are the more serious, and all the more deserve condemnation. Humility in the heart makes a man slow to speak; he waits rather to be taught, and for others to express their thoughts; he is more ready to learn than to teach.

Many according to the flesh would avoid giving a blow who cannot restrain a passionate or hard word against a neighbor. But if no man can restrain the tongue, the grace of Christ can do it, for the inner man on one side is under the yoke of the Lord, and is meek and lowly in heart; Christ fills the heart, and thus precisely because the tongue follows the impulses of the heart, the speech will express this meekness and lowliness. For this, it is needful that Christ alone should dwell there, and the flesh be so held in check that when temptation comes it may not stir. It is difficult not to fail, but it is very useful to see that the tongue shows what is working within, just as the hands of a clock show the hidden workings of its wheels.

J. N. Darby

Bible Challenger-07-July V.09

Take the first letter of each word or phrase needed to complete the Bible quotations to form the words that evaluate the relationship of sorrow to laughter when betterment of the heart is in question. [2] The number in brackets indicates the number of words in the answer.

1. "To Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the_____ [3]
2. "In lowliness of mind let _____others better than themselves." [2]
3. "A doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the_____ of wickedness." [1]
4. "He requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O Lord, my life_____." [2]
5. "Come no more before king Ahasuerus; and let the king give her royal _____ unto another." [1]
6. "A man should_____ in his own works; for that is his portion." [1]
7. "May I not wash in them, and be clean? So he_____ and went away." [1]
8. "Why weepest thou? and why eatest thou not? and why is thy _____ grieved?" [1]
9. "Behold the fowls of the_____ : for they sow not, neither do they reap." [1]
10. "A garden of herbs, because it is_____ unto my house." [1]

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

R. Erisman

Bible Challenger-06-June Answers V.09

1. G reatness
2. R oots
3. E arth
4. A ll your heart
5. T ongue
6. T hundereth
7. H ome
8. I will answer
9. N ame's
10. G lad
11. S ervants

"Thy righteousness also, O God, is very high, who hast done GREAT THINGS: O God, who is like unto Thee!" Psa. 71:19.

1 Chron. 17:19

Dan. 7:8

2 Sam. 7:23

1 Sam. 12:24

James 3:5

Job 37:5

Mark 5:19

Jer. 33:3

Acts 9:16

Joel 2:21

2 Kings 5:13

Acts 7:55, 56

ACTS 7:55,56|HEBREWS|

"Full of the Holy Ghost"

"Looked up ...into heaven"

"Steadfastly"

"Into heaven"

"Glory"

"Saw ... Jesus"

"Son of man"

"Standing"

"On the right hand of God"|"Gifts of the Holy Ghost" (2:4)

"Look for Him" (9:28)

"Looked for a city" (11:10)

"Hold ... our confidence

steadfast to the end" (3:14)

"Christ ... entered ... into

heaven" (9:24)

"Ye have in heaven a

better ... substance" (10:34)

"His Son ... brightness of

His glory" (1:2,3)

"Crownest Him with

glory" (2:7)

"Bringing many sons unto

glory" (2:10)

• "We see Jesus" (2:9)

"Jesus the Son of God" (4:14)

"Even Jesus, made a high
priest" (6:20)

"Jesus made a surety" (7:22)

"Looking unto Jesus" (12:2)

"Son of man" (2:6)

"When He ... purged our
sins, sat down" (1:3)

"After ... one sacrifice ... for
ever sat down" (10:12)

"On the right hand of the
majesty on high" (1:3)

"On the right hand of the
throne of the Majesty in the
heavens" (8:1)

"At the right hand of the
throne of God" (12:2)

N. Berry |

The Exceeding Riches of His Grace

"That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."

Eph. 2:7

This is the way the angels and principalities and powers in the heavenly places will learn the meaning of "the exceeding riches of His grace." They will see the poor thief, and the woman of the city that was a sinner, ourselves, too, in the same place and glory as God's Son!

Editorial

Social Improvement Plan

Conspicuously absent from the New Testament are such terms as "social service," "the social order," or "the social gospel." When here on earth our Lord did not attempt to overturn the social order of that day by some new system of ethical instruction. He always dealt with the individual. In His work with persons, God always begins inside. God showed that personal sin is the root of all the trouble in the world, and our Lord did not attempt to reform the sinner. He came to save and give a new life instead of trying to help the human race to better its condition.

Some of the most difficult problems in society today are crime, welfare, illegitimacy, and broken families. Government has to do with all its citizens and control is from the outside. Believers are a good influence in any nation and their presence does better the social order. This is the result, but not the primary purpose. The purpose of God is to take believers out of the world. Meanwhile, we are left here to represent Christ. In 1 John 2:6 it says, "He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked." And Peter tells us, "Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps." 1 Peter 2:21.

Christ came to bring in an entirely new creation through the regeneration of individual sinners. In the measure in which those who possess that new life walk as Christ walked in the power of the Holy Spirit, there will be a consequence of improved social conditions. The important thing is to keep first things first. Preach the gospel to the individual (all individuals), and then they can seek the salvation of their neighbors.

This is God's work which begins inside and works out. "It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Phil. 2:13. Have you read the little book of James recently? He tells us, "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."

If ethics are needed in this world, the book of Proverbs is a book of ethics, and, if practiced, will benefit the general public. "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." Rom. 12:21. "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Prov.

4:18. In Matt. 5 the Lord Jesus taught His followers, "Ye are the light of the world.... Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." In these ways believers are a good influence in the environment in which they live. Ed.

Time in the Four Gospels

The hours of the trial and crucifixion of the Lord Jesus and the methods of keeping time are very interesting. In John's Gospel Roman time is used, which is the same as we employ now, but in all the other gospels, and in Acts, time is reckoned after the Jewish mode. It calculates from sunup to sundown, and from sundown to sunup.

1. Pilate sentenced the Lord Jesus at "the sixth hour" (John 19:14), or six o'clock in the morning according to Roman time. The Lord and His disciples had eaten the Passover the previous evening, after which they went to the Garden of Gethsemane. There He was betrayed by Judas, seized by the mob, and forsaken by His own. He was then taken before the high priest, and later before the whole council where He was condemned to death. From here He was taken to Pilate, from Pilate to Herod, and back to Pilate. Then in His final appearance before Pilate He was condemned to death by 6 o'clock in the morning. They had been busy all night to accomplish their evil designs.

2. Mark 15:25 says, "And it was the third hour, and they crucified Him." This is in perfect accord with John's Gospel where He was still on trial at 6 a.m. Here, according to Jewish time, He was crucified at the third hour, or 9 a.m. After His sentencing by Pilate, He was led away to be mocked by the soldiers, and then in the procession out of the city to Golgotha. Thus there was an elapsed time of three hours from His sentencing to the actual crucifixion.

3. Matthew, Mark and Luke tell of the darkness that settled over the land from "the sixth hour... until the ninth hour," or from 12 noon until 3 p.m. He was on the cross from 9 a.m. till noon suffering as a martyr; from then on the scene changed and He was made "an offering for sin." During the second three hours, He was there as the holy victim and darkness shrouded the scene, for man was shut out when it became a matter of God's dealing with sin in the Person of the sinless Substitute. All three gospels which speak of these hours speak of them after the Jewish method of reckoning time. The reason that John uses Roman time is that he wrote much later, perhaps about A.D. 90, or twenty years after Jerusalem and Jewish polity had been destroyed; by then Roman time was in vogue.

4. As soon as the Lord Jesus delivered up His Spirit, at the ninth hour, the veil in the temple was rent from the top to the bottom. No human hand had done it, for the rent started at the top. It was God's doing, thus opening up the holy of holies, showing that He could come out in grace, and the sinner could now approach through the finished work of Him who died.

5. Acts 3:1 tells us that the ninth hour was "the hour of prayer"; that is, 3 p.m. We are also told by some that at that time, the hour of prayer, the priest was in the holy place of the temple, just outside of the veil. If this is true, the priest was there in the holy place to witness the rending of the veil. What a sight it must have been to him to see that secluded spot-the holy of holies known only to the high priest once a year-open to his full view. What a testimony as to the efficacy of the work of Him who had just died!

P. Wilson

Warnings and Instructions in First Timothy

by J. L. Erisman

In Psa. 19:7-11 we have brought before us the law, testimony, statutes, commandments, fear, and judgments of the Lord, and in verse 11 we are told, "Moreover by them is Thy servant warned." Do we appreciate the warnings given in the Scriptures? We do appreciate the warnings which are given to us in the affairs of life. They are generally given to us concerning our safety, whether our health, business, pleasures, or in our traveling along the highways. In this latter case we have warnings about speed, curves, etc. We do well to pay attention to them, which we are inclined to do. Generally the effect of disregarding them will soon be apparent.

We are apt, however, to neglect those warnings where the results are at a considerable distance in the future. We are inclined to regard the warnings of Scripture in this latter class, but, though the results may not soon be apparent, we should bear in mind that He who gave them makes no mistakes, and not one jot or tittle of them shall fail.

1 Timothy 1:3-7, 18-20

The setting of this epistle is built around the affairs of the church at Ephesus. The Apostle Paul had besought Timothy to remain there and "charge [or enjoin] some that they teach no other doctrine."

The Apostle Paul had spent considerable time at Ephesus, and there had been much blessing as the result of his labors. Then, when he wrote the epistle to them a few years later, as another has said, "his heart was full of the immensity of grace, and nothing in the state of the Ephesian Christians required any particular remarks adapted to that state."

Now reports had reached him that caused him to give us the warnings found in this epistle. In this first epistle to Timothy, the Church is seen in order as to its outward form. There are certain trends of declension as shown in verse 3 and later. But the Church, or assembly, is looked at as being able to deal with these problems. Here we have instructions to the man of God, on how to behave or conduct himself within the house of God.

If we turn to Rev. 2 and the address to the church at Ephesus, which was given a few years later, we hear the Lord's comments on their declension. There seems to be still an outward form of order, but what is put forth or done does not spring from that motive which He can value—love. They had left their first love.

Ephesians

In the epistle to the Ephesians, love is quite prominent. In chapter 1:4 we learn that we have been chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, "that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love." In chapter 2:4-6 we have His great love brought before us, that when we were dead in sins He quickened us together with Christ and "raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

Then in chapter 3, his prayer is that we be rooted and grounded in love and that we may know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge. In chapter 4:15 it says, "Speaking the truth in love." In verse 16 we have, "That which every joint supplieth... maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." Then in chapter 5:2 we are exhorted to "walk in love," and in verse 25 we have that wonderful expression, "Christ... loved the church, and gave Himself for it." Chapter 6 closes with, "Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

The End of the Commandment

Getting back to our chapter in 1 Tim. 1, I believe verse 5 stands out prominently and has a peculiar attraction. You read it and meditate upon it, and then as you feel constrained to come back to it again and again, you realize something of its depth. It seems to be a grand summing up of all that the Apostle has taught before. This epistle is one of his last, evidently coming after the letters to the various churches, or assemblies. So on account of this it demands our special attention and consideration.

Verse 5 refers to "the end of the commandment." It is perhaps better translated, "The end of what is enjoined." Unlike the law, we do not have specific commandments in the New Testament, but it is simply as in John 15, abiding in Him and His words abiding in us.

Love Out of a Pure Heart

This grand summing up specifies three things which are to claim our attention. Let us look at them in the order given. First: "Charity [love] out of a pure heart." Perhaps it may be asked, What is a pure heart in the light of Scripture? We have instruction in 2 Tim. 2:22, "Follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart." Then in 1 Peter 1:22 we are exhorted, "See that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently." I believe that the mind and heart of the new man are closely connected, and the exhortations to each are similar in character. The heart is looked at as the seat of the affections, and the mind as where the intelligence of the new man is stored.

In Phil. 2:5 we are told, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." Then we have in Rom. 12:2, "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God."

We have already referred to the prayer of Eph. 3 where the desire is that "Christ may dwell in your hearts." Then in chapter 4 we read: "If ye have heard Him and been instructed in Him according as the truth is in Jesus; namely your having put off according to the former conversation the old man... and being renewed in the spirit of your mind; and your having put on the new man, which according to God is created in truthful righteousness and holiness." Eph. 4:21-24 JND.

It seems from these scriptures, then, that "love out of a pure heart" can only spring from one who is born again. All thoughts and desires of the old man are put in the place of death, so that it is only the thoughts and desires of the new man that are in evidence and hence it comes from a pure heart. All the selfishness and ambition which characterize the present age are not given a place in the heart and mind of the new man. It is not a state reached once and for all practically, but it is a matter of being before the Lord constantly in self-judgment.

The Lord passes us through a school of training here in our wilderness journey, similar to Israel of old as brought before us in Deut. 8. "To humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart... that He might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord."

This "love out of a pure heart" would be that love which Christ consistently manifested down here, and it should proceed out of the hearts of His people. I am reminded of what is said in John 13, "Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end."

A Good Conscience

Second: The next thing brought before us in 1 Tim. 1:5 is "a good conscience." Again we might ask, Just what is a good conscience? Perhaps we might get some light on the operations of the conscience from Rom. 2:13-15, which is really a parenthesis in the chapter. It describes the Gentiles before the cross, not having God's law, thrown entirely upon their consciences in relation to the witness of God in creation which was manifested to them. They could show the work of the law written in their hearts. This testimony of God which they had, depending on their submission to it, could produce the work of the law (or what the law should produce) in their hearts.

How did it operate? Well, their thoughts the meanwhile were accusing or else excusing one another. If our thoughts accuse us, or excuse us, we have not a good conscience. When we find this going on, we need to get before the Lord in self-judgment and own our state before Him. Then, and only then, can we have a good conscience. When in our thoughts we are excusing ourselves, we are virtually saying, If conditions had been different, we would not have failed. The Lord never had to excuse Himself, and neither would we if we were in communion with Him.

The Apostle Paul says in Acts 24:16, "Herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offense toward God, and toward men." He did not want a conscience where his thoughts were continually accusing or else excusing. There cannot be real spiritual progress where there is this accusing or excusing.

Faith Unfeigned

Third: We now arrive at the third thing in verse 5, "Faith unfeigned." It refers, I believe, to the manner in which we hold that which has been revealed and which we hold by faith. Where something is feigned, there is a pretense to something which is not real. When such is the case, we are simply deceiving ourselves, and under such conditions could hardly be a channel that the Lord can use. (See 2 Tim. 3:13; James 1:22.)

These three things-love, good conscience, and faith unfeigned-are followed by the statement in verses 6 and 7: "From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling; desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm," or, as in another translation, "or concerning what they so strenuously affirm"

Shipwreck

Where there is a lack of any of these necessary things, we are swerving from the course, though there be "good words and fair speeches." There is not the power of the Spirit of God, "for they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ." A writer of a former generation used the expression, "Too much sail will upset the ballast less boat."

In the latter part of this chapter (1 Tim. 1:18-20), we have an illustration of the result of such a course-shipwreck. "Holding faith" refers to what has been committed to the Church, as in the latter part of verse 4. It is a little more clear in the JND translation. "Which bring questionings rather than further God's dispensation, which is in faith."

In verse 20 we have two men brought before us, Hymeneus and Alexander, who, evidently allowing their minds to work in connection with what had been revealed, made shipwreck. From what is said of them here, we could gather that they were those who truly had been born again, as we are told that the discipline was for the purpose of their learning not to blaspheme. Their course was the very opposite of girding up the loins of the mind, according to 1 Peter 1:13 and 2 Cor. 10:5, "Casting down imaginations [or reasoning]... and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." These two men, then, had evidently gone on in a way that ruined them for being vessels suited for the public testimony of the Lord. They possibly could be salvaged, but for the present they were a hindrance and as such to be avoided.

The mention of "shipwreck" brings to mind very vividly a scene off the coast of England in the Strait of Dover. There were several wrecks of small war vessels, with parts of their superstructures above the water even at high tide. Some of them were German vessels, some English, and some American. Their positions were shown on the map at that point, and their names given so that they were well-known. It was necessary in steering a vessel in those waters to avoid them and to steer a course around them, as in Rom. 16:17. There was the danger of the tide sweeping one into them with damage resulting, not only from collision with them, but a hidden danger of possible explosions from unexploded shells, bombs, or torpedoes still on board.

We are told in 2 Tim. 3:5 that there are some from whom we are to turn away. So we are to steer our courses around those who have made shipwreck of the faith.

Getting back to 1 Tim. 1:18, we have mentioned, "This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy." I believe that the expression "this charge" is the same as in verse 3, and also the same as "commandment" in verse 5. It is rendered "enjoin" and is used seven times in this epistle-chapter 4:11; 5:21; 6:13, 17. When we see the different ways in which it is used, we begin to realize something of the solemnity of what is here brought before us.

Material Things of Life

What we have just been considering in 1 Tim. 1 as to the pathway has been connected more with the doctrine and the manner of behavior which should accompany it. In chapter 6, however, we have exhortations that are more connected with the material things of life. In verse 5 we have men spoken of as "destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself." This line of things, supposing that gain is godliness, is the opposite of that which the Lord used when tempted of Satan in Matt. 4:4, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

In connection with the material side of things, it does not mention shipwreck, but does mention that which accompanies shipwreck. In verse 9 it says, "Which drown men in destruction and perdition." Then it refers to the love of money, "which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith [or, wandered from the faith], and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."

The man of faith, here called the man of God, is exhorted to flee these things. There is danger connected with them. The warning used is as though some great catastrophe is about to take place ahead and he is told to flee; he is to lose no time in getting away. He is to fight the good fight of faith, or to strive earnestly in it. It is a good fight. That is, it is worthy of all the energy that can be brought to bear upon it.

A Good Confession

Then follows the most solemn "enjoin" of all those brought before us. It is done as in the sight of God, and the Lord's witnessing "the good confession" before Pontius Pilate: "that thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Tim. 6:14. Then we shall be associated with Him in all His glory, and what a range of glory is here associated with His appearing!

This is followed by injunctions to those that are rich, not to trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God who is brought before us as the One who gives us richly all things to enjoy. The opposite, then, of heaping up riches is to be rich in good works and willing to distribute.

In closing I would call attention to the last clause of verse 19, "That they may lay hold of what is really life." 1 Tim. 6:19 JND. Man calls life that which his wealth or position enables him to do, which others not so favored are unable to do. But here what is really life is not that, but is association with those whom God has chosen, the poor of this world, rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He has promised to them that love Him.

This can only be accomplished by getting our eyes off the things which are seen and fixing them upon the things which are unseen. Then we realize that the things which are seen are but for a moment, but the others work "for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

His Personal Presence

All believers accept His Person and Deity (the Holy Spirit), but His distinct, Personal Presence as dwelling in the Church and constituting her unity (in contrast to Old Testament working) is another matter.

“My God, My God, Why Hast Thou Forsaken Me?”

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

G. V. Wigram

Proverbs

Simon Patrick on the Proverbs

1683

Chapter 3:13-26

13. "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding." Happy, more happy than can be expressed, is that man who attains to this degree of wisdom; and acquires (though it cost him the greatest pains and labor) such an understanding of God and belief of His providence, as, notwithstanding any troubles that befall him, still to adhere unto Him in faithful obedience. (v. 7.)

14. "For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold." If it were to be bought for money, one would purchase it at any rate: for the profit of it is infinitely to be preferred, before all the advantages that can be made by silver and gold.

15. "She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her." The most precious pearls are not so valuable: nor can our boundless fancy present anything to our wishes that is worthy to come in competition with it.

16. "Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honor." For true wisdom presents us, as we say, with both hands: teaching us in the first place such prudence and moderation, as by the divine blessing prolong our days (which none of those things can do for us) and in the next place, adds both riches and honor; which men foolishly and vainly seek to get and to keep by other means.

17. "Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." And besides all this, there is a singular pleasure, nay, the highest delight, in all the acts of virtue to which wisdom directs her followers: who are always, either in perfect safety by well-doing; or if any trouble come upon them, have that inward tranquility and satisfaction, which nothing else could give them.

18. "She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy is every one that retaineth her." In short, wisdom leads into a paradise; and supplies the place of that tree of life, from whence our first parents were banished: that is, gives not only a present, but an immortal satisfaction, to all those that strongly apprehend and retain her precepts; and therefore I again pronounce him happy (v. 13) above all other men, and above all expression, who constantly and firmly adheres unto them.

19. "The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath He established the heavens." For they are a participation of that wonderful wisdom and understanding, whereby the Lord settled the earth, in that place where it remains fixed; and disposed the heavenly bodies in that admirable and unchangeable order, which He would have us imitate.

20. "By His knowledge the depths are broken up, and the clouds drop down the dew." In works of mercy and goodness especially: whereby we plainly communicate with Him in that knowledge, by which the Lord made fountains of water gush out of the earth, for the use of all living creatures; and the clouds drop down plentifully their refreshing dews, for the cherishing of plants and grass, which in hot countries many times have no other moisture.

21. "My son, let not them depart from thine eyes: keep sound wisdom and discretion." My son (to whom my affection is so great that I cannot but again repeat it, vv. 1,11) let me prevail with thee to fix these good instructions in thy mind: look upon them as the most solid wisdom, and the greatest cunning and policy; and accordingly observe them.

22. "So shall they be life unto thy soul, and grace to thy neck." For they will revive and cheer thee, when other things fail thee: and enable thee also with acceptable words to comfort those, whom the fame of thy wisdom shall invite to learn of thee.

23. "Then shalt thou walk in thy way safely, and thy foot shall not stumble." When thou goest abroad about thy business, thou shalt dispatch it the more cheerfully; because thou art sure of God's providence over thee: and wisdom will direct thee to avoid those stumbling blocks, by which others fall into sin and danger.

24. "When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid: yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet." And when thou comest home to rest from thy labors, thou shalt not be troubled with fear of what may happen whilst thou art asleep; but (having nothing within to discompose thee) shalt lie down securely, and by a sound and sweet repose, be refreshed to return to thy employment.

25. "Be not afraid of sudden fear, neither of the desolation of the wicked, when it cometh." In which, if thou shouldst be interrupted by any rumors and reports of unexpected and approaching danger, let not that disturb thee: no, though thou shouldst see the wicked ready to lay all waste, or the divine vengeance bringing utter desolation upon them for their wickedness.

26. "For the Lord shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken." For a firm hope in the Lord shall be thy support, even when thou art in a tottering condition: nay, when thy skill quite fails thee, and thou knowest not what to do for thy safety; He shall so direct and guide thee, that thou shalt be preserved from falling into the hands of those that lie in wait to destroy thee.

God

Above me is God; down below me is God; before me is God; behind me is God; all round about me is God. In Him we live, and move, and have our being. Who, as David said, can get himself away, or can escape where God is not? But only believing Christians can say, "If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us. Hereby know we that we dwell in Him, and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit." 1 John 4:12,13.

Questions and Answers

QUESTION: What does "He loved them unto the end" mean in John 13:1?

ANSWER: Christ's love is eternal; it cannot cease nor change. It is proved by what He did on the cross (Eph. 5:25). In the present it is shown by what He is doing (Eph. 5:26), in the future by what He will do (Eph. 5:27), and in the glory we will still feast and delight our souls in His love. So here on the journey, until it end, we can count on Him to care for and provide all we need spiritually and temporally. There is no end to His love. "The end" here must, therefore, mean all the way through (Heb. 7:25).

Of Him and His love will we sing,
His praises our tongues will employ,
Till heavenly anthems we bring
In yonder bright regions of joy.
"Yea, I have loved thee
with an everlasting love:
therefore with lovingkindness
have I drawn thee."

Jer. 31:3

Let Us Go Forth Unto Him

"Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach." Heb. 13:12,13.

There is far more involved in the soul-stirring call to "go forth" than a mere escape from the absurdities of superstition or the designs of a crafty covetousness. There are many who can powerfully and eloquently expose all such things who are very far from any thought of responding to the apostolic summons. When men set up a "camp," and rally around a standard on which is emblazoned some important dogma of truth, an orthodox creed, an enlightened scheme of doctrine, or a splendid ritual, it demands much spiritual intelligence to discern the real force of the words "let us go forth," and much spiritual energy and decision to act upon them.

They should be discerned and acted on, for it is perfectly certain that the atmosphere of a camp is destructive of personal communion with a rejected Christ. No religious advantage can ever make up for the loss of that communion. It is the tendency of our hearts to drop into cold, stereotyped forms. This has ever been the case in the professing church. These forms may have originated in real power. They may have resulted from positive visitations of the Spirit of God. The temptation is to stereotype the form when the spirit and power have all departed. This is, in principle, to set up a camp.

The Jewish system could boast a divine origin. A Jew could triumphantly point to the temple with its splendid system of worship, its priesthood, its sacrifices, its entire furniture and show that it had all been handed down from the God of Israel. He could give chapter and verse for everything connected with the system. Where is the system, ancient, medieval or modern that could put forth such lofty pretensions with such weight of authority? And yet, the command was to "go forth."

This deeply solemn matter concerns us all. We are prone to slip away from communion with a living Christ and sink into dead routine. Hence the practical power of the words, "go forth therefore unto Him." It is not, Go forth from one system to another—from one set of opinions to another—from one company of people to another. No, but go forth from everything that merits the appellation of a camp to Him who suffered without the gate. The Lord Jesus is as thoroughly outside the gate now as He was when He suffered there almost twenty centuries ago. What was it that put Him outside? The religious world of that day. The religious world of that day is, in spirit and principle, the religious world of the present moment. The world is the world still. Christ and the world are not one.

Much of the world has covered itself with the cloak of Christianity, but it is only in order that its hatred to Christ may work itself up into more deadly forms underneath. Let us not deceive ourselves. If we will walk with a rejected Christ, we must be a rejected people. If our Master "suffered without the gate," we cannot expect to reign within the gate. If we walk in His footsteps, where will they lead us? Surely not to the high places of this Godless, Christless world. He is a despised Christ—a rejected Christ—a Christ outside the camp. Oh! then, dear Christian, let us go

forth to Him bearing His reproach. Let us not seek this world's favor, seeing it crucified and still hates the beloved One to whom we owe everything both now and forever. He is the One who loves us with a love which many waters cannot quench. Let us live for Him who died for us. While our consciences repose in His blood, let our heart's affections entwine themselves around His Person, so that our separation from "this present evil world" may not be merely a matter of cold principle, but an affectionate separation because the Object of our affections is not here.

May the Lord deliver us from that selfishness so common at the present time, which would not be without religiousness, but is the enemy of the cross of Christ. What is needed to stand against this terrible form of evil is not peculiar views, special principles or cold intellectual accuracy. We need a deep-toned devotedness to the Person of the Son of God; a wholehearted consecration of ourselves, body, soul and spirit, to His service; an earnest longing for His glorious advent. Will you and I, then, join in uttering from the very depths of our hearts the cry: "Wilt Thou not revive us again: that Thy people may rejoice in Thee?" Psa. 85:6.

C. H. Mackintosh

Bible Challenger-08-August V.09

The first letter of the missing words of each of the following Bible quotations with one or more words to complete, will form the word that describes what an apostle desired the Word of the Lord to be as he labored in the preaching of it. [1] The number in brackets indicates the number of missing words in each answer.

1. "And when the Gentiles heard this, they were_____." [1]
2. "When he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a_____ voice glorified God." [1]
3. "If any man speak, let him speak as the_____ [3]
4. "Certainly this was a_____ man." [1]
5. "They... became vain in their_____ and their foolish heart was darkened." [1]
6. "Filled with_____, saying, We have seen strange things." [1]
7. "He laid His hands on her: and_____ she was made straight." [1]
8. "Break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and_____ therein." [2]
9. "The multitude wondered, when they saw the _____, the maimed to be whole." [3]

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

R. Erisman

Bible Challenger-07-July Answers V.09

1. Blood of sprinkling Heb. 12:24
2. Each esteem Phil. 2:3
3. Tents Psa. 84:10
4. Takeaway 1 Kings 19:4
5. Estate Esther 1:19
6. Rejoice Eccles. 3:22
7. Turned 2 Kings 5:12
8. Heart 1 Sam. 1:8
9. Air Matt. 6:26
10. Near 1 Kings 21:2

"Sorrow is BETTER THAN laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better."

Eccles. 7:3.

The Servant's Praise

We do not find the Lord commending His people for success. "It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." 1 Cor. 4:2. "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." Matt. 25:21. "Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household?" Luke 12:42.

Misunderstood even by our brethren, we must be content to labor on, conscious that we are in the position to which we are called by Him. What we have done will all come out at the judgment seat of Christ. What we have said will be repeated there with God's comments upon it.

"He that planted the ear,
shaft He not hear?

He that formed the eye, shaft He not see?"

Psa. 94:9

Editorial

Suffering Now, Glory Later

"The sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." So writes Peter in his first epistle. Indeed, Peter mentions the sufferings in each chapter of his first book, then in his second book he tells of the excellent glory. He says we were eyewitnesses of His majesty, and we have made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

If the Lord Jesus Christ in His pathway first experienced sufferings and then the glory, shall we, as believers in Him, expect it to be different for us? To encourage us, Peter writes: "But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you." 1 Peter 5:10.

Paul writes: "If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him." 2 Tim. 2:12. And later he says, "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." 2 Tim. 3:12.

These past nearly 2000 years have not made the world better or more favorable to Christ or the Christian. The year 1994 is the same as the year 30 when Christ suffered and died at the hands of His creatures, when the malice of men's hearts was fully manifested at the cross. One thing for us is sure: the glory is now very near—about 2000 years nearer than when Peter and Paul wrote.

The Lord gave these two great apostles, Peter and Paul, a wonderful education. Peter was the apostle of the Jews, and Paul the apostle of the Gentiles. Peter denied the Lord when he knew Him, and Paul would have destroyed His name if He could have done so. But later their mouths were closed unless they spoke of the grace which they had tasted. Such was their education, and then they both look on to what we will call their graduation. Peter includes us in it. He writes, "For

so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." 2 Peter 1:11.

Paul for himself says, "The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen." 2 Tim. 4:18. Ed.

The Perfections of Christ

The only act of disobedience which Adam could commit he did commit, but He, who could have done all things as to power, only used His power to display more perfect service, more perfect subjection. How blessed is the picture of the Lord's ways!

Last Words

R. Erisman

2 Sam. 23 opens with these words: "Now these be the last words of David... the sweet psalmist of Israel." There follows a confession of an honest man reflecting on his entire life, in which he acknowledges that all too often he had fallen short of God's perfect standard. Yet David recognizes that God's mercy more than makes up for his shortcomings. He can contemplate with confidence his ultimate salvation because of God's everlasting covenant.

It is in this chapter that the Spirit of God chose to record a touching incident in David's life when honor was bestowed upon his faithful warriors. David is seen taking refuge from the Philistine armies in the cave of Adullam. In verse 15 we read: "And David longed, and said, Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate!"

From verses 13-17 of this chapter we understand that David had an inner circle of three mighty men who had distinguished themselves by their heroic deeds of defending their country. Nor are we left in doubt as to their accomplishments.

In verse 8 we read of Adino the chief, who, against incredible odds, single-handedly slew eight hundred men at one time.

In verses 9 and 10 we read of Eliezer, who, in the thick of battle with the Philistines, showed great purpose of heart in that, though his compatriots had retreated, his hand, weary of battle, still clave to the sword. The Lord rewarded his zealousness with a great victory that day.

Finally, in verses 11 and 12 we read of the heroics of Shammah, who also stood firm in the face of a retreating Israelite army, and overcame a whole troop of Philistines. He seemed to have a double motive, for the place he defended was a field of lentils—a much needed source of food for a beleaguered army. Again the Lord rewarded this man's faithfulness by granting a great victory.

No doubt these three men heard the longing of David's heart as he thought of Bethlehem's well, whose waters had refreshed him in his boyhood days. Perhaps Shammah glanced at Adino, and Adino caught Eleazar's eye, and with raised eyebrows the same thought seemed to race through each mind:

“Let's Do It!”

So the three mighty men set out on their perilous journey. The result of this mission by three mighty men, acting in the fear of the Lord, was never in doubt. The water of refreshment was soon in the hands of their loved David.

There may have been some doubt in the minds of these men when they contemplated David's reception of their love gift. What would he say? What would he do? And no doubt those smiling faces turned to consternation as David poured the water on the ground. Was their mission a failure? Had they misunderstood David? Did he not appreciate the dangers and jeopardy by which they obtained their prize? The answers were not long in coming. David says in verse 17: "Be it far from me, O Lord, that I should do this: is not this the blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives? therefore he would not drink it." The look of consternation soon turned to joy as these mighty men heard David's words. They realized that David was saying, "This gift is too valuable for me; it belongs to the Lord." Perhaps the men had a preview, as it were, of the words uttered by our Lord, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me." Matt. 25:40.

David as a Type of the Lord

David is often referred to as a type of the Lord Jesus, because many of the events in his life have a counterpart in the life of the Lord Jesus.

- * He was misunderstood by his own brethren who thought he was seeking self-aggrandizement.
- * He was a shepherd of "sheep" and hazarded his life for the sake of the flock.
- * He was a mighty victor over a formidable foe.
- * He was an anointed king living in rejection.

Now we might wonder if there was anything in the life of the Lord Jesus that would correspond to what has just been written about David in the presence of his mighty men. Of course, everyone has or will have last words. The Lord Jesus uttered His last words as He hung on the cross of Calvary. Chronologically they seem to be in the following sequence:

1. "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Luke 23:34.
2. "Today shalt thou be with Me in paradise." Luke 23:43.
3. "Woman, behold thy son!" John 19:26.
4. "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Matt. 27:46.
5. "I thirst." John 19:28.
6. "It is finished." John 19:30.
7. "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit." Luke 23:46.

“I Thirst”

We want to consider in some detail the fifth entry as it is in John 19:28. It will be noted that the details of the Lord's death are very accurately foretold in the Old Testament, most notably in the book of the Psalms. As the Lord was hanging on the cross, He knew only too well the pain of having His hands and feet pierced (Psa. 22:16). No doubt His head was hanging down and He vividly saw His disjointed bones (Psa. 22:14, 17). Perhaps He had seen the soldiers dividing His garments and casting lots for His vesture (Psa. 22:18). He felt the scornful laugh and the mocking of His agony by those shooting out the lip and shaking the head (Psa. 22:7). He could see the soldier standing by with spear in hand. He knew His side was soon to be pierced (Zech. 12:10). As He reviewed all these prophetic scriptures, He knew the moment had arrived in which He could proclaim, "It is finished." But wait, one scripture was not yet fulfilled. It was Psa. 69:21, "In My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink." And so He proclaims those poignant words, "I thirst."

What response did this utterance bring forth? Was great David's greater Son to have some of His adherents leap into action so that they might ease the pain of His suffering? No, it was not to be. The Lord Jesus did indeed have a select group of men around Him in the time of His ministry. We read in Luke 10:1, 17 that a company of seventy had a special ministry for Him. And then there was His inner circle of twelve, His chosen disciples who were selected only after an entire night was spent in prayer (Luke 6:12).

Among David's many mighty men, three occupied a special relation and nearness to their leader. The Lord Jesus also had three men who seemed to hold a special place of nearness to Him. They are Peter, James and John. These three accompanied Jesus on several special occasions:

1. It was Peter, James and John who were partners in the fishing business and obtained a miraculous draft of fish at the Lord's direction (Luke 5:6, 7, 10).
2. It was Peter, James and John who accompanied the Lord at the raising up of Jairus's daughter (Mark 5:37).
3. It was Peter, James and John who accompanied the Lord at the time of His transfiguration (Matt. 17:1).
4. It was Peter, James and John whom the Lord took to be near Him as He agonized in Gethsemane (Mark 14:33).
5. Later, it was Peter, James and John who became pillars in the early Church (Gal. 2:9).

Three Mighty Men

Peter was obviously a very forceful individual. He often became the spokesman for the entire group. He was brash, he was bold, he was enthusiastic and ready to swing into action at a moment's notice. Peter is a Greek word meaning "stone." This is later emphasized by the Lord, because He surnamed him Cephas, an Aramaic word for stone. So Peter is publicly recognized as having those durable qualities for building solid discipleship.

James and John were brothers and very zealous, a trait perhaps inherited from their mother. On one occasion they rebelled at the ill treatment afforded the Lord, and desired to call down fire from heaven in retribution. Perhaps their fiery temperament was displayed in other ways, for the Lord called them Boanerges, or "The sons of thunder."

Where were these three "mighty men" when their Master needed someone to show Him kindness and consideration? Alas, we read in Matt. 26:56, "Then all the disciples forsook Him, and fled." Peter, we know, had betrayed his Lord and perhaps was still weeping bitter tears of remorse in some secluded spot. John, after fleeing, apparently returned to the scene and stood with the women afar off (Luke 23:49), but later he was by the cross (John 19:27) at the crucial moment when the Lord said, "I thirst." James, like Peter, is not mentioned as being present.

A Sponge of Vinegar

Now the well of Bethlehem was probably too far removed (some 15 miles) for anyone to bring of its refreshment to the One who was presently in such dire need. Perhaps someone, however, with heartfelt compassion would rise to the occasion and defy the authorities to respond to that plaintive request, "I thirst." Again it was not to be. Oh, there was a response; it came from Satan's emissaries, and soon a sponge of vinegar is pressed to our Savior's lips.

What a contrast is seen in the heart of man and in the heart of the Lord Jesus. The One who had said, "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst" (John 4:14), is now given bitter vinegar to drink in His thirst. So it must be; the One who was called the Man of Sorrows must be acquainted with grief to the very end. Thus we begin to understand that He whom God will highly exalt, and bear the name above every name, and to whom every knee shall bow, must first become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross with all of its shameful indecencies.

More Last Words

There are others in the Bible whose last words are recorded for our learning. Some seem to be reflections of wasted lives and missed opportunities as conveyed in Jacob's parting words, "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been." Gen. 47:9.

Others have great towering words of positive thoughts reflecting on a mission fulfilled. The Apostle Paul was such an example. Hear now his words as he surveyed his path of service, accompanied as it was with much physical suffering and pain, and decide whether it was worth it all. "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day." 2 Tim. 4:7,8. "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day." 2 Tim. 1:12.

These are not the words of one contemplating a leap in the dark, as some have erroneously thought when the final journey is about to begin as the last breath is being drawn. No, he says with full assurance, "I know." He has heard the skeptics and rejected their vain philosophy. And now when his course has been run, he is fully persuaded as to the truth of God as revealed in Christ Jesus. May it be so with everyone that has read these lines.

Individual Service

Connect your service with nothing but God, not with any particular persons. You may be comforted by fellowship, and your heart refreshed, but you must work by your own individual faith and energy, without leaning on anyone whatever, for if you do, you cannot be a faithful servant. Service must ever be measured by faith, and one's own communion with God. In every age the blessing has been by individual agency, and the moment it has ceased to be this it has declined into the world. The tendency of association is to make us lean upon one another.

The Lord's Return

by W Trotter

In the epistle to Titus we are expressly told that the grace of God teaches us to look for that blessed hope. The looking for it is the crowning lesson taught us by the grace of God. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ." Titus 2:11-13.

In the light of this hope, patience is urged upon us. "For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry." Heb. 10:36, 37. James uses it in a similar manner: "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord." James 5:7.

Peter speaks of our being begotten again to a living hope, of an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fades not away, reserved in heaven for those who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time. He speaks of the saints rejoicing greatly in this hope, even though now for a season, if need be, they are in heaviness through manifold temptations. The issue of such trials is to be seen at the coming of Jesus. "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." 1 Peter 1:7.

Then further he exhorts us, "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." It is this hope by which Peter, as well as Paul, would encourage the saints under all the afflictions they endure. "But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." 1 Peter 4:13.

The godly care of the flock by those who have the charge of it he enforces by the same motive. "Feed the flock of God which is among you.... And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." 1 Peter 5:2, 4.

The disciple whom Jesus loved, and who lay in the Savior's bosom, is not behind the rest in his joyful anticipations of his Lord's return. "And now, little children, abide in Him; that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming." 1 John 2:28. "Beloved," he says, "now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." The sanctifying influence of this expectation he declares in the most emphatic way. "And every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." 1 John 3:3.

As to the Revelation given to this favored apostle-the closing book of Scripture-it is impossible to understand it at all if the coming of Jesus is not the hope of the Christian as we have so largely

seen. True that it is the coming of Christ to execute judgment that is most prominently brought out in this book. Along with it are the premonitory judgments which usher in that solemn event, and the reign of peace and blessedness which follows it. But when Christ thus comes, it is with His saints; when He thus reigns, His saints reign with Him. All this implies that they have been previously caught up to Him and glorified. They are those who have part in the first resurrection that live and reign with Christ a thousand years.

I content myself at present, however, with quoting from the last chapter of this book, the closing chapter in the volume of inspiration. This passage shows in the most affecting way what the value of this hope is, both to the heart of Jesus and to the hearts of His saints. Twice in this very chapter the coming of Christ has been spoken of in the way of warning—"Behold, I come quickly." But before the whole volume closes, Jesus announces Himself to His people. "I have sent Mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star." This announcement of what He is elicits from the Church an invitation to Him to come. "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come." Anyone who has ears to hear is invited to join in the cry: "And let him that heareth say, Come." Thirsty sinners and whosoever will are also invited to partake freely of the living waters. Then after a parenthesis on quite another subject, Jesus replies to this invitation: "Surely I come quickly." It is not a note of alarm, but it is an assurance to the hearts of those who long for Him, and invite Him that He will not long delay. "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly." The Church again responds, "Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

The Apostle's benediction on the saints is all that remains of the Scripture. It is with this touching dialog between Christ and His Church, as to Himself and His speedy return, that the Bible concludes. Can anyone doubt that the coming of Jesus was intended to be the Christian's hope? Oh that it were more vividly realized in each of our hearts!

Bible Challenger-09-September V.09

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the words spoken by the Lord Jesus to His disciples that personally identified Himself as the One for whom their words and deeds had led them to be mistreated and arrested. [3] The number in brackets indicates the number of words in the answer.

1. "He that_____ his life shall lose it." [1]
2. "We preach not_____, but Christ Jesus the Lord." [1]
3. "Ye shall be beaten: and ye shall be brought before_____ and kings." [1]
4. "Hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or_____, or wife, or children." [1]
5. "This great tempest is upon_____ ." [1]
6. "I will_____ how great things he must suffer." [2]
7. "Be ye kind one to_____, tenderhearted." [1]
8. "Because they_____ not Him that sent Me." [1]
9. "Say all manner of_____ against you falsely." [1]

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

R. Erisman

Bible Challenger-08-August Answers V.09

1. Glad
2. Loud
3. Oracles of God
4. Righteous
5. Imaginations
6. Fear
7. Immediately
8. Every tree
9. Dumb to speak

Acts 13:48

Luke 17:15

1 Peter 4:11

Luke 23:47

Rom. 1:21

Luke 5:26

Luke 13:13

Isa. 44:23

Matt. 15:31

"Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be GLORIFIED, even as it is with you." 2 Thess. 3

Made Us Meet

H. Snell

"Giving thanks unto the father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."

Col. 1:12

The New Testament abounds with witnesses of present joy, because of the knowledge of present salvation. It is what the Holy Spirit teaches. Our blessed Lord told His disciples before He left them that they would know their security and standing in Him. Referring to the time of the Comforter's coming He said to them, "At that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you." John 14:20.

When a poor sin-burdened woman came to our Lord and shed tears over His dear feet and wiped them with the hairs of her head, the blessed Savior would not allow her to depart without the fullest rest of soul as to her sins and guilt. To those present He said, "Her sins, which are many, are forgiven." Then, turning to her, He added, "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." Luke 7:47, 50.

Again, when a rich publican came down and received Him joyfully, the Lord also assured him that for a sin-convicted soul to receive Him whom God had sent was to have present salvation. "This day is salvation come to this house," said He. "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Luke 19:9, 10.

The apostles taught the same. We find Paul, when addressing saints by the Holy Spirit on the gospel, saying, "Unto us which are saved, it is the power of God." And when writing to Timothy he exclaims, "Who hath saved us." In another epistle we find the same ground of faith maintained: "We know [not we hope, but we know] that, if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have [not we hope to have, but we have] a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

Peter, too, by the same Spirit, not only says that we rejoice in Him, whom having not seen we love, with joy unspeakable and full of glory, but, referring to present salvation, he adds, "Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." John also by the same Spirit says, "We know [not we hope, but we know] that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." "We know that we are of God."

The same line of truth, only in more detail, is brought before us in the epistle to the Colossians. It appears that Epaphras had presented the gospel to that idolatrous city. Some believed. This success he communicated to the Apostle Paul. The two cardinal points of Christianity were very manifest in them: "faith in Christ Jesus, and... love... to all the saints." Col. 1:4. The Apostle thanked God when he heard of these characteristics of true Christianity. It was not people merely

saying that they believed, but as true faith in the Lord Jesus is always connected with life in the soul and being born of God, the consequence is that this life flows out in like-mindedness to Christ who is our life. They therefore love what He loves. He loves all saints, and so do all that are born of God.

But more than this, he learned from Epaphras that it was not merely affection which they manifested to certain persons, for after all this might be mere natural affection, but with these saints it was spiritual—"love in the Spirit." There could, therefore, be no mistake as to their reality; hence the Apostle addresses them as "in Christ," for all true believers not only have life, but Christ risen and ascended is their life, they are therefore in Him. Thus Scripture now speaks only of two classes, those who are "in the flesh," and those who are "in Christ." Here the Apostle looks at them in the new creation, where God sees them. So in the second chapter he tells them, "Ye are complete in Him."

In turning to the Apostle's prayer, we find he asks first that they may have knowledge of God's will—that spiritual intelligence and understanding as to God's mind, that they may be able to walk (Col. 1:9, 10).

How can Christians do God's will if they do not know it? The great adversary, therefore, has gained a great step in souls when he has succeeded in hindering them from reading and meditating on the Word of God. God's Word gives us His will. In the third chapter he exhorts them also that the word of Christ may dwell in them richly. It is impossible that the importance of habitually reading the Scriptures prayerfully, in dependence on the Holy Spirit, can be overrated. In fact, it is impossible that a believer can know how to act so as to please God without it.

Notice, as to walk, it is to "walk worthy of the Lord." How seldom we find such a standard of walk for which to contend. We hear much as to "consistent walk," but such a loose, indefinite character of walk is not found in Scripture, it is "worthy of the Lord" who loved us and gave Himself for us. This is a different thought and silences a thousand questions as to going here or there, or doing this or that. The whole point is, "Is it worthy of the Lord?"

But more than this: His heart's desire by the Holy Spirit is that they may honor the Father as they ought for having made them fit for glory. "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." The verses which follow declare that they have present redemption: "In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins." Present deliverance—"who hath delivered us from the power of darkness"—and present translation—who "hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son [the Son of His love (JND)]." Here it is something more than the other blessings: "made meet" for the inheritance. How can it be otherwise if we are in Christ, complete in Him who is the Head of all principality and power.

And yet, how many Christians in the present day, while really in Christ and having the atoning work of Christ as the foundation of all their hope of glory, are nevertheless looking for something yet to be done in their souls to make them meet for glory. It is not uncommon to hear some speak of affliction and trial as squaring and fitting them as stones for the heavenly temple. Others talk of the present sufferings purifying them for glory, or of ripening them until they become like a shock of corn ready for the garner. Their souls have never entered into that precious declaration of the Holy Spirit that the Father hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in

light, and that our place now is to thank Him for it.

That affliction does afterward yield peaceable fruits of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby, and that through the trials we get profit and are made partakers of His holiness, are most blessedly true. But being made meet for heaven is something not to be done, but has been done. The idea of saints getting, by their trials, more and more meet for glory denies the truth of man's thorough ruin in the flesh. It sets aside the workmanship of God in the new creation, and questions the full value of the redemption work of Christ. "For by one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified."

Scripture tells us that Christ is "of God made unto us... righteousness," that "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." He is also spoken of as our life—"Christ, who is our life." If then, as we have before noticed, we are regarded by God now as not in the flesh, but in Christ, complete in Him who is our life and righteousness, and that God now speaks of us as accepted in Christ, and that "as He [Christ] is, so are we in this world," it becomes simple enough. All this, too, is traced to the Father. It was the Father who loved us and chose us in Christ, who gave us to Christ, and redeemed us by Christ. It is the Father now who welcomes us through Christ, accepts us in Christ, assures us that the cross of Christ has judicially rolled away all our sin, our guilt, and our evil nature. Now we are in the new creation, and brought into the new relationship of sons and partakers of the divine nature.

We do wait for the redemption of the body, that change which will fashion this body of humiliation like unto His glorious body. For some things we do not wait; we have them now. We have life, the forgiveness of sins, righteousness, union with Christ, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, sonship, and a full title to glory. We are "made... meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." Hence we are told that "after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory." Eph. 1:13, 14.

Beloved, have we so believed these precious truths of God as to know the joy and rest of soul, and thankfulness, too, that they produce?

Proverbs

Simon Patrick on the Proverbs

1683

Chapter 3:27-35

27. "Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it." And as it will give thee great security of mind and confidence in God at such a time, not to be conscious to thy self of any wrong done to thy neighbor by denying to pay thy just debts when thou art able, so the remembrance of having done good to others will be far greater. Therefore let me advise thee to take a special care not to withhold relief from those whose needs entitle them unto it, when thou canst not pretend disability, but hast where with all to do it.

28. "Say not unto thy neighbor, Go, and come again, and tomorrow I will give; when thou hast it by thee." And as thou wouldst not have God to defer His help in such distresses as I spake of (vv.

25,26), so do not thou put off thy neighbor when he begs a kindness of thee by saying, I cannot now, come another time, tomorrow thou shalt see what I will do for thee; when if thou hadst a heart to it, thou couldst supply him now as well as then. And who can tell what shall be tomorrow.

29. "Devise not evil against thy neighbor, seeing he dwelleth securely by thee." And let not the quietness of any man's temper, much less the confidence he hath of thy honesty and goodness, tempt thee to contrive any mischief to him, for the more securely he relies on thy virtue, and the less mistrust he hath of any harm from thee, the greater wickedness it will be, so much as to have it in thy thoughts to do him any injury.

30. "Strive not with a man without cause, if he have done thee no harm." For instance, do not bring false actions against any neighbor nor vex him with causeless or unnecessary suits at law; no, nor so much as pretend a cause for quarreling and falling out with him, when he hath done nothing to deserve it of thee.

31. "Envy thou not the oppressor, and choose none of his ways." And what though thou shouldst see men thrive by oppression and violence, let not that provoke thee to emulate them; that is, to wish thy self in their condition, by imitating them in any of their injurious proceedings.

32. "For the froward is abomination to the Lord: but His secret is with the righteous." For he that perversely departs from all the rules of truth and justice, is above all expression abominable to the Lord; even in his highest prosperity: but the Lord is a friend to men of sincere integrity, who know the secret of His providence in raising those wicked oppressors so high, that they may have the more dreadful fall.

33. "The curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked: but He blesseth the habitation of the just." The evil doer is under the curse of the Lord, though he live in the most stately palace: but just and good men ought to look upon themselves as under His care and blessing, and therefore very happy in the meanest cottage.

34. "Surely He scorneth the scorners: but He giveth grace unto the lowly." Those proud oppressors and scoffers at good men, He will undoubtedly, not only confound, but expose to scorn and make them ridiculous in the eyes of the world. But He will cause the humble, modest and meek (who bare even their insolent scoffs patiently) to be had in honor and highly esteemed.

35. "The wise shall inherit glory: but shame shall be the promotion of fools." They may be despised and debased for a time, but in the issue they shall be accounted the only wise men, and leave an excellent never dying fame behind them, when those impious men shall be famous for nothing but the shame and disgrace that shall fall upon them.

Nearness to Christ

If we live near enough to Christ, we live for the Church, not from it. It is not by what we find, but by what we bring that we can serve in Christianity. Living in the good with Him, you carry it in with you into the service and circumstances of the Church. The true effect of being near Christ puts me into fellowship with Himself about others.

"Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth."

1 Cor. 10:24

Witnesses to Christ

In the gospel of John we have a sevenfold testimony to the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

* The testimony of John the Baptist:

"Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth" (Ch. 5:33-35).

*The testimony of Christ's works:

"The works which the Father hath given Me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of Me, that the Father hath sent Me" (Ch. 5:36).

*The testimony of the Father:

"The Father Himself, which hath sent Me, hath borne witness of Me" (Ch. 5:37).

*The testimony of the Scriptures:

"Search the Scriptures.... They are they which testify of Me" (Ch. 5:39).

*The testimony of Himself:

"Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of Myself, yet My record is true" (Ch. 8:14).

*The testimony of the Holy Spirit:

"But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of Me" (Ch. 15:26).

*The testimony of the disciples:

"And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with Me from the beginning" (Ch. 15:27).

All Depends on the Nail

Quaint John Bunyan used an illustration which is as helpful as it is simple in showing how secure the believer is in Christ.

He takes the simile of Isa. 22:23, 24 where Christ is seen as "a nail in a sure place," and of which it is said, "They shall hang upon Him all the glory of His Father's house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons."

Everything for God's glory depends upon Christ and His glorious work, and everything for the sinner's salvation and for the believer's security depends upon Him and His glorious work as well.

Bunyan says that there is a nail driven securely into a strong wall, and on that nail hangs a great iron cauldron in perfect safety. That vessel weighs perhaps half a hundred weight. Beside it on the same nail hangs a little tin cup. Both are in perfect safety. They both depend on the same support, but the little tin cup shivers and shakes and wonders if the nail can hold it up. Then he supposes the cauldron saying, "You silly little tin cup, the nail holds me safely, and it can hold a thousand like you."

The work of redemption of our Lord Jesus Christ upholds all the glory of God: His majesty, His honor, His faithfulness. All is maintained by Christ, and His work holds up safely every believer too. Trust Him fully. "He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him." Heb. 7:25.

Editorial

Where Is Israel Heading?

Lately there seems to be a renewed interest in the events in and around present-day Israel. It is good for us to be interested in that part of the world which God has chosen and where one day, not too far distant, He will place His Son upon His holy hill. The second psalm says, "Yet have I set My King upon My holy hill of Zion."

People are asking, "What about Israel's giving up Jericho and the West Bank and Gaza to gain some peace with their enemies—especially the Palestinians?"

1. Will it work out well for Israel?
2. How long will it last?
3. Can peace be purchased with territory?
4. Will Israel lose Jerusalem?
5. What will happen to the Mosque of Omar?
6. Who will possess the temple site?

These are all very interesting questions to which a short-term answer is difficult to give. Events sometimes move quickly and sometimes slowly. Even before these lines are published and read, some of the answers could be evident or even history. As to the final answers to these questions, it seems to me that God's Word gives a clear response. We refer you to Matt. 24:1-28 and then on to verse 44. All of this section is Jewish.

Already there has been a partial fulfillment of the first two verses, but prophecy always looks on to the end. That is, it looks on to Christ and His coming to claim the earth. Verse 8 mentions the beginning of sorrows which is the first part of the 7 years of judgment to precede the 1000-year kingdom period. Verse 21 speaks of the great tribulation. This is the last half of the 7 years.

1. In considering God's Word we will say in answer to the first question that it will not work out well for present-day Israel.
2. As to the second question, we cannot tell how long some measure of peace will last from recent national negotiations, but probably not very long.
3. If peace is purchased with territory, it surely will be limited and is even likely to cause Israel's enemies to desire more concessions later.
4. To the question, "Will Israel lose Jerusalem?" we say, "Yes, they will."
5. Surely the Mosque of Omar will come down.
6. As to who will possess the temple site, Psa. 132 gives a definite answer. "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." vv. 13, 14. Ed.

"Learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart."

Matt. 11:29

A Sweet Savor of Christ

Occupation with Christ—that blessed Man in whom God finds His delight—will turn our hearts away from ourselves and send out a sweet savor of Christ. The more we are occupied with Him in all His beauties, His perfection, His glories, the more the sweet savor of His knowledge will flow from our lives as well.

Korah, a Levite, with two men of the tribe of Reuben had taken men and risen up against the leadership that God had appointed. The fact that their following included 250 princes of the assembly of the children of Israel, famous in the congregation and men of renown, seemed to give real weight to their complaints. They felt that Moses and Aaron were lifting themselves above the congregation and that all the congregation, every one of them, were holy and could come near to the holiest.

“Seemeth it but a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to Himself to do the service of the tabernacle of the Lord, and to stand before the congregation to minister unto them? and He hath brought thee near to Him, and all thy brethren the sons of Levi with thee: and seek ye the priesthood also? for which cause both thou and all thy company are gathered together against the Lord.” Num. 16:9-11.

The way into the holiest was not yet opened as it is today. Only the priest could enter into the holiest, and to presume what God had not ordered was open rebellion. Also, they thereby sought to set aside the leadership that God had ordered. It was evident that it would result in serious confusion. The charge leveled at Moses and Aaron was that they had brought up the children of Israel to kill them in the wilderness. There was no recognition and brokenness about their own sin.

The result was a tremendous lesson engraved in the annals of time as to how God deals with challenges to His ordained and delegated authority. In no uncertain manner God spoke through the mouth of Moses, and the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up the rebellious ones. They went down alive into the pit, not only themselves, but all that belonged to them. The only exception that we are told about is in Num. 26:11, “Notwithstanding the children of Korah died not.”

Authority that God has given may err, as is the case with anything that is committed into the hands of man, but it in no way gives place to doing our own thing and refusing to recognize those in that place. Even the Lord Jesus, in speaking to His disciples, said, “The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.” Matt. 23:2, 3. Those men were the ones who were primarily responsible for the rejection of the Lord Jesus. Until the call came to come out of that system (Hebrews 13:13), they were to recognize those in the position of authority—Moses's seat.

The day following Korah's rebellion and God's awful answer to it, there was general discontent. “All the congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron, saying, Ye have killed the people of the Lord.” Again God's presence was manifested and the glory of the Lord appeared. God tells Moses and Aaron to get up from among the congregation so that He

could consume them in a moment.

Moses does not respond to God, for he realizes how serious what the people were doing really was, but surely in the Spirit of Christ he intercedes for them. This was done simply by telling Aaron to take a censer and put fire therein from off the altar, for the sacrifice had been made. Then, putting on incense, Aaron ran into the midst of the congregation. Only thus was the plague stayed that had broken out.

"He shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the Lord, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the veil: and he shall put the incense upon the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is upon the testimony, that he die not." Lev. 16:12, 13.

What a lesson this is for our souls. Moses did not argue God's cause with the people to try to convince them of their wickedness. The sacrifice was on the altar and the fire from off the altar was put into the censer. Then it was the incense that caused the plague to stop. When there is a spirit of general discontent among God's people, our tendency often is to continue to press the truth that has certainly been ignored. But what will turn the tide and bring about an end to the plague of general discontent and murmuring that so consumes us is to give the sweet savor of Christ. That incense is figurative of all the sweet savor of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ's person that always goes up to God, both in His life and in His death.

R. Thonney

Defilement

All saints are clean, only they may defile their feet. The Spirit, through the intercession of Christ, applies the Word and rebukes evil, shows the starting-point of it, and after a while restores the soul to communion. But God never deals with the conscience to falsify the relationship of the saint. The distress may be the greater, because everything is judged by the light we are brought into, but confidence in God will be untouched. If I apply 1 John 1:7 to failures, I ought to read, "If we do not walk in the light, the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us." In truth, that verse gives the whole Christian standing. It is, abstractedly, the portion of the Christian, which can never be lost.

The First Resurrection

W. Trotter

There is perhaps no point on which the Church at large has more widely departed from those habits of thought, feeling, and expression which characterized apostolic Christianity than that of the place given to death on the one hand, and to resurrection on the other. With the apostles and with Christians of their day, death was, so to speak, left behind. Resurrection, or rather the coming of Him whom they knew as "the Resurrection and the Life," was the one object of their joyful, triumphant hope.

What makes death really terrible is the fact of its being God's righteous sentence upon mankind as sinners, and also its connection with that eternal death which for unbelievers it is both the type and portal, and its import as the expression of slavery to Satan who "had the power of death" against all who were his slaves.

The first Christians knew how death had been borne for them by Christ and so had been robbed of all its terrors. The sentence against their sins had been executed on Jesus; the entrance to eternal death had thus been closed against them by Him whom they knew as their deliverer from "the wrath to come." As to Satan, the resurrection of Christ was to them the demonstration that through death He had vanquished him that had the power of death.

Death was thus regarded by these Christians as a conquered foe. They were accustomed to speak of Jesus as the One "who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality [incorruptibility] to light through the gospel." 2 Tim. 1:10. Consciously partakers of the risen life of Christ—Christ risen being, in fact, their life—they looked back to His death for them as having discharged every claim upon them, whether of the law, or of divine justice, or of Satan, or of death. Being thus one with Christ in His life and partaking of His victory, they joyfully sought to manifest "the power of His resurrection" in dying practically to themselves, sin, the world, and all hopes or thoughts of any rest or portion here.

Did sin present its baits? How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Did the flesh plead for indulgence? "Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh." Rom. 8:12. From where is this inference drawn? From the statement which immediately precedes it: "And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness."

Did the world invite to an easier path? The cross of Christ was that in which they alone gloried, and by it they were crucified to the world, and the world to them. Was the danger contemplated of nullified ordinances resuming their power over the mind?

"Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances?" Col. 2:20.

In brief, their whole position and walk was that of dead and risen men. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When

Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth." Col. 3:1-5.

They were still on earth, it is true, and they had evil propensities which needed to be mortified. God in his grace having identified them in life and glory with Christ Himself, as risen and ascended, it became their privilege to mind those things only to which they were thus introduced, reckoning themselves dead to all besides. This led necessarily to a path of self-renunciation which seemed madness to those who were not in the secret of their resurrection hopes. Indeed, the Apostle himself says, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." But resurrection was their hope. Christ, the firstfruits, had risen, and they knew that they should not always be left here.

It was not that they calculated with certainty on death in the literal sense. "We shall not all sleep," says the Apostle, "but we shall all [that is, whether asleep or awake] be changed." Resurrection was what they counted upon. They might fall asleep as some of their brethren had done already, but whether or not, the world was to them already stamped with the character of death. That for which they looked was the communication to their bodies of the life already enjoyed by their souls in their oneness with the risen and ascended Christ.

They waited for the appearing of Christ, the Resurrection and the Life, when mortality would be swallowed up of life. They knew it was for Him that their departed brethren were waiting. And though the apostles and early Christians esteemed it better to depart and to be with Christ, absent from the body and present with the Lord, they did not look upon death, and their individual happiness after death, as the object of their hopes. Much less could it be the object of their fears.

Death was theirs, and they so knew this that instead of regarding death as an officer of justice having absolute power over them, they were able to view it as a servant which might be employed by their Lord to withdraw them from the conflicts and sorrows of the present scene, and to rest with Himself till the moment of His appearing. But it was for that moment they looked and waited. It was to see Him and be perfectly conformed to Him, in body as well as in spirit, that He might be thus, according to God's eternal purpose, the firstborn among many brethren.

It was this living expectation that made the apostles and early Christians what they were. It was by this they were inspired with courage, armed with fortitude, endued with meekness, and made glad to lose what others lived to obtain. It enabled them to rejoice with exceeding joy amid afflictions the bare enumeration of which is enough to cause the natural heart to faint. They had the sentence of death in themselves that they should not trust in themselves, but in God who raises the dead.

Why does the Christianity of the present day so little resemble theirs? Why the uncertainty and lack of confidence of which almost universal complaint is made? Why the fear of death, the shrinking from the cross, the love of pleasure and of ease, and dread even of the world's censure, which so characterizes us in these days? No doubt there has been a great departure from the simplicity of Christ. The Holy Spirit being grieved, the general tone of Christian character and

experience is impaired, and the power of divine truth as a whole greatly diminished. There exists a solemn need for self-scrutiny and self-abasement in all these respects.

While admitting this, and praying that it may please God to press the sense of it on our souls, may we not also inquire whether the truths by which the first Christians were so powerfully influenced are held by us? Or if undoubtedly they are held as to the general theory, whether they are held by us in the same relations and proportions as by the apostles and their fellow-Christians of that day?

The Church has its existence by virtue of the death and resurrection of Jesus. The life by which it is animated is His life, as risen from the death He underwent for our sins, by the infinite efficacy of which death those sins are put away. In Eph. 1 and 2, where the Holy Spirit unfolds a truth beyond even this, this truth is most strikingly developed. The truth there specially revealed, and which does pass beyond the subject of our present meditations, is that of the association of the Church with Christ, not as risen only, but as ascended also. But ascension implies resurrection, and our participation in Christ's resurrection is, moreover, expressly declared.

"The exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe" is "according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places." Eph. 1:19, 20. "God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Chapter 2:4-6.

Thus even now is the Church partaker of the resurrection-life, as well as of the heavenly exaltation of Jesus. The life has not yet been communicated to our bodies and therefore it is in spirit, not as yet actually that we are in heavenly places. "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." The resurrection of our bodies will place us actually where our oneness with Christ by the Holy Spirit now places us spiritually—in the heavenly places whither our risen Lord has ascended and where He has sat down.

It is surely of all importance to have such a testimony that the resurrection of the Church is on a principle common with that of her glorified Head. And it is by virtue of her association with Him in life, in inheritance, and in glory!

Questions and Answers

QUESTION: Where in the Psalms or prophets is the belief justified that there will be conversions in the millennial age?

ANSWER: Almost everywhere that we find the work of divine goodness contemplated. In Psa. 2:12, "Kiss the Son, lest He be angry... Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him." All conversions, past, present or future, are in this way and no other. They alone are the righteous who fear God then as now. The gospel, which actually goes out in indiscriminate grace, the Apostle vindicates to the Jewish objector in Rom. 9 and 10 by testimonies from the law, Psalms and prophets which anticipate that day. It will be the harvest. We are but a sort of firstfruits, though called to "some better thing," as in Heb. 11:40, as compared even with "the elders." But the ingathering, great as to extent, awaits that day. All must bow to the Lord, "King over all the earth," as well as "Head over all things," but all are not converted even then as Isa. 65 shows, and on a

large scale Rev. 20:7-10. Previously they will have rendered but a feigned obedience. Also see Psa. 18:14.

"I sat down under His shadow with great delight."

Sol. 2:3

The Counsel of Balaam

Num. 31:16

"Behold, these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the Lord in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the Lord."

Here we see what Balaam's counsel was. This wicked man, a man whose eyes had been opened and willfully closed, when he saw that he could not curse the people, counseled Balak how to deceive them. What the enemy could not do with open assault, he would accomplish by stealth. This unfolds the true state of Balaam, for we might have hoped that he was changed by the revelations which he had. But the crafty man knew that if he could get the people to intermarry and then come to the idolatrous feasts, he would bring them down in their practice from the exalted place in which they stood, and then they would reap God's governmental dealings.

Now it is precisely here that we have to be on our guard. Nothing can ever separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. We are a people of God's choosing and blessing—a heavenly people. But the enemy would tell us that it is not too bad if we mingle with the world, and join in its pursuits.

In the Lord's address to the church in Pergamos we read, "But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication." This period of the Church's history, depicted by Pergamos, is that wherein the Emperor Constantine made Christianity the religion of the Roman Empire, and the Church and the world formed an unholy alliance. There were some then who taught that this was not bad, but the Lord tells us it was the doctrine of Balaam. It tells the saints that there is nothing wrong in unholy association with the world, and it is on every hand today. It is the warp and woof of present-day Christendom.

How terribly sad it is when such bad counsel comes from the lips of true children of God. Some have openly advised young Christians to join fraternities and earthly societies of one kind and another when God has said, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." Through bad counsel, even from Christians, many dear young believers have kept company with unbelievers, only to end in an unholy marriage, a linking of light and darkness. Dear young Christian, please remember that all such counsel comes from the enemy of your soul. It has a deeper source than the lips of the one who gives it. And if you follow the counsel of Balaam you will reap sore disappointment from the world, and the government of God in your life.

The devil can never frustrate the purposes of God to bless us. He can never keep us out of heaven, or take away one blessing which we have in Christ up there, but he can spoil your joy and mine, and ruin our testimony for the Lord if we follow the counsel of Balaam. The word "fornication" in Rev. 2 has reference to an unholy alliance between the people of God and the

world—a mixture of holy and unholy. Our happiness depends on walking in the good of all that God has given us. May the blessings bestowed on us and the glories that await us so captivate our hearts that the world will have no appeal to us. May the language of this hymn be the expression of our hearts:

"O worldly pomp and glory,
Your charms are spread in vain;
I've heard a sweeter story,
I've found a truer gain.
Where Christ a place prepareth,
There is my loved abode;
There shall I gaze on Jesus,
There shall I dwell with God."

Let us not trust in our own hearts, "for he that trusteth in his own heart is a fool." Prov. 28:26. We have an old nature which is susceptible to the counsel of Balaam. And dear young Christians, beware of the little things. Great matters turn on little affairs. The bait may be small but the hook is large. It is the small edge of the wedge that enters first. The enemy of our souls would like to draw us away from faithful devotedness to Christ, and he will use any means that he thinks will succeed.

There are many practical applications that could be made of shunning the counsel of Balaam. But we leave it to the reader to make his own application in the matters of his daily life. Anything that will draw you away from Christ in heart, anything that will make you compromise the truth, anything that is contrary to the Word of God—shun it. The world is more to be feared when it smiles on us than when it hates us. "The kisses of an enemy are deceitful." Perhaps the devil would dangle financial advantage, or social advance, or any one of a thousand things before your eyes. May God give the reader and the writer spiritual perception to see the tempter's hand in these offers, even though disguised like Jacob's when Isaac said, "The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau." Gen. 27:22.

There was One who trod this path before us who never wavered for an instant in faithful devotedness to His Father, and in entire separation from the scene through which He passed. He began and finished the path of faith in all perfection (Heb. 12:1,2). May we keep our eyes steadfastly on Him.

P. Wilson

Unbelieving Fears

When there remains in the heart any groan which is not uttered to God as to a God of grace, any distrust of Him, it is the flesh and work of the enemy. We may be cast down at times (although scarcely ever without some want of faith) and yet everything goes on well if we bring it all to God.

The Body of Moses

Moses is the only man God is said to have buried, "and no man knoweth of his sepulcher unto this day," but Michael the archangel evidently did so. It is possible that Michael, His highest heavenly servant, may have been the instrument of Jehovah to give His greatest of human servants the most honorable burial.

If it were then that the "contending" happened (Jude 9), it might be that Satan disputed his right to this high honor, considering that Moses' sin, in speaking unadvisedly with his lips and smiting the rock instead of speaking to it, had caused not only his exclusion from the land of Canaan, but his death. Michael, standing before God, dared not bring against him a "railing accusation," but being overawed by the majesty of God said, "The Lord rebuke thee."

Besides this, the context in Jude would lead us to infer that he also had respect for the original greatness, dignity and glory of the devil. In this Michael sets an example for us to have a respectful spirit when speaking of Satan, because of his greatness as a creature of God. And if we stand in God's presence with a profound sense of His majesty, we will not be found indulging the lawless spirit of the day that allows men to speak evil of dignities, whether earthly, heavenly or infernal. The maintaining of his servant ship in Jehovah's presence enabled him calmly to put Satan under the rebuke of the Lord and leave him there. Thus must we feel and act if we would resist the devil and have him flee from us, "whom resist, steadfast in the faith." "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might."

Are we to be satisfied with the explanation given as to the ground of the contention? The object of their contention was "the body of Moses." Was the ground of it that he should be buried by God, or that the body of Moses should not be in Satan's power as having "the power of death" (Heb. 2:14)? Christ's death, which alone delivers, had not yet taken place. Or was it that it should be in the special keeping of Michael, so that Moses should appear in it on the transfiguration hill along with Elijah, also in his body, and Jesus in His glorious, transfigured body shining above the brightness of the sun in the midst?

When Satan's power over the bodies of the saints of God who slept in their graves was broken "through death" when Jesus died on Calvary, the right and title to deliverance from the domain of death appeared openly. It was in this way that "the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose" (Matt. 27:52), but they came out of their graves after His resurrection. He was the first to rise from the dead in the power of life, that could not be holden of death or of him that had the power of death, whom He through death destroyed (or annulled).

When the disciples were with Jesus on the holy mount, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with Him, and in order for the two men to be seen talking, they must have been there in their bodies. Then may we not conclude that the contention was that the body of Moses should be buried by God, angelically guarded all along by Michael from the devil's domain of death, and supernaturally brought forth, even before the death and resurrection of Christ, to appear with

Jesus on the holy mount?

This greatest of God's pre-Christian servants, who was denied entrance into the terrestrial and transitory kingdom of Canaan as the leader of the tribes of Israel, was honored to enter it in company with Jesus the Son of God. He received from God the Father honor and glory, and there was given him a momentary vision of the coming of the kingdom of God in power and glory at the Lord's glorious advent. Then earth and heaven shall be united, and the dominion and the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be administered by Him to the glory of God the Father.

"The body of Moses" is then the body of the man Moses, and is not figurative, just as "the body of Jesus" was the body of the man Christ Jesus which Joseph the counselor begged of Pilate (Luke 3:50-53).

The Lord's Hand

Christ will be a sure friend, and even if we begin to sink in the water, He will stretch out His hand and lift us up. It is sweet to have His hand in any case, even if our failing foot has led Him to stretch it out.

Bible Challenger-10-October V.09

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the word spoken by the Psalmist which expresses the way he wanted his words and meditations to be in the sight of the Lord. [1] The number in brackets indicates the number of words in the answer.

1. "But I have all, and_____ : I am full, having received." [1]
2. "I will not overthrow this_____ , for the which thou hast spoken." [1]
3. "To proclaim ... the day of vengeance of our God; to_____ all that mourn." [1]
4. "I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to_____ the earth." [1]
5. "If, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it_____ [1]
6. "Be not conformed to this world: but be ye_____ [1]
7. "If thou doest not well, sin lieth _____[3]
8. "Whatsoever hath a_____ , that shall ye not offer." [1]
9. "Wherefore we_____ , that, whether present or absent." [1]
10. "Go thy way_____ with joy, and drink thy wine." [3]

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

R. Erisman

Bible Challenger-09-September Answers V.09

1. Findeth Matt. 10:39
2. Ourselves 2 Cor. 4:5
3. Rulers Mark 13:9
4. Mother Mark 10:29
5. You Jonah 1:12
6. Show him Acts 9:16
7. Another Eph. 4:32
8. Know John 15:21
9. Evil Matt. 5:11

"And ye shall be brought before governors and kings FOR MY SAKE, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles." Matt. 10:18

Proverbs

Simon Patrick on the Proverbs

1683

Chapter 4:1-13

1. "Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding." Listen then all ye, that are desirous to learn, unto the instructions which out of a paternal affection I bring from God unto you: hearken to them, though they correct your present manners; and let your mind be so attentive, that you may know what it is to have a right understanding in all things.
2. "For I give you good doctrine, forsake ye not my law." They are no frivolous or indifferent matters which I teach you; but the most excellent things, and absolutely necessary to your happiness: therefore do not merely attend to them, but strictly observe my precepts, as the law and rule of your life.
3. "For I was my father's son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother." Do as I myself did, who remember that when I was a child, the son of a most wise and pious father, and under the careful eye of an affectionate mother who loves me most dearly above all her children, and while I was soft and flexible and apt to receive good impressions, looked to my education with great circumspection.
4. "He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words: keep my commandments, and live." My father was wont to tutor and instruct me (1 Chron. 28:8; 29:2)

saying, "Mind my words and faithfully retain them, not only in thy memory, but in thy affections: observe my commandments, and thou shalt enjoy long happiness."

5. "Get wisdom, get understanding: forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth." And this is the thing I require of thee; not so much to seek after riches, as to treasure up wisdom; and endeavor to understand how to behave thy self upon all occasions; and when thou art well informed in thy duty, do not forget it, nor turn aside from the way into which I will direct thee.

6. "Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: love her, and she shall keep thee." Quit all things in this world rather than forsake the precepts of wisdom; stick to them and they will preserve thee from innumerable mischief; love them sincerely, and they will be a stronger guard than money can procure thee.

7. "Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding." And as there is nothing comparable to wisdom, so the first step to it is to know as much, and to prize it accordingly. Begin therefore to be wise by looking upon the fear of God as above all earthly possessions, and by being willing, if it were needful, to give all thou art worth to know what is pleasing to Him.

8. "Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honor, when thou dost embrace her." Thou canst not speak nor think too highly of this wisdom, as thou shalt find by happy experience. For if thou magnify it above all things, it will raise thy esteem and make thee great in the world; yea, when thou entertainest it with ardent love, thou shalt become most illustrious in the sight of God and men.

9. "She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee." Whatsoever else thou hast to commend thee and gain thee honor, this shall add unto it, and make it far more amiable: the fairest ornaments or the most beautiful crown that can be set upon thy head, shall receive luster from hence; and be settled there the more securely.

10. "Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings; and the years of thy life shall be many." Thus my father was wont to discourse to me, as I do to thee, my son; whom I earnestly again entreat to consider what I say, and to believe it that thou may lead a long and happy life.

11. "I have taught thee in the way of wisdom; I have led thee in right paths." I have already taught thee and will still inform thee in the wisest course unto it; not in those crooked ways of fraud and falseness, etc., which many take; but in the direct paths of integrity and truth in which I intend, as I have done hitherto, to lead thee.

12. "When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened; and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble." And if thy actions and designs have no other rule, thou shalt be at ease, and free from those straits and difficulties which others meet withal: and in case thy business shall require haste, this will be the safest, as well as the most inoffensive (if not the shortest) way to accomplish thy ends.

13. "Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go: keep her; for she is thy life." Resolve to try it, and though it should be contrary to thy present sense, yet do not refuse this instruction which I give thee; but take such fast hold of it, as never for want of care and pains, to let it slip out of thy mind: keep it as a most precious treasure, for all thy happiness depends upon it.

Purged Worshippers

The Christian is looked at, if we may so say, in one point in 1 John 1:7, and neither before nor after. He is in the light, has fellowship with God and His people, and is cleansed. The verse does not say that the blood of Jesus has cleansed or will cleanse, but it cleanses. God sees me as a believer sprinkled with that blood, which can never lose its value or have to be sprinkled again. Many who have been brought to God have not learned what it is to be purged worshippers, having no more conscience of sins, a mistake the Lord may bear with, because of the value that Christ's death has in their souls. God alone can give the consciousness of being in the place in which Christ is before God.

"Unto Him that loved us...

be glory and dominion forever and ever."

Rev. 1:5, 6

Amos

Amos was the prophet who prophesied before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah, king of Judah (Amos 1:1). We may say that he was the prophet of that event (Ch. 8:8; 9:5).

That earthquake is treated by Zechariah as typical, as a notice of the Lord's controversy with the world when again there will be earthquakes and pestilences, ministers of judgment and vessels of wrath (Zech. 14:5).

Accordingly, judgment is the great burden of Amos's prophecy, and it therefore served the purpose of Stephen in Acts 7, for that moment was also a crisis in the history of the Jews. Stephen there quotes Amos (see Acts 7:42, 43; Amos 5:25-27).

Amos treats the Gentiles as dealt with by God, as well as the Jews. He judges them all alike. He brought the Philistines from Caphtor, and the Syrians from Kir, as He had brought Israel from Egypt. And in coming millennial days He will have all the Gentiles called by His name, as surely as He will build again the fallen tabernacle of David (Ch. 1, 2, 9:7-12).

In this character, the word by Amos directly answered for James in Acts 15 where the Apostle was insisting on the independence of Gentile saints, and that they must not be required to be circumcised and to adopt the custom of Israel. Amos intimates this, and James cites him to show that the Gentiles were to be adopted of God (or have His name called on by them acceptably) in a way quite independent of the Jews, or that the Lord knew them before Israel knew them.

Thus those two great occasions in the history of the Church in the New Testament, Stephen's words in Acts 7 and James's words in Acts 15, were served by the Spirit through Amos, who gives what may be regarded as somewhat a distant and unnoticed portion of the Word of God. It is beautiful to see that we are to live "by every word of God." We know not in what obscure corner of the volume, so to speak, that scripture may lie which is fitted and destined by the Holy Spirit to stand by the soul in the trying hour. Amos ministering to Stephen and James witnesses this.

I would add a verse or two from George Herbert, which this finding of the words of Amos in Acts 7, and again other words of his in Acts 15, may call to mind. They are in his little piece called "The Holy Scriptures."

"Oh that I knew how all thy lights combine

And the configurations of their glory!

Seeing not only how each verse does shine,

But all the constellations of the story.

This verse marks that, and both do make a motion

Unto a third, which ten leaves off does lie: Then, as dispersed herbs do make a potion,

These three make up some Christian's destiny.”

J. G. Bellett

Editorial

Racial Pressures

Is racial enmity increasing? Are the Jews under attack in many lands? Is the religious right considered dangerous by those who do not believe in God?

Answers to such questions are almost daily manifest in current events. One recent headline read, "Destroying Jews' Sense of Security" Another one in big letters said, "BLACK and WHITE and Read All Over!" But the trouble is neither color nor religion, but sin and what comes out of the heart. Undeclared wars are in many places on this globe. Strife and sorrow abound, and the most powerful authorities fail in correcting these things. "Peace-keeping missions" do not keep peace; civil war, tribal conflicts, and local uprisings cause much misery and poverty.

Rabin says, "There is a continuation of the arms' race. Saudi Arabia and Syria and Israel add to their arsenals. It didn't start yesterday. It is a prolonged process that continues." All this goes on while peace is pushed and much is made of signing treaties.

The prophet Isaiah writes of the fortification of Jerusalem in chapter 29. Here Jerusalem is called Ariel, meaning lion of God. The time is the last days in which time Messiah comes and delivers His earthly people. In verse 7 it says, "And the multitude of all the nations that fight against Ariel, even all that fight against her and her munition [fortifications], and that distress her, shall be as a dream of a night vision.”

At this time Jerusalem will have been reduced to the last extremity by the seven years of the tribulation. But now Jehovah appears for her deliverance, and the multitude of her enemies disappear as a dream of the night.

The Jews will not be delivered by their fortifications. All of their arsenal will likely be expended during the wars of the seven years. But when they have been reduced and brought very low, the Lord comes and delivers them.

Meanwhile, the world is ill at ease, for many disturbing factors abound. Famine and disease afflict masses in many places at the same time that much of the world is comfortable and some are very wealthy.

The true Christian's peace in such a troubled world is in the upward look beyond strife, turmoil and selfishness. Our God whom we know as our Father is above all the unrest and strife. Events do not affect God's throne nor stop His hand. He is above all circumstances and He works all things according to the counsel of His own will.

The poetic language of Cowper expresses it well:

Blind unbelief is sure to err,

And scan His work in vain;

God is His own interpreter,

And He will make it plain.

Can we not safely rest in His love and care? Circumstances cannot affect our peace if we rest in Him whom nothing can disturb. Ed.

Practical Grace

A. H. Rule

In Heb. 12, two mountains are spoken of: one that speaks of law, and one that speaks of grace. It is important for our souls to discover which one of these mountains we are brought to. In connection with one, we have to do with God as making demands upon us, while in connection with the other, we have to do with God as acting in grace.

Ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: (for they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart: and so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:) but ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. Heb. 12:18-24.

God had spoken the law to Israel at Mount Sinai, and their responsibility was according to the just requirements of that law. In this they failed and utterly broke down, and in the days of Eli, the ark—the only remaining link between Jehovah and His people—was taken by the Philistines. At the end of this career of failure, God came in grace and chose David the king, who with his son, Solomon, founded the temple on Mount Zion. This was the expression of God's grace to a failing people when all was over on the ground of responsibility under the law.

This is the grace according to which God had visited the Hebrew saints who accepted the Messiah. It is the same grace that has taken us up, and that goes on with us day by day. And on this principle only can we get on with God. God acts toward us in grace. This is an immense truth for our souls to grasp, for only as we lay hold of this can we realize the character of our relationships with God and with one another as Christians, and the principles that are to govern us in our ways with one another. Our sins have been purged through the blood of Christ. This is pure grace.

Is not holiness required? Without holiness no man can see the Lord, we are told in Heb. 12:14. Is this grace also? The need of holiness surely is not grace, but if God's character and nature are such that none can be in His presence without holiness, He furnishes it to us in grace, blessed be His name! We have it not of or in ourselves, but He makes us "partakers of His holiness," even if He has to chasten us in order to break our wills and bring us into that exercise of soul in which we can receive all from Him. All blessing flows down from Him in perfect grace, and our place before Him is that of subject receivers.

If God acts toward us on the principle of grace, we are to be imitators of Him as dear children. Grace is the principle on which we are to act toward one another. Do we sufficiently realize this in our souls, so as practically to act according to divine principles?

We find in the beginning of Heb. 12 that we are on the racecourse, and weights are to be laid aside, and sin which entangles the feet. Then God comes in and helps us by chastening and making us partakers of His holiness. Now we are not alone in this path. There is a company—the whole company of God's people—moving on together toward Him who has finished the course of faith, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God, but who will soon rise up to receive His own. It is with this company we have to do.

It is not a mere selfish running where only one receives the prize. We all journey on together, and as in a flock of sheep, there are the weak and the lame not to be left behind, but to be helped on. There are "hands that hang down," and there are "feeble knees." How are we to act toward such? The passage is plain: "Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed." vv. 12,13. This is not the terrible mount that burned with fire; it is the pure grace of God.

On the one hand, grace leads us to minister help to the weak and the faint. On the other hand, it will lead us to be watchful, taking heed to our own ways lest the lame be turned out of the way. There are lame ones in the flock, and they do not get on well, but the whip would be no remedy for such. We must not act toward them on the principle of Pharaoh's taskmasters with the bond-slave children of Israel. This is not God's way. He acts toward us in grace and helps us in our infirmities, or if He chastens when needs be, it is "that we might be partakers of His holiness."

What would we think of a shepherd taking a whip to a poor, weak, lame sheep? Yet how often is this done among the flock of Christ! The whip instead of grace! Mount Sinai instead of Mount Zion! God's Word is, "But let it rather be healed." It is not that holiness can be dispensed with, and therefore it is written: "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."

Only let us remember that the whip and the burning mount will neither heal nor produce holiness. Grace only can do either, and so it is added, "Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God." If I lose in my soul the sense of that grace in which God is ever acting toward me, I shall fail in manifesting grace toward my brethren. Who can tell the loss and damage to the saints? Some root of bitterness springs up, and trouble arises, and many are thereby defiled.

What sorrow is sometimes caused in the assembly of God, just because someone—a leader, it may be—has failed of the grace of God, and acted in the spirit of the law rather than the Spirit of Christ! Or someone, through greed of gain, has driven a hard bargain, or defrauded his brother! Or some word has been unadvisedly spoken and an evil seed has been sown in some heart. When it springs up it is as a root of bitterness producing trouble which passes from tongue to tongue, thereby defiling many. Surely such conduct is most sad, utterly contrary to the Spirit of Christ. If not unsparingly judged by those who so act, it will bring down the hand of the Lord in discipline.

Oh, to realize in our innermost soul that we are saved by grace, and we stand in grace, and that it is grace every step of the way to the end! And to realize that we are called to live, and act toward

one another, in the power of the same grace in which God has acted and always acts toward us.

Our Joy In Heaven

Luke 9:28-36

Let us look a little at this scripture showing what our joy in the glory will consist of. We have the warrant of 2 Peter 1:16 for saying that the scene represents to us the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. And this is what we wait for. Our souls are not in a healthy state unless we are waiting for God's Son from heaven. The Church is not regulated in its hopes by the Word and Spirit of God unless it is looking for Him as Savior from heaven (Phil. 3).

This passage, as disclosing to us specially what will be our portion when He comes, is important to us in this respect. There are many other things in the passage, such as the mutual relations of the earthly and the heavenly people in the kingdom. These it may be very instructive to consider, but this is not our present purpose, which is to consider what light is here afforded on the nature of that joy which we shall inherit at the coming of the Lord. Other scriptures, such as the promises to those who overcome in Rev. 2 and 3, and the description of the heavenly city in Rev. 21 and 22, give us instructions on the same subject. But let us now particularly look at the scene on the holy mount.

"And it came to pass about eight days after these sayings, He took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray. And as He prayed, the fashion of His countenance was altered, and His raiment was white and glistering." It was when Jesus was in the acknowledgment of dependence—"as He prayed"—that this change took place. This, then, is the first thing we have here—a change such as will pass upon the living saints when Jesus comes.

With the Lord

"And, behold, there talked with Him two men, which were Moses and Elias." They were with Him. And this will be our joy; we shall be with Jesus. In 1 Thess. 4, after stating the order in which the resurrection of the sleeping saints, and the change of the living, will take place, and that we shall both be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air, all that the Apostle says as to what shall ensue is, "And so shall we ever be with the Lord."

In this passage there is not only the being with Christ, but there is also familiar conversation with Him. "There talked with Him two men." It is not that He talked with them, though this was no doubt true, but this might have been, and they be at a distance. But when we read that they talked with Him, we get the idea of the most free and familiar conversation. Peter and the others knew what it was to have such communication with Jesus in humiliation. What joy must it have been to have the proof that such conversation with Him would be enjoyed in glory!

Appear in Glory

Then it is said by Luke that they "appeared in glory" But this is secondary to what we have been considering. We are told that they were with Him, and then that they appeared in glory. They share in the same glory as that in which He was manifested. And so as to us. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory." "The glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me."

Speak of His Cross

But there is another thing still. We are not only told that they were with Him, that they talked with Him, and appeared in glory with Him, but we are also privileged to know the subject of their conversation. They "spake of His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem." It was the cross which was the theme of their conversation in the glory—the sufferings of Christ which He had to accomplish at Jerusalem. And surely this will be our joy throughout eternity, when in glory with Christ— to dwell upon this theme: His decease accomplished at Jerusalem.

We next read that Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep. It shows us what the flesh is in the presence of the glory of God. Peter made a great mistake, but I pass on.

Fellowship with the Father

"While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud. And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is My beloved Son: hear Him." Peter tells us that this voice came from the excellent glory "For He received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Now Peter and the others had entered into the cloud, and thus we get the wonderful fact that in the glory, from which the voice comes, saints are privileged to stand, and there, in that glory, share the delight of the Father in His beloved Son. Not only are we called to the fellowship of God's Son, Jesus Christ, we are called to have fellowship with the Father. We are admitted of God the Father to partake of His satisfaction in His beloved Son.

"And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone." The vision all gone—the cloud, the voice, the glory Moses and Elias, but Jesus was left, and they were left to go on their way with Jesus, knowing Him now in the light of those scenes of glory which they had beheld. And this is the use to us of those vivid apprehensions of spiritual things which we may sometimes realize. It is not that we can be always enjoying them and nothing else. But when for the season they have passed away, like this vision on the holy mount, they leave us alone with Jesus, to pursue the path of our pilgrimage with Him in spirit now, and with Him in the light and power of that deepened acquaintance with Him, and fellowship of the Father's joy in Him, that we have got on the mount. And thus we wait for the moment of His return, when all this, and more than our hearts can think of, shall be fulfilled to us forever.

J. N. Darby

God's Love

1 John 4:7

by G. V. Wigram

The expression repeated over and over in verse 7 of 1 John 4 is "love." And in verse 8 it is repeated again, winding up with "God is love."

It is very important to enter into the truth, not only that love is of God, and that He dwells in us who believe, but to understand that the love here spoken of is the character of God Himself. "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." v. 16. This is something exceedingly beautiful to those who know it, and "he that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love."

Communicates Life

What the Spirit of God speaks of in chapter 1 of this epistle as to our relationship with the Father is surpassingly marvelous, and we can only know it by knowing for what purpose Christ came. Knowing it, we are identified with that Son who came into the world that we might have life in Him, and God sent His Son that we might have life. What sort of life is it? A life that brings a believer into direct connection with the Father and the Son. Not only am I a son, but being born of God I have a new nature.

He tells me I am in His Son who was before all worlds and He in me. Think what a place it is in which He sees me, and notice all God's springs are in Himself. He saw nothing in man but hatred, and it was divine love that led Him to give His Son, and love that led that Son to come into this world that God's love might be manifested to His creatures. His own nature and heart led Him to do it. He drew His own motive from within Himself, and He puts this same love into the heart of him who tastes it. It is love that brings us into the presence of God Himself, a love that communicates the life of His Son to those dead in trespasses and sins. They have a life that is locked up in the Son and never can be touched.

Is it true that you can say, "The manner of life I have is life hid with Christ in God"? If Christ Himself in glory is my life, it links me up with Him in whom is the whole bundle of life. The Head cannot say to the foot, "I have no need of thee." Why? Because of its being bound up in the bundle of life. Not only is that life brought out in all beauty in Him who was with the Father, but that life has been communicated by the Father to us, and is so in us that Christ cannot say He has no need of us.

Did you ever look up into the face of the Lord Jesus Christ with the consciousness of having one life with Him? If so, you cannot entertain a single question about the place you are in before God. In Eden all was very beautiful and looking around man might have said, "What a great Giver God is." But what can we say as those to whom this life has been given, and whose fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ? Surely we can with deeper feeling say, "What a blessed Giver our God is!" When I wandered in sins, He found me and gave me a life that has brought me into fellowship with Himself and His Son.

The eleven on the day of Pentecost saw the stream of life flowing to this and that one, and even to men who had dipped their hands in the blood of God's own Son. But did it cease then? No, it has flowed for over nineteen hundred years into the dead souls of sinners. When we look, we find it has connected us with another scene altogether. Well may you say, I am very unlike Him whose life I have. If you have it, you have found out, and will be finding out till He comes to take you to Himself in a glorified body, what a contrast you are to Him.

Starts in His Heart

It is not a question of what you are, but of a portion that has flowed to you from the Father. You may find your dearest relations turning from you, as those whom the Father has given to Christ out of the world. The Lord said, "The world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." The world cannot understand that principle in you—a certain affection in the heart of God that found its expression in the Son. We find those whom God has given to Him so connected with Him that the love wherewith He is loved is in them, and they are able to walk in the power of His life unto His praise and glory as dear children.

Neither you nor I can say that we love God with all our hearts and souls, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Not that we loved Him, but He loved us. If I begin with self, there is nothing but ruin. Is there anything to be gotten out of the ruin, any want felt there for God? Impossible that there could be. Well then, "Herein is love," God says, and it is not your love to Him, but His to you. Turn your eye to Christ to see how God loves you, so much that He gave His Son for you.

Displayed at the Cross

Under the law, in connection with propitiation or atonement, a victim was brought, but the blood of bulls and goats never could put away sin. The blot remained, though the blood was sprinkled and put on the mercy-seat, and its effect was so far from being eternal that before the end of the year, sin being there, it needed to be done again. But Christ, by one offering, forever has put our sins away. Not only love comes out on the cross, but all He did was the expression of the love of God, and the meeting of the Father's mind. He was as completely one with the Father as it was possible to be.

I have to begin with God, not myself. What has God done? He has put before the soul the ground on which it can rest in His presence—given His Son as the propitiation for our sins. We can sing, "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood... to Him be glory and dominion, forever and ever. Amen."

In Rom. 2 and 3, the Spirit of God traces out the awful condition of man by nature, but God has commended His love to us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Not only has God given His Son as a propitiation for us, but He has introduced us to a higher order of existence than man in Adam ever was. He has given us the eternal life that is in His Son—an entirely new and divine order of being. What I have is just the life of that one Person in whom is God's delight.

By the work of Christ on the cross all question of sin was once and forever settled, and we have peace with God. Now out of His fullness we receive grace upon grace, and when He comes He will present us without spot or wrinkle to Himself.

Is it difficult to say whether or not we have tasted what it is to be in such a place? I get this light shining in me because He has given me of His Spirit. Has not God a right to speak? Does He not know how to use human language so as to carry it right home to my soul? You can be sure He does and He says, "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God."

The Lord Jesus declares that His sheep have eternal life, and none can pluck them out of His hand, or out of the Father's hand. But human nature says, "How can I know it to be true?" It would be far better for the creature to say, "Let God be true, and every man a liar." It is by faith in Him who cannot lie that we know this, and His testimony is that "whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God."

Dwells in the Believer's Heart

Then in describing the experience of a soul led by the Spirit of Christ and what should be the mark of it, God says His love was so displayed in that work of His Son that it dwells in the hearts of believers, and they in it. If God uses your sin to show the virtue of His Son's blood, are you to say, "My leanness, my leanness"? How did you come to be calculating on anything of yourself? If you bring an empty vessel, even if there be a crack or flaw in it, you can keep it full to overflowing if you put it into a cistern of water.

The proper expression of God's will has come out, the deepest, highest, brightest, fullest, most blessed counsels of God getting their expression in Him who said, "Lo, I come to do Thy will." Who was that Babe there laid in a manger? What could it mean when those angels said, "Glory to God in the highest"? Ah! God said, Your ways are not My ways, nor your thoughts My thoughts. I shall bring out of My own bosom One who was there before all worlds, and thus will come out to light through that Son of My love. What I am-My character-will be seen, and He will declare what I am. I can let the brightest expression of heaven's delight shine out upon something on earth now.

God could look down on that Babe and see there the perfect expression of His glory. All God's glories came out in connection with that Person who said, "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father." And again, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father."

Looking to be manifested at Christ's judgment-seat, we have no cause to have any uncertainty as to results. Why? Because, "as He is, so are we in this world." I can say this: "If Christ has taken the place of the smitten Rock and has become my life, will He find fault with His own life in me?" He will find fault with our practical inconsistencies, but the life of a believer is what Christ is. Not only have we life in Him, but He is the propitiation for our sins. He did the whole will of God, and He was made sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. We can take our place in God's presence and our confidence cannot be shaken if the heart is simple and true, because there is the blood that cleanses from all sin, and we take our place there as those who are cleansed.

Received Without Merit

If it is the question of your getting into His love, you cannot get in. But if it is the question of Christ's having brought you into it by washing you from your sins in His own blood, there can be no fear, for "perfect love casteth out fear," and "we love Him, because He first loved us." Would you have liked Christ to have left out of His Word all desire for the expression of your love?

God cannot receive anything from a ruined creature, because it comes with a taint of sin and selfishness, but as accepted ones in the Beloved, is it not an expression of His love to put it into our heart to say, "We love Him, because He first loved us"? All the ruin and sin of the first Adam became the very occasion for all the love of God to flow out. If we are able to say, "I am a believer and a pilgrim," I ought to be able to say, "I know what manner of love God has bestowed upon me." The real claim of God's love over them is never answered by the children of God, if they are not standing in it as the expression of it. What have I to do with bringing water down from the rock? The water is there, and if it has come down to me, was there any virtue or power in self to bring it down? No! As a creature I am ruined, and if I should say to God, "What can I as a ruined creature do?" His answer is, "It is not the question of your doing, but of Mine. I gave My Son to be the propitiation for your sins, and you will find that he that honors that work has found the ground on which to stand in My presence with perfect acceptance."

I am in a world where all are scrambling after what they can get for self. I might say that I have nothing, but poor and little as I am the Father gave His Son for me. I have the heart of that Son of His who is occupied with all that concerns me, and He even counts the beatings of this heart of mine down here. After all Christ's self-denial for me, is there to be none from me to Him? When Christ bought me with His own blood and He charged Himself with all my guilt, am I to do or say anything that is not for the glory of that Christ?

You can only plead with God as you know Christ. He alone is the channel by which God can bless you and answer every desire of your heart. "God is love," but it is in and through Christ that He is this for us.

"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God;

and every one that loveth is born of God,

and knoweth God."

1 John 4:7

Proverbs

Simon Patrick on the Proverbs

1683

Chapter 4:14-27

14. "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men." And if thou really intendest to be guided by me, remember the advice I gave thee in the beginning (Ch. 1:10) not so much as to enter upon their wicked course of life, or to keep them company, who regard not God and are injurious to men; or if thou hast been seduced into it, be not persuaded by their seeming prosperity and thriving condition to continue in it.

15. "Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away." Avoid it therefore with a just abhorrence; come not near it, but get as far as thou canst from their society, and decline all occasions that might invite thee into it, as dangerous temptations.

16. "For they sleep not, except they have done mischief; and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause some to fall." For as mischief is their business, so they pursue it with a restless diligence, there being those among them, for instance, that cannot be quiet, nor have any satisfaction till they have executed their villainous intentions, but perpetually disturb themselves, that they may ruin others.

17. "For they eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence." For they live by robbery and spoil, having no other meat and drink, but what is the fruit of rapine and violence, and not of their honest labors.

18. "But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Which makes a wide difference between them and righteous men, whose pure and innocent life is full of honor as well as joy, which increases continually together with their virtue, proceeding (like the splendor of the sun, which nothing can extinguish, nor hinder in its course) till it come to the highest pitch of joy and glory

19. "The way of the wicked is as darkness: they know not at what they stumble." Whereas those wicked people live most uncomfortably, as well as basely and vilely, going on blindly to their own destruction (of which they are in constant danger, and grows more and more upon them) and yet they know not, no more than men in thick darkness, what mischief it is that suddenly may befall them.

20. "My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings." Therefore I do not without reason once more repeat my request unto thee (vv. 1,10) that thou wilt give diligent heed to my advice, and seriously consider those exhortations, which proceed from a sincere affection to thy welfare.

21. "Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart." Read them over and over again, and keep them perpetually in mind; or rather preserve them studiously, and lay them up, as a most precious treasure, in the closest affections of thy heart.

22. "For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh." For they will make all those exceeding happy, both in body and soul, who become thoroughly acquainted with them, and, how various soever their temper and condition be, will prove an universal remedy for all their grievances and troubles.

23. "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." And charge thy self with this, above all other cares, to set such a strict guard upon the inward thoughts, motions and affections of thy soul (which are besieged with many enemies) that thy consent be never obtained

to anything, which thou oughtest to refuse: for thy living well or ill depends on this; and such as thy caution and watchfulness is in this, such will the actions of thy life be, which flow from thence.

24. "Put away from thee a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from thee." And as they that defend a city against an enemy set a strong guard at the gates and posterns, so do thou upon thy ears and upon thy mouth: never speaking things contrary to truth, honesty, and religion thy self, nor listening unto those that do, but banishing both, as far as is possible, from thy familiarity

25. "Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee." The eyes also are dangerous inlets into the heart, and therefore watch them well that they do not gaze about, and fasten on every object that invites them, but be fixed upon one scope, as thy thoughts ought to be, from which let nothing divert them.

26. "Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established." And before thou fixes and resolves upon any action, examine and weigh it thoroughly, whether it be agreeable to the rule of life, and the end thou aims at: and so thou shalt be constant to thy self, and confirmed in a steadfast course of well doing.

27. "Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil." From which do not suffer thy self to be drawn aside, either to superstition on the one hand, or to contempt or neglect of religion on the other. Let neither love of friends nor hatred of enemies, neither hope of pleasure and gain, nor fear of pain and damage, neither prosperous nor cross events ever move thee to turn into either extremes from the rule of virtue, but, whatsoever inclination thou findest that way, do not proceed to commit the least sin against God or against thy neighbor.

Bible Challenger-11-November V.09

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the words which Moses said would be a witness against the people of Israel as he recounted the sad consequences of becoming idol-worshippers in their promised land. [3] The number in brackets indicates the number of missing words in each answer.

1. "As soon as we had heard these things, our _____did melt." [1]
2. "Thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and Thou art _____ as head above all." [1]
3. "Lifted up their voice to God with one_____, and said, Lord, Thou art God." [1]
4. "Ye should turn from these_____ unto the living God." [1]
5. "Who hath given to David the king a wise son,_____ with prudence and understanding." [1]
6. "At the_____ of Jesus every knee should bow." [1]
7. "And spake unto them, saying,_____ is given unto Me." [2]
8. "By Thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is_____ too hard for Thee." [1]
9. "Who hath_____ from the power of the lions." [2]
10. "Glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne... for _____ [3]
11. "And_____ rode upon a mule, and ... went under the thick boughs of a great oak." [1]
12. "Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast _____ them unto babes." [1]
13. "God that made the world and all things therein ... dwelleth not in_____ [4]
14. "Wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and_____ it." [1]

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

R. Erisman

Bible Challenger-10-October Answers V.09

1. A bound
2. C ity
3. C omfort
4. E stablish
5. P atiently
6. T ransformed
7. A t the door
8. B lemish
9. L abor
10. E at thy bread

Phil. 4:18

Gen. 19:21

Isa. 61:2

Isa. 49:8

1 Peter 2:20

Rom. 12:2

Gen. 4:7

Lev. 22:20

2 Cor. 5:9

Eccles. 9:7

"Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be ACCEPTABLE in Thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer." Psa. 19:14

Our Rights

The thought that Christians are to have their rights in this world is to forget the cross and Christ. We cannot have our rights till Christ has His, for we have none but His.

Keep Yourselves in the Love of God

I trust God is keeping you very near Himself, and that He maintains the freshness of His grace and love in your soul. We need to be constantly renewed; without that, spiritual energy does not keep up. "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." Isa. 40:31.

It is not progress in knowledge that affects that, although this is profitable for helping others in the truth, but what is important is keeping oneself near God. In this place love maintains itself and grows— His love in our souls, which finds its activity and comfort in exercising itself towards poor sinners and towards the saints. One seeks the glory of the Lord in them, and their own well-being.

God gives you to enjoy Himself, but God reveals Himself not only as infinite blessedness in Himself, but also in the activities of His love in which He finds His delight. When His love is shed abroad in our hearts, we enjoy assuredly what He is, but this love is active towards us by His grace.

Activity, unless renewing itself in communion with Him, may be sincere, but will degenerate into routine and into a habit of acting. It may be even dangerous if the soul gets far from God without knowing it. But abiding in His love and His Word abiding in us, we can count on an answer to the request we address to Him in our hearts.

Editorial

Iniquity Not Yet Full

Each year violence and corruption seem to increase. The number of killings this past year is astonishing. The heart of man shows its evil in wars, murders and terrorism, and, in addition, there are many deaths from car wrecks, airplane crashes, train wrecks and ships sinking. Sometimes we wonder (not having the statistics) if there are more deaths than births.

The daily news is largely made up of murders and wars and personal fighting. The New Testament tells us, "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies." Matt. 15:19.

The prophets of the Old Testament use very expressive language in writing of coming events. Micah describes it this way: "The good man is perished out of the earth; and there is none upright among men: they all lie in wait for blood; they hunt every man his brother with a net. That they may do evil with both hands earnestly, the prince asketh, and the judge asketh for a reward; and the great man, he uttereth his mischievous desire: so they wrap it up." Ch. 7:2, 3.

Daniel writes of two kings and says, "And both these kings' hearts shall be to do mischief, and they shall speak lies at one table." Ch. 11:27.

Isaiah declares, "The treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously; yea, the treacherous dealers have dealt very treacherously." Ch. 24:16.

It is interesting that the violence of Lebanon-where we have seen so much violence lately-is mentioned by one of the prophets: "For the violence of Lebanon shall cover thee, and the spoil of beasts, which made them afraid, because of men's blood, and for the violence of the land, of the city, and of all that dwell therein." Hab. 2:17.

The patience of the Lord in waiting to judge is seen in His words to Abram in Gen. 15. He says, "The iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full." vs. 16. If we were the judges of this present evil world, we would likely judge that the iniquity is full, but our Lord God is merciful and not willing that any should perish. In His long-suffering and goodness He is, by His Spirit, still saving souls out of the world and gathering some to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. "God our Savior; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." 1 Tim. 2:3, 4.

For saved souls, the bright prospect concerning this world is to be taken out of it. That is what Jude, the writer of the last epistle, means when he writes,

"Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." Ed.

I Will Come Again

The blessed Lord gave His disciples nothing to look forward to in the way of progress on earth. On the contrary, He set His coming again for them, to take them out of the world to the Father's house, as the true expectation of their hearts.

"I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:3. The glorious prospect He gave His disciples was Himself coming again for them that they might be with Him where He is. And most glorious it is, for nothing short of this and nothing but this could satisfy their hearts.

This was not, however, a characteristic of Judaism, for Israel being an earthly people, called with an earthly calling, they were encouraged with expectations of blessing on the earth. In Christianity, connected as it is with Christ as rejected by the world and welcomed to the right hand of God in glory, the Holy Spirit is sent down. It is not to establish a religious system and a people in the world, but to connect believers with Christ in heaven, and so rescuing them from this present evil world. They are not of it even as He was not of the world. We, therefore, serve Christ in it as those who expect Him to come from heaven at any time to take us bodily out of it, and so be forever with the Lord.

We are not, then, to marvel if the world hate us, or think it strange if our path is one of suffering and reproach for the precious name of the Lord Jesus. But having Him who is now in heaven, in His exercise of living ministry and constant care over us, to look to and trust, the Holy Spirit down here in us to comfort us, and the hope of our Lord's coming for us, we are to show forth our love to Him by keeping His Word. Young Christian

Infirmities and Sins

What is the difference between infirmities and sins? Christ can be touched with the feeling of my infirmities, but He never had any sins, or any sympathy with them. I can get help for my infirmities, and in a sense can glory in them, but I could not in my sins.

There are two kinds of temptations. One is from without, all the difficulties of Christian life; Christ went through them and He has gone through more than any of us. But the other kind of temptation is when a man is drawn away of his own lust and enticed. Christ, of course, never had that.

You want the hatchet of Scripture for these latter; the Word of God discerns the thoughts and intents of the heart, and so helps us in that way to go through the wilderness.

Advocate or Accuser

A. P. Cecil

This is a practical question for Christians in these days. It is not a question of whether we are Christians or not, though it may often test the fact. Happily, simple faith in the Person of the Son of God and His work settles that question. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Acts 16:31. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." John 3:36. "Being now justified by His blood" (Rom. 5:9), and many other passages. But the question is, as professedly saved ones, Do we take sides with the Advocate, or with the "accuser of our brethren"?

The advocacy of Christ is founded on His righteous Person, and His perfect work. (See 1 John 2:1, 2.) His blessed work clears us from all the guilt of our sins, and in His blessed Person we have entire deliverance from our Adam state, He Himself-the dead, risen and ascended One-being our righteousness before God. It is on this ground that He intercedes-does the work of an advocate. If we sin after we have been brought into relationship with the Father as His children, then the advocacy of Christ applies. "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we [children] have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and He is the propitiation for our sins." 1 John 2:1, 2.

The office of the Advocate, then, is not to get righteousness for us, nor to put away our sins, nor to make us children. That is all settled by Christ's death and resurrection by faith in Him, for it is written, "This man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool. For by one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." Heb. 10:12-14. It is, therefore, to maintain us as children before the Father without sin, after we are justified, in face of the accuser of the brethren. (See Rev. 12:10.)

When a child of God sins, communion is interrupted; the relationship remains, but the Father has no fellowship with the sin of His child. The Advocate pleads against Satan, who accuses. The Father hears the pleading of the Advocate, who applies the Word to our walk (John 13:4, 5), brings us to the confession of the sin, upon which the Father "is faithful" to the righteous Advocate, and "just" to the Advocate who made propitiation, "to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9.

Thus communion is restored, and the child of God walks in the joy and light of His Father's countenance. The Advocate is literally the Manager of our affairs in our Father's court, and has reference to His government of His children in this world. It reconciles the fact of a naughty child and a Holy Father. (Compare 1 Peter 1:17.)

The Advocate does two things: He pleads with the Father for us, and He applies the Word to us. The one maintains our cause, if we sin, before the Father against the accuser. The other brings up our practical state to our standing, which is always maintained without sin by the righteous Advocate who has made propitiation. The failure in our practical state is from the fact of our having

the flesh still in us. Our actual state is that of having two natures in one person. With the mind I myself serve the law of God, with the flesh the law of sin (Rom. 7:25). And though by faith and in spirit we are no longer in the flesh, yet actually it is in us (though by faith we reckon it dead, hence the failure).

There is no excuse, but the fact is that we fail. Our standing as children always remains the same, even though we sin, owing to the righteous Advocate who has made propitiation. "If any man sin, we have an advocate." But we have failed in our walk. We are defiled. We stand forever cleansed from our sins by the blood of Jesus. It never needs to be applied again (Heb. 10:12-14; 1 John 1:7). Thus we always have access to God for worship. Our bodies are also washed with pure water (Heb. 10:22); we have had once the washing of regeneration (Titus 3:5). We are born again (John 3:3) and we need not then to be put into the bath over again. But we have sinned, we have our feet defiled, as it were, in passing through this sin-defiled world. This will not do for the Father's presence. What does the Advocate do? He applies the Word to us, washes our feet; the Word judges us and leads us to confession and self-judgment.

The remembrance of our Advocate who made propitiation leads us back on our knees to our Father who forgives us and cleanses us from all our unrighteousness. Thus the blessed work of the Advocate is, on the one hand, to plead for the children before the Father, if they sin, and, on the other hand, to wash their feet with the Word and to bring their practical walk and state up to their standing before Him.

Satan, on the other hand, is the accuser of the brethren. He accuses them before God day and night (Rev. 12:10). He is the author of divisions between the children of God by accusing them one to the other. "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple. For your obedience is come abroad unto all men. I am glad therefore on your behalf: but yet would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil." Rom. 16:17-19.

Satan would have Balaam hired to curse the people of God, and failing in that he would use the same prophet to teach Balak to mix with the nations around, and partake of their sinful practices. He would tempt David to sin in numbering the people of Israel (1 Chron. 21:1). He would resist Joshua the high priest, and seek to prevent his filthy rags being taken from him, and his being clothed in new raiment (Zech. 3:1). This is the accuser's wretched work.

Those who follow the accuser are called false accusers, slanderers (literally "devils"), because they are doing the devil's work. He whispers in the ear of a minister's wife (1 Tim. 3:11) some false story about some brother or sister in Christ. She spreads it about, and so the evil spreads, which perhaps may end in an assembly being broken up. Some aged sister sits leisurely at home (Titus 2:3), and not having much to do is ready to hear stories perhaps from some worldly person about some child of God. She spreads it about to others who come to see her. It is a slander, a lie, and so the devil does his work, and perhaps some child of God gets a wound or gets hindered in the work of the Lord for years.

I would solemnly ask every child of God who reads this paper: on whose side are you working? When some slander is uttered about a child of God, do you plead for him and go home to pray for him if you know he has failed? Do you go in love and humility and take the Word to him and wash his feet? (John 13:14.) This is the blessed work of the Advocate. Or do you listen to the story, go and spread it lightly to someone else without knowing whether it is a fact or not? And if you are hurt by some brother, do you go in a huff to God and pray in anger at him at prayer meetings (1 Tim. 2:8), and accuse him? This is to do the devil's work.

But how happy it is for us to be associated with the blessed Advocate, on the one hand pleading for our brethren if they sin, on the other hand carrying the Word to them and washing their feet. May the Lord grant His people increasingly this grace, so that the saints may see their blessed privilege of love to cover sins. "Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins." Prov. 10:12. And then to plead for our brethren if they sin, acting in faithfulness in carrying the Word to them, washing their feet, so that they might be cleansed from the defilement, and so overcoming the accuser by the blood of the Lamb on the one hand; on the other hand openly resisting him by the Word of their testimony like the blessed Lord Jesus Himself. He answered the devil when tempting Him by, "It is written." So should we.

If we sin, thank God we can always answer Him by the blood of the Lamb which is the balm for every wound. Thus the blood of the Lamb and the Word, the sword of the Spirit, are our instruments against the devil down here, while our Advocate maintains our cause before the Father up in heaven. In every case we are maintained, and we are over-comers, more than conquerors, through Him that loved us.

"There hath no temptation taken you

but such as is common to man:

but 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."

1 Cor. 10:13

Bible Challenger-00-December V.09

The first letter of each of the following responses will form the words which the heavens declare for more eloquently than any other words could ever convey. [3] The number in brackets indicates the number of missing words in each answer.

1. "On earth peace, _____men." [2]
2. "Her _____was like unto a stone... even like unto a jasper stone." [1]
3. "Receive ye _____ as Christ also received us." [2]
4. "By faith into this grace wherein we stand, and_____." [3]
5. "On their part He is evil spoken of, but on _____He is glorified." [2]
6. "Jesus standing_____ of God." [4]
7. "Filled with the_____ of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ." [1]
8. "This sickness is not unto death, but ... that the Son of God might be _____ ." [1]
9. "Who commanded the light to shine_____ [3]
10. "Whether therefore ye eat, or_____or whatsoever ye do." [1]

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

R. Erisman

Bible Challenger-11-November V.09

1. H earts Josh. 2:11
2. E xalted 1 Chron. 29:11
3. A ccord Acts 4:24
4. Vanities Acts 14:15
5. E ndued 2 Chron. 2:12
6. N ame Phil. 2:10
7. A ll power Matt. 28:18
8. N othing Jer. 32:17
9. D elivered Daniel Dan. 6:27
10. E ver and ever Rev. 5:13

11. A bsalom 2 Sam. 18:9

12. R evealed Matt. 11:25

13. T emples made with hands Acts 17:24

14. H allowed Ex. 20:11

"I call HEAVEN AND EARTH to witness against you this day, that ye shall soon utterly perish from off the land whereunto ye go over Jordan to possess it; ye shall not prolong your days upon it, but shall utterly be destroyed." Deut. 4:26

Matthew

Christ is presented in the gospel narratives in four distinct ways. In Matthew He is seen as Jehovah-Messiah, son of David, son of Abraham and presented to His people and rejected. In consequence, He passes to His higher glory as "Son of man," over all the works of God's hands (Psa. 8), through death and resurrection. Then He is presented as coming back as Son of man in judgment with the ensigns of Jehovah—power and great glory.

If you examine Matt. 24, you find the Messiah rejected by His people and cast out, then returning as Son of man in judgment, and delivering His people Israel. First dealing with Jews in the land of Judea (vss. 15-31), He appears for their deliverance. Then He gathers the "elect" of Israel from the four winds, from among the nations of the earth. (See Isa. 11:11-12; Zech. 2:6.)

Before that day comes, there is an immense heavenly interval, during which Christians are in relationship with Christ. We have this presented under three parables: the good and the evil servant; the wise and foolish virgins, and the faithful and the unfaithful use of the spiritual gifts of Christ as ascended and gone away for the time from Israel, until He comes and reckons judicially with His servants.

Then when the time we are passing through is past and gone, you find that after having come and delivered Israel (Ch. 24:15-31), and dealt in the true appraisal of the work and watchfulness of His servants (Ch. 24:44-51; 25:1-30), He sits upon the throne of His glory. There before Him are gathered the Gentiles (or nations), and His brethren after the flesh, the Jewish remnant of that day. The former are judged as to how they had received the message of His coming kingdom and glory through the latter. Believing and bowing to it constituted them the "sheep"; the rejection of it, the "goats." It is the judgment of the "quick" which introduces the millennial kingdom, the thousand years of earthly blessing. It will be seen that there are three classes of persons in this scene: the sheep, the goats, and His brethren.

You must quite set aside the human thought of this scene being a "general judgment" -there is nothing so foreign to Scripture. God does not confound together the saved and lost in that world, when by the truth He has wrought to separate them here, much as man has blotted out the distinction. In the judgment of the great white throne of Rev. 20, after a thousand years there is not a living man seen; in that of this chapter not a dead man is seen!

Besides all this, the ground of judgment in this solemn scene would embrace only a small proportion of the population of the world. Comparatively few will have had the testimony addressed to them, which forms the ground of judgment here, or any testimony from God. They will be judged according to their works—a totally different ground of judgment. This precludes the thought of its being a general judgment. Nothing but most careless reading, or the bias of human thought, could have so interpreted the passage.

With this judgment of the living nations the Jewish mind was most familiar; with a judgment of the dead but little. To us as Christians, the judgment of the dead is a familiar thought, and the

judgment of the "quick" very little known.

Mark

In the Gospel of Mark, the Lord Jesus is presented as God's servant in testimony, in His holy mission of service of love. At the close of it, when ascended and in glory, it is said, even then, "the Lord working with" His servants whom He had left to carry on His heavenly mission here below. He is still the worker as gone up.

In chapter 13 you find Him as one who has gone away, and gave to "every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch." Then He comes back to see if each is at his post of service and watching, whether at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning. Thus is the Lord's coming presented in keeping with the gospel of His service-His own work, or that of His servants. He comes back to see if each servant is at his post.

Here let me say to you that it is a very solemn thing for every soul to inquire, Am I filling up the little niche of service that He has given me? There are not only great gifts, but joints and bands, and the body of Christ is said to increase by the joints and bands, every joint supplying that which belongs to itself in the mutual and effectual working of the measure of each one part.

It is a great thing if each has found out his own path of service for the Lord. It may be by earnest prayer in one, by the use of his temporal means in another, of the spiritual gifts in a third. In one way or another, He has given us something to do for Him, and He is coming back to ascertain how each is discharging the duty given him, and "at an hour ye think not."

Therefore, after giving to each his work, and commanding the porter to watch, He says, "What I say unto you I say unto all, Watch."

Luke

In Luke, who is the great moralizer, presenting things morally to men's souls, and looking for a moral state in them, we find another thing. If Matthew gives us the official glory of the Messiah, and Mark the mission of service of One who "went about doing good," Luke gives us Himself-Jesus the Son of man and dealing morally with man.

What, then, will he look for as he presents to us the Lord's coming? A moral state of soul in those who have such a hope. In chapter 12, "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning"—that is, not resting here. "Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest: because it is polluted." If you compare every place in Scripture where you find girded loins spoken of, you will find the characteristic of the place is toiling and journeying on in a scene where your heart and affections must be braced up; they must not flow out here. It is a place of conflict and toil of some sort or other.

He speaks here of a "little flock." Ch. 12:32. He says, I have charged Myself with your circumstances; you need not be of a doubtful mind. "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord." Notice the word "like"—that the world might take knowledge of them. Nothing tests the heart like the coming of the Lord. I say there is nothing in Scripture that has such testing power with souls. If the Lord's coming is the horizon of the soul, see how little you will care for this scene, how little laying up for the future. The world would say, Well, it is plain what the man is doing. His hope is imprinting itself on his life, and acting itself out in all his ways. Of what value is this blessed hope if it be only held as a doctrine?

What is so blessed is that it brings a divine Person before the soul, and the heart is drawn out after Christ. It cultivates intimacy with Christ as we pass through this scene. Your heart is in the very condition that will welcome His return; it enjoys and cultivates a deepening intimacy with the One for whom it waits. Nothing brings Christ so personally before the soul as the hope of His coming.

John

John presents to us the divine Word manifest in flesh: the only begotten Son of the Father, the Son of God. And instead of a coming in power and glory, or in scrutiny of service, or as expecting a moral state of soul and heart to answer His own, He says in chapter 14, "I go"! I must take your heart and affections out of this place and all earthly hopes. I must lead them into the Father's house, where there are many mansions. David's kingdom and Messiah's glory must now fade away in your hopes and hearts. The day will come when all that earthly glory will be consummated. But your hopes are in another sphere. I am about to enter the Father's house as man. I have wrought out on the cross your title to be there. I enter it Myself in the title by which you will enter into it. Then "I will come again and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:3.

Thus His instruction deals with and supersedes the hopes of the Jewish hearts around Him, and, as a consequence, suits our hearts which have had no such hopes at all.

How blessed to find that the moment I am free in heart and conscience before the Father and in the knowledge of His grace, there was an abode in His house on high for me before ever the world was! Why is it that we never find any description of the Father's house in Scripture? You have the heavenly Jerusalem described in her wondrous glory and displayed as His bride, but never the Father's house. It is because you are supposed to be familiar with the Father's Son; the Father is revealed in Him. Then it is sufficient to know that He is there, and the heart rests content in peaceful joy in the sense that where Jesus is, it is enough! "That where I am, there ye may be also."

There is only one other passage in John (Ch. 17:24) that brings you thus into heaven and the Father's house. This is suited to John, because he is occupied in unfolding God on earth in Christ, not as Paul who rather shows us Christ as a man gone on high, and our place in Him in glory.

Christ as seen in Each book of the New Testament

The King in Christ Matt. 2:2

The Servant in Christ Mark 10:45

The Man in Christ Luke 5:24

God in Christ John 1:1

Power in Christ Acts 3:16

Justification in Christ Rom. 4:25

Enriched in Christ 1 Cor. 1:5

Comforted in Christ 2 Cor. 1:5

Liberty in Christ Gal. 2:4
Raised and Seated in Christ Eph. 2:6
Rejoicing in Christ Phil. 3:3
Complete in Christ Col. 2:10
Hope in Christ 1 Thess. 1:3
Glorified in Christ 2 Thess. 2:14
Faith in Christ 1 Tim. 3:13
Grace in Christ 2 Tim. 2:1
Order in Christ Titus 1:5
Refreshing in Christ Philem. 1:20
Better in Christ Heb. 7:22
Doing in Christ James 2:16
Suffering in Christ 1 Peter 4:13
Knowledge in Christ 2 Peter 1:8
Love in Christ 1 John 4:17
Truth in Christ 2 John 3
Walking in Christ 3 John 3
Preserved in Christ Jude 1
Glorying in Christ Rev. 1:5,6
N. Berry

Questions and Answers

QUESTION: Should we continue to ask for many things of the Lord, such as more of the Spirit's power, increase of faith and conversion of relatives? Or when these requests have been once laid before Him, should we leave them in His hands?

ANSWER: God exercises our hearts and our faith in delaying to give the answer to our prayers at times. The earnestness of our prayer will be according to the exigency of our need, and the consciousness that God alone can give the answer. The heart is exercised and kept in dependence, waiting on Him for the reply. Faith is kept alive. Other sources are not looked to when the soul has learned that He alone can do what is needed. It is a mighty engine, that of prayer, fitting expression of the newborn soul's dependence on God, in contrast to that nature which always would be independent of Him, though it cannot escape His righteous judgment.

Daniel had to wait in fasting and mourning for three whole weeks at one time before he received the reply (Dan. 10). At another time, "Whiles I was speaking," he says the answer came. It marks the fact that we are not indifferent to the result when the heart can, in earnest entreaty, wait upon God.

We may find, like Paul, that it is better for us that our desires are withheld. He learned also the reason why they were withheld after his thrice-repeated prayer; thus he could boast in that which was the taunt of his enemies, and the trial of his friends (2 Cor. 12).

We need to be "filled with the Spirit," and we need that our faith may grow. Many are the needs of our hearts, and if God is pleased to bless His people He exercises their hearts in prayer. Paul was indebted to some praying sister, perhaps, who could agonize in prayer before the Lord for those gifts with which he carried on his service in the gospel field. He could agonize in prayer for those he never saw (Col. 2:1), and Epaphras, too, could labor earnestly in prayer for those he knew and loved (Col. 4:12).

In the midst of our cares and conflicts we have to "be careful for nothing," but to let our requests be made known to God. God, who has no cares, keeps our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. But we have also to "continue in prayer." Col. 4:2. We have also to "watch in the same with thanksgiving" for His ever-opened ear. One of the exhortations in Rom. 12:12 is "continuing instant in prayer," or it might read, "pursuing in prayer."

The very "importunity" of the man at the unseasonable hour of midnight was the occasion of his obtaining the loaves (Luke 11:8). One can lay down no rules in such cases. The truly exercised heart gets its own answer from God. At times we can, with simple confidence, make known and commit the request to God. At other times the heart is conscious that it cannot but cry to God until the heart is at rest as to the petition. He will not give the answer till His own time, and meanwhile the soul is kept in earnest exercise. Faith is tested and patience tried, and the heart watches and waits on Him.

Again such is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us, and if we know that He hears us, we know we have the petitions that we desired of Him (1 John 5:14,15). He listens to everything which is in accordance with His will. He cannot fail in power, and we get the reply. The true heart would ask nothing contrary to His will.

The Object of My Life

If Christ is my life, Christ and heavenly things become the object of my life. Every creature must have an object. It is God's supreme prerogative not to want an object. He may love an object; but I cannot live without an object any more than without food. "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." 2 Cor. 3:18. There is the life; and this life has got a perfect, blessed Object which it delights in and contemplates: and this the Lord Jesus is in His glory.

Proverbs

Simon Patrick on the Proverbs

1683

Chapter 5:1-14

1. "My son, attend unto my wisdom, and bow thine ear to my understanding." I cannot too often awaken thine attention, (whoever thou art that putteth thy self under my instruction.) Especially in things of such moment as I am going to treat of: and therefore again I beseech thee, both to mind diligently, and to consider what I take to be true wisdom, and more than ordinary prudence.

2. "That thou mayest regard discretion, and that thy lips may keep knowledge." Which if thou observest, it will make thee so skillfully and discreetly cautious, that thou shalt not only be able to preserve thy self from the most subtle and dangerous deceits; but upon occasion to advise others, and keep them from being cheated.

3. "For the lips of a strange woman drop as a honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil." As too many are by the arts of an harlot, from whom thou oughtest to estrange thy self as much as if she were not of the commonwealth of Israel: for she pretending the greatest love, allures inexperienced youth by her flattering speeches, and sweet voice perhaps and songs, wherewith she enchants them; and making them believe they shall taste nothing but the most delicious pleasures, her soft and smooth enticements slip down glibly into their unwary hearts, which are taken with her.

4. "But her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword." But the beginning of this love is not so sweet, as the conclusion is bitter; and therefore think of both together, and believe what I now tell thee without making a trial: that after a short pleasure follows long pain, by the impairing men's health, strength, estates, and credit; which they cannot reflect upon without trouble and vexation, and (if she do not quite destroy their reason) be filled with remorse of conscience and anguish of spirit: for, like a sword that cuts on both sides, she wounds both soul and body.

5. "Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on hell." In short, leads those that follow her to an untimely, shamefully, and miserable end: to have ever so little to do with her, is to approach to certain and inevitable destruction; not only here, but in another world.

6. "Lest thou shouldest ponder the path of life, her ways are movable, that thou canst not know them." For though thou mayest think to make a retreat in time, thou wilt be deceived: she having more ways than thou canst ever know (winding and turning herself into a thousand shapes) to keep thee from so much as deliberating about thy return to a virtuous course of life.

7. "Hear me now therefore, O ye children, and depart not from the words of my mouth." All which considered should incline those that read these things, to be obedient to me: who do not desire to restrain them from anything that will make them happy; but in tender affection advise them, not to be enticed by her flatteries to depart from those fatherly counsels, which out of mere kindness I give unto them.

8. "Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her house." If all will not be governed by them, yet do thou, whose mind is awakened to attend unto me, wholly shun all familiarity with her; nay, so much as the least aspect towards her: avoid her as thou wouldst the plague; and be so far from going into her chamber, as not to come near the door of her house.

9. "Lest thou give thine honor unto others, and thy years unto the cruel." Lest thou forfeit all the reputation, which perhaps thou hast got by worthy actions, and grow contemptible among thy friends and acquaintance; who see thee prefer the company of harlots, and their base attendants, before that of the most virtuous persons: and thereby thou lose, not only thy fame, but sacrifice the flower of thine age, and thy precious time, to one that doth not love thee a jot; but could see thee perish without any pity.

10. "Lest strangers be filled with thy wealth; and thy labors be in the house of a stranger." And that will be the issue of thy impurity; which wastes first the strength and vigor of thy body, and then thy money and estate, upon a strange family, perhaps of another country: whose filthy lusts are satiated at the expense of thy spirits; and whose house and table are furnished with the fruit of thy care and labors.

11. "And thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed." And when things are come to this pass, that thy credit, thy friends, thy precious time, thy health, thy estate, and the pleasure too are all gone, and nothing left but an heavy heart.

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