

SCRIPTURE QUARTERLY MAGAZINE

by Various

A quarterly periodical devoted to the study of Scripture, providing articles, exposition, and theological reflection on a regular basis for churches and individual readers.

104 Chapters

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001 The Second Coming of Christ.

The Second Coming of Christ.

Luke 12:34-59.

J. N. Darby. The coming is not presented as something to learn, but is constantly identified with character. "As men who wait for their Lord," not as men who believe in His coming! Some had become cold and felt not that the Lord would not come but that He delayed His coming. In 1 Thess. they were converted to wait for God's Son from heaven. Expecting Him as a living reality is becoming to a Christian. The love He showed in His death would lead us to follow Him too. The Christian is between Christ's first coming to save him and the second coming to take him to Himself. You first get the "watching" and then "doing" while He is away. He makes them rulers over all He hath. The Holy Ghost dwells in the Christian and is the seal to us of the efficacy of Christ's work on the Cross! Christ waits till the joint-heirs are gathered to put them in glory. 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10. shows the coming as part of their conversion. In 2, it is the joy of the Apostle's service. In 3, it is connected with holiness, a great element in the Christian life. In 4, it comes in to show that the "dead in Christ" will not be left out of blessing. In 5, the truth appears as a warning, so that the conversion, ministry, holiness and sorrows of the Christian are connected with the Coming. The Lord's person is precious and prominent. He is the object of our affections, but in glory being with Him is the great satisfaction, thus expectancy detaches us from the world. Two things needed are: (1) at peace with God and (2) to love Him enough to care for His coming. The Living Saviour is our object and exercises our consciences. All the passages presume that His Coming will be in the life of the people addressed, which is the present expectation! The sleeping virgins were the same who awoke. Whether absent or present we should be pleasing to Him, when He shall come! What will it be to hear His words, "Well done, good and faithful servant!" "Loins girded" indicate hearts in order. "Flowing garments" make contact with the world, they need to be tucked up. Then "lights burning" is a full profession of Christ. When He will come He will make us sit down and feast on His things. In Php 2:1-30, we see His path. There are two parts of the Christian's life, (1) like Christ in coming down, (2) like Him now, since He has gone up. He always went down! John 13:1-38! gives one step in His service now; love delights to serve. Luke 12:37, gives the blessing! His satisfaction is to make them happy. We do not believe enough in His heart being towards us and we have not enough heart for Him. "Ye have continued with me in my temptations." What a Saviour! Constant expectation leads to doing (serving). He has entrusted us with talents; perhaps giving a cup of cold water to His own. That the Lord has committed a service to all is in the kingdom aspect. There are two ways of looking at the inheritance. (1) as a man walking here in trials and difficulties looking out for the inheritance in Heaven; (2) as sitting in heavenly places with Christ and going to inherit all that Christ possesses. The heavenly Christ is the royal Christ! He is the Morning Star, the forerunner of the Sun of Righteousness in judgment. The awakened man sees the dawn! The kingdom rule has to do with earth. But His being "crowned with glory and honour" is more than that. In the counsel of God, He is getting joint-heirs for the same glory as Himself. The Father has given us to Christ for His own satisfaction, bringing

many sons unto glory! On the Holy Mount, Christ was manifested in symbol with the saints in glory; they entered into the Shekinah cloud out of which came the voice of approval. The disciples feared as they entered, Moses and Elias had their part in the kingdom!

(Some notes of a reading with J. N. DARBY at Malvern, 1880.)

002 Two Companies — A Contrast.

Two Companies — A Contrast.

G. Cutting. In Matthew 28:11-15, we have a company of Christ-haters produced by the religious world of that day. In John 20:19, we have a company of those who loved the Lord and they now formed the assembly. Every one belongs to one or other of those companies. The Spirit has come to bring heavenly things before those who form the assembly, so that we find our interest in them. The other company cast out the heavenly Man. With which company do we associate? Suppose the case of a mother with her children, through the hatred of another family, her husband had been banished. After a time the latter make pleasant advances to the children who are taken by the seeming friendliness, as kindly and agreeable, there can surely be no harm in responding to their overtures. But the mother answers "remember, that whatever they may say or do, they hate your father, the one who loves you." Let us each challenge our own hearts! Are we subject to the smiles of the world? Let us not forget what the world did to our blessed Lord! The Holy Spirit would impress us with the awfulness of belonging to such a company, and with the blessedness of belonging to the family of God.

Three things marked the company outside of those closed doors, in the strongest contrast to the company inside. There was no fellowship that day between the two. The cross of our Lord Jesus Christ created a great gulf between His crucifiers and those who loved Him and the coming of the Holy Ghost made the gulf more apparent. It will be the same today, if the Holy Ghost has his way with us. Three things mark the inside company: (1) Love; He loved them and in response they loved him. (2) Joy; the moment they apprehended His presence, joy filled their hearts. (3) Peace; His first word to them was "Peace unto you!" It was a foretaste of heaven and the Holy Spirit can still make Christ's presence known to us, so that we get a foretaste of heaven also. In the other circle there were : (1) Hate; they hated Him without a cause. (2) Selfishness; the soldiers took the money. (3) Trouble and disturbance; for He whom they hated was risen. The devil was greatly disturbed when Christ rose from the dead and had to cover his blunder with the greatest lie ever invented. All was discord. Why is there strife, sorrow and discord in the world? Because there are still present the hatred that refused Christ and its selfishness. The only bit of heaven the world will ever know is the bit they see in us! Love, peace and joy we know inside. As we are able to show a little of what we enjoy inside to those outside, we are witnesses for Christ here!

(Notes of an address by GEO. CUTTING, 1901).

003 The Two-Fold Ministry.

The Two-Fold Ministry.

Notes of address by J. A. Trench, 1914. The work of the Spirit at Pentecost in forming the body of Christ is first revealed at Paul's conversion on the way to Damascus. From the teaching of the Apostle we see what the assembly, composed of all who are united to Christ in glory by the Spirit dwelling in them, is to the heart of God. "In other ages was not made known unto the sons of men." From the beginning of the world it was hid in God; creation is the sphere in which it is to be brought out (Ephesians 3:1-21.). There was a double ministry of the Apostle: (1) to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, his Gospel; (2) to make all see the fellowship of the mystery or administration, that has a larger meaning than fellowship. It is the practical arrangement and process of carrying out. To the intent that now to the exalted intelligences of the heavens might be known in the Assembly the manifold or all-various wisdom of God. His wonderful works in creation had displayed His eternal power and Godhead, but the Assembly was His masterpiece in which all the resources of His wisdom were displayed in forming out of heterogeneous races and conflicting nationalities (even Jew and Gentile) one body, who would recognise each other and walk as fellow members of the body of Christ. How infinite the grace that has brought to us that which had so great a place in the eternal thought and counsel of God.

Ch. 5. reveals the place it has in the heart of Christ. The truth of the Assembly being His Body did not bring out sufficiently how His affections were engaged in it. Hence when the Apostle touched the nearest and dearest of natural relationships, viz., husband and wife, the Spirit leads him to unfold about the love of Christ to the Assembly. He not only gave His life for her, shedding His blood, but gave Himself in the inscrutable glory of His person: 1:e., the love of formed relationship. He loved her as He found her (not sanctified nor glorified) with all the devotion that led Him to give Himself. He is now sanctifying and forming it like Himself that there may be nothing to hinder the enjoyment of His love by the revelation and ministry of all He is to her. Cleansing is going along with this and is necessary because of the flesh in us. We have to pass through with a view to His presenting her to Himself as all that His heart can delight in and that we may answer practically to what we are as chosen in Christ individually before the foundation of the world, holy and without blame before Him in love. But even yet we have not learned all the Assembly is to Christ. It is His own body as Eve was to Adam, in God's original incident of marriage. It is Himself, as Paul had learned in the first words to him from the glory of Christ and thus it is that His body can be presented as His wife. In loving His wife He loves Himself and in detail, tender nourishing and cherishing is wanted in that love of His to the Assembly. The mystery is great, but Paul is speaking to us concerning Christ and the Assembly. Revelation 19:1-21. gives us the celebration of the greatest joy in heaven, 1:e., the result of the presentation, when the espousals can be celebrated in heavenly glory and His wife comes out having passed the judgment seat arrayed in all that which had been the fruit of His grace in her. Revelation 21:1-27; Revelation 22:1-21 gives her display in the glory of Christ in the coming Kingdom. But 21:2, shifts the scene to eternity; no longer is her glory displayed to others, but she is for Himself, as a bride still in the freshness of His

affections after a thousand years of display to a wondering universe. That will be the answer to our hearts of the wealth of divine love lavished upon us. Well may Ephesians 4:1-32 commence with walking worthy of such a calling!

004 The Two Prayers in Ephesians.

The Two Prayers in Ephesians.

Notes of address by J. A. Trench, Harrington, 1914. The prayer in Ephesians 1:15-23, is to the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, because He is viewed as man, yet the object of all God's thoughts. While the prayer in Ephesians 3:14-21, is to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ because He is viewed as Son. The first prayer dwells on three great themes:(1) The hope of His calling. (2) The riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, (3) The greatness of the power that has put us in the calling. To apprehend these the eyes of our heart must be enlightened. The heart of the Apostle overflowed in ascribing blessing to the One who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings, etc., 1:e., worship. Observe it is His calling, the calling of God, not our calling. The hope of His calling is not specially the Lord's coming, but the realisation in the eternal glory of all that God has called us to in Christ as the fruit of His purpose. Even as the calling causes us to look towards heaven, the inheritance directs attention to the earth and it is in the saints. Originally, His inheritance was in Israel. We are not the inheritance, but heirs of God. We have obtained an inheritance in Christ. These thoughts should not be confused with each other. They are all quite distinct. Two great parts of this prayer are (a) That the Ephesians might know the place, (b) that they should know the power that brought them there. That power is exceeding great and finds its measure in Christ's resurrection from the dead. All around was in death. They were dead in trespasses and sins, amidst which God worked to effect His eternal purpose and at the same time to reveal Himself therein. The authorities sealed the tomb and set a guard determined that Christ would never interfere with mankind again, but He was raised from the dead by the glory of God the Father. That same power is in evidence in quickening us together with Him, and has raised us up together and made us to sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus. The first part of Ch. 1. reveals our individual place in Christ before God the Father in eternity; while the second part shows our corporate relation to Christ as His body relative to the work of God to accomplish His eternal purpose. In the third chapter, the Apostle sets forth his double ministry of the gospel and of the mystery, to make all men see what is the administration thereof. (In the A.V. the word is translated "Fellowship," which is a very blessed part of the administration, but the more comprehensive word is more appropriate as descriptive of the promotion of the truth as to the body of Christ on earth). That mystery relates to the present time. It will not be needed in heaven. It is intended that the conduct of the Christian here should be profoundly affected thereby. The angels, the mighty powers in heaven, see in the Church what they had not seen in creation, nor in subsequent manifestations of God in judgment and providence, grace and mercy There is shown a new departure in the ways of God that the Gentile should be co-heirs and co-partakers of His promise in Christ in the Gospel. Its ill-assorted components (Jew and Gentile) nevertheless form one body, consisting of all who belong to Christ, united to Him in glory. The prayer is not that we may know our place in Christ as in Ch. 1, but that the truth may be freshly dwelling in our hearts in the fellowship of the Christ. There are resources in the riches of His glory, 1:e., the power by which we may be strengthened by the Spirit in the inner man. It is the Father's Spirit that brings about

that the One who dwells in the Father's bosom may dwell in the Christians' hearts by faith! The first prayer was relative to our being in Christ, the second prayer with His being in us. He is the centre of eternal purpose; that centre is brought into our hearts by the Spirit. Development proceeds in that love revealed to us in the purpose of God. The love of Christ will lead the saints to apprehend the breadth, length, etc., of the boundless sphere of glory, (that cannot really be defined); and then to know that love itself which surpasses knowledge, which would seem to be a confusion of terms, but is quite in order. The first prayer is objective, since the power is operating externally; in the second prayer the power is operating in us internally, and is thus subjective in its bearing. It is very fitting that the prayer should conclude with such a wonderful doxology.

005 Three Arks.

Three Arks.

Hebrews 11:23; Hebrews 11:7; Hebrews 9:3-5.

J. B. Duff. The three arks, connected with the passages we have read, present our Lord Jesus Christ in three different aspects. In the first scripture, we have a beautiful child, fair to God; a type of the Lord Jesus, who grew up before Jehovah as a tender plant. On Him God's eye rested continually with delight, for He was the altogether lovely One. Moses was born at a time when the children of Israel were suffering under the oppression of Pharaoh, and he was the one through whom God was to deliver them, and bring them to Himself. When the ark was opened, the child wept; a beautiful picture of the Man of Sorrows, who was born under the law that He might redeem them that were under the law. "He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows." We read, "The man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth" (Numbers 12:3). This beautifully portrays Him who said, "I am meek and lowly in heart." Such was the character of Him in whom God intervened for the deliverance of His people. In the second scripture (Hebrews 11:7), we read, "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." He lived in an evil age, and "It repented the Lord that He had made man, and it grieved Him at His heart. And the Lord said, I will destroy man." How sad this is to read! Is there no remedy? Yes, thanks be to God! He found a means of perpetuating humanity, and that was by the ark which Noah built. In this, I believe, we have a type of the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. In His death the end of all flesh came before God. Sin, the flesh, and the world, were all judged and condemned at the Cross; and, of this, baptism is a sign (1 Peter 3:21); but, in resurrection, Christ is the head of a new race, who are entirely free from condemnation, and who shall be to the eternal pleasure and glory of God. In the third scripture, we have the ark of the Covenant, speaking of Him, who has entered in, and abides forever before the face of God; the One who is crowned with glory and honour. Before reaching that place, He must first be the Man of Sorrows. How beautiful that life was in God's sight, a life of perfect love and of sorrows meekly borne. All is treasured up before God, as set forth in the golden pot that had manna. Then we have the truth of Christ's death and resurrection brought before us in Aaron's rod that budded. He was cut off in the midst of His days, but He lives now "in the power of an endless life" as our Great High Priest. The tables of the Covenant teach us, that in Him God's disposition towards us in grace is expressed, and God's will has been established: and lastly, the Cherubim of glory remind us, that in Him all God's claims have been met, and His nature glorified. As we meditate upon these truths, we make no wonder that, in the description of the Holiest, the Golden Censer is mentioned first; for what can we do in the presence of God's glory, but worship and adore!

006 Three Precious Gifts.

Three Precious Gifts.

There are three things bestowed on every soul who, through grace, believes in Jesus. These are Life, Light and Liberty. In comparison with these all earthly riches, pleasures and distinctions are but as the small dust in the balance. Many ought to be in the settled enjoyment of these immense privileges who do not know that they possess them at all and consider it presumption for any soul to think of possessing them. Many earnest converted persons through bad teaching, self-occupation or legality are in the dark as to the elements of Christianity; the simple truths of the Gospel. In place of Life, Light and Liberty they are in the shadow of death in darkness and bondage. We are not going to expound nor to state fully the doctrines indicated. Our objects is to exhort rather than expound! Our Lord says, "I give unto my sheep eternal life," (John 10:1-42.). Someone may say, "I see that, but my soul-crushing difficulty is to know that I am a sheep of Christ." That is beginning at the wrong end. It is putting feelings before Christ and His word. If it is something about myself I am to feel in order to be saved, then I cannot have settled assurance. I must have something independent of myself, i.e., God's own revelation to rest upon. The eternal truth of God alone forms a real basis of peace which all the power of men and devils cannot disturb. By believing in Christ I get eternal life "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life" (John 6:47). Every one who hears His word and believes in the One who sent Him is the happy possessor of eternal life. A believer should know what he possesses. Of what value can it be for anyone to be left a large fortune in Canada if he knows nothing about it? The life is in Christ. As we get life so we get light in Christ. "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life" (John 8:1-59). God would not give us life and leave us in the dark. The proper sphere for the life we possess is the light in which we have the privilege to walk. The darkness is passed, the shadows are gone, the clouds rolled away, the dim twilight has given place to the full orb light of life, streaming into our souls and upon our path enabling us to judge ourselves and our surroundings according to the true light. Of blessed necessity as we get life and light, so we get liberty in Christ. He quickens, enlightens, emancipates! "If the Son shall make you free ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:1-59). He would not give us life and leave us in bondage. He sets us free from guilt and condemnation, from the dread of judgment to come, from the fear of death, from the present power of sin, as from its future consequences! May the reader lay hold of these things in simple faith and join in fervent praise to the Giver of these three precious gifts!

(Summary of article in "Things New and Old," 1874).

007 The Five Digit Name.

The Five Digit Name.

T. Oliver. That the human hand has five digits is common knowledge and each of them forming part of the hand has its own peculiar characteristics and functions, so we find in the prophetic statement of Isaiah 750 years before the even that God would put His hand into human affairs in a way radically different from his current intervention in the prophets, even in Isaiah, the grandest of them. The virgin's son would be called Immanuel, meaning "God with us." But two chapters further on the fingers of that hand are clearly identified in connection with the government on the throne of David and endless peace being the consequence. In contrast with the war-ridden condition in the world, it will indeed be a happy day! "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father (lit. the Father of Eternity), the Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6).

Corresponding to the thumb on the hand His name is Wonderful, 1:e., not merely that the coming Son would excite wonder amongst His contemporaries. That fact had abundant testimony. But a vastly deeper intelligence was conveyed in the usage of the word. The Hebrew word may be presented in English characters as "Pehleh" which really conveys the idea of an enigma, an inexplicable mystery, transcending all philosophic conception not to speak of expression. His humanity is inscrutable except in the channel of revelation. He is the miraculous intrusion of the eternal hand of God in time! In the Holy Scripture the same word occurs in the record of the incident when the Angel of the Lord intimated the birth of Samson to Manoah and his wife. In answer to Manoah's question he said "why askest thou after my name seeing it is secret (Pahlah)"Judges 13:18). Shortly afterwards he ascended to heaven in the flame of the burnt offering on the altar, Who else could ascend in the savour of the burnt offering but the One who would be subsequently described as the mystery of Godliness (1 Timothy 3:16).

Corresponding to the forefinger is the name Counselor which conveys the idea presented in the New Testament in the Greek word "Parakletos" translated in John's Gospel four times as "Comforter" relative to the Holy Ghost, and once in John's epistle translated "Advocate," relative to the One who has gone up to the Father's presence, representing our case in heaven, and as antecedent to the Holy Ghost coming down to earth to carry on the work. The literal thought in the meaning of the word is that One who is competent is called to our side to help, consequently it implies guidance for the person who entrusts his case implicitly to the Paraklete.

Corresponding to the middle finger of the hand is the name "The Mighty God." Not only is this central as to position but central as to significance! Who could possibly manifest all the other characteristics unless he were the Mighty God, 1:e., the singular El signifying unity of power and action. God is One. (1 Timothy 2:5). The plural Elohim occurs more frequently and signifies creatorial of the Trinity in Unity of action; the absolute supreme Deity in perfect harmony. Needless to say these terms transcend human comprehension. We endeavour simply to distinguish and use scriptural terms as they are used in Scripture.

Corresponding to the third finger of the hand is the name "Everlasting Father" of A.V., but literally, "the Father of Eternity." That is the logical consequence of the preceding title. Eternity is infinite for all purposes yet there is one who took eternity in the "Cradle" of His hand, so only God is really infinite. The thought is stupendous! The One who is the Son of God's love created all things in heaven and in earth visible (thrones and dominions) and invisible (principalities and powers). All created by and for Him! He is (not was, because "He is" implies the present) before all things and by Him all things subsist (Colossians 1:16-17). All the glories of creation are relative. The Creator alone is absolute and supreme! But an even greater thought than that is enunciated in the expression "Father of Eternity." He Who is the Son is its Author!

Corresponding to the little finger on the hand is the last title, viz., the "Prince of Peace." Although that may be simpler than the others as being in the realm of our comprehension, it involves the others as antecedents, because no one could be the Prince of Peace but He Who in His essence is The Mighty God and the Father of Eternity. He alone could make peace through the blood of His cross (Colossians 1:20). By Him alone will complete reconciliation of all things be effected. From time to time men have conjured with these ideas, conceiving an Utopian state evolved by human effort and resting on the supposition of human consistency. In recent years Peace Palaces have been erected at the Hague and at Geneva with the evident intent of ultimately ushering in a millennial state on the aforementioned basis. All through the histories of such movements ominous underground rumblings should have made the authors and promulgators of the ideas very uneasy, yet they hailed the result of "the War to end war" as something permanent. Suddenly the volcano, on which their peace and safety slumbered, blew up, blasting all the hopes of men and demonstrating the fallacy of the idea! There is no other peace of lasting value than the one which is God-given and commences with the individual who has not to wait for peace as the groaning creation has to do for the advent of its deliverer! The Colossian passage already cited goes on to say "you who were formerly alienated and enemies in mind by wicked works yet now has He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death" (Colossians 1:21-22). On the night of His betrayal He could say to His own in the upper room, "Peace I leave with you," in anticipation of the accomplishment of the work of redemption. That was the peerless legacy which will yet be communicated to all creation. The Prince of Peace will administer absolute justice! The government, not only of David's kingdom, but of the wide universe, will be borne lightly on His shoulder. The government of a small part of the world has defied the wit of man to perform properly. So periodically the rulers shuffle off the burden to the shoulders of others, as the responsibility incurred and the obloquy of failure would be too great to carry for any length of time.

008 A Psalm of Praise.

A Psalm of Praise.

J. B. Duff.

Praise ye the Lord! Praise the Lord, O my soul! Praise Him who left the heights of glory, and descended to the lowest depths that He might redeem us and have us for His own peculiar treasure. Jesus is His name. He created all things: He upholds all things: He shall inherit all things. Selah! He came into this world, took upon Himself the form of a servant, perfect in His obedience and love. These were put to the full test, but shone out in all their brilliancy, at Calvary. He was meek and lowly in heart. His pathway, in every detail, was a delight to God. His Father. He showed compassion to the wretched: He relieved the afflicted: He comforted the broken-hearted, Selah! He was filled with zeal for the glory of God. He rebuked the Scribes and Pharisees: He exposed their hypocrisy: He pronounced "Woe" upon their unbelief. He was misunderstood; despised and rejected; hated and unwanted. Yet He cherished no hard feelings towards His enemies: He did not resist, nor retaliate. As He hung in pain upon the Cross, hearing and feeling keenly the bitter mockery and cruel taunts of His enemies, He prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Selah! He loved His own which were in the world, and He loved them to the end. There was much about them that grieved Him — their pride and uncharitable spirit — but He loved them. Peter, at the last, denied Him; all His disciples forsook Him, but He loved them. He bore all things: He believed all things: He hoped all things: He laid down His life for them. He was buried, but He arose in mighty triumph on the third day, having overthrown principalities and powers and completely smashed the power of the Devil. Selah! In resurrection His love to His own was just the same. He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, and dried her falling tears. He had an interview with Peter, who had so grievously denied Him. He drew near to the two disciples who had lost hope; walked and talked with them on the way to Emmaus, and made their heart to burn within them. The Good Shepherd, who had laid down His life for the sheep, was now, in risen life, the Great Shepherd seeking His wandering sheep, and gathering them together. When they were assembled in the upper room at Jerusalem, He appeared in their midst, and shewed them the marks of His suffering love, and their hearts found peace and joy in His presence. Selah! Now, ascended and glorified, His love is still the same, and soon He is coming to receive us to Himself, when it shall be ours for ever and ever to enjoy to the full that love "which passeth knowledge." Praise the Lord, O my soul! Praise ye the Lord!

009 The Administration of the Mystery.

The Administration of the Mystery.

J. W. H. Nichols.

We have seen that the gospel of God is spoken of in Romans 1:2, as "promised afore by His prophets in the Holy Scriptures." In Romans 16:1-27, where the apostle speaks of "my gospel," (1:e., "by prophetic writings" not "the writings of the prophets"), and the epistles possess this character. In the "writings of the prophets" there is no reference to the mystery (Romans 16:25-26); the present period of time does not come within the scope of prophecy. During this parenthetical period the gospel is proclaimed world-wide — not for world-betterment, but to call out a people, irrespective of nationality, set apart to God and the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul's gospel evidently included the revelation of "the mystery," which had been kept secret since the world began. His commission, received direct from Christ in glory (Galatians 1:15-17), led him outside of his much-loved nation — for divine grace could not be bound within its narrow limits. "A people for His name" was henceforth the apostle's watchword, and his written ministry throughout breathes the spirit of his commission. For the unfolding of this wondrous truth (simply referred to in Romans 16:1-27), we must read Ephesians and Colossians. These contain the whole truth of Christianity: Romans laying the foundation; Ephesians leading us into the most exalted truths of Christianity, making fully known the secret long pent up in the heart of God. Colossians is closely allied with these two epistles, and the admonition of 2:19, indicates the special character of this epistle.

Committed to the apostle for the obedience of faith, this wondrous revelation took precedence over all else in his mind, and it was for this he gladly suffered (Ephesians 3:1). This chapter (Ephesians 3:1-21) is a parenthesis in the epistle, and clearly unfolds the essential principle and character of the mystery according to the counsels of God. This truth was hitherto hidden, and necessarily so; for, to have put Gentile and Jew upon one level would have been to demolish that barrier which God had carefully placed between; and if this line of demarcation were not observed, the Jew sinned. Now, however, they are co-heirs of the same body, and this was part of God's eternal counsels before worlds were. It was ever in the mind of God that when His blessed Son, having become man for the suffering of death, should be glorified, He should have companions fitted to share His acquired glory — "all of one" (Hebrews 2:1-18). Here let me draw your attention to the beautiful rendering of Ephesians 3:8-12, in J. N. D.'s new translation. Here, then, was a distinct manifestation of the wisdom of God. Creation had been the silent witness to His almighty power and glory; the earth, the scene of His government and providence; and afterward, Christ manifested in flesh showed His intervention and kindness on man's behalf; but here was something entirely beyond all that had been manifested before. His manifold wisdom as manifested to the highest of created intelligences by the bringing into blessed union with the risen and glorified One, the Church, which is His body, and though called out on earth, does not belong to it, for in Hebrews 3:1, we see the calling is heavenly. The assembly is His fulness, or complement, as Eve was to Adam (Ephesians 1:23). He fills all things, and the Church united to

Him forms the mystery which is now revealed. Surely the knowledge of this, and the place given us in God's counsels as to His blessed Son, should bow our hearts in worship, and fill our souls with the desire to walk worthy of this high and holy calling. For this the apostle prays (in chap. 3.), that Christ, who is the centre of all this glory, might be the supreme, commanding object of our affections, and that we, in company with "all saints" (the circle of His love), may joy in hope of the glory of God. This surely is the great antidote for all worldliness and laxity in our daily life. "Not holding the Head" was the Colossian snare, exposing them to philosophy and vain deceit — a needed word of admonition in our day, when there is such feeble apprehension and appreciation of the glorious truths which constitute Christianity.

010 The Amen and its Consequences.

The Amen and its Consequences. A soliloquy on 2 Corinthians 1:18-22.

Omicron (T. Oliver).

"God is faithful," is a prominent statement in Ch. 1 of the first epistle. The same statement "God is true" or "faithful" is made at the opening of the above passage in the second epistle. So it was a logical conclusion that the apostle's preaching was not equivocating, not saying "Yes" and "No" in the same breath or saying one thing and meaning another! Then the subject of his preaching, the Son of God, necessarily partook of the same character. The argument was one in ethical congruity, 1:e., it was unbelievable that one who had such a subject to preach and who enforced it emphatically would be untruthful or controlled by considerations of expediency! Then he leaves the subject of the character of his preaching, changing the verb tense from the aorist (egeneto,* was) [*Alternative reading is estin, 3rd pers. sing. pres. indic. of eimi to be, but the change to the perfect represents the action as completed re the present time.] in the first passage to the perfect (gegone) in the second passage, signifying that the substantiation of the truth is in Christ, the Son of God. The alternative and possibly better reading of 5: 20 is "in Him is the yea, wherefore also by Him is the Amen to God for glory by our means," 1:e., by means of the apostle and his associates. The promises of God have been fulfilled and ratified in Christ. He is the incarnate Amen of these promises. His words were based on immutable certainty. In His life and works the promises of God were fulfilled and justified. Similar scriptural references are "I am the truth," "He that is true," and "the Amen, the faithful and true witness," all putting emphasis on the same fact. To the Greek nai is added the Hebrew Amen to give greater emphasis, as in the Revelation where the most solemn expressions are rendered in both Greek and Hebrew.

(Justin said the Congregation uttered Amen after the prayers in the synagogue, the people shouting the Amen "so be it." They read "open ye the gates that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth, literally the Amen, may enter in" (Isaiah 26:2). An Amen if not well considered was called an "orphan amen." Whoever said such his children would be orphans, 1:e., due to a hasty Amen his days would be shortened. But when distinctly said at length, lengthening his days would be the result).

Then the Apostle in 5: 21, includes his readers in the association in establishment or confirmation in (or attachment unto) Christ, 1:e., an actual incorporation with Him. As to such there are frequent occurrences in Scripture. Here is a notable threefold statement: (1) confirmation or establishment (bebaion), (2) anointing (chrisas), (3) sealing (sphragizo), by God. It is always instructive to compare scripture with scripture, so (1) Confirmation "shall confirm you unto the end," (1 Corinthians 1:8) in the future tense; "stablished in the faith" (Colossians 2:7); "the word confirmed unto us" (Hebrews 2:3); "the heart established" (Hebrews 13:9) are other examples of the usage of the same verb. (2) Anointed, used in Luke 4:18 of Christ also in Acts 4:27, Acts 10:38 and Hebrews 1:9. How wonderful it is that what is predicated of Christ should be credited to us, that we should be anointed as He. This thought is continued as "unction" (1 John 2:20), and anointing (1

John 2:27). A spiritual intelligence in the power of the Holy Spirit (3) "Sealed," used in sealing the stone (Matthew 27:66) Jesus the Son of Man was sealed by God the Father (John 6:27), so we are sealed with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13), "sealed unto the day of redemption" (Ephesians 4:30). We are the property of God. In the Revelation, there are many instances of sealing, mainly referring to the servants of God, the tribes and the sayings or documents of prophecy. In 2 Corinthians 11:10, "no man shall stop me of this boasting" (literally "this boasting shall not be sealed to me"). Coupled with the sealing is the earnest of the Spirit given in our hearts. The Greek word *arrabona* is an exclusively Pauline expression appearing three times, viz., in 2 Corinthians 5:5; Ephesians 1:14, and here. Originally a Hebrew verb (see Jeremiah 30:21; Nehemiah 5:3), meaning to mix or to exchange or to pay first instalment as a pledge, it is also used as a cognate noun in the last sense in Genesis 38:17-18. It was probably carried to Greece by Phoenician merchants, then into Latin writings, hence to modern languages even into old Scotch as "arles" at the engagement of a farm worker! In the New Testament the Christians were not to think that their present spiritual endowment was final. It was a pledge of greater things to come. Under a Hebrew image, "first fruits of the Spirit" (Romans 8:23), the expression may be taken as an example of the genitive of apposition, 1:e., the earnest which is the Spirit.

011 Antecedents to Service.

Antecedents to Service.

L. B. Hogg.

It has been properly remarked that the history of the book of Kings is that of man in responsibility; whilst the history of the book of Chronicles is of God's purpose. Sad though man's history had been, yet 2 Kings, strikingly closes (2 Kings 25:28), with an intimation that man will, through the mercy of God, be lifted to a seat of honour. Man's history would have ended in irrevocable judgment had God not intervened in sovereign mercy for His own glory and man's blessing. In Chronicles we can trace God's purpose, and though man there, as ever, still fails, God continues His good pleasure by securing a remnant, see Ezra and Nehemiah, and in Malachi declaring His delight in such, and promising to them the rising of the Sun of righteousness. By Him eventually God's purpose is consummated. However, saints too, can find an honourable place in the record of God's purposes. In 1. Chronicles 4:10, we read of Jabez requesting God to bless him richly and enlarge his border. He was in accord with Ephesians 3:16-19; and such prayers find a ready answer. Another bright jewel found shining amongst the apparently uninteresting genealogies of the early chapters is that in Ch. 4:21-23, which would seem to be so pleasureable to God, that He digresses to draw attention to it, and thus doubtless to instruct and encourage those who would in their day and measure serve Him acceptably.

Before mention is made of the activities to which we are directed in 5: 23, the godly character of those under review is first given. This is most essential! We serve becomingly as we live becomingly! Shelah, the first named, means "peace," and assuredly all who serve commence there, whether this is taken to refer to the person and work of our Lord, as "He is our peace," and "He made and preached peace"; or, as may be more correct here, the manner of our service, as "endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Er, meaning "watcher," suggests Ephesians 6:18, followed by Lechah — "addition." "The families of the house of them that wrought fine linen" reminds us of the need of righteousness in our walk, Revelation 19:8, confirming the fact that here we have practical, rather than imputed, righteousness. Jokim (Jah sets up), and Joash (Jah supports) need no interpretation in the line of purpose. Moab in Jeremiah 48:11; Jeremiah 48:29, speaks of ease, pride, haughtiness. Saraph (burning-judgment) reminds us of the self-judgment needed that we may obey the word which says, "walk as wise, redeeming the time" (1:e., not at ease, idlers) "because the days are evil"; and also "walk worthy of the vocation or calling in all lowliness, meekness, longsuffering, etc., striving to keep the unity of the Spirit" (not unity merely) "in the bond of peace." These are some of the features traced for us here by God.

Before we touch the service of these men, we read, "these are ancient things." The word "ancient" means "removed." Matters relative to God's purpose are not connected with this world, being far removed from the sphere of natural man's interests. "Our citizenship is in heaven." Further, a vessel meet for the Master's use must be a purged (1:e., separated or removed) vessel. The

features expressed in the names before considered are old and unchanging.

Now we come to the character of the service. "These are the potters," to fashion or form. This was true of him who in Galatians 4:19, writes "my little children of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you." Truly the New Testament potter at work here, as Jehovah Himself in Jeremiah 18:6. Then as to their abiding place, "they dwelt amongst the plantations and enclosures" (N.Tn. by J. N. D.). The plants are of the Father (100:f. Matthew 15:13), and the enclosures or folds, being plural, would speak of assemblies where are placed the called ones according to eternal purpose. Shelah and his posterity abode there, yet not alone. One is already there, "they dwelt with the king for his work." The Lord is in His assembly, He delights to be there, and such are with Him. With Him speaks of holy intimacy and companionship. Dwelling with, precedes working for. As we know Him, we are able to serve Him properly. Abiding in Him, according to John 15:1-27 assures fruitfulness. Therefore we read "with the King for His work." "I will build my assembly." His interest and activity has it in view. He both died and lives for it. The gifts bestowed by Himself are given with the object of perfecting the saints, and edifying the body of Christ. Also every part, according to its effectual working makes increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. May this Scripture encourage us to seek our Lord's presence, and there be fitted for His work in the plantations and enclosures. L. B. HOGG.

012 Assembly Ground.

Assembly Ground.

R. K. Wilson.

There is a plain path marked out for the individual in 2 Tim., but for coming together in assembly 1 Cor. guides all in every place, till the Lord come. We read of the commandments of the Lord, and the Lord's Supper. In Luke 22:1-71 we have the Passover aspect of the Lord's death: 1 Corinthians 5:1-13 gives the Passover in its application to Christians. We are to keep the feast of unleavened bread! Evil is judged, all that man is, exposed and put away. The priests and Judas seeking to destroy Jesus showed what was in the heart of man. The Lord's Supper, given in connection with the Passover in the night of Christ's betrayal, speaks of the love of Christ and the love of God. If the Passover aspect of Christ's death tells us that the ground is cleared, the Lord's Supper tells us who occupies the ground! The Lord fills every eye. 1 Corinthians 10:1-33 teaches how Christ's death shuts the door on all not of God. Christians are shut up to Christ. They have a full cup of blessing! In 1 Corinthians 1:9, we are called into the fellowship of God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. In 1 Corinthians 11:1-34, we are shut in with Christ; His death opens the door to all that is of God. In 1 Cor. we read of God's assembly, God's temple and Christ's body; it is holy ground! The Holy Spirit has taken up his abode in the saints. Holiness and love were wanting at Corinth. Love builds up. It is the bond of perfectness, holding all together. 1 Corinthians 12:1-31; 1 Corinthians 13:1-13; 1 Corinthians 14:1-40, tell us how saints are edified. There is no arrangement nor president; not even elders are spoken of in 1. Cor. In 1 Corinthians 15:1-58, all have the gospel as Paul received it and preached it: Christ's death, burial and resurrection, and the seven witnesses that Christ is raised from the dead. Thrice we read of "the first day of the week." In John 20:1-31, we have the disciples together and Jesus in the midst; peace and gladness filling their hearts. In Acts 20:1-38, they came together on the first day of the week to break bread; not because Paul was there, but as their custom. In 1 Corinthians 16:1-24, it is in connection with the collection for the poor saints. In a day of ruin we have to turn to the scriptures for directions as to God's order in His house as Ezra did. There was one centre for God's earthly people. Christ is our centre and our altar. Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp bearing His reproach!

(Extracts from the late R. K. Wilson).

013 Notes on Baptism.

Notes on Baptism.

T Oliver (1) A Historical Survey. The subject of Baptism has provoked more unkind feelings and acrid words than probably any other Scripture question has, and yet if people realised its significance the strife of tongues would cease. It is an individual exercise and not a responsibility of a local Christian company. There is only one Baptism as one Lord and one Faith (Ephesians 4:5). It may be well to mention that on the subject of the Baptism of the Spirit there is little or no difference of view amongst real Scripture students. "By one Spirit we (the Christians) are baptised into one body." With that matter water baptism is not directly connected. The fracas is over water baptism. Christendom has been divided into two great opposing camps according as the individuals favour one or other of two views:- (1) Believers' baptism, (2) Household or paedobaptism, (from paidion, Greek word for child). In the first place we shall take a brief survey of the history of the subject in the last nineteen centuries. The first mention of baptism is in connection with John the Baptist's mission. His baptism had the result of establishing a confessedly repentant and separate remnant in Judaism. The result of his preaching and action was to prepare a company who would ultimately receive the Lord. His baptism was to the life of Christ while here and thus is quite distinct from baptism in the Christian era, the significance of which is to the death of Christ. However, they were on the same principle relative to their surroundings. Moreover, that remnant became the nucleus of the Christian company after the death, resurrection and ascension of Christ and the consequent coming of the Holy Ghost to earth. The subject of baptism receives 25 citations in the Book of Acts, , eight of them referring to John's baptism. There were instances of believers who only knew John's baptism, e.g., (1) Apollos (Acts 18:25), (2) twelve disciples at Ephesus (Acts 19:3). The bearing of the subject formed a very important element in the preaching of the Apostles.

Early in the second century of the Christian era the wholly unscriptural doctrine of regeneration by water baptism had obtained many adherents. So it was only a step to obtain security for heaven as early as possible in the life of the person. Hence the ritualist has ever since had his children baptised in view of the danger of their dying before the rite could be performed and thus they would be shut out of heaven. On the contrary, Scripture shows that baptism only relates to earth and to people living thereon. The first condemnation of the practice of infant baptism recorded was by Tertullian in 197 A.D. Pelagius, a contemporary of Augustine about 400 A.D. denied the validity of baptismal regeneration but said that baptism only introduced the child into the Kingdom of God where it had the opportunity of receiving salvation. Columba and the simple monks of Iona in the sixth century are credited with being the first who are mentioned as deferring baptism until a profession of faith was practicable, but sometime later, in the next century, they were crushed by papal edict. Somewhat later, the Armenians contended that baptism should be by request of the individual, so as to be a confession of faith. They insisted that the practice of infant baptism had brought "the world" into the Christian profession. The persecuted Waldenses (1200-1500 A.D.) seemed to have arrived gradually at the same conclusion as the persecution grew. In the

Reformation of the 16th century, Luther, founding a great national church, was unable to curb the general custom of infant baptism and the current doctrines founded thereon. Similarly, Zuingli failed in Switzerland! About the same time, the Anabaptist ("baptised again") movement sprang up in Germany and Switzerland, etc. (It was really the emergence to public view of a river which had been flowing underground for a thousand years; the obscure martyrs had carried on the testimony throughout the centuries). Unfortunately the Anabaptists were confounded with a communist parallel movement and thus they were persecuted both on political and ecclesiastical grounds. Many were put to death by Romanists and Protestants alike!

Towards the end of the 16th century there sprang up in England two classes of congregations:(a) Independents who baptised infants, one of whose parents was a believer, (b) Baptists who baptised believers only. The 17th century witnessed the rise of the Society of Friends who in spite of intense persecution bore unflinching testimony to the Holy Spirit's indwelling of believers and oral ministry thereby. But in pressing that truth they became lop-sided in dispensing with all ordinances including Baptism. Although a Baptist, John Bunyan declined to make Baptist views a ground of fellowship. In the first half of the 19th century, the early Brethren were not agreed as to the practice of baptism. J. N. Darby taught that baptism introduced a Christian's child into a place of privilege, but he condemned the Anglican theory of baptismal regeneration. At first he had only a small minority of his associates who shared his views. Many others of his associates were strong advocates of deferring baptism until a confession of faith was possible. Prominent amongst these were G. V. Wigram, William Kelly and C. H. Mackintosh. We shall make quotations from their writings later. From an analysis of the historical development of the subject one is forced to the conclusion that a strong element in the practice of believers' baptism was originally developed as a protest against the abuse which had been made of the paedobaptists' contention.

2. The General Bearing of Baptism. The doctrine of baptism is conclusively stated in Romans 6:3-4, "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ were baptised into His death? Therefore, we are baptised with Him by baptism into death." The preposition in the A.V. text translated "into" really bears the construction of "unto the significance of" His death. The eunuch in Acts 8:1-40, clearly apprehended the implication of Philip's preaching and the bearing of the prophetic teaching of Isaiah 53:1-12, concluding with the statement "His life is taken from the earth." He saw that if the only One who had a perfect title to live here had His life taken from the earth it was time for him to be associated with that One in the place of death and burial symbolically set forth by baptism. That would close the record of his life as a man of the world. Moreover, it should be noted that the eunuch was a man of marked distinction in the world's affairs. Baptism for him would imply that he could not again be recognised as one of the world's grandees! That is no less incumbent on all others who follow the same course, hence the sequel for every baptised person is to be true to the implication of his or her baptism. We should not be found striving for a place in the world which cast out our Lord.

(The scriptural mode of baptism was undoubtedly immersion in water). Some hold that baptism appertains to the Jew and does not apply to the Gentile urging that the commission in Matthew 28:1-20, was given as an antecedent to the Kingdom to be instituted. But in the Acts, the Apostles preached and enacted baptism repeatedly; indeed it is one of the fundamental principles in the initial stages of the Christian era. So that anyone ignoring baptism is not really on Christian ground. He may be right for heaven, but he is not right for earth! The theory of baptismal

regeneration enunciated in the early Christian era is an untenable fiction. Water baptism has nothing whatever to do with heaven, its sole concern is for earth. No mere ordinance can put one right for heaven! Baptism by the Spirit is into the one body which has the issue of heaven in view. The Baptist View. The Baptist view is that baptism is the sequel to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is maintained that (1) it is an act of obedience to a command of the Lord, proving to the public the honesty of our belief. (2) It is a figure of what has taken place in God's reckoning in relation to the Christian as soon as he believes. (3) It is the answer of a good conscience. (4) It is a public confession of faith, that in scriptural language the individual has put on Christ. He has adopted a new profession with the privileges and responsibilities thereof, 1:e., henceforth he is on the Lord's side against the world. The illustration is sometimes given that just as immediately on the death of a king his successor becomes ruler although his coronation may be deferred for some time when he will be declared officially king before the world at large. The believer is baptised in the name of the Trinity and of the Lord Jesus.

Baptism is not only a figure of association in death but also of burial. We are buried with Him by baptism. A further thought is impressed in baptism being a figure of resurrection because Romans 6:4, goes on to say, "That like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Again "buried with Him in baptism wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God who hath raised Him from the dead" (Colossians 2:12). The alternative translation of "wherein" as "in whom" is rejected by this contention. So by coupling both ideas of death and resurrection in the thought of baptism it would be untenable to baptise infants since obviously they could not walk in newness of life. Christian baptism would thus be the door into the sphere of Christ's righteousness and life (Many baptists would probably demur to the last rendering of their view since they would admit that baptism has no subjective import).

Baptists having baptised one who makes an unfounded profession of faith and subsequently believes do not as a rule baptise that individual again. (If they did it would be without meaning). On the negative side the Old Testament incidents which are adduced by the paedobaptist in support of his view, viz., Noah and the flood, Abraham and circumcision, Moses preserved in the ark among the bulrushes, the passage of the Red Sea, Hannah's presentation of Samuel for service in the House of God, etc., are all capable of diverse expositions and prove nothing conclusively. Then as to the three households baptised relative to the apostle Paul's ministry, viz., those of Lydia, the Philippian jailer, and Stephanas, there is no reference to the constitution of these and the inclusion of unconscious infants therein would be a speculative hypothesis. On the positive side of the argument action is taken on "he that believeth and is baptised shall be saved" (Mark 16:16). In Peter's initial ministry at Pentecost his instruction is direct and unequivocal, "repent and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins"; also "they that received his word were baptised"(Acts 2:41). Again in the Cornelius incident "can any man forbid water that these should not be baptised who have received the Holy Ghost as well as we" (Acts 10:47). Since the Holy Ghost had fallen on them all, there could not be any question about their baptism. Believing, repentance and baptism are indissolubly joined together in the Acts, To the argument that children of believing parents are holy (or set apart) and thus suitable for baptism (1 Corinthians 7:14), the answer is given that they are holy because of relation with their believing parents and baptism would not make them less or more sanctified. It is denied that there is any

sphere of divine favour instituted through baptism. The baptist views infant baptism as valueless just as John's baptism was invalid after the death of Christ. Thus would be like having paid a debt in counterfeit coin. The debt would still require to be discharged. So the individual would still need to be baptised and that would not reckoned "baptising again" in any real sense. (Unfortunately the majority of writings on the subject of baptist views are largely occupied with pouring ridicule on the views of various opponents and but little doctrinal evidence is offered. So from the mass of verbiage it is often difficult to extract thoughts of value in the argument).

"I can only say that I have for 32 years been asking in vain for a single line of Scripture for baptising any save believers or those who profess to believe. Reasoning I have had, but of direct Scripture authority, not one tittle. It is always with extreme reluctance I touch on the subject of baptism. There is such a difference of judgment amongst those whom I love and honour that it is not for profit to discuss it. All enquirers should take the N.T. and study carefully and prayerfully, and if they cannot find anything how can they act without clear divine authority." C.H.M.

Though baptised myself as a believer, I cannot sympathise with such or ignore scriptural light on baptism. On the other hand, who can fairly say that paedobaptism has been shown to be an article of faith. Tracts have been published, but we are far from having that warrant of Holy Writ which we justly look for before we accept any doctrine as Christian. Intelligent men on all sides admit that the households of Scripture decide nothing as to this. There may have been no infants or the household might be said to be baptised without including them, because of the nature of the case. Never do we hear of Peter or any other proceeding to baptise in the first place but to preach, then those who received the word were baptised, but it was the receiving and confessing the name of the Lord, not the baptism which constituted them disciples, however certainly the initiator rite followed their confession. The word of God is too wise to insinuate that He (the Philippian jailer) was baptised before he believed because it is afterwards said that he rejoiced believing in God with all his house. It is remarkable while his joy is given in the aorist, his faith is described as implying the present or continuing result of what is past. Nothing can be more palpably erroneous than saying that "Baptism is a subjective thing," such indeed is the notion of the Baptists who reduce baptism to signify the state of the baptised, whether there is any subjective reality depends on the faith of the recipients." W.K. The above are fair examples of the views of C. H. Mackintosh and W. Kelly on the subject. Although G. V. Wigram had definite baptist views they formed little or no part of his ministry or writings. It is narrated that a pert lady once said to Mr Darby "What does Mr Wigram hold on baptism?" She was unprepared for the cutting rejoinder "Madam, he holds his tongue." If we realised how little we were true to the significance of our baptism, we, too, would seek to emulate G.V.W.'s practice.

Household or Paedo-Baptist View. The name in which baptism is enacted is more important than the mode, amount of water, period of life, or the person performing the rite. The usual "Believers baptist" standpoint is apt to be in collision with Scripture! The outstanding stumbling block is that the Apostle Paul baptised households. At once the critic asserts that the constituents were all converted. Scripture does not say so. In making the statement unconsciously he gives away his ground to the other side, who maintain that the trend of Scripture doctrine would justify household baptism. The Baptist is very upset when asked if his family of small children will go to heaven if the Lord came immediately. He will reply, "Yes, certainly"! On being asked for scriptural warrant for the statement he will probably make irrelevant remarks. He accepts the value of the death of Christ

assuring a place in heaven for his children without Scripture, and denies them (with Scripture) a place on earth in the external sphere connected with the House of God where God dwells. We are quite sure that his young children will have a place in heaven due to the sovereign grace of God, but there is no specific Scripture saying so. The Baptist's great contention is that his opponent has no Scripture evidence for his action, but he cannot have his argument both ways! In Acts 2 Peter abjured his hearers to repent and be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ. Remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Ghost followed, which is the reverse order from the Baptist's theory. The promise was to the Jews and their children whom he exhorted to save themselves from that untoward generation. (There was no longer salvation in Judaism, the best circle of the world.) The Jew was to dissociate himself from the world! Before the crucifixion the Jew said, "His blood be on us and on our children," the Holy Spirit said, "The promise is to such." Peter opened the door to let the repentant Jews and their children into the kingdom of heaven. Then Saul of Tarsus was told by Ananias "arise and be baptised and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." (Obviously the washing away of sins could not be relevant to eternal matters). In a governmental way he was to dissociate himself from the sins and the place to which they attached. He had to clear himself of identification with his guilt as a Jew and enemy of Christ. He was to lead a new kind of life under the authority of the Lord. His was a business to be henceforth run under new management! In Acts 16:1-40, Lydia's heart was opened, she and her house were baptised. (No reference was made to their hearts being opened). They were brought into Christian association in consequence of her faithfulness. In 5: 32 the Apostle spoke the word of the Lord to all that were in the jailer's house (a wider term than in 5: 31), 5: 33 says he was baptised, and all his straight way, 1:e., his house, viz., those under his direct responsibility. The Christian does not advocate baptising all children but only those who are his! In 5: 34 the structure of the sentence in the original implies "he, believing in God, rejoiced with all his house." "Believing" is in the singular, but his house partook of his joy. Conversion made a revolution in the house of the erstwhile brutal ruffian! Conversion is not worth much if the onlookers do not recognise a great change. Then as to the household of Stephanas, the Apostle did not remember having baptised any other, so that no responsibility attached to either baptiser or baptised else he would have remembered. "Children obey in the Lord your parents" (Ephesians 6:1). The literal rendering puts emphasis on "obedience in the Lord." They teach their children the truth, which laid hold of will spoil them for the world!

1 Corinthians 7:14, is in perfect accord showing that the House is a place of privilege. Under the Law, the Jew put away strange wives as unsanctified, but in grace the "believing" sanctifies the "unbelieving" element in the marriage bond which was declared valid and the children legitimate so that they could enter the outer court of the temple. In 1 Peter 3:21, baptism is the figure of the Noah incident of 5: 20, "which now saves you," (obviously as to earth only). The Noah type of the Lord's death did not indicate the atoning value (of which only the blood could be witness) but the separating result of His death condemning the world-system for the Christian household. The Jewish Christians' good conscience demanded why they were enduring suffering, while under the old Jewish order, from which they had been dissociated, obeying God gave earthly blessing. That question is answered by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. the consequence of His death. Its significance separated the Christian from the course of the world and saved him from the world and its principles. Baptism puts a person under the authority of the Lord, but eternal salvation is in Christ! Baptism is only relative to life on earth. The erstwhile malefactor who died with Christ was

not baptised. He had forfeited the right to live. (So there is no sense in baptising a dying person). But of all the blood-bought through he will be the only one who can say, "I was crucified with Christ." The Apostle said, "I am crucified with Christ." That was a spiritual apprehension which led him to be true to his baptism! The Baptist's view was due to a revulsion of feeling against the age-old gross abuse of the Scriptural ordinance. But the abuse does not render invalid the significance of the ordinance! Hence of much greater consequence is that we subject ourselves to scrutiny as to how far we are true to the significance of our baptism. The Christian baptises his children in view of their living on earth confessedly separating them from the world to Christ by baptism and he is responsible to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. If the parent is separate in heart from the world, he will not train his children for it!

There is not any command to be baptised! The Lord instructed his Apostles in Matthew 28:1-20, but that was not a universal injunction. Moreover, it is not a public confession. It simply introduces to the outward privileges of christianity which are no mean advantage in the mercy of God. Baptism is not a symbol of being dead and risen with Christ. "We are buried with Him by baptism unto death" (Romans 6:1-23.). Baptism is putting on Christ (Galatians 3:27). To the eye they were identified with Christ thereby hence there was no sense in seeking to put on Moses (the Law). Baptism is not a sign that they had put on Christ previously! Israel (men, women and children) were baptised to Moses in the cloud and in the sea thus separating to him under his authority. Whether they had faith or not was tested by the wilderness journey. A soldier may wear a uniform and be a traitor, nevertheless, he is responsible in a very different way than a civilian is! Noah prepared an ark to the saving of his house (Hebrews 11:7). (In baptism, salvation and not forgiveness of sins or conversion is in view). Noah's sons and their wives shared his salvation, although they had no direct dealings with God.

It is evident that immersion was the proper Scriptural procedure but sprinkling has become common and christian profession is recognised thereby. The water (much or little) signifies association with the death of Christ. Baptism has no reference to a subjective state in the soul. Baptism does not confer any virtue, it is purely objective. In the Cornelius incident of Acts 10:1-48, the Spirit came first because of the natural prejudice of the Jews. There are only two things in Christianity, evident to the eye, viz., Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The former is initial and non-recurrent, but the Lord's Supper is recurrent. "As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death, till He come" (1 Corinthians 11:26). I did not baptise myself, but in partaking of the Supper, I have the privilege of confirming my baptism. Every time I put my hand to the cup I am symbolically taking the Lord's side against the world!

Extracts of Letters from J. N. Darby.

I would as much avoid being an antibaptist as a baptist. If you can offer to persons means of appreciating truth and prevent souls from falling into sectarian spirit I desire no better (Vol. 1:244). They have been harassed by ardent baptists; such a display I have rarely witnessed, it was deplorable. I decline controversy and sought only liberty of conscience. The whole Baptist principle is nothing more than conscientious want of light. I occupy them rather with Christ for half the evil is being occupied with ordinances, whatever side may be taken (1:309). Reference to John's baptism, as far as it went, would have hindered His (Christ's) being put to death. I see a command to baptise, none to be baptised (1:363). We purge ourselves from evil in a great baptised mass.

But there has been much confusion and abuse that one must have patience with those thrown on these ordinance ways of correcting them (1:444).

I never have pressed any to baptise their children. While recognising it as a christian ordinance I think it is in scripture purposely left in the background, while eternal life and union with Christ are fixed in Him. Ordering of all on earth is provisional. I have no doubt as to infant baptism of the children of a Christian. But I feel that Christ did not send me to baptise. I leave to others activities on either side. With Peter it is everywhere to repent and be baptised for the remission of sins and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. He does not go to our death with Christ or resurrection with Him (2:55-66). I fear in being occupied with the manner (of baptism) Christ should become less the only object of the heart (2:176). Peter said, "Repent and be baptised for the remission of sins" not "because your sins are remitted." "Be baptised" means "become a christian." It was profession they came into. If true faith and repentance were there they got the actual administered remission and received the gift of the Holy Ghost.... My thought has always been to connect baptism ecclesiastically with the house (one of the two characters of the assembly), not with the kingdom. Baptism is the formal entrance into the place of privilege (2:494). The mischief is occupying people with an ordinance. If a person has not been baptised, he ought to be. I should not rebaptise a person sprinkled in infancy, though I do not like the form . . . I have no wish to enter controversy with you on baptism.

I dread a sectarian tendency. It blots out the House of God, where God's blessings and presence are found. But I have no wish to persuade anyone on these points (2:536, 569).

Baptism is to death; no hint in scripture of giving life. The English service gives forgiveness of sins to an infant who has never committed any and has no real forgiveness by redemption at all (3:242). If one makes it a sect it is a very great evil; baptism becomes the centre of union instead of Christ. The Holy Spirit has never been received by baptism of water. As to baptism of infants I have never tried to persuade anybody; I believe everyone must act according to his own conscience. The children of believers are relatively holy. 1 Corinthians 7:14 has precisely that bearing. I deny this is a matter of obedience, those who treat it so upset christianity in its first principles. (The doctrine of remission of sins and receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost by baptism comes from the enemy) (3:328-329). A person who never has been baptised ought to be before breaking bread. The only commission to baptise was to the twelve to baptise Gentiles (not Jews). Baptism has nothing to do with the unity of the body, but admission by a form which expresses Christ's death (3:495). A great mistake Baptists make is not seeing that there is a place of blessing set up by God besides the fact of individual conversion (3:557). I am baptised to His death, not because I have died! I wash away my sins, not because my sins are washed away. It is a formal entrance into the privileges, not a witness that I have received them. I have never sought to convince anyone. If they are content to follow their conscience I have nothing to say, but I am sure if scripture be right their views are wrong (3:560).

Baptised for the Dead. The Greek preposition *huper* in conjunction with the genitive case is translated in the A.V. 113 times "for," 8 times "of," 6 times "instead of" or "on behalf of," once "concerning," J.N.D. in one place renders it "in view of" or "with reference to." Other scholars concur in translating the word in this instance as "concerning" or "relating to," and reject the superstitious theory of baptising a living person for a dead one who had not been baptised. The

par. (5:5:, 20-28) is parenthetical while 5: 29 is connected with the subject of 5: 19, where the denial of the resurrection from the dead is shown to involve that Christ was not raised and if so all were plunged in hopeless gloom. Because in that case it would be absurd to spoil one's prospects for this life by being baptised; since baptism formally dissociates us from the old manner of life. We would be identifying ourselves with the death of one who was reckoned by the world to be unfit to live any longer, and there would be no further prospect beyond the grave. Hence the argument would be to enjoy all that we can of this life. But death is not the goal; resurrection opens a new sphere of endless blessing! At the time, persecution was rampant and many were dying as martyrs, but baptised persons were stepping into the places of the dead, just like fresh soldiers stepping forward to fill the blanks in an army due to casualties.

We have illustrated the subject by reference to a historical incident. The first half of the 18th century was marked by Jacobite turbulence in the Scottish Highlands. In 1757, the thought occurred to William Pitt, (the elder), that the warlike character of the Highlanders could be used to better purpose against the King's enemies. So he invited the Highland chiefs to form territorial regiments. As a result, Cameron of Lochiel raised 1100 Cameron men who measured more from shoulder to shoulder than any other 1100 men in the British Isles. In the following years, they performed doughty deeds of valour. During the two centuries which have elapsed since the initiation of the regiment, successive waves of recruits have filled the depleted ranks. But it is safe to say that never since its initiation has the regiment presented such magnificent men as at first. Yet although these have passed away, the Cameron Highlanders continue; and at every juncture since, they have sought to maintain the honour of the regiment. So we may not compare favourably with the faithfulness of the early Christians, but we are responsible to maintain the Christian traditions as presented in the scriptures, in the same way as they did, and to the best of our ability, with the same magnificent outlook relative to the Coming and the Judgment Seat of Christ. T. OLIVER.

014 The Break-up — Who will stand.

The Break-up — Who will stand.

F. T. H.

We should not only know but feel the break-up of the church. They would never turn from the path of obedience who were conscious why it was directed for them. To do right things effectively, we must have a sense of what has brought about the doing. Why did the remnant of old hang their harps upon the willows? (Psalms 137:1-9). By the sense that they were in a strange land and Israel was in captivity. Others merely joining them would have little interest in their procedure, because not in the same circumstances. So also was the remnant in Malachi 3:16. They did right because intelligently with the Lord, as to his interests here. A remnant would have been out of place in Solomon's day. The visible church is in ruins, but God has a path for His own. However great the general failure, there is a state and service that please Him as well as if all were in Pentecostal order. If we only do right as attracted by those already correct in mode, we need not be surprised at the fall later. At the setting-up of the church, a remnant would have been wrong, for the order of the assembly was of God. The Spirit never recalls the whole when once departed from the path of truth, but raises a testimony in a few who feel the departure and ruin. To be truly in the remnant is not simply to join it; but to be there because He is there. The time of break-up is for the exercise of a living faith. The moment of the shipwreck (Acts 27:1-44.) was the opportunity for faith. In days of prosperity there was no demand on faith; but in the break-up the faithless were helpless and the man of faith was master of the situation. It is always in crisis that faith yields its vast revenues. May the Lord help us, that our hearts may rise to Himself, learn His ways and resources in the storm and prove to be more than conquerors as rejoicing in the Lord. To act suitably we must, like Moses, know His ways, not merely observers of His acts or imitators of others. We may do right, without being established in the reason why, or in sympathy with the position which is out of course with what obtains among Christians generally. (Abridged from F. T. H. in "The Voice," 1893.)

015 Canaan as a Type.

Canaan as a Type.

Editor. (T Oliver.) A correspondent writes, "thanks for the little books with which you so kindly favoured me, but I do not agree with all they contain: e.g., in 'Cities of Refuge' it is stated that 'the land of Canaan in O.T. type does not represent heaven in N.T. relation, as it is often caused to do in sentimental hymnology.' Hebrews 3:7; Hebrews 4:11 are a warning against stopping short of God's purpose, and the rest of God frequently mentioned in the passage clearly refers to Canaan as type and this rest in my opinion is definitely future and is not reached until we get to heaven! To show that I am not alone in reading the passage, I refer you to Hymn 76 in the 'Little Flock' book, vv. 9, 10. I have heard it contended that as there was fighting in Canaan it could not be a type of heaven, but the argument is spurious because the passage has Canaan in view as the type and the thought of rest forbids the idea of warfare. So shall we not continue to sing with heaven in view?" The writer is quite entitled to his opinion! But a type has not a private or single interpretation, even as a mountain like Arthur's Seat has many aspects depending on the viewpoint, e.g., one looks like a lion recumbent, and another like an ordinary peak, yet it is the same mountain in spite of its varying aspects. So the truth has many aspects too! If our correspondent quotes Hymn 76 he must accept also the following passage from the same writer's Vol. 27:145.

"I sometimes wonder that it does not strike people what an odd thing it is that although Jordan means death and Canaan heaven (which they do) fighting should characterise the place in Joshua, for the first thing he meets there is a man with a sword drawn Yes, heaven will be ours! I am not quarrelling with the use of the image in that way. Jordan is a type of death and Canaan of heavenly places." J.N.D. That is our point in the passage cited. We do not object to the use of the image in a secondary way. The contention about Hebrews 3:1-19; Hebrews 4:1-16 is clearly wrong, because that passage specifically teaches that Joshua did not bring them into rest, but that the rest awaits us!

016 Chosen in Christ.

Chosen in Christ.

Notes of an address by J.A. Trench, 1890.

It is a wonderful thing for our souls to be carried back, as we are in Ephesians, to God's counsels for us from all eternity, in contrast with His ways with man on earth. There are these two distinct lines in Scripture-the history of the first man, and God's counsels in the second. How blessed to have all that belongs to the first man blotted out, so that nothing remains before our eyes but the perfection of the second. Have we been able so to learn the history of the old man, as to have done with it, so that we may be free to bask in the wondrous truth of Ephesians 1:1-23. We cannot begin there. The first thing is that God has to deal with us about our sins, that our links may be broken with the first man. All through the Old Testament we have the history of the failure of the first man when tried in every way. Placed in innocence in Eden man is given one command, and he breaks it: Noah, set over all the world after the flood, fails to govern himself: God chooses one nation and commits to them His testimony, and the first and cardinal commandment is broken before it reaches the camp: He sets up priesthood, strange fire is offered before Him, and the priesthood breaks down: He gives them a king, and how soon the kingdom fails. Turn where we will, we find the same thing. The last test was applied to man when God said, I have yet one son it may be they will reverence my son. The only answer to this was, "This is the heir, come let us kill him." Stephen sums up that history in Acts 7:1-60. the promises despised, the law transgressed, the prophets slain. What a history! From the first act to the culmination, nothing but sin, and all this is ended in the cross of Christ. It is a blessed thing when the trial of the ages, carried into the conscience, discovers me to myself as belonging to a lost race before God.

There is, however, another side to the presence of the Lord Jesus here on earth; it was the dawn of the accomplishment of God's eternal counsels. How sweet to trace Him in that lowly path, as we find Him in the Gospels fulfilling God's pleasure. We see the heavens opened over Him, and hear the Father's voice saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." But God's glory had to be made good. We follow Him to the cross, there we see Him Who knew no sin, made sin for us-identified with all that we had been found to be; the infinite One infinitely enduring God's judgment of sin, and sin turned into the occasion of infinitely glorifying God. All that I am, there judged, condemned, and crucified with Him; the history of the first man ended, so that now God can reveal His own eternal counsels for us. Up to the cross man was dealt with as alive in the flesh, now as dead in trespasses and sins. Into that scene of death God comes to raise up one Man from the dead. Before the dear women could be at the grave, He had been raised by the glory of the Father. In this epistle the Spirit of God fixes our eyes on the risen Christ in the glory of God. Carried back into God's eternal thoughts and counsels, the apostle's heart can only find relief in worship. Then the Spirit of God leads him on and back. Having chosen us before the foundation of the world, Christ was there before Him, and we chosen in Him, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love. He was alone in that perfection when here. "Except a corn of wheat die

it abideth alone." Now we see in Him the full fruit of His death, in that He has united us to Himself where He is, and we stand before God in all His perfection. How sweet to be able to drop everything connected with ourselves, and to enjoy His eternal thoughts and counsels for us. He has "predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself." This is not something for you and me merely, to satisfy us; but to satisfy His own heart. He could have made us angels, but that was not what was in His heart for us; He has made us sons. Christ's place before God, is the only measure of the place which He has had for us before Him in His eternal counsels. Redemption is but the threshold of all the fulness of the blessing into which we are now brought, and now revealed that faith may know it. By redemption, God the Holy Ghost is given to us, as surely as we have received salvation. He is the earnest for us, of all that lies before us in the glory. What rest, to be set up in all the perfection of Christ! If responsibility entered into that glorious position, how soon would it break down. Blessed be God, there is no question of responsibility there. Have we entered into the truth that we are in the perfection of the second man?

Now we come to the responsibility that flows from this position. With the first man, his position depended on how he walked, therefore he had no standing before God: now our responsibility flows from the place in which we are set. We come, out of heaven, to walk here on earth as sons before the Father. God, the Holy Ghost, given to us, as that mighty power working in us: He must not be grieved! Oh! that we might have a deeper sense of it, that there may be nothing of the old man in us to grieve the blessed Spirit of God. As children beloved we are before God the Father, sent out to shine before men. If God has shined into our hearts in all the perfection of the revelation of Himself, so He is to shine in the two characteristics of His life, love and light. What a confirmation of the place that the responsibility which flows from it, should be that we come from heaven, and manifest nothing but what God is. (Ephesians 4:17; Ephesians 4:30; Ephesians 5:1-2; Ephesians 5:8).

We may say who is sufficient for these things? We have the power working in us to walk according to it. Turn to the service of the Lord Jesus for us, as set before us in ch. 5:25-27. He "loved the church and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." This is not only a love of the past; He is now sanctifying and cleansing it, presenting Himself to our hearts, so that we may be more and more answering to Him, that He may at last present us to Himself "a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing." The distinct object before His heart is, that we should answer perfectly to what we are in Him as we find it revealed in Ch. 1. How blessed, when humbled at the thought of all the failure to be able to turn to Him. He did not cleanse that He might love the church, but because He loves it. Oh that we may yield ourselves to the power of the truth, so that we may be formed more like Him, until He will be satisfied, when He has us before Himself! What rest to know that not one will be missing there!

017 Christ in Gen_1:1-31.

Christ in Genesis 1:1-31. by R Robertson. The purpose of God has ever been to glorify His beloved Son. We see this at the opening of His Revelation. God created the heavens and the earth which was without form and void (waste and empty). A great length of time could have elapsed between the first two verses. God is not the author of disorder so we may be sure that it never left His hand in that condition. Isaiah 45:18, tells us He created it not in vain (waste and empty). In Ezekiel 28:15, we read that Satan under the figure of the king of Tyrus first introduced sin into God's universe. The Lord Jesus said in John 8:44, the devil sinned from the beginning. That might account for the chaotic condition out of which God brought light by His word on the first day. Darkness on the face of the waters would describe the condition of man morally when Christ the light of the world came. The Word become flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth (John 1:14). The Spirit of God hovered over the face of the waters expressing deep interest in what was to take place when the eternal Son according to divine purpose would become Man, and be lifted up that there might be a revelation of the heart of God. On the second day, the expanse was brought in over the earth which would suggest the holy life of the Heavenly One (John 3:13). He came freighted with all the goodness of heaven for the blessing of fallen creation. What a study is the life of Jesus as we trace his path in the four Gospels, where we see beautifully blended all the attributes of God shining in Him! The third is the Resurrection Day. God said let the waters be gathered together and dry land appear. That spoke of Calvary, the place where the waters of God's judgment against sin were poured on the devoted head of our Saviour. His prophetic words were, "All thy waves and billows have rolled over Me," that the claims of God's throne might be met and His love expressed. At the resurrection of Christ the dry land appeared. He was alone in His atoning death but in His resurrection He has companions, to whom as last Adam He has communicated His risen life in the power of the Holy Spirit. On the fourth day, we have the creation of the sun, moon and stars, setting forth the present place Christ occupies at the right hand of God. From Him we receive the warmth of the love of God and the light of His revelation and rule. As the sun rising, Christ will remove all that offends and fill the universe with the light of God's love. The moon derives light from the sun, so the assembly derives from Christ to be the exponent of His life and character, whilst He is hidden from view. The stars may be applied to Israel who will come into blessing in their own land after the Church has gone. The fifth day gives the creation of the fish and the beasts. Saints of God are given the privilege of carrying the gospel testimony to men that they might be brought from a wild condition into knowledge of peace and love enjoyed by faith in the power of the Holy Spirit. The sixth day gives divine consultation in the making of man. Romans 5:14, tells us that Adam was a figure of Him to come. Christ perfectly presents God's authority, (image). In Him all the fulness of the Godhead was pleased to dwell (likeness). Psalms 8:1-9. gives us the Son of Man who will have universal dominion; the angels attending on Him (John 1:51), the centre of a reconciled universe for the delight of God the Father. He shall have His bride, the object of His love, to share with Him His glories as man. In His intrinsic glory He stands alone, but we shall behold that with adoring hearts. In each day "the evening and morning" is one day. God always works in view of the day; man works till night. (His day ends in the night of

death). On the seventh day "evening and morning" is not mentioned, having the eternal day in view when the kingdom will be given up to the Father and the tabernacle of God will be with men, and God shall be all in all! (A meditation by R. Robertson (abridged)).

018 The Love of Christ.

The Love of Christ.

Notes of an address by J. A. Trench at Galashiels, 1916. The depths of the love of Christ set forth in John 12:24, are wonderful. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone, but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit." The heart is thrilled when one thinks that the Lord Jesus in figure fell into the ground and died in order to bring forth such profusion of fruit. He became man and died on the Cross in order that He might be able to associate us with Himself for ever. That association was according to the eternal purpose of God. He introduces us to that communion of divine joy which subsisted in the past eternity between the Father and the Son. That is opened out to our enraptured gaze in Proverbs 8:1-36. There we hear Wisdom's voice speaking about the Father and the Son sufficing for each other in an unbroken continuity. They rejoiced mutually in each other, sharing each other's thoughts. Before the foundation of the world, the Lord Jesus typified by Wisdom delighted in the sons of men. How blessed it is to have such intimation as to the direction in which Their hearts were going even then. That we should be taken up and ushered into such scenes of delight surpasses all human comprehension! But it is important to see that we could not be taken into such association with Him in any other way than by His becoming man and dying. That He gave Himself for us is a statement of scripture which enhances the magnitude of the gift and the love behind the gift. The Father and the Son were in perfect harmony in the action of giving! God so loved the world that He gave His Son sets forth a wider thought of the matter; but when the gift is viewed relative to His own then it is said that the gift originated in the heart of the Father and the Son. The Son took the initial step in perfect obedience to the Father's will and He was found in the body specially prepared for Him to give further effect to the same will. In the perfection of that path on earth He was alone. The more we contemplate Him in that perfect path of obedience the more we shall follow in dependent appreciation of Him. In John 16:32 we read that His own would be scattered and He would be left alone, and yet essentially not so, because His Father would be with Him! Notwithstanding that, next day He had to fathom infinitely deeper depths of isolation on the Cross in the forsaking by His God. That explained the meaning of His anguish in the Garden of Gethsemane, as He foresaw what was necessarily entailed in meeting God as the victim, the Lamb of God's providing in the complete and lasting solution of the question of man's sin against God. We cannot conceive what it meant to Him to be totally abandoned by God! In rebuking the overzealous Peter who sought to deliver his Master, He said "The cup that my Father hath given Me shall I not drink it?" (John 18:11). In every step of His pathway, His love shone forth, witnessed by such statements as the following: "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you" (John 15:9). That love continues unchanged in the exalted position in which He now is. He is the same yesterday, today and for ever! Shortly He will descend into the air to take us up to the place He has won for us in resurrection. That place is beyond the reach of distress, difficulties and death! Meanwhile, the contemplation of that unchanging love should have a practical effect on our lives and service. The passage in John 12:24, is followed by, "If any man serve Me, let him follow Me." In these words we are invited to follow in the path which His

footsteps have traced out for us in an unmistakable way. Then our service will partake of the character of that path. The power to make it our own lies in the extent to which our hearts have been absorbed by the significance of the little word "Me" twice repeated in one short sentence. The great criterion of our service in the ultimate assessment of the One who never makes a mistake will not be its amount nor apparent success before the eyes of our fellowmen but in the measure in which Christ has been the object thereof.

019 The Love of Christ.

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Extracted from W. Magowan , "Words of Grace," 1905. In the death of Christ we perceive the extent of His love to us (1 John 3:16). Death is the greatest act of sacrifice by which love can be expressed, "for greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). In this, perfect self-abnegation consists, because of the love of Christ to us an obligation rests on every saint to lay down his life for the brethren. With us, love is relative not sovereign, for a motive is needed to produce love in our hearts. Therefore we love because He first loved us; but no reason is given for the love of God, that is due to the divine nature, sovereign in its exercise! In order to express divine love, Christ has gone to the utmost limit of self-sacrifice. No consideration could deter Him from entering into all that we were liable to by the just judgment of God. The wrath of man was there and the dread power of Satan also. He perfectly understood and measured what lay before Him and entered into it that the mighty unfathomable love of His heart might be known. No man took His life from Him, He laid it down of Himself. In this we recognise perfect kindness as well as perfect love. He might have gone into heaven as a man apart from death, but we should never have known love, nor kindness, nor the mind of God. All the love of God was made known in the death of Christ. Satan has blinded men's eyes to the attitude of God, representing Him as hard and exacting. In the saint, the dark distance has vanished in the sunlight of Christ's love. The faithfulness of the love of Christ is the subject of John 13:1-38., "Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them to the end," 1:e., not to the end of any time, but however tried, it is changeless in character. He foretold the treachery of Judas and the denial of Peter and that the little band would desert Him under pressure, but the mighty current of His love was not disturbed. He was the unchangeable One; He could be implicitly trusted! Ch. 13. was in full view of the evil and showed an epitome of all that has appeared since in Christian profession. "Ye believe in God, believe also in me" (John 14:1). What an unspeakable comfort that He abides faithful and loves to the end!

Another aspect is presented in Romans 8:35. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? The eternal love of Christ is our lasting portion. Nothing in the universe is so strong. Over sevenfold evidences of the enemy's power, we are counted more than conquerors! Samson, type of the conqueror, slew the young lion; bees took up abode therein, the resultant honey produced meat and sweetness. Strength and refreshment were found in what had threatened him with destruction! In all that assails us in our pathway we find meat and sweetness for we are more than conquerors and nothing can separate us from His love. Another character is shown in Ephesians 5:25, giving the devotion of love. He gave Himself in the infinite value of His person thus He has a right to the church and shows it by holy solicitude, sanctifying and purifying from all trace of defilement. When the day of glory comes, as the last Adam, the head and centre of all, He will present the Church all glorious to Himself; that will be the full result of His devoted love displayed. Ephesians 3:16 gives the boundless nature of the love of Christ. To know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge may seem a paradox. But to know that love we need to be strengthened

with might by His Spirit in the inner man; then we know its vastness like an illimitable ocean which can never be fully explored but our spiritual capacity to appreciate and enjoy is constantly increased. Then Galatians 2:20, speaks of His love to the individual. The Apostle had the consciousness of Christ's personal love to Him and he refused to find guidance for his life in flesh by the Law. He received all light and direction from the Son of God who loved him and gave Himself for him. The love of Christ constrained him in his service and was the spring of its action towards men as well as the light by which he walked! May we be enabled to consider the love of Christ in its extent, faithfulness, strength and devotedness. Then we shall be able to appropriate it personally and say, "He loved me and gave Himself for me!"

020 Christ Supreme.

Christ Supreme.

Unnamed author, in "The Voice," 1878.

There are two experience:- (1) the greatest for time; (2) the dawn of eternity. (1) when Christ is seated on the throne of your heart — his Coronation day. It is not merely that He is in your heart, but that His sway there is fully recognised. Spiritually it is the same as in Genesis 21:1-34; when Isaac was weaned, Abraham made a great feast for him. Every one did homage to him. They celebrated his right and title. The greatest day in time is when the heart keeps festival in celebration of Christ's right to be enthroned there. That is a moment of surpassing delight, when Christ is only heard to speak. He reigns alone! Though rejected on earth, He is proclaimed King there. That makes the merry heart a continual feast! Like "the whole year" which Elijah spent with the widow (1 Kings 17:1-24): every care and every need were foreseen and provided for by the great guest in the house of the desolate one.

(2) The dawn or introduction to the eternal day is when you accept that all that is beautiful in the first creation terminated in the death of Christ; not only that all the bad is under judgment in Adam, but that "old things are passed away, all is become new and all is of God." You find yourself in the light of the eternal scene. Figuratively it is Genesis 22:1-24, you have traversed Mount Moriah having practically accepted that everything is gone in Christ's death. Your eyes have opened on eternal day! You are before God in that new day in the sweet savour of Christ; the ram on the Mount; "Jehovah-Jireh." The order of the old creation sets before us these two experiences. The tree lives and thrives in winter because of its roots; it bursts forth into unhindered manifestation of its life in summer, because the climate and seasons induce it to do so. The winter is time; the summer is eternity! We live in Christ at home during the winter; we bask in the sunshine of His presence in foretaste now of an endless eternity. It is Christ in both; He reigns in our hearts and we shall reign with Him; but the better we know the festive time when He reigns in our hearts, the more shall we enjoy in prospect reigning with Him. If we do not like His full sway in our own little kingdom, how can we relish His unbounded sway over everything? "He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much." Crown Him King in your own heart and the great day of His Kingdom and glory will also burst on your prepared and delighted heart!

021 Daughters of Faith.

Daughters of Faith.

Notes of address by R. K. Wilson at Glasgow, 3-1-1916.

Hannah raised a song in a dark day; even as Deborah did in hers of similar darkness (1 Samuel 2:1-10). It is remarkable that Hannah could raise such a beautiful psalm of triumph to God in the midst of abundant wickedness all around. That did not lessen her resolution to give up her son for the service of the house of God. She could leave safely to God the matter of dealing with her enemies, while the Lord's enemies would be broken to pieces in His own good time. The Lord kills and makes alive. He brings down to the grave and up therefrom. He makes poor and rich. He brings low and lifts up. From the lowest to the highest all are in His hands. He exalts the beggar from the dunghill and sets him amongst princes even to inherit the throne of glory. With that knowledge none need seek favour of advancement at man's footstool. All is in the hands of a higher power! But the prophetic touch in the song of Hannah stretches forward to our day when the inheritance of the throne of glory set in heaven is shared by those of low degree. The way up is by going down! We get down at the Lord's feet, coming under his sway of grace; meanwhile "He will keep the feet of His saints" (1. Sam. 2:9). That is fulfilled now in the feet-washing of John 13:1-38. When the Lord came to earth, Anna, like her namesake of the earlier day, kept to God's place and His people in the temple, serving God with fastings and prayers night and day. She had good things for all who looked for redemption in Jerusalem. It is worthy of note that she spake of Him. In Luke 21:1-38, we see the record of another of the daughters of faith who acted in direct opposition to all the grasping greed of the day in which she lived. The widow gave her all into God's treasury! However, much the religious leaders of that day might be misrepresenting God's character by their conduct, she was not hindered in acting in faith under the eye of God alone, from which she could not be hid. The rich people's giving was all surpassed in the Lord's unerring verdict by the two mites which formed all her possessions. She won undying fame; they, acting for the praise of men, have been forgotten.

022 Devotedness to Christ

Devotedness to Christ Revelation 3:7-12.

T. Oliver. The features of devotedness to Christ are clearly presented in the scripture cited. The real relations between Christ and the Church receive emphasis in the words (a) "I will make them (the subversive claimants of being in the lineal descent of traditional religion) to come to do homage before thy feet and to know that I have loved thee" (5: 9). (b) "Thou hast kept My word and has not denied My name" (5: 8). So that in His absence faithfulness to His interests is not escaping His recognition! The components of the Church are not here to achieve fame or acquire reputation for consistency but to present the features of Christ. Consequent on the reception of the truth they are responsible to keep His word not by mere bull-dog pertinacity, but by apprehension of the preciousness of the One of Whom all Scripture speaks. So by the heart becoming the cultured garden of spice-bearing plants with pleasant fruits (Song of Solomon 4:12-14), the fragrance of Christ fills the surrounding atmosphere. The sequel to that is they do not deny His name. In this negative statement there is much encouragement. Even if our confession of His name appears negligible, we are going to receive credit, even if we are merely on the right side of the clear plane of demarcation between the world and the sphere in which Christ's name is held in honour! That involves separation from the world, otherwise we shall compromise the significance of the Lord's name. He who is holy and true cannot tolerate what would be subversive of His name.

Therefore to maintain that character we must be exclusive of the methods and ambitions of the world, being content to follow in His pathway, which is clearly marked out for us, in a four-fold way in the Gospels. Those manifesting such features and maintaining the Scriptural standard render a real service to the whole church. The erstwhile disgruntled insignificant band of adventurers in the Cave of Adullam held together by the magnetic power of their leader formed the real defence of Israel against the Philistines. The numerous followers of Saul were powerless against the enemy. So today the bulwark against the flood tide of rationalism and Satanic agencies is not found on the line of compromise and expediency of orthodox religion, but through those who have gone forth unto Him without the camp of orthodoxy consequently bearing His reproach or the peculiar stigma attaching to the pure profession of His name. What is wanted is not only more intelligence as to the meaning of Scripture, but devotedness to Christ through coming under the benignant influence of His love. We are necessarily in the world as a physical entity, but we are not to be of it, 1:e., not to partake of its character as a moral entity! That there is a day of reward and subsequent display in the coming glory is evident. There will be an integration of all the promises to the overcomers in the various churches made good for all the Church in association with Christ. In this particular church the promise to the overcomer is to be made a pillar in the temple of my God and to go no more out. Inscribed pillars are usually the memorials of the past, but the eroding influences of time efface the inscriptions and ultimately the pillars themselves crumble and disappear under the sands of the ages. Such is the record of human greatness! So the props on which we have leaned also pass away. But the overcomer is introduced to something which will last for time and eternity.

The inscription is threefold. (1) "The name of My God" is relative to creation both in the physical and spiritual spheres. (2) "The name of the city of My God" is relative to administration and that must carry us on to the world to come, when perfect administration of righteousness will be displayed. (3) "My new name" must assuredly be relative to the Church. It is said that an enthusiast sought to forestall that inscription by having Christ's name tattooed on his chest! His earnestness cannot be doubted, but his idea fell far short of the apprehension of the Scriptural meaning which says, "I will write." The writing of Christ is in an indelible fluid, the Holy Spirit, and is much deeper than the skin. What will be rendered apparent in the day of declaration is proceeding now in a spiritual way!

023 Discipline and Unity in the Assembly.

Discipline and Unity in the Assembly.

Extract from letter by J. S. Oliphant, 1920.

. . . The Spirit and the Word of God remain. Every assembly truly gathered in the name of the Lord and acting upon the truth of the unity of God's assembly is responsible to maintain "in its own sphere" what is due to the Lord, the Head of the Assembly, whether in reception of saints on adequate testimony to godliness, or in the exercise of scriptural discipline with a view to the maintenance of holiness, practical unity and fellowship. That there has been grievous failure in maintaining a true testimony to Christ and the unity of His body on the earth, cannot be denied, and those who are kept abiding in His love will be humbled about it for the rest of their journey. The breakdown of corporate testimony or witness of those amongst so-called Brethren has been complete, and scripture affords no hope of the restoration of parties as such, where the candlestick has been removed through unfaithfulness and departure from the scriptural ground of gathering. This does not imply that the Lord's promise of His presence in the midst of His own, Matthew 18:20, will not continue till His return. It is in truth His provision for His own in sovereign grace and for His pleasure from the commencement to the end of the history of His Assembly, which displaced the Temple as the Jewish centre on earth, for "wherever only two or three are gathered together by Himself, and maintained in the power and truth of His holy name, there He is in the midst of them." There is, consequently, a rallying centre instituted and maintained by Himself, the centre of unity, where individuals may find Him and enjoy with others all the blessings flowing from His presence and the power of the Holy Ghost; and, until the end, the word in Hebrews 2:12, will be fulfilled: "I will declare Thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the Assembly will I sing praise unto Thee." But the conditions as to being gathered in His name exclude the notion of the amalgamation of parties, or the rebuilding of the Church, or restoring meetings which have either failed to deal with leaven, or have separated without scriptural authority from any Assembly answering to the conditions ensuring the presence of the Lord, and therefore trusted by other Assemblies acting under the Lord by the Spirit, outside and apart from what answers to the Camp in Hebrews 13:13. I have said advisedly "any Assembly answering to the conditions ensuring the Lord's presence," because He is there, the acknowledged Head and Centre, and where He is and His presence realized, there He is paramount, and acts by the Spirit in the midst. Moreover, however feeble, a true Assembly represents Himself and His Assembly everywhere, and acts in His Name for the whole Assembly, Christ and His Assembly being One. But the Spirit is still the witness in Christendom, testifying of Christ, and, "He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches." The address to Philadelphia proves that in the darkest time at the close of the Spirit's day, the hearts and consciences of individuals are exercised by His power, so that the phase therein described as passing under the eyes of the One who says: "I know thy works" is acceptable to Him; but neither Philadelphia nor Laodicea can be regarded as any corporate ecclesiastical organization. They are rather a state or condition of things contrasted, the former being pleasing to the heart of Christ, the Holy and the True, who

makes "His own" conscious of what He values, so that a revival is the result, and keeping His word and not denying His Name by those who, though they only have a little strength, use what they possess to please Him; and the latter so nauseous, being lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, that it leads to the professing body, proud of being rich and increased with goods, being spued out of the mouth, or cast off as a false witness by "the faithful and true Witness." This state is rapidly developing, and there is no remedy, for Christ is already outside the condition. But in His longsuffering goodness and mercy, He still gives counsel and stands at the door and knocks; there is therefore still hope for individuals, and if any man hear His voice and open the door, He will enter in and bring such an one into communion with Himself and into the possession of "gold tried in the fire," "white garments" and "eye salve"; and to "Him that overcometh He will grant to sit with Him in His throne, as He overcame and is set down with His Father on His Throne."

024 The Ministry of Elisha.

The Ministry of Elisha.

(In handwriting of Adam Oliver, Hawick (who died 18-11-1907) probably notes of reading with a visitor). In 2 Kings 2:1-25 Elisha, in intercourse with the sons of the prophets, tried to lead them to the moral elevation in which he was walking. He was not a prophet's son, just as Hazael and Jehu were not kings' sons either. Elijah anointed three men out of nature's order! Elisha was to be in Elijah's room, sent not only as a servant but as himself. The double portion was to be his! (Deuteronomy 21:17). Hence "the beginning of his strength" must be seen in and through him! "He that has seen Me hath seen the Father" (John 14:9), also "If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise" (Galatians 3:29). "If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is not of Him" (Romans 8:9). As Elisha came forth they said, "the spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha." It was not partly Elisha partly Elijah, but altogether Elijah! Thus those in Christ's room came forth having the Spirit of glory and of God resting on them (1 Peter 4:14). They are here in the name of the absent Lord. All that comes forth from them is to be Christ. The prophet's quick eye saw true hearts among the sons of external religiousness! "Behold now there be with thy servants 50 strong men," shows nature's energy unbroken; yet there was desire after Elijah. Elisha allowed them persisting in nature's course to see the end of their efforts. He acted similarly to his master who said to himself, "Go back again for what I have done to thee" (1 Kings 19:1-21). In this critical time even an Elisha must often look on and trust the Lord for many true-hearted who though warned persist in using empty nature as a power in service. Years may elapse ere the "strong seekers" give up. If they continue true in heart they will! After reproving these sons, there is a moral in each of the following incidents, showing how the Lord deals with the soul he is leading on to the line of power. In 2 Kings 3:1-27, they were in a strait wanting a difficulty removed, but not to rise above sense and sight; yet grace met the want and the needy were helped, although they went once more in their own wills. In 2 Kings 4:1-7, the incident rose higher than in 3. The widow was in distress and in debt, grace was realised more abundantly, because the need was deeper. Then the great woman at Shunem had a greater heart for Elisha than the widow had. Not pressure of circumstances but the greatness of his person made her cry. She saw more in Elisha than even abounding grace. Still she had to reach further through sorrow! Elisha kept Gehazi between himself and her (2 Kings 4:11-17). She only stood in the door! The power of the servant hindered not the one in bitterness of soul from reaching the feet of the prophet; the weakness of the servant was exposed in seeking to raise the dead! She used the words Elisha once uttered ere he got the glory-mantle, "as the Lord liveth, etc.," (2 Kings 4:30). But to have consecrated power, she had to have a deeper lesson although the basis was laid there, in life out of death. We find the sons of the prophets once more in the incident of the great pot. Previously Elisha had come with his master as he learned his weakness from Gilgal to Bethel, Jericho and Jordan. Then he returned in power to the place where Egypt's reproach was rolled away in Israel's palmy days. He sought to maintain the pristine principles thereof. Death and corruption came out of the great pot. What man calls life in this world wherein he seeks enjoyment is the vessel bringing forth death! Nature may have great

capacity for whatever is put into it, but the principles of Gilgal demand its full exposure. Elisha put in meal and evil was banished from the pot. The man from Baal-Shalisha brought bread for the man of God which he shared with the people. In spite of its apparent insufficiency there was a residue according to the word of the Lord! "The bread of the first fruits" we thus enjoy sustains us in the place where life abides. Elisha fed "the sons of the prophets" at Jericho on similar food to the "old corn of the land" which was also eaten there (Joshua 5:1-15.). Gehazi had no eye for such food. He did not demur preparing food in the great pot; but nature has no vision when new Creation sustenance appears! All our supplies come from the first fruits. THE MINISTRY OF ELISHA. 2.

There was another interval ere the "sons" appeared again and the moral lessons typified in the great pot were taught in the succeeding chapters. The history was not of a great woman and a little chamber, but a great man and a little maid. All man's valour comes to nought. The mighty man was a leper, corruption was there, but the bit of first fruits in the little captive worked wonders! She knew that power was vested in Elisha. What grace was there. "Would God my Lord were, etc." There was no effort to depreciate the position of the haughty Syrian. It was not a rod of iron smiting in divine righteousness; but in Naaman's house there was a feeble instrument through which blessing (life and incorruptibility) would come. Neither affection for Elisha nor the lesson taught by the pot of oil was in evidence. Naaman was healed on his first journey from Samaria to Jordan. But no gifts could be 'received, by the prophet; nature must die. In 2 Kings 6:1-33, when the master who leaned on Naaman's hand besieged Samaria, it is likely the captain of his host, was there also and it would be humbling to his dignity to see all fleeing for their lives and leaving their possessions in such disorderly fashion. Thus life in this world is made nothing of when death and corruption is learned. Naaman obeyed, (for grace ever accomplishes its end), but he did so in a rage. The mighty man of valour was healed through the recommendation of a little maid! The hidden power of divine righteousness quietly effected its purpose. There may be much activity for Christ when grace acts in our souls, but the next step is that the affections are drawn after Him, while nature seen in its sentimentality may be very ensnaring. The third step is the conscious entrance into the sphere of incorruption involving exercise which brings a total crash to all our hopes. That is promoted by the taste of the first fruits. The great pot often detains the truehearted and its power of professed sustainment may be hidden for long. But when the food of new creation is partaken, the soul passes on to other tests. Love must be in incorruptibility (See Ephesians 6:24). Nature cannot be mingled with grace nor with love either. The process is intensely inindividual. Then we can come forth and say "I know it" (2 Kings 2:3), and be sustained in power of what we have learned. In 2 Kings 6:1-33, pressure came upon the sons of the prophets and was brought into view through new creation principles. The sons of the prophets said unto Elisha "behold now the place where we dwell with thee is too strait for us." He wished to have them up to his own line (see also John 13:8). But such a place was too strait. Nature could not maintain it and so the effort failed. The man of power condescended to show the weakness of their resources. They would fain dwell at Jordan and urged Elisha to go with them. He had consecrated power for that and could go. He seemed almost "loose" in his action, but he was really never more "exclusive." It is often wise to go as far as possible with those who would insist in bringing in the rudiments of the world to their service. But if the Spirit's power is in action, the condescension will expose the true nature of the activities of those who refuse the line of the Spirit. When they came to Jordan they "clave" wood. The human element was at work but "he that cleaveth wood shall be in danger thereby"

(Ecclesiastes 10:9). Hence we behold the borrowed tool lost and the man of God quietly triumphant. They showed him the place where it fell. He "shaved off" wood and cast it in and the iron did swim. That chip of wood scraped off as from the bark of the tree spoke volumes to the sons. The user of the axe might have been on the way to a city of refuge a short time after he began work (Deuteronomy 19:5). (If we insist on taking lower ground than where divine righteousness displays its power, our work will be stopped. The mind and ways of the Lord must be observed. Up to the Cross, nature was not displaced by grace, nor was death nor corruption manifested. Now life and incorruptibility are brought to light through the gospel! THE MINISTRY OF ELISHA. 3.

Until the Shunamite's child died, Elisha's ministry seemed to typify Christ before the Cross. (In Luke, Christ was leading those "whose names are written in heaven" to their full blessings. Nature was still owned as a servant). Although holiness might be felt and desired, divine righteousness could not be revealed while Gehazi was the medium between, so the sympathy of Christ is felt as the Spirit leads the soul through the gospel of Luke now. Then as to doctrine there follows the Living One in John! Thus it would seem that Elisha sought to lead "the sons of the prophets" up to his position. However, the place where he dwelt was too "strait" for them. He would not have them mere servers at their own will when they owned him as gracious. There are few in the "strait" place now. There are multitudes of believers who remain all their days like Martha of Luke 10:1-42; zealous, active, learning truth intellectually, no pressure till all falls in a crash! In the "strait" place love is the great thought as in Philadelphia, while in Laodicea it is light as the prominent feature. In the former, devotedness; in the latter, friendship is evinced. A Martha may be too occupied with her zeal and service to dream of such a region. Elisha was faithful and exhibited grace as in 2 Kings 3:1-27, without giving up his place of separation. He could accept the constraining of the Shunamite with all the beauty of true consecration. She preferred making him a little chamber so that he might be comfortable. Bye and bye, the little chamber became a sepulchre, and death brought her as a devotee to his feet! Such a servant knew when to refuse Naaman's presents, before the latter was healed. A second journey to the place of death may be requisite till the man whose flesh became as the flesh of a little child, is a little child himself; nay, the man altogether gone. The little maid may not be able to sweep away aught of his glory without the cross, but her presence in his household as a grain of the first fruits worked wonders. Then Gehazi's want of power when death came in led to the exhibition of his want of faith, as the "great pot" shewed his activities. He may have wanted the Shunamite's riches, although lodged with the "holy man" under her roof. He got to know the truth from Elisha as he professedly served, then he was seen with the apostate king telling all "the great things" he had learned from the truth in Elisha. That is very much like Christendom! Nature becomes religious in leprosy, yet will not cry "unclean," but actually boasts of its acquisitions. As Elisha passed with Elijah from Gilgal to Bethel he might have remained to testify against it, but the person of the Heavenly One could not be there. Many do not own the external ruin of the House of God, being more occupied with usefulness than following Christ to the place where He is! The Spirit is with them, but Christ's presence is never realised, although they may seek to know Him after the flesh. They often mistake the actings of the spirit of grace for the presence of the Living One. Some may follow to Jericho (typical of the world lying in the wicked one). They will find false aid all around, but if the mantle of 1. Kings 19. has touched them, Jericho will not ensnare them. At Jordan, nature in themselves is exposed in all its destitution. What they owned as a truth long before is found merely a shell. Nothing is too great to

ask the Lord now (Ephesians 3:19-20). The Lord's resources are tested by longing hearts. It is from the Holiest, the "double portion" comes. The great snare nowadays is turning to what is external, before the unseen is known and the Living One reached in power. We may gaze on the Heavenly One as he walked in Luke. But we should leave John the Baptist (1:e., grace in connection with man in Adam) for John the Apostle (1:e., grace in connection with the Living One in new creation). This we do as we ask Him "where dwellest thou?" Thus we pass from Luke's to John's ministry in figure. THE MINISTRY OF ELISHA. 4.2 Kings 7:1-20. As we have seen, Elisha is a remarkable type of Christ. He did not come in the character of Elijah, but was marked by having a double portion of Elijah's spirit. Whereas the ministry of Elijah was largely connected with judgment, Elisha was the minister of grace. Israel constantly suffered greatly from the inroads of the Syrians who had come to be recognised as natural enemies. The children of Israel were as constantly seeking to relieve themselves from the persecution of the enemy by their own ingenuity. But they continually found that there was no benefit derived from the goodness of God, but through the word of Elisha. So deliverance was always accomplished through having recourse to the prophet's agency. They were quite ready to avail themselves of the deliverance, but they soon forgot the channel by which it came. That illustrates the principle of the advent of the gospel message. A little maid brought the glad tidings to Naaman. So in 2 Kings 7:1-20, four leprous men brought the intelligence that the enemy's power was broken and that scarcity had given place to plenty. God will not put honour on His messengers in the line of the glory of men. The four lepers were in a desperate plight. Entrance to the city, sitting still, or falling to the Syrians had a common issue in death. So they chose the last mentioned course; but they found their enemies had gone, leaving abundance, and they proceeded to hide some of the spoil. But their conscience arrested further concealment, and they carried the good news to the city. All were sceptical, suspecting a Syrian ambush. They could not believe the goodness of God. In the sequel, a distinguished nobleman suffered death on account of his unbelief. There were two other instances in the ministry of Elisha of similar profanity:- (a) The children who mocked the prophet at Bethel and (b) Gehazi, whose greed belied the character of God. We cannot trifle with God! The gospel tells what God has done. To trifle with such grace entails a serious responsibility. The scarcity in Samaria was due to the Syrian without. Man's state is the same today! The enemy is without and there is spiritual starvation within. All are liable to fall under the power of the enemy. There are three elements in us which answer to the blandishments of the enemy:- viz., the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life. The devil will assist people on the course of this world of which he is the god and prince and he blinds the vision of those who believe not. Satan will minister to us and give us great assistance if we seek self-gratification, but he will carry us much further than we ever intended to go. Many young people in the world have entered on a course of wrong-doing with the thought of restitution or making good the initial incident, if success should be achieved. But controlling forces of which they have no knowledge will cause the well-laid scheme to go awry, and disaster follows. If that is true of secular matters, what must be the issues of a similar course as to eternal matters. The broad road that leads to eternal loss is paved with good intentions! All that shows there is a concealed subtle power operating which is vastly greater than man can detect; let alone resist successfully. There is evil without and famine within, yet men try to live on chaff, feeding on the world's light literature (nevertheless, frequently pernicious). They live in unhealthy environment as to spiritual issues even with "one foot in the grave." These things cannot sustain the soul to meet sickness and death, and after that to meet God. The higher man is

socially, the more he needs to be prayed for, as a rule he cannot be approached, so really he should be an object not of envy but of pity. Only the abundant mercy of God can reach and preserve such a man! But what a comfort to know that the power of the enemy has been broken for the Christian, and abundance of grace introduced to reign through the death and resurrection of Christ.

025 Emmaus and Bethany

Emmaus and Bethany

Luke 24:1-53.

Notes of an address by W. T. Turpin, 31/3/1893.

There is a pretty general thought that the Old Testament saints and the New Testament disciples looked forward to the Lord's death as the foundation of their blessing. That it was so in the mind of God is true; but the state of mind illustrated by the two disciples on the road to Emmaus shows that His death had shattered their hopes; indeed the journey proved that for them all was over, and Jerusalem was left with weary hearts. Yet it was the brightest day that had ever dawned on this ruined earth. Three things marked it: the Risen Lord, the empty tomb, the rolled away stone! "He is risen" They set forth the new beginning. Their hearts were in the gloom of death, but the risen One is the same, and they had a place in His heart. They were attracted to Him. How comforting to know that He alone can really take that journey with us! In the skill of His love, He captivated their poor hearts and drew them with the gentleness peculiar to Himself. They drew nigh to the village and He made as though He would have gone further, but they constrained Him. He had awakened ardent attention! Observe the beauty of His action. He was indispensable to them. One feature of this is that He will surely bring us to the place where He is! Let us dwell on the recognition scene, as they sat at the evening repast. He gave thanks as the head of the house and broke bread and in so doing caused the fact of His death to pass before their souls. He was there as alive, passed through death and now risen, as such they knew Him and He vanished. Their eyes had rested on a risen Christ, henceforth they were to know their relationships with Him as such. Their words were "did not our hearts burn within us while He talked with us by the way and while He opened to us the scriptures?" Next they rose up the same hour to join Him where He was; this is ever so! He came into the midst and certified that He was the same Jesus and a living man in their presence. He ate before them and invited them to assure themselves that He was really a man but of a new order; hence "a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see Me have." So that in a risen Christ they were to behold the One who is the beginning of the new order. The cross and the grave closed the history of the old; the opened tomb and the resurrection morning began the history of the new! Hence He is not only the Second Man, but also the Last Adam, 1:e., there never will be any other order of man! Next we have the closing scene. He led them out for blessing, Bethany was His platform of departure. It was the only place that afforded Him a shelter in His path of sorrow. He left the world from Bethany. The blessings He gives are from the place where He is, the departing one and now the exalted one, and we receive them as we are led out by Himself to Himself.

026 A Meditation on Eph_4:9-10.

A Meditation on Ephesians 4:9-10.

W. Bramwell Dick.

Here is a parenthesis in which we have multum in parvo. It follows, and is a comment upon the quotation from the triumphant sixty-eighth Psalm. There can be no doubt as to whom the eighteenth verse of that Psalm refers, and in his illuminating commentary the inspired Apostle adds lustre to it. He points out that if the Lord Jesus ascended, He must first have descended. Just here we get a flash of the Glory of His Person. Only a divine Person could leave the condition and circumstances in which He was and come into a condition and into circumstances in which he had not been before. We are reminded of Hebrews 1:1-3. The Son; He who made the worlds; the effulgence of God's Glory and the expression of His substance Who upholds all things by the Word of His power, having made by Himself the purification of sins, has set Himself down on the right hand of the Greatness on high (New Trans.). No less a person could descend into the lower parts of the earth and this was a necessity if He has to make purification of sins. When we consider the greatness of the Person and the immensity of the descent we get some little idea of the greatness of the work that He accomplished, and the vastness of the results that flow from it. Now we return to our Scripture. "He that descended to the same also that ascended up far above all Heavens." As man He was "raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father" (Romans 6:4). It is also true, however, that He "rose again" (1 Corinthians 15:4), indicating that He Who became man was a divine Person. He could say, "I lay down My life that I may take it again.... I lay it down of myself. I have authority (the right), to lay it down and I have authority (the right), to take it again." Only a divine Person could say that, yet as Man He adds: "I have received commandment from My Father" (John 10:17-18; New Trans.). Now we proceed: He has "ascended up far above all Heavens." In face of all opposing forces, for Satan is "the prince of the power of the air" (Ephesians 2:2). He has risen from the domain of death to the highest point in the Glory of God. None but He could have come from such a height, and none but He could have stooped to such a depth, nor could any other than He have ascended to the Throne of God. He came into Manhood; as Man He descended into the lower parts of the earth; as Man He has ascended to the Throne of God; as Man He will fill all things; He will never cease to be God, He ever will be Man. In Ephesians 1:17; Ephesians 1:23 we learn what God has done with Him. He has raised Him from the dead; He has exalted Him to the highest place; He has put all things under His feet; and He has given Him the Assembly to be His complement in the coming day of Glory. In Hebrews 2:8-9, we see Him where He now is the Object for our heart's deep delight, "crowned with glory and honour," and we rejoice that God has given Him His rightful place. It is the only place of which He is worthy, and He is the only Person who is worthy to fill that place. Let us take one more glance at our Scripture as we close. He who has descended and who has also ascended is the One who is going to fill all things. He who is the centre of the Father's affections; the centre of the divine purpose; the centre of the Assembly; will be the centre of the vast system of Glory, and He will be the One to whom all creation shall ascribe worthy praise when everything that hath breath shall

praise the Lord. Hallelujah!

027 Notes of readings on Ephesians.

Notes of readings on Ephesians.

No. 1. In Ephesians 1:1-23 the Apostle proclaims his ordination by the will of God, which recurs in 5: 5 (re. good pleasure) 5: 9 (re. mystery), 5: 11 (re. counsel). The epistle is encyclical, and not merely to the saints at Ephesus. "The faithful" is equivalent to "believers." Romans begins (after the introduction) with a survey of man's moral state before God; but Ephesians with the eternal purpose of God. The initial thought is God's calling (3-5). The first six verses do not refer to man's merits or demerits; all is from God's side. The Christian's blessings are all spiritual in the heavenlies in Christ; hence blessings cannot be counted (even mercies which are in the realm of sense are not statistical). We are predestinated unto Sonship which appertains to heaven. The calling of God is on high in Christ Jesus, and its appropriate scene is in the heavenlies! The verses show that we are connected with what is entirely outside the earth, irrespective of our merits. In the light of that, we are formed to be holy and blameless before God in love. His love desires to have people in harmony with Himself! We are the sons of God in Christ Jesus by faith (Galatians 3:26). The full thought of sonship is association with Christ in glory; while as children we suffer with Christ and share His rejection. Israel had an earthly calling, but Christians have a heavenly calling, (which is a great contrast). In Sonship we are companions of a glorified Christ. Sonship is through Jesus Christ (that adds character thereto). The Holy Spirit leads us spiritually to what God has called us and to be conscious of the Father's love. In the glory of His grace, we are accepted in the Beloved. In Ephesians, justification is not cited, but acceptance is, as outside the responsibility of man. Immediately after that the Apostle refers to the responsible sphere. "In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, etc.," which is not included in the Christian blessings, because these are all in Christ Jesus; it is the most elementary antecedent thereto. It is striking that it is the most elementary result of redemption which is mentioned, viz., sins forgiven. In His boundless grace, God gives us to know the mystery of His will. He has been pleased to make the Church the intelligent confidant or treasury of His purpose. Then that mystery is explained as all things being put under the headship of Christ in the administration of the fulness of times. (The preceding era was only preparatory to that end).

Then as united to the Head, the Church will share the inheritance. The glory of God is known as seen in us, primarily referring to the believing Jews who thus forestall their national awakening at the end of the era. But 5: 13 related to the Gentile believers consequent on their hearing the word of truth. Having believed we are seated with the Holy Spirit of promise as the earnest (or sample) of the inheritance with Christ on which we wait. (This is a further thought than regeneration). Christ is the object of faith; the saints are the objects of love and that is transmitted to all around. The prayer of Ephesians 1:1-23. is to God, the Father (or source) of glory, that we may have the key to His knowledge, and also that of (a) the hope of His calling, (b) the riches of the glory of His inheritance in His saints, (c) the power which has placed us in such a favoured position. The hope of His calling is not defined, but it is obviously introduced to impress us with its present value. As the property of faith it is appreciated even as at the climax in the Lord's coming. To arrive at these

ends, the vision of our hearts (or affections) must be clarified: 5: 21 treats of the greatness of Christ on to the millenium. The Church, His body, is the complement of Him who fills the universe.

Ephesians 2:1-22 opens with the Gentiles, dead in trespasses and sins, in which once they walked according to the age under Satan's influence just as the Jews (sons of disobedience) had done. All were children of wrath. But God, in His rich mercy, has co-quickenened us with Christ. (Salvation is by grace not merit). He has co-raised and co-seated us in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus, that in the coming ages He might show the surpassing wealth of His grace in kindness towards us in Christ Jesus. All is the gift of God; no merit of man can find place. That is proved by the original dead state as sinners. So the fact that she lives demonstrates that the Church is heavenly in blessings and position.

NOTES OF READINGS ON EPHESIANS No. 2. The works of man are excluded; but even we are His workmanship (lit. masterpiece or work of art), and good works have then their place as a divinely constituted environment for our walk (Ephesians 2:10). Then the Apostle calls to mind their former state. The Ephesians as Gentiles had been far off aliens, hopeless and godless. (What a state!). But all distance and distinction are now obliterated in Christ Jesus! Those formerly far off are made nigh by His blood. The Jews, by slaying their Messiah, had broken every tie linking them with God; the wall between them and the Gentiles had disappeared. The death of Christ had abolished the ordinances and disestablished the vaunted pre-eminence of Israel. This has not resulted in the fusion of the alien races, but in their dissolution. So that the age-long feud cannot exist. A new entity is formed in Himself (a new man in Christ) composed of elements originally refractory as of the two opposing categories (Jew and Gentile). So peace is made and He is our peace who has made a harmonious unity therefrom. Men have sought after an imaginary peace of compromise, but their efforts have been futile. Complete reconciliation of the warring factions of mankind must primarily be to God and that can only be effected in the one body by the Cross of Christ. Man's enmity against God and his neighbours disappears only in Christ. On the resurrection evening, Christ came and proclaimed the peace established to those representatively nigh. He did so to those afar off later through His apostles. He brings to us the good news of the peace effected in the Gospel. The Son acts through the medium of the one Spirit in securing free access to the Father. So that there is a complete cycle of manifestation of divine affections. The Gentiles are no longer aliens from a mere earthly commonwealth, but have the incomparably greater honour of being associated with the heavenly saints and of the household of God in the earthward aspect. Moreover we are built up on the sure foundation of the apostles and (New Test.) prophets. Christ Himself is the initial foundation. That building, perfectly adjusted, is growing with an object in view to be a holy temple in the Lord. That will be seen in the glory. Meanwhile our being built together is that God may dwell therein through the Spirit (presenting the thought of the tabernacle). That is our present position!

Ephesians 3:1-21 is an explanatory parenthesis dealing with the mystery. Although revealed to the apostles and prophets, it was exclusively ministered by Paul. The mystery of the Christ is that the Gentiles should be co-heirs of the same body and co-partakers of His promise in Christ by the Gospel, 1:e., beyond O.T. promises. (Ephesians 3:6). So that the name is now inclusive. In the O.T., it was exclusive. In true humility, the Apostle bore witness to the grace given in his commission to proclaim among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ (surpassing knowledge). The majestic passages of the Psalms and other parts of the O.T. dealing with the

Messianic glories treated of what was searchable, as within the confines of knowledge. The O.T. prophets never mentioned the mystery; that could only be revealed consequent on the death, resurrection and ascension of Christ. Hence it does not emerge in the public ways of God. Ephesians 3:1-13 is occupied mainly with unfolding the qualification of the apostle to pray for the saints in the subsequent part of the chapter. Grace was given to Paul to make all know what is the administration of the mystery that now unto the angelic hosts might be made known by the Church the all-varied (rainbow character) wisdom (or resources) of God, according to the eternal purpose in Christ Jesus our Lord. We learn what Christ is on behalf of God (i.e., in whom all His purposes of love are accomplished). There are many families, but union with Christ is our association. The prayer is that we may be strengthened by His Spirit in the inner man, in order that the Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith. Then our knowledge of the dimensions of the sphere of promise and purpose (all that has been given to the Son) is consequent not on erudition, but on our being well-grounded in love. The acme of excellence in the process is to know in a qualitative way the love of Christ which in a quantitative way cannot be compassed. These are what the Apostle wished us to know. We should be in harmony with that wish. (The bride will reasonably wish to revel in the interests of the Bridegroom!) The end is that we may be filled to all the fulness of God. There will be no lack of power for testimony. The world is filled with ambition and greed. But the great contrast will be to find the universe filled with love, when Christ has His rightful place of honour. How fitting is the transcendent doxology at the end of the prayer!

NOTES OF READINGS ONEphesians 3:1-21. In Ephesians 4:1-32, there are exhortations, re. (1) church relations, (2) everyday contacts. They were to walk worthy of a calling with special privileges, manifesting the graces of Christ; lowliness as to self, meekness as to neighbours, longsuffering (yea, suffering gladly) in love to all; so as to be diligent to keep the invisible unity of the Spirit, in the visible bond of peace. That unity is congruent with the mind of God, whether in the circle of (a) the one body, Spirit and hope (or issue) of the calling, or (b) of profession, viz., one Lord, one faith, one baptism, or (c) of the universe with one God and Father of all. (This is not a sentimental unity of compromise or "splitting the difference"). In that unity, there is diversity of gift proportional to the giving of Christ. When He ascended, completely triumphant over the enemy, He led the erstwhile captives of Satan, captive in the chains of His love. He received gifts as a man for transmission to men. Christ will fill the universe with His radiance. Gift is diverse. Every kind of gift is essential. It is a proof of the tender love of Christ and of grace flowing from the Head in heaven. The exercise of gift has proximate objects (Ephesians 4:12). The perfecting of the saints is their complete equipment in a twofold way, viz., for service and building up the body of Christ. In the eye of God there is but one man. All the saints convey the thought of a perfect man in the mind of God. The issue of the energy of the Spirit of God in the saints is to recognise the bond wherein all secular considerations disappear, and Christ is all in all. The perfect man is a divine conception wherein every feature of Christ or moral excellence can be exhibited. Conditions may have rendered impracticable the attainment of the ends specified but that does not render invalid what is in the mind of God. The ultimate end of gift is arriving at the unity of the faith (the revealed basis of Christianity) and the clear knowledge of the Son of God, apart from which there is no real understanding of the love of God. The gifts are operating until we reach full growth proportional to Him who fills all things. We are not to continue in an infantile condition, the sport of the whims of man's subtle mind. All will grow according to the revelation of the glory of Christ, growing in the Head which is the only true growth! The antidote to organised error is holding or speaking the truth

in love (being true in love). Truth is the revelation of God. In Ephesians 4:16, the subject goes beyond gift showing that the body is self-building in love through the agency of "joints of supply." (In the human body, two bones are always separated at the joints by synovial membranes filled with a fluid which lubricates and thus assists articulation). The confusion of Christendom does not interfere with the interrelation of the Head and the Body. Exhortations follow relative to daily practice which is contrasted with the Gentile practices all around. Vanity of mind, darkness, ignorance, mark the "old man." The Christian is to walk in a new character or order, that of the "new man," created after God's pattern in righteousness and holiness of truth. The former conduct is to be eschewed! We are not to grieve the Holy Spirit, not because he may leave us; but since he has sealed us until the day of redemption, he is thus a life-long friend. Our attitude to each other is to be on the pattern of God in Christ forgiving us. Therefore, we are to be imitators of God, acting on His principles. Thus we are to walk in love as shown by the example of Christ whose life ever ascended as an excellent fragrance to God!

NOTES OF READINGS ONEphesians 4:1-32.

Ephesians 5:1-33 opens with the analogy of Christ's offering Himself and the burnt offering, the savour of which went up entirely to God. Immediately it is shown that there will be results in realisation of such heavenly blessings, that the Christian will eschew the works of darkness, e.g., impurities like fornication (lightly esteemed amongst the heathen), greed, jesting. The O.T. was filled with evidence of God's wrath manifested against such practices of the sons of disobedience; so the Ephesians were to avoid them, since no longer in darkness but light in the Lord. So we are to walk as children of the light, the fruit thereof is in goodness, righteousness and truth, distinguishing what is well pleasing to the Lord. Hence we are not to share in the barren works of darkness, but rather reprove such because the light makes manifest, transforming where its entrance is effected. So the sleeper arouses himself from among the dead to intercept the radiance of Christ. Then we are to walk accurately (carefully picking our way over a rugged path) snatching opportunity, because of evil days, not being foolish but apprehending the will of the Lord. Intemperance is riot, but we are to be filled in the Spirit, speaking to each other (none else would be interested) in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, praising the Lord; and in subjection to each other, fearing God. Then the intimate relationship of husband and wife is reviewed in the light of headship, whereof the former is to be a visible testimony, even as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for her, sanctifying and cleansing by the water of the Word. Moreover He nourishes and comforts and will ultimately present her to Himself without spot or wrinkle. Hence husband and wife are indissolubly joined for life; but the mystery is too great for complete illustration, as relating to Christ and the Church, Nevertheless the husband loves and the wife reveres in the light of that truth.

Ephesians 6:1-24 carries on the other home relationships. Children are to obey in the Lord their parents, which also held in the old dispensation; the fifth commandment was the first with promise of long life. The fathers are not to irritate their children but to rear them in the discipline and admonition of the Lord. Slaves were to obey their lords with reverence and simplicity not as eye-servants, but as the slaves of Christ, wholeheartedly serving the Lord and not men, knowing the sure reward of the Lord whether bond or free. Reciprocally the lords were to act to their slaves without threats knowing that they acted under the eye of the Lord in heaven. In conclusion there was a more subtle spiritual conflict in which the whole equipment of God would be required so as

to withstand the artifices of the devil, wrestling with dignities and authorities in the spiritual darkness of the age and the evil hosts in the heavenlies (observe not "in Christ"). Against such nothing less than the armour of God will suffice to overcome and to continue standing girt with the truth (as presented in Holy Writ). Clothed with righteousness as a breastplate and shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace with faith as a shield they would quench the incendiary bombs of Satan. Above all having the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit (the word of God). Praying on every occasion in the Spirit, watching with perseverance and intense prayer for all saints, that the apostle might proclaim freely the mystery of the gospel, as its chained ambassador: then followed his benediction. Tychicus would let them know the apostle's circumstances and encourage them with peace, love, faith. Grace with all that love the Lord Jesus Christ in incorruptibility. Amen.

028 The Eternal Son.

The Eternal Son.

"When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman." Galatians 4:4.

H.P.L.

"Is it not strange," a child once asked his father, "that St. Paul should tell us that our Saviour was born of a woman? Everybody that I know is born of a woman, and it is hard to see why such a thing should be mentioned as if it were remarkable." "Born of a woman!" Surely there is nothing remarkable in this circumstance, if we take human life as we find it. For us men to be "born of a woman" is not merely the rule, it is a rule to which there is no known exception. So that we are constrained to ask why a circumstance which might have been taken for granted should be invested by the Apostle with such prominence in the case of our Lord Jesus Christ. Surely, the real question is whether, in His case, such a circumstance could have been taken for granted. If Paul mentions it thus emphatically, it is because he, at least, does not make such an assumption. If, indeed, the Christ Whom Paul loved and served was only a son of God by grace while by nature He was only and purely a man, then to have said that He was "born of a woman" would have been an unmeaning truism. But if in naming Him, Paul is thinking of a Being whose nature is such as to make any appearance of His in this earthly sphere in a high degree extraordinary, then to say that He was "born of a woman" is to advance an assertion of startling significance. When Paul says, "God sent forth His Son," he uses the same word as when he says, "God sent forth the Spirit of His Son" (Galatians 4:6). It is a word which does not simply describe the action of God's providence, whereby He places a being on the scene of created life; it implies a sending forth of One Who shared the very nature of the Sender. The Son of God, Whom God sent forth, and Who was born of a woman, was God's Son, not by grace but by nature; not as being begotten after a lapse of ages, but as, before all worlds. God of God; the Son of God, in a sense unshared by any other, because not other or less than God the Son. At His birth, as Paul says, He was "manifested in the flesh"; but whether in this passage He is called God or not, the Apostle's words at the least imply that our Lord existed before His manifestation in time. The Father "sent forth His Son, made of a woman." But the Son existed before He was sent forth: the expression is evidently chosen to imply this.

029 "Evening Morning; Morning Evening."

"Evening Morning; Morning Evening."

Meditation by T.D. Wood, sequel to that on Genesis 1:1-31. No.9.

There are two definite lines discernible in Scripture — God's (a) directive will, and (b) permissive will; (a) unfold to us God's purpose, and (b) His overruling in the midst of the ruined creation in His providential dealings. These are set forth in the expressions, "Evening morning" and "Morning evening." The morning sets forth what God has before Him on the line of His purpose — the evening, the ruin that sin brought in the grave moral features of "Man's day." While the expression "Evening" occurs over 50 odd times only in Scripture — the expression "Morning" occurs on over 200 occasions. There are five Hebrew terms used to express the word "evening" as also five Greek terms are used to express the same word. In the numerals of Scripture, five is a figure of human weakness, ending in death. There are eight Hebrew terms used to express the word "morning" as also seven Greek terms are used to express the same word. The number eight sets forth Resurrection and new creation; and the number seven, Divine perfection. The first mention of "evening" is in Genesis 1:1-31. in connection with creation — the last mention is in John 20:19, and is rendered literally "It being late." The first mention of "morning" is in Genesis again connected with creation and the last mention is in Revelation 22:16, morning only, the "Morning star." Let us trace briefly, how this two-fold truth is set forth in the sacrificial glory of the offerings, also in days of recovery, anticipating the bright days of the Millennial earth. Exodus 27:20-21, Leviticus 24:1-4 "Evening to morning" equals moral glory. That is seen here in the pure oil olive beaten for the light, setting forth (a) a Man here both conceived by and anointed with the Holy Ghost. (b) The light shone outside the veil and during the night. (c) The vessel of the Spirit during the time of Israel's moral darkness. Leviticus 6:8-13. "All night unto the morning" equals Sacrificial glory. The fragrance of the Burnt offering, the "Olah," the ascending offering. The ashes without the camp as cited in Hebrew 13. — without the camp, and without the gate — set forth Christ's present position in the outside place. The Fire ever burning upon the altar brings before us the continuity of that sacrifice; the fragrance of which ever ascends, both today and for ever.

Psalms 22:1-31. To the chief Musician upon "Aijeleth Shahar" (the hind of the morning). Here we have presented the SIN offering. Psalms 16:1-11. gives the MEAL offering, Psalms 11:1-7. the BURNT offering, Psalms 69:1-36 the TRESPASS offering, Psalms 116:1-19 the PEACE offering But in the title the Lord looks on to the morning of joy — "joy cometh in the morning." Psalms 22:1-31 looks beyond the cross and anticipates His portion and ours in the midst of the Assembly.

2 Chronicles 13:11 "Every morning and every evening" equals days of recovery after failure and division. Under Abijah, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah, certain features were restored, but glories never recovered. The Shekinah glory of Solomon's day (1 Kings 8:11), (2 Chronicles 7:1). The Glory cloud that filled the house (1 Kings 8:10-11). The Fire of the Burnt offering and the Sacrifices (2 Chronicles 7:1) are never restored. The 24 Courses of the Priests — 2 Chronicles 31:2-16 of the house Eleazar, and 8 of Ithamar, 1 Chronicles 24:4 — these we restored. The Burnt

offering and the Song of the Lord began, 2 Chronicles 29:27, in the recovery of the Pre-exilic days. Similar moral features are restored to the Assembly today.

Moving to Post-exilic days we find the expression, "Morning and Evening" (Ezra 3:3). This suggests recovery on the lines of King David's festival sacrifice, where Asaph and his brethren render the psalm of thanksgiving. Zadok the Priest offered burnt offerings unto the Lord upon the altar of the Burnt offering; "Morning and evening," 1 Chronicles 16:1-43. The "Evening sacrifice" (Ezra 9:4-5, Psalms 140:1-2) brings before us the expression of confession and the language of the penitent who in principle eat the sin and trespass offerings as did Nehemiah and Daniel in making the nation's sin their own.

Daniel 8:13-14, the transgression of desolation, the 2300 days, are literally rendered "Evenings mornings." This prophecy doubtless finds its partial fulfilment in the profane history of Antiochus Epiphanes, the little horn of Daniel 8:9. "The vision of the evening and the morning which was told is true" (5: 26) Ezekiel 46:13; Ezekiel 46:15. "Every morning" — lit. "Morning by morning."

Exodus 29:1-46. and Numbers 28:1-31. present the morning lamb and the evening lamb. (There is no Evening lamb in the Millennium. The bright day of the Millennial earth). While the sin and trespass offerings are there, as sin will still be in existence; yet the thought of what is penal or expiatory will not be prominent. In that sense their character will be memorial feasts. Divine and moral glories in the Burnt and Meal offerings, also the Priests' and Princes' part in the Peace and Drink offerings, are prominent. goes back to His original purpose in the bright day of the restored earth. We look on to the "Bright morning Star" (Revelation 22:16), and as there was no "Evening" on the 7th day (the Sabbath of rest), so God will usher in the Eternal state where "All taint of sin shall be removed, All evil done away; And we shall dwell with God's Beloved, Through God's eternal day."

030 The Father as Author.

The Father as Author.

T. Oliver. In Isaiah 9:6, the Everlasting Father of the A.V. really means the Father of Eternity or of the Everlasting. He is the Author of Eternity. The Greek philosopher Plato said that "time and the heavens came into being in the same instant in order that they might be dissolved together? of such was the mind of God in creation." Whatever might have been the thought in the mind of Plato expressed by that grandiloquent statement, we can rest assured that both fell far short of reality. Because the synchronising of the passage of time and the heavens is proximate and not final. They give place to the emergence of the new heavens and new earth which subsist in eternity! In 2 Corinthians 1:3, the expression "Father of Mercies, the God of all comfort" conveys that in these we find the most noteworthy in the realm of time. We are the objects not only of abstract mercy, but of ceaseless specific mercies, 1:e., the countless incidents in which we are debtors to the mercy of God! In consequence He is the God of all comfort. The evidence of God's care for us must necessarily afford as nothing else can. He is the Author of those mercies, 1:e., their origin. In Hebrews 12:9, consequent on discipline for our bodies, the expression "shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits and live" occurs. God is the Author of spirits, 1:e., on the spiritual side man enters into intimate relation with God. Discipline is for the body, but it has the object in view of spiritual prosperity to the individual and as a consequence he lives; 1:e., the effect of subjection to God's salutary discipline! In James 1:17, we read that "every good gift and perfect gift is from above and comes down from the Father of Lights with Whom is no variableness neither shadow of turning." The service of God is enhanced by many brilliant lights, spreading the incomparable light of the Gospel and of the knowledge of the glory of God, far and wide. But these are not the result of natural evolution. They are not the legacy of inherent ability, but they have come as every good and perfect gift has come from above! God is the Author of these luminaries. So that the individuals who form the lamp-holders cannot take any credit to themselves, but it is very comforting to know that they emanate from an origin which knows no swerving in the consummation of His purpose. "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance (or retraction)" (Romans 11:29). In Ephesians 1:17, the apostle puts as a preface to his first prayer therein "the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory." That again shifts the centre of interest to eternity from which glory emanates and where its Author dwells. It is an unique usage. It has been suggested that the glory is synonymous with the glory of the Logos of John 1:1-51, which the disciples beheld; also with the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ of 2 Corinthians 4:6.

031 The Father's Ways of Grace.

The Father's Ways of Grace.

(Notes of address by J. S. Bertram at Galashiels).

All movement in relation to the accomplishment of the Father's will must essentially emanate from the Father Himself, hence the Father sent the Son, and it is the Father that draws to the Son. It is not in man or of man to come to the Son, it is the Father in absolute grace that draws to the Son. What a constraining power! That power draws from the distance and darkness into the light which exposes and into the love that dismisses all dread. "No man can come unto me except the Father which hath sent me draw him." Thus drawn to Christ, the Son, the new centre, He must displace all that has gone before, whether place or system. Having been drawn to Him, we are also given to Him of the Father, i.e., the Father's love gift to the Son. Seven times over in John 17:1-26, we have the Lord addressing the Father about "those whom Thou hast given me," as such we are the objects of His interest and care, so much so that He prays for them. "I pray for them," what a place we have in His heart of infinite love; all that He has here are those who have been given to Him of the Father, and in this connection He says "all mine are thine and thine are mine." What oneness obtains between the Father, and the Son! This speaks of a divine capacity to be in accord with the Father's appreciation of the Son consequent upon His accomplished work. He has received from the Father a specific glory, this He shares with His own. "The glory which Thou hast given me I have given them" (John 17:22). That shall be seen by a redeemed universe, as presented in the precious stones in the foundation of the heavenly city, for they reflect that acquired and shared glory. The saints become the vessel of expression thereof. The Lord Jesus desired of the Father that His own might be with Him. Love cannot rest apart from its object. What a delight for the blessed Lord it is to have His own with Him, whom He has conducted and befriended through the long night of His absence, not only to be with Him but to behold His glory. That unique incommunicable glory shines forth in all its majestic splendour; the glory as of the only begotten of the Father. We shall be free then from all the frailties which at present mark us, to be absorbed with that divine glory. In that circle of the Father's love is the Son's portion and the portion of His own. Then love and glory find their eternal home. All the seeming mishaps of time but serve the Father's ways. Since everything has been given to the Son there is going to be a complete recovery in the last day. And we shall dwell with God's beloved Through God's eternal day.

032 The Firstborn.

The Firstborn.

Omicron (T. Oliver.)

We do well to ponder deeply the greatness, and glory of our Lord. In Colossians 1:15, He comes before us as the Image (eikon) of the invisible God, the perfect representation of all God's attributes, God manifest (phaneroo, expressing the shining forth, moral display of His Love in wisdom and power), in flesh, the unseen God, 1:e. , manifestation, in perfect detail, that we through grace by the Holy Spirit may see or have revealed to us what eye hath not seen nor can see. He is accordingly "firstborn of all Creation." Prototokos which without the article (the) carries the full meaning of the term, denoting the dignity of priority," and "sovereign right" to the full inheritance of the whole Creation, which He called forth by the creative word of His power. He is not therefore firstborn in this sense by birth, but there is the underlying truth that He first-bore the whole creation, 1:e. , brought it forth, something entirely new, fresh from His almighty hand, and to which He, as His birthright will lay claim in His own due time in the day of His full glory. (Psalms 89:2). (Man may make; but he cannot create, or even "make" unseen things). (Colossians 1:16). The prepositions are of great importance, "all things were created by" (literally "in" (en) with the dative case), denoting that the creative power was ever resident in Him. The next prep. is "dia" by or "through," 1:e., his being the operating or instrumental wonder-working hand, and "for Him" "eis" with the objective accusative, 1:e., for His glory. In Exodus 4:22, God calls Israel, His Son and Firstborn. So in Jeremiah 31:9, Ephraim is my firstborn. Hence it is dear that the thought of firstborn does not necessarily imply "birth" involving the thought of generation, but when used with reference to the Lord, signifies priority over all created things and sovereignty over all created beings. In Colossians 1:18, The Son of God is called the firstborn (same word) prototokos, "from among the dead." Note the parallel "first born" and His relations with the created universe and the Church, the body of which He is the Head, as He is of all creation. He has pre-eminence over the universe, and though in a different way, over the Church also. In all things He has the priority, holds the first place "from among the dead." Death could not hold the One in whom all the fulness of the Godhead was pleased to dwell! This pleroma, the plenitude or the fulness of the divine attributes, resided permanently in Him, as well as the secrets of divine counsel in view of all future time. Thus raised by the glory of the Father, He takes the first place at the head of a new race whom death cannot touch, in the full power of headship. Therefore the Church is called "the church of the firstborn ones." (Hebrews 12:23). In completing the work of redemption He conquered death, and the power of the enemy. To Him thus belongs in addition to His Creatorial glory, as Son of God, this new resurrection glory, as man, head of a new Creation which will not pass away. To Him be all the Praise! He is worthy of all the honour and glory the Father hath given Him.

033 Eighty Short Extracts

Eighty Short Extracts

"I will fasten Him as a nail in a sure pluck and they shall hang upon Him all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons." — Isaiah 22:23-24. To great and small things love alike can reach, And cares for each as all, and all as each.

Jesus only can truly satisfy and rejoice the heart. All the difficulties of earth are nothing when He is present; but heaven itself would be for us solitary and joyless, if He were wanting there. (Present Testimony 15:19).

If a man has not Christ at the bottom, he is no Christian at all; but even where Christ is in a man, you may find him walking blamelessly, yet, if you speak to him of Christ, there is not an echo in his heart, though his life goes on smoothly. Christ at the bottom, and a fair Christian walk at the top, and, between these two, a hundred and fifty things that Christ has nothing to do with at all. His life is practically passed without Christ. This will not do. It is the terrible levity of the heart that goes on without Christ, until it becomes the highway of whatever the world pours into it.

(J. N. D. Coll. Writings 27:289).

There is no answer to infidelity like the life of Christ displayed by the Christian. Nothing puts the madness of the infidel, and the folly of the superstitious, more to shame and silence than the humble, quiet, devoted walk of a thorough-going, heavenly-minded, divinely-taught Christian. It may be in the unlearned and poor and despised; but, like the scent of the lowly violet, it gives its perfume abroad, and both God and man take notice of it. (Present Testimony 14:412).

Nine-tenths of the temptations that beset and hinder would not exist if Christ had His place. Things would not tempt and beset us, as gold, and silver, and pretty things, if "the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus" had its place in the heart; that kind of conflict would be gone.

(J. N. D. Coll. Writings, 27:289).

"A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." Proverbs 25:11 .

Dig deep in this precious golden mine, Toil and its richest ore is thine, Search and the Saviour will lend His aid To draw its wealth from its mystic shade Strive and His Spirit will give thee light To work in this heavenly mine aright Pray without ceasing: in Him confide, Into all truth His light will guide.

(Found in the Bible of Dr Barlee's mother)

What screened the Israelites was not their seeing the blood but God seeing it. Many souls are saying, I do not know whether I have accepted it aright. But what gives peace is knowing that God has accepted it. They think they must look into their hearts to see if they have accepted it aright: but a simple soul would not think of such a thing, but would only be too happy to rest in God's

value of Christ's blood. J. N. D. (Vol. 19:477). On visiting this land 70 years ago, Dr Dollinger was struck with the presence of a Bible in every household as a distinguishing feature of English life. That is far from being true to-day!

Scripture is never hackneyed in expression nor threadbare in texture! We do well to pay attention to the subtle niceties of Scriptural expression lest we miss the still more subtle niceties of Scriptural thought! T. O.

. The spiritual life keeps one young in spirit, for not only in this life have we hope: we have an intimate link with the Lord of life and glory. These exercises are rejuvenating for the old who have true faith. . . . (Extract from a recent letter).

"We are His (God's) workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Ephesians 2:10.

One thing we must never forget — that if we are to have practical guidance from God, it must be in a path which is itself according to His mind and will. Much of the uncertainty felt by Christians as to the details of their path arises from the fact that they look for guidance as to details when their entire position is such as God cannot own. (Present Testimony 7:277-1855).

O Lord and Saviour, we recline On that eternal love of Thine, Thou art our rest, and Thou alone Remainest when all else is gone. (G. Helyar).

Tyndale, who gave us our first New Testament from the Greek was strangled; Coverdale, who gave us our first printed Bible, narrowly escaped the stake by exile; Rogers, to whom we owe the multiform basis of the A.V., was the first victim of the Marian persecution; Cranmer, who left us the Psalter, was at last blessed with a death of triumphant agony. Such men were "of whom the world was not worthy" (Hebrews 11:38). Although the persecution nowadays in this country may be less evident, we have to guard against a no less real opposition of the world in spite of its being expressed more politely!

Let them ever shout for joy because Thou defendest them (1:e., covers or protects them), (Psalms 5:11). It is very encouraging to hear of obscure people here and there who practise what we preach, just as recorded in Malachi 3:1-18, and they will receive the same recognition: an unfading order of merit. T. O. When Christ was here it did not signify what He went through, so that His Father's name was glorified; when His life took hold of Saul of Tarsus, Saul learnt to feel that it did not signify what he went through, so that Christ was magnified in his body whether by life or by death. He was altogether for Christ! If Christ up there be wholly for me, cannot He make me to be entirely for Him down here? I would not shut out the thought of Christ being magnified through everything. The bitterest things need the sweetness most! ("The Voice" 9:377).

If the children of God make alliance with the world and pursue a line of conduct opposed to their true character they must find disappointment. We always carry a little of the world with us when we have mingled with it.

Believing in Jesus is safety; seeing the work done to the satisfaction of God is deliverance; walking in conscious association with a glorified Christ is power! A danger for Christians is the desire for stimulants in teaching. This also characterised Israel (Amos 2:11). Stimulants are not food and in the end they create a distaste for it. They serve only to excite the imagination or nature and never

reach the conscience or heart. The evidence of this desire is the itching ear (2 Timothy 4:3). Christ alone is the food of His people! The Book of Judges is mainly the history of the failure of Israel to put out the evil!

Scripture is perfect in type and in doctrine, but spiritual discernment is always needed to appreciate its significance! T. O. The early Christians presented the Nazarite character in a beautiful way. They walked as those whose hearts Christ had taken away with Him to heaven. (G. V. WIGRAM, 1877) "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." (Matthew 6:21).

Vain indeed is the attempt to have our treasures below and our hearts above. (Present Testimony, V. 66).

It is a constant sorrow to the elder ones at least as to how little of what God so richly gave and has preserved to us is followed by the younger generation who seem far more occupied with good men than with the truth of God. This agitation for bringing together the parties into which so many of those once gathered in the unity of the Church of God are now broken up through the will of the leaders goes on, and is evidence, I fear, of very serious decline.

"There are two ways of reading Scripture — devotional and systematic. In the former I listen to what the Lord communicates and look to Him to produce in me the suited effect of His truth by the working of His Spirit. Thus I become formed by the truth; worship and holiness of life result. In the latter I search and examine to discover His mind, and what is taught on any given subject. I look to Him to give me understanding by the Spirit; to preserve me from error and to enable me to form His own judgment — to discover and to hold the truth in a divine way. Dependence is, therefore, of all importance, combined with an ungrieved Spirit."

(Written in the 19th century).

If we do not digest what we hear we shall have light without power. To be wholly for the Lord in the power of the Holy Ghost should be our aim; we should constantly look to the Lord to keep this before our souls. Christ and the knowledge of Himself are beyond all else! To enjoy hearing the truth is very different from living it. The former often brings into favour, the latter entails the cross.

Here it will be still toil and labour in the midst of opposition, till He come who shall take us up to be with Him in God's rest. If we can glorify Him meanwhile, all is well. What else have we to do? The Great High Priest enters into every sorrow we pass through. On account of His having tasted the sufferings of the pathway He is able thus to be touched by the very feeling of our infirmities! As we gaze on Him where He is, we can in spirit enter into every relationship which is ours in Him. We see in Him what Sonship and acceptance are. The beloved Apostle John unfolds to us the deep secrets of the love the Father has brought us into. May we know these things better!(Written recently) The world is a great snare to the believer who is liable to sink into it. Satan uses it strongly so as never to let the Christian be satisfied with food and raiment. The Lord alone can keep the feet and hearts of His saints. (Written from Cork, May, 1843). The Apostle Paul corresponds to the man bearing the pitcher of water in Luke 22:10. He guides us unerringly as to how and where the Lord's supper should be taken.

R. K Wilson at Galashiels, 30-6-1917.

Two lovers built two cities. The love of God built Jerusalem and the love of the world built Babylon. Let every man enquire of himself what he loves and he shall resolve himself of whence he is a citizen!- St. Augustine (354-430 A.D.).

Inheritance is title to possession. Justification is the antecedent to the reception of the Holy Ghost as the earnest of the inheritance. In justifying anyone God approves him for heavenly blessing. Possession is effected at the day of redemption!

Either Christ's atoning sacrifice is sufficient or it is not. If it is, why those doubts and fears? Our lips profess that the work is finished, but the doubts of the heart declare that it is not. Everyone who doubts his full and everlasting forgiveness denies the completeness of the sacrifice of Christ.

C. H. Mackintosh in "Christian Friend," 1879. When I read Genesis 3:1-2 in the English Bible, I am as one listening to a narration, but when I read the same in Hebrew I am as one in the presence of God, the Living God in action! — (G.V. Wigram).

God has told us all of grace for us; but He has not yet told us everything with relation to His government, that will come out fully at the Judgment Seat of Christ! The angels know the blessedness of strength; the saints know the blessedness of weakness.

(H. M. Hooke, 1885).

If you take the world you must take the enmity against God along with it, for the friendship of the world is enmity against Him. Are you going to have this world from Satan, or to have the other from Christ? (extracts from "Words of Truth," 1871, edited by F. G. Patterson).

There is no giving in the "far country," not even of husks. Satan sells all and dearly — our souls are the price. The world's principle is "nothing for nothing." Would you find a giver? You must come to God. (J. N. D.).

There is no equality in an alliance between truth and error, since thereby truth ceases to be truth, and error does not become truth, but what is lost is the authority of the truth.... To be soundly instructed in the heavenly origin, position and destiny of the church is the most effectual safeguard against worldliness in the present path and against false teaching in reference to future hopes.

(J. N. D. in "Words of Truth," 1866).

Innocence is ignorance of evil; holiness is separation therefrom.... The presence of God without a veil and of sinners without sins prove the efficacy of the sufferings of Christ. If we felt it more in the journey of faith we should be more unceasing in seeking for the Word as the trellis work on which our faith might climb. Faith learns Christ and walks by what it learns! The book of Kings gives God's government of Israel, and the book of Chronicles gives His ways in grace. All is told in Kings, while in Chronicles only those sins which exalt the God of all grace. But in type the book of Kings surpasses Chronicles as pointing to heavenly, as Chronicles to earthly things!

(D. T. Grimston in "Words of Truth," 1871).

E. L. Bevir, when a young man, once asked G. V. Wigram's advice as to a secular project. The latter answered in his laconic way : — No one, but the Spirit of God, has a right to say to me "go near and join thyself to this chariot." That cast the young man back on God with the result that he

did not join and shortly afterwards the project failed!

Doctrine is more serious than practice: Paul was more afraid of the Galatians than of the Corinthians. Discipline is setting things right in the Church; separation is setting myself right when I cannot set the assembly right! (W. Kelly before 1874).

Even if we do not cling to the world, how it clings to us! If Christ had His place it could not. If last night, the Lord Jesus had been put to death by the world, would any be "hail fellow well met" with it. Some insist on belonging to this world and to Christ too. Christ could not! (J.N.D.). In prayer we say "yes" to God; in fasting we say "no" to ourselves. (The late C. E. H. Warren).

Unrighteousness allowed, or righteousness evaded, either individually or collectively, except it be repented of and judged, destroys the power of the name of the Lord: those continuing in any unrighteousness cannot have the power of the Name, nor the joy of the unclouded presence of the Lord. (J. N. D.).

"I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye. Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding; whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle "Psalms 32:8-9. Providence does not guide us — it guides things, and thereby controls us: very precious as regards the hand of God over us; but this is not the guidance of the Spirit. (Pres. Test. 5:57). Is it not appalling to think of Christians accepting truth in terms without intention of carrying it out practically? On the contrary, they press the world and its ways into it. Adopting the terms without submission to what it involves is a fearful aspect of the times! (W. T. Turpin, 1889).

We do not think there is harm in a thing we like: the front of it is pleasure, but the back of it is sin!

Believers are bound to have fellowship with everything, according to God; but they are equally bound to refuse fellowship with all that is not. True fellowship with one another can only be in the light (1 John 1:7). Our life is like the dial of a clock. The short hand is God's hand in discipline which passes slowly and surely as God speaks at each stroke. The long hand is God's hand in mercy passing over the dial twelve times for each circuit of discipline; and for each stroke of trial there are 60-fold ticks of blessing. Both hands are securely fastened to one central pivot, the great unchanging heart of a God of love. (Modified from a wall text in the possession of the late Mrs Fox of Wigton in 1913). The Spirit of God always points up now because of the rejection of Christ. All is failure and judgment here; yet it is not merely as a servant I look up, but as one united to Him who is there.

It is one thing to be occupied with the glory and another with the Person of Christ. He is the One that fills the heart and the One that fills heaven. He is the centre of all! The hand of God never deals but in concert with His heart of infinite love Even if He sees good to allow a sorrow to arise, it is from a hand which never mistakes, nor fails in answering to a heart whose love is perfect. (J.N.D.).

"Now the God of peace . . . make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well pleasing in His sight" — Hebrews 13:20-21. Be assured that God does more in us than we for Him; and that what we do for Him is only in proportion as it is Himself who works it in us. — j.n.d. An artist goes over his work again and again, retouching and obliterating, until his

ideal is reached. We cannot do thus with our lives, since we paint on a rolling canvas which is rolled up on a cylinder as fast as our work is done, not to be unrolled till the Judgment Seat of Christ!

"This is not your rest" (Micah 2:10). We have neither the earth, on which we are, nor heaven to which we are going." — J. N. D.

"Lo, I come to do thy will, O God" (Hebrews 10:7). His Father's will was His motive for doing everything. If you never thought of doing a thing except because it was God's positive will that you should do it, how three-quarters of your life would at once disappear. — J. N. D. The beginning of all declension is letting slip the guidance of the word of God. When obedience thereto ceases, there must be declension. There is no other counsel for me. The first temptation was to divert man from it. Christ keeps my heart and conscience under the light and control of His word, so that I may walk in company with Him! In divorcing a part of Scripture from its context, we can cause it to bear any construction which the subtle mind of man cares to put thereon. Similarly, it is not uncommon to see isolated passages from the great writers of the nineteenth century adduced to justify courses which are foreign to the general trend of the life works of these writers. As having been engaged largely in the presentation of such extracts, we have endeavoured to lay under contribution only such passages as may be considered representative of the general outlook of the writer in question. — Editor.

Separation from evil is the refusal of everything in association, life, habit or practice unsuited to Christ! (E. Dennett, 1878). My fellowship with the Father is my taste of the delight He has in the only-begotten! (G. V. Wigram). In times of difficulty, faith does not show in the magnificence of the result, but in love for God's work, however little it may be, and in the perseverance with which it is carried on through all the difficulties belonging to this state of weakness!

Many serve who are not following. Oh, for more distinct going forth to follow a rejected Lord and to esteem our holiest joy to tread the path He trod!

(Abridged from W. T. Turpin in "Christian Friend," 1878).

Neither go before your faith nor lag behind your conscience. (J.N.D.) If I cannot trust God to make me happy by doing His will, I will try and make myself happy by doing my own will.

Looking at past failure you will constantly find that it arose from settling things according to circumstances. I cannot settle anything myself, if I am in His presence I get guidance from the Lord in His circumstances. There is a Man in heaven in the highest glory! He can enter into everything where His people would not be able to move for themselves. Is His heart less occupied, His eye less fixed, on me than it was on Stephen? The curtain was drawn back for him. It is equally true to faith now! G.V.W.

Law: Prohibition, requirement, curse. Gospel: gift, grace and blessing. Salvation is deliverance by divine power out of one condition to another. The world is not now under probation, but the gospel comes to the lost. "The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost." (Extracts from "Words of Truth," Vol. 1: 1866).

"This do in remembrance of Me," Who is the Me? What mind can frame an answer? Who could describe His glory in its surpassing grandeur? The eternal life before the foundation of the world,

the only begotten in the bosom of the Father. Then when He was here what a display of the character of God! The gospel of John first speaks of His person then of the different offices blending in His person, then of the eternal life brought into this world. But what carries to our souls the earnest of the living affections of the Lord Jesus towards His own, is the fount unsealed and flowing from His heart. He knew His people needed to be reminded of His undying love! (Extract from G. V. Wigram). In Moses, self-first crops up in confidence in itself, then after 40 years it appears in fear.

Joshua is a type of the heavenly Christ in staying in the tent of the congregation, but in Moses, we have a type of the gracious Christ going into the camp.

Having the soul fixed on Christ will enable us to resist temptation and sin. It is not so much by thinking of the object that may be a temptation to us, that we shall get strength; it is not in letting our minds dwell on it, even though it be with the effort to resist it. Our privilege is to be occupied with Christ, and thus obtain the victory.

We never lose, if God puts us in trial and we need never be afraid if there is faithfulness. If you have only got faith to walk in the path of God, you will find He has a plan through it all. If our hearts have courage to do God's will, all will turn out for blessing. (J.N.D.).

There are many instances in Scripture where God made man's insufficiency superabundantly sufficient for the needs of individuals. We can depend that His wonders have not ceased either in the material or in the spiritual realms! T.O. The moral glory — the beauty of the ways of God is "the riches of His glory." God finds His whole delight in the Son of His love. You are to have your heart full of Him seeing the riches of His glory now in the exquisite beauty of the Father with such a Son! In "the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints" we look forward and see the heavens as they will be in the millennium and see not only one heavenly Man there but heaven filled with heavenly men. The Lord has them all as His "staff" around Him. (Extract from G. V. Wigram).

Whilst the eye is gazing with delight on Christ in glory, the Holy Spirit is engraving the Christ in whom we delight on our hearts. The lack of spiritual perception is the sure sign of spiritual decay. On the failure of the priesthood, the prophet becomes supreme.

You cannot possibly please yourself and bring profit to your brethren! Divine love always seeks such profit.

If I turn my mind to that with which Ephesians 3:1-21. closes (breadth and length, etc., of love in connection with the infinitude of the divine Being), my mind cannot grasp it; but when I see the central object is Christ loving me and He Himself mine, able to fill me with all the fulness of God, I can lay hold of it. I am brought by the Father to the Lord Jesus Christ blessed in Him and His love bearing on my heart, He has to empty me to get my heart filled with Himself. I cannot grasp the infinitude of God, but I can say "He loves me." (G. V. Wigram).

We are going on to "the brightest and the best" and what may intervene is subsidiary to the unrolling of the scroll of Omnipotent mercy and grace at the judgment seat which will show us the superabundant care the Lord of Glory has over His own! T.O.

If we love each other, we sacrifice ourselves for each other.

Worldliness begins wherever Christ is not the motive, because Christ accompanies as light and grace there. Christ is both the manna and old corn of the land! He bends graciously to my necessities, but He does not cultivate folly. I shall seek what meets my necessity with thankfulness. If I seek to please the world, worldliness begins. If I love vanity, it is not Christ. If I dress or furnish to meet the world's eye, it is worldliness! In learning Christ, we learn in spirit much more than we think. "Why persecutest thou me, Saul?" contains in germ the whole mystery. How be it Saul knew not what it was all about, nor what wonders the words contained! The least bit of self obscures the presentation of Christ.

Divine strength cannot be where human strength is!

If we do not know how to be nothing, God must make us nothing. The place of nothingness is that of moral exaltation (Matthew 18:4). The Cross has come in and closed the history of man as a lost sinner and began the history of the accepted Man 1:1 :e., of Christ!

God is light and the Church is the prism through which the light of God is brought out in detail to show all the beauties of His glory.

Faith acts without evidence, but when it acts, there is abundant corroboration!

What is our true course now? More simple faith, seeing Him who is invisible and more thorough separation. "The Nazarite is for the day of weakness!" The Spirit of God is our only power against evil as also for enjoyment of heavenly things; but to avail ourselves of His power we need to be in dependence and active faith.

There has been frequent allusion to the truth having been recovered to the Christians in the past century. That was a notable fact! But of even greater significance is the news when we hear of Christians being recovered to the truth! Ed. In Ephesians, "in Christ" has to do with heavenly position, while "Christ in" the believer connects with all the fulness of God! "Ye in Me" tells of deliverance in Romans; satisfaction in Colossians; heavenly position in Ephesians. "I in you" expresses liberty in Romans; hope of glory in Colossians; all the fulness of God in Ephesians. (M. C. Gahan in "Christian Friend," 1896).

We look for the advent of the Lord of Glory; but shortly before the consummation of creation's expectation, we shall go to our proper place with Himself! T.O.

Looking at ourselves in service there would be nothing but despair; but the moment that Christ is manifested, there comes a joy which neither my light nor my darkness can dim. G.V.W.

034 Sixty Fragments

Sixty Fragments THE JOY OF HEAVEN.

"There came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." 2 Peter 1:17.

Ah yes! this is heaven's deepest joy; fellowship with the Father Himself, in the delight with which He views His beloved Son; and fellowship with Jesus, in His delight to be thus the object of the Father's love. This joy, even now on earth, is ours, But only, Lord above;

Thy saints without a pang, shall know The fulness of thy love.

(Present Testimony 5:69).

LIKENESS TO CHRIST.

You never can become suitable to Christ but by being in His company. It is the Bridegroom that makes the Bride; and you must acquire from Himself what best suits Himself.... It is company that teaches manners. If you are not in His company you may read the Scriptures as much as you like, be able to describe from them dispensations and so on, but it will all end in affectation, not in Christ's ways. . . . Accustom yourself to being in the presence of Christ; and the effect of that presence is to demand the entire removal of everything that is not of Him.... The reason we see so little of it in people is that they have been so little beholding the glory of Christ. This was just what made the difference between Martha and Mary. Martha was occupied with the human good thing; Mary was learning, by being in company with Himself, what suited Him. Children are very often like their parents, because they keep their company so much.... It is only as I am with Himself that He gives me power from Himself to be what is suited to Him. J. B. STONEY.

HE IS COMING.

"O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength: lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him." Isaiah 40:9-10.

He is coming; and the tidings Sweep through the willing air, With hope that ends for ever Time's ages of despair.

He is coming; and the mountains Of Judea ring again;

Jerusalem awakens And shouts her glad Amen. For He thy true Messiah, Thine own anointed King, He comes, in love and glory, Thy endless joy to bring.

Yes, He thy King is coming To end thy woes and wrongs, To give thee joy for mourning, To turn thy sighs to songs. To dry the tears of ages, To give thee, as of old, The diadem of beauty, The

crown of purest gold. To lift thee from thy sadness, To set thee on the throne, Messiah's chosen nation, His best-beloved one.

H. BONAR.

TITLES OF THE PENTATEUCH. The titles of the Mosaic books in the Bible are taken from the Septuagint which was a translation in Greek; for Exodus in particular compare the Greek of Luke 9:31. The Hebrew headings are respectively (1) "Beginning," (2) "These are the names" (3) "And He called," (4) "In the wilderness," (5) "These are the words." The last four titles are simply the phrases introducing the several books. They have no relation in meaning to the titles in the English A.V. We find them already in Jerome's day, but it is clear that they could not be original titles and that they result from the disintegration to which the Torah was subjected by those concerned in the translation called the Septuagint. The rest of the Old Testament titles for the most part follow the Hebrew. In the Jewish Mishna, Leviticus is spoken of as the "Law of the Priests" and Deuteronomy as "the Duplicate of the Law." E. E. WHITFIELD. A SCRIPTURAL SEQUENCE.

(1) Thy words were found, and I did eat them; Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: . . . (2) I sat not in the assembly of the mockers, . . . (3) if thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as My mouth: (Jeremiah 15:16-19).

Note (1) shows remnant character loyal to the Word, (2) is the consequence in a separate path, while (3) is the result in discriminating ability which leads to suitable testimony.

T. OLIVER. THE MERCIES OF THE LORD.

"The Lord is my helper, I will not fear what man shall do unto me." Hebrews 13:6. When the widow cried unto the prophet, "The creditor is come to take unto him my two sons to be bondmen," what answers Elisha? At first as if embarrassed by this touching appeal, he replies, "What can I do for thee? Tell me" (he continues as if he had discovered the mode of relief), "what hast thou in thy house?" God does not allow us to be placed in circumstances which bear no evidence of His providing mercies. They may be very small and scanty, yet faith appropriates them, and encouraging the soul in God proclaims, "The Lord is my helper," not outside His own mercies, but through them. The widow here borrows from abroad from her neighbours empty vessels. The testimony in asking the loan of an empty vessel was that she who was known to be in such abject circumstances had something to put into them. She might doubtless have been taunted that her poverty was notorious, and that it was folly to borrow empty vessels. She had only boldly to say, "The Lord is my helper!" Now this is an example of the simple action of faith in the use of means. Nature would have despised the "pot of oil," and sought unto the king and those in high estate, or to the lender for relief; but this is not God's way. God only wants to bring Himself into the scene, for He can touchingly appeal to His people, "What could have been done for my vineyard which I have not done for it?"

(Present Testimony 5:254).

ANXIOUS CARE.

(From Notes of Reading with J. McDonald at Innerleithen, 16/10/97)

I have been much struck lately with the literal meaning of the Greek word "Merimnao" which in the New Testament is used to convey a meaning of anxious care. It is derived from a root word which signifies "to be pulled in opposite directions." A cart pulled in opposite directions will never go on! But if we are going on with God, care will serve to give us spiritual exercises. In all circumstances we should bring in the victorious character of Christ into our lives and walk in the power of the victory that He has won for us. He was crucified through weakness, yet He was not raised through weakness but by the power of God. When we get the knowledge of this in power in our souls it has a wonderful influence on all our actions. It was the sense of the victory achieved that enabled Abraham to refuse the spoil of Sodom even from a thread to a shoe latchet! We ought to act rightly and not to be grumbling at our circumstances; e.g., if we are underpaid, the Lord has His eye on this. He will see to it in many ways. A man once told me that he used to be very discontented with his wages; at last he got an increase, but the next month after, some of his family turned ill and he had a large doctor's bill to pay, so that he did not gain anything by the increase. God could make poor fare afford more sustenance to the body than the richest food in the world. There are many instances in Scripture where God made man's insufficiency superabundantly sufficient for the needs of individuals. We can depend upon it that His wonders have not ceased! THE LANGUAGE OF THE GOSPEL. The reader has probably often asked himself, "What language did the Lord and the Apostles use?" That is not easily answered. Scholars have mostly assumed that Aramaic was the language that underlies the discourses of the Lord in the Gospels and of the Apostles in the Book of the Acts, but some have held that Greek was the usual language they employed. The only solution of the difficulty is to suppose the Lord and His immediate followers were bilingual, speaking both Aramaic and Greek; employing the one language in the midst of the less cultured portion of the community, the other oftentimes in parts of the country such as Galilee, or in intercourse with Hellenist Jews. There is a modern analogy familiar to people acquainted with Wales or the Channel Islands where the upper grade will address his guest in the English tongue and afterwards turn to address his servant in the vernacular. Who could suppose that in Luke 2:1-52 the angels addressed the shepherds in any language but Aramaic? It is as little likely such could speak Greek, as English peasants in olden times could speak Norman-French. That Greek was not in the time of our Lord the usual language of the common people in Syria (at least) would lie in the fact of the need being early felt amongst the Christians of an Aramaic translation of the New Testament as much as the Old. It is a fact that the Lord spoke from heaven to Saul of Tarsus in "the Hebrew dialect" (Acts 26:14) which Paul himself used as well as Greek according to the circumstances in which he was placed or his object (Acts 21:37; Acts 21:40). Greek (like modern French in diplomacy) was the medium of communication between the upper classes of the Jews and their rulers. On the other hand when Peter conversed in the hall of judgment, he must have used Aramaic, because of the reference to his provincial accent! E. E. WHITFIELD (1883).

NOTES ON THE FIRST DIVISION OF BRETHERN.

"There was strife between the herdsmen of Abram and of Lot." (Genesis 13:7).

Lot's story (one of the saddest in Genesis) is important to be noticed in a day when God having revealed to us the truth of our heavenly calling, it is plain that there are many Lots. With Abraham outwardly, he was not at heart what Abraham was; later with the men of Sodom outwardly, yet not a Sodomite either. He corresponds to a saint untrue to his saintship! His was a downward course. Lot merely followed Abram. Abram walked with God; Lot only with Abram. How easy it is to walk

where another's faith leads without exercise of conscience! How many such there are, practically but camp followers, adherents of a cause for which they have no thought of being martyrs, balanced between what they know as truth and a world which has never been seen by them in the light of truth. Egypt had acted thus for Lot. The attraction it had for him came out plainly where the coveted plain of Jordan seemed in his eyes "like the land of Egypt." Abram's failure in going there had loosened the moral hold he had hitherto retained on his nephew. Still true to the weakness of his character, Lot did not propose separation; but Abram did, after it was plain they could no longer happily walk together. Their possessions, increased largely in Egypt, separated them; but Abram manifested his own restoration by the magnanimity of his offer. Lot beheld the fertility of the plain of Jordan and he chose to be there. He covered the choice with a veil of piety! The plain of Jordan was "like the garden of the Lord," like paradise: Why should he not enjoy God's gifts in it? He forgot the fall and that paradise was barred from man, argued religiously while under all the real secret was found in this: "it is like the land of Egypt."

Subsequently Abram dwelt in the land of Canaan, God bade him walk through it as his own. He moved and dwelt in Mamre (fatness) which is in Hebron (communion). May we only know and live in the portion of Abram here!

(Extracts from F. W. Grant's "Genesis in Light of N.T. 1870 or so.) THE SILVER LINING. In Romans 15:4, we read that through the comfort of the scriptures we might have hope, that is why at such a juncture we turn to the scriptures without any formal recitation or performance of ritual. In the face of death, the greatest enemy of mankind, human philosophy has been and is shrouded in hopeless gloom. There is probably no greater cloud in human affairs than the cloud of bereavement, yet the scriptures invest that cloud with a silver lining, and there is no other agent which can affect that end! T. OLIVER VISION AND VITALITY. The reference to Moses in Deuteronomy 34:7, has been used to illustrate the inflexible nature of the Law retaining its unimpaired strength to the end. We venture to speak of the verse in another way, as the title suggests. By way of contrast we recall the closing days of Eli. "There was no open vision" and the word from the Proverbs was abundantly proved in the history of Israel! As to Eli himself we read, "his eyes were dim" and the sad end of his life is one of departed glory. Returning to Moses we suggest there is a link between Deuteronomy 34:7, and Hebrews 11:27. In both verses we have what is equivalent to vision and vitality! In the pathway of faith these two features are complementary. It was the "seeing him who is invisible" which made Moses endure. He had seen the glory of Egypt, had tasted of its pleasures, but when faith's vision laid hold of Him who is outside all of sight and sense, Moses refused, chose, esteemed and endured! Before applying the lesson to ourselves, we think of the beloved Apostle. Writing to the Corinthians he could say, "Last of all he was seen of me" (1 Corinthians 15:8). How that vision changed everything for him! How telling were his words to King Agrippa, "I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision" (Acts 26:19). As a last reference we turn to Php 3:1-21, where we learn how the effect of that vision was to relegate all he could boast in as a man to the refuse heap! We turn to ourselves. The lesson may not be easy in execution. It is simple in teaching. The way of strength is found as faith's vision is turned to Christ. Where He has gone is where our souls must and can only find rest. As to things here (ourselves included), all is of a transitory nature. We feel the pressure of change. But we have links with what is eternal: — the scene which He fills, "While we look" on these things, the things here assume their true position and calibre in our minds. It is "while we look." The Lord

grant we may be marked by vision and vitality!

G. HARKESS.

STEADFAST CONTINUANCE (An extract from a letter by the late Dr Wolston at Oslo, Dec, 1914),

I have been struck of late to see how long the Apostle of the Gentiles stayed in many places he visited. At Antioch he remained "a whole year" (Acts 11:26). At Corinth "he continued a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them" (Acts 18:11); and at Ephesus, as his centre, he was certainly two years and three months (Acts 19:8-10). It is a grave question if servants of the Lord to-day are not too meteoric in their movements hence the too often evanescent results of labour. We are none of us apostles; but we may well learn from his wise ways how the work of the Lord is best carried on. Such a line of ministry demands faith and patience on the part of the labourers THE NEW ORDER AND NEW POWER (Romans 8:1-39)

How comforting it is to be even in a small measure in the light of the death and resurrection of Christ. Romans 3:25 speaks of the propitiation, 1:e., mercy seat, the meeting place and what needs blood, so we thank God unfeignedly for the blood of Jesus. The apostle goes on to show that not only do sins need to be dealt with, but the sinful condition from whence they come. God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin condemned sin in the flesh, so that in the death of Christ this matter has been for ever brought to an end, His death signifies this (our baptism commits us unto His death): that involves the closing completely of that order to which sin attached and the impending judgment of God. Here it is not pardon but deliverance from that order which could only be effected by His death, so we thank God for the death of the Lord Jesus. In Christ's death there is the closing of the old sinful order and in Christ risen there is the opening of the new order, while a new principle operates, viz., the principle of the Spirit of life, in contrast to the principle of sin and death manifest in the old order. The name "Christ Jesus" signifies Christ risen, and that means everything or God and for man. Romans 8:1 speaks of those who are in Christ Jesus. God has set us there, consequent on our identification with Him in death, but in the light of that He would have us to see that we now belong to an order taking its character from Christ, where life and righteousness are, and where can be no condemnation. Everything meets God's holy eye with perfect delight. We stand in the holy liberty of a new order, and rejoice that there is now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus. The last part of the verse should not be there, it was added probably; by an over-zealous scribe who thus sought to make the blessing conditional on conduct instead of an accomplished fact. Verse 2 speaks of being made free from the principle of sin and death by the agency of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. Freedom in this order brings power with it. We are now free to please God and have power so that the righteous requirements of the law right be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit. What could not be effected by the law on account of man's condition, is now definitely expressed consequent on the new condition "in Christ Jesus," and the new power "the spirit of God," so we come to be in the light of the value of the death and resurrection of Christ. J. S. BERTRAM. THE PERSON OF THE SON.

"He smote the men of Bethshemesh, because they had looked into the ark of the Lord" —1 Samuel 6:19. Let us beware of unhallowed thoughts of the Son of God. Let us eschew curious disquisition about His Person. His name is wonderful; no man can unravel the mystery. He is presented to us as the object of adoration, not as the subject for inspection (Present Testimony

2:33). AT HOME WITH THE LORD (2 Corinthians 5:6-9).

(Substance of address at the graveside of Mrs R. H. Brown, at Galashiels, 31/5/41). In the passage the words translated in the A.V. (1) as present means "at home with," and (2) as absent is literally "to be away from home." So that we can substitute these phrases for the words: "present and absent." Our beloved sister who was snatched from us so suddenly three days ago is obviously away from home as to the body since we have put it in the grave, but that she is at home with the Lord is not evident judging by sight or appearances. It is only as we walk by faith, that fact becomes good to our apprehension. The sentence begun in 5: 6 is partially broken off so as to introduce that explanation and is resumed in 5: 8. Apparently the Apostle preferred death to life because that would bring him to be "at home with the Lord." We are content rather to be away from home as to the body and thus to be at home with the Lord. If death comes before the coming of the Lord the Christian will have the far better part, hence we need not mourn in reality for our departed relative and friend because she has a far better part than if left here. She had a sudden death but that does not imply sudden glory as is so often said, for that she has to wait (as we have) the glad resurrection morning to receive a body of glory, like unto His body of glory! But she is happy at home with the Lord, waiting that certain first resurrection which will be indescribably blessed and glorious. Wherefore the Apostle could say we make it our ambition that whether present or absent we may be well pleasing to Him. Hence our main exercises are not relative to the departed, but for those who are left over in view of the great reunion. Her sudden homecall has the object in view that in the infinite grace of the Lord we may be found walking before Him as children of the family of God, growing in grace and in our apprehension of the preciousness of Christ, stimulating one another to love and good works. The sudden transition from the seen to the unseen is very desirable for the christian. There has been no time for heart-rending farewells but we should live each day with relation to each other so that farewells will be unnecessary. But for anyone who does not know the Lord, sudden death would be an irrevocable disaster for eternity. Therefore such should seize the opportunity because now is the day of salvation. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be safe for time and eternity!

T. OLIVER NOTE ON ROMANS ch. 5 - 8.

Kristiania (Oslo), 4th December, 1914.

Some have got help through seeing in Romans 5:1-21. the two heads — adam and Christ — and that you can only have association with one at a time. Hence, if in Adam you are not in Christ, and vice versa. In chapter 6. there are two masters, sin and God, and you can only be under one at a time. Again in Romans 7:1-25., you find two husbands, the law and Christ. If bound to one there is no link with the other. But, by death, the link with the first is broken, and thus one is free to be married to another, even to Him who is alive from the dead. When that is seen, liberty is in view. Romans 8:1-39, is really the dowry of the soul married to the risen Christ — and a very grand dowry it is! 1:e., "in Christ" and "no condemnation"; "in the Spirit" hence "life and peace"; then "Christ in you" (5: 10), and the Spirit in you (5: 11). As a consequence power is known and sonship (5: 14, 15). The "first fruits of the Spirit" follow, and the soul learns that "God is for us" and from His love there can be "no separation" (5: 39).

Extract from a letter of Dr. Wolston. He was stricken by paralysis at the end of Dec., 1914, but remained until summer 1915 when Geo. Johnsen brought him home.

DEPARTED LEADERS. The Apostles had no successors! In the prospect of their departure Paul commended the saints to God and the word of His grace (Acts 20:32), and Peter to the written Word (2 Peter 1:15). It has been the same in principle with the vessels of testimony of every age. They lived, served and departed to be with Christ. We are left and we ask for the light in which they should now be regarded. The Word of God supplies the answer (Hebrews 13:7). We are to remember those who have been our leaders and have spoken to us the word of God and considering the end of their conversation we are to imitate their faith. When bereft of any to whom God has specially committed his testimony in the dark and evil day, the Holy Spirit would lead our affections in divine channels. It is a consolation to be directed to remember such eminent servants of the Lord and to recall their faith as an incentive and example. To do so will obviate the danger of human idolatry, and enable us to glorify God in the energy and zeal which they displayed. Moreover, we are told that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day and forever! They may disappear but He abides as our unchanging resource. Amid all our vicissitudes, failures and unfaithfulness, if our hearts are stayed on this blessed truth we need never be discouraged. Christ remains ever the same and he will never cease to care for His church. What comfort in our conscious weakness and antidote to our apprehensions will be found in this. His truth is bound up with His immutable character. Therefore we must not be carried about with strange doctrines. When standard-bearers fall, it is but a summons to hold all the more tenaciously the testimony they proclaimed. "Behold I come quickly, hold fast what thou hast, that no man take thy crown" (Revelation 3:11).

EDWARD DENNETT in "Christian Friend," 1882.

MEN OF UNDERSTANDING (1 Chronicles 12:1-40.).

Among those gathered to David at Ziklag were instructive characters. The centre, light and beauty of that despised company was the rejected man of that day, mean in appearance and contemned. He was a type of the blessed Living One on high who is the Rejected Man of this day of boasted resources. "I am rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing." The first thought as we meditate is concerning a rejected Lord. The characteristics of these Gadites and men of Issachar show the state of soul suitable to our Lord Jesus Christ in His rejection. The first notable feature in the sons of Gad was that they were a separated company; they had gone out, not come in. That is the very responsibility in order to be a vessel unto honour sanctified and meet for the Master's use (2 Timothy 2:21). Communion is a greater thing in the Lord's eyes than usefulness and is the spring of all service suitable to God. Then these separated sons of Gad were men of might and of war, they could handle shield and buckler, with faces as lions, as swift as the roes on the mountains. In their separation was found strength, courage, skill, boldness, alacrity. These are the qualities of a heart separated to Christ. Ere any of these qualities are found in exercise, Jordan must be crossed when overflowing its banks (5: 15). They must pass through death ere they could serve! "If any man serve me, let him follow me." To give scope for all true devotedness to the Lord, death must be known practically as passed and carried by us. So it has ever been, whether in type or in power of the Holy Ghost. Death in the power of life is the secret of true following of Christ and true acting for Him. Elisha's newly acquired mantle of power received from the one to whom he separated himself led him ere he used it to the same spot as these lion-faced sons of Gad! Jordan alone can open the door for me to reach my Lord in heaven and to follow Him suitable to his rejection on earth and give that subduedness in keeping with vessels of Christ devoted to Him in every turn of

the heart, and efficient for Him. Lastly, what characterised the men of Issachar marks the saint to-day according to whether he is a son of Gad or not. If not separated to David they could not have "understanding of the times as to know what Israel ought to do." No one can know the Lord's mind as to the saints who is not suitable to the true David. What can be more excellent, first Christ then His own? The only way to know the mind of the Lord about His interests is to be truly devoted to Himself in communion, walking in His path through the desert of this world. Nothing can please the Lord in the day of His rejection but a remnant wholly separated to Himself empowered in communion with Him by the Holy Ghost. The strength, courage, skill, boldness and alacrity to walk His path, accepting His death, is the only door out of visible things to Himself!

Extracts from W. T. TURPIN in "The Voice," 1880.

ETERNAL SECURITY. A few words spoken at the graveside of an old friend. John 10:28, read.

I have known our deceased relative and friend from infancy, thus probably longer than any other person now living. Amongst her excellent qualities I may mention her faithful service with a firm in this town for half a century. She had a lifelong struggle against ill health in a fragile body borne patiently with calm fortitude and cheerfulness. But I put emphasis mainly on the fact that as a girl she came to know eternal security in the hands of the One whose promise has never failed. He said that they shall never perish, 1:e., emphatic, conveying the intelligence that they shall "never, never" perish for all eternity. As we have committed this frail body to the grave it would seem that the grave has gained a victory, but it is only temporary, because we look forward to a morning without clouds. The cloud of bereavement is one of the darkest clouds on earth! In that morning to this war-ridden earth will come the Prince of Peace hushing its groan and crushing all opposition to His will and He shall administer everything to the Glory of God. But antecedent to that morning there will be the resurrection morning when 6,000 years of dying will be eclipsed in a moment, "a twinkling of an eye"! We commit this body of the last member of a christian family (all of whom knew eternal security in the Lord Jesus Christ) to the grave in view of that sure resurrection. "Blessed are they who have part in the first resurrection over whom the second death will have no power." The second death is the logical conclusion of the broad way of man's self-will and opposition to God. May the lesson of this open grave and the sudden homecall of our friend speak to everyone impressing upon us the lesson which we require! T. OLIVER. THE REMNANT. No single truth can ever be taken as a ground of fellowship in an evil day when Christendom presents ruin whatever may be the pretension of the Roman or other Church. Let us then insist that we are not living in Pentecostal times but in the last days when judgment is imminent! The question is "can we be in the position of a true remnant without falling into narrow sectarianism on the one hand or into Romanism on the other"? A remnant represents a true part of the whole, e.g., a piece of woven silk has been burned save a little bit. That is a true specimen of the whole piece. Revelation 3:7; Revelation 3:13 is purely unsectarian so that any sentiment of being Philadelphian is precluded. Some have indulged that idea with notorious consequences. But the passage applied to those who are in the position of the remnant who disclaim being the Church but who recognise and are governed by the great truths of the Church. We must not confound the recognition of these with the taking of them for a basis of fellowship! That would end in pretension like that of Rome or the narrowest sectarianism. We may be in danger of thinking we are "the Body" instead of being a feeble remnant depending on the Lord to carry out the truths He has confided to us. 2 Timothy 2:1-26 will keep us from sectarianism! We cannot get out of Christendom

without becoming Jews or pagans. The "Great House" contains miscellaneous vessels, and the faithful one is called to purify himself from such as are to dishonour, and he shall find fellowship with those who pursue righteousness, etc. That the blessed truths of the Church may be recognised as binding on the conscience, will be the first effect of following righteousness, but that is different from making them the basis of communion. May we call on the Lord out of a pure heart!

Extracted from E. L. BEVIR, in "the Voice," 1895. THE REMNANT AT THE CLOSE.

"He must increase, I must decrease," 1:e., the keynote of His ways with us. All I could give Him were my sins (to wash out), nakedness, (to hide me in His acceptance), lost condition (to share His own given glory). But even these I could not really give to Him, so to be done with them; for I was not greater than the "I" that loved myself but He has adjusted that and we are satisfied: — He with His Father's service and I (renewed) with the delight He had in so acting. John's reference was to service. The herald is important until the heralded appears. If He is to be magnified on earth ere He comes to fetch us, what is wanted is a fresh action of the Spirit. It may be hidden and quiet. When He came the first time, there was in the temple Zacharias and near it Elizabeth, Mary, Joseph, Anna, Simeon, etc. So there may be going on now a silent formative power preparing for the bright morning star. Surely it is the present mind of heaven acting upon us which says, "Surely, I come quickly" which has led to our saying, "Even so, come Lord Jesus" and led to our looking at what there may be still around ourselves practically inconsistent with that hope!

Extracts from letter by G. V. WIGRAM, 6-9-1874. THE MAN OF THE PHARISEES.

There was no miracle in John 1:1-51. Peter, Philip and Nathaniel were brought to Jesus without miracle; the work was in their souls. "Behold the Lamb of God" had awakened this going to the Lord to seek him as sinners having discovered their moral condition; (very different from being drawn to him by wonder). The Lord gives Himself to those in John 1:1-51, but not to those in John 2:1-25 who believe in His miracles. So in John 4:1-54, there is no miracle before the Samaritan woman or the villagers of Sychar! Conscience was stirred. They received Him as Saviour and He is at home with them at once; just as He received Andrew and his companions to his dwelling. In John 3:1-36 we get Nicodemus occupying his own peculiar place. He was attracted by miracles, but his soul was reached and it did not end with him as it had begun. He did not wonder and believe but was exercised and sought Jesus timidly. The Lord did not take him to Himself at once. He is patient yet decided, exposing him so that he might learn himself. In committing Himself to others, he formed living alliance with them, consenting to know them with personal knowledge in the bonds of fellowship. He cannot do this for those who believe merely historically by force of evidence; (as the multitude then and as Christendom now). With those who come as sinners He forms alliance and fellowship for eternity! The fragments of convicted hearts must be the link. Nicodemus is seen a second time in John 7:1-53 standing for righteousness in the person of Jesus in the midst of the elders. This is a little way beyond John 3:1-36. He is still :the companion of the rulers, acting with misgivings and in small measure owning the Righteous One. But in John 19:1-42 he has advanced; he put himself on the side of the world victim. God will provide the victim with a glorious triumphant resurrection by and by. Meanwhile Nicodemus and Joseph provide Him with a tomb and grave clothes. Their spices perfume the sepulchre! Nicodemus occupied the place of which the early words of Jesus had told him. In spirit, he is looking at the uplifted serpent, the crucified healing Son of Man, henceforth he was one to whom Jesus

committed himself. Do we know that Jesus has committed Himself to us?

(Unnamed author in the days when people read articles because of their contents and not of the signatures.) THERE SHALL BE NO NIGHT THERE (Some words at the grave of John King, Gavinton, 6-9-41.) That night succeeds day with unfailing regularity does not admit of controversy. That it should be otherwise would entail the reconstruction of the physical universe. Nevertheless, that will be compassed by God's intervention in manifest power. But the statement in Revelation 21:25, and repeated in Revelation 22:5, implies more than circumstances in the physical realm. It has also a moral bearing. "Men love darkness rather than the light, because their deeds are evil" (John 3:19). Night conceals many wrong actions which would be inadmissible under the searchlight of the sun! But darkness is the realm of the author of evil. The Colossian Christians were delivered from the power or authority of darkness and translated into the kingdom of the Son of God's love. The strangers scattered abroad were addressed by the Apostle Peter as a royal priesthood to God who had called them out of darkness into His marvellous light. So that darkness is absolutely opposed to love and light, the great features of God's sphere. The Apostle Paul addressed the Thessalonian believers as sons of the light, 1:e. , the teaching of Scripture in the power of the Holy Spirit, and sons of the day (1:e. , the future glory of Christ). They were not of the night nor of darkness! "The light" is the present value of "the day to come." Hence the conduct of the Christians should be in keeping with the light and the day and in strong contrast to the character of the darkness and night exhibited by the world. That the time left for our testimony is brief is impressed with peculiar point at the side of an open grave! Many in this large company are getting old. Many have possibly no thought of God and the real issues of life and only respect for the deceased has led to their attendance here. This moment is of all importance, fraught with eternal significance. The night of eternal loss is coming for the careless man of the world. It will be infinitely better to choose now the path of light which will issue in eternal day with Christ and where night will have vanished for ever! T. OLIVER.

HERE AND THERE.

"These things have I spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." (John 16:33.) "Our citizenship (thus our political interest) is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ." (Php 3:20.) Here there are hours of sadness And trials hard to bear;

There all is joy and gladness, Without a passing care.

Here there are heavy crosses, Which weigh the spirit down;

There every brow is circled With an immortal crown.

Here wars, and strifes, and tumults Rage on and never cease;

There not a thought can ruffle The deep celestial peace.

Here there are separations, Which almost break the heart;

There loved ones meet, and never Know what it is to part.

Here oft in bitter anguish, We weep from day to day;

There God's own hand so gently Wipes all our tears away.

Here we a little longer Must life's brief story tell;

There in the many mansions We shall forever dwell.

(1882.) READY FOR THE RAPTURE. The Lord never ends a dispensation without giving a close worthy of Himself. How beautiful in Luke to find hearts brimful of God's thoughts, looking for the Messiah. Mary and Elizabeth talk of Him and His ear is close down to hear as in Malachi 3:16. If Christ acts now, as He always acts, we may expect (despite all the ruin) to have some with whom the Spirit can say to Him "Come." The great thing that we have to do in our day is to live for Christ. People have a vague idea of living for the glory of God; but the only way to do that is to have the love in Christ's heart so dwelling in us as it dwelt in the Apostle Paul that he said "That Christ should be magnified in my body." Is that my earnest expectation and hope? If I have been living for myself those around must see that the light is marred, it does not shine out and they would say "if all the light that shines out is the measure of the Christ that shines in, he must have very little?" It is the One whose love has never passed from me for a single moment Who wants me to live for Him. It is impossible to go through this world without suffering! You may chose whether you will suffer for Christ or suffer for yourself. If living for Christ you will suffer for Him. If living for yourself you will have God's rod close behind you. Lot had God's mark as well as Abraham! He had not forgotten Lot any more than He had Abraham; but which of their troubles was it better to have? Abraham's son was the centre of the promises. Would he reckon that God was the keeper of the promise and not himself? Would he trust God to make good His promise while God was testing his heart? Yes! Can I not say "Oh, Lord Jesus, give me Abraham's trial and portion, and not Lot's." It is the mind of God to make as complete a split between flesh and Spirit in these last days, as He did at Pentecost. The question is, who is living for Christ and who is not? If your heart is set on Christ you will have the enjoyment of Christ before He comes and you will meet Him with joy. The Father's thought is that as Christ is there absolutely for us, He will have us here absolutely for Him. Do not pick up things around you, 1:e., curiosities out of the gutter; but say "through His grace I will work out what He has worked in, I will live to Christ, whose eye is looking on me and I will manifest to others the One to whom I live."

(G. .V. WIGRAM in "The Voice," 1890). THE WORD OF GOD The Word of God should not only be a check on our thoughts but be their source, which is far deeper. We see it in Christ, the only perfect One. He only could say, "By the word of thy lips I have kept me from the path of the destroyer." "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee." There is a preserving power in the Word, to keep the feet from sliding, which those only know who receive the truth in the love of it. Merely having the word hid in the memory will not do! There is no preserving power in that. There must be the action of the truth on the heart and conscience, separating from all defilement otherwise its preserving power cannot be experienced. (Fragment from "The Voice," 1879).

CONFORMED TO CHRIST'S DEATH.

"Be not conformed to this world" (Romans 12:1-21); but we are to be conformed to the death of Christ (Php 3:1-21). Paul speaks for himself, but it is the path for every saint in the process of going down. We are to be dead to all that to which Christ has died. We shall be conformed to His

body of glory in a moment fast approaching. Now is the time to present our bodies a living sacrifice to God. That will be effected in doing His will. That pathway is clearly marked out for us in Php 2:1-30. In leaving this world for another which is infinitely better, Paul became the pattern saint in the path which the Lord had traced out while here. Our business is to "follow in diligent haste" therein to His glory!

(Extract from address by the late ISAAC ELLIOT at Carlisle, 27-12-15). THE RICH MERCY OF GOD. The day of which we are sons will declare the majesty of the rich mercy of God! Enoch is the transcendent O.T. example of the N.T. heavenly calling in principle. The advent of the first-born seldom conduces to increased godliness on the part of the parents as it did in his case. Because new ambitions and interests are introduced. However, the removal of a beloved one is more likely to lead to wholehearted occupation with the object of all heaven's delight. Your beloved has now the better part with Christ and you are left over for the coming of the Lord, the consummation of the prospect of grace. The outcome of the welter of blood and thunder in the affairs of men will be God's intervention in the Man of His right hand claiming His own wholesale and when He will deal with the world in inexorable righteousness. Meanwhile we occupy till He come! We weep with those who weep and commend you, dear brother, to the infallible resource which alone can be found in the word of His grace. Our sincere sympathy goes with you in your hour of great trial! Extract from a letter of condolence by T. OLIVER. MY GOSPEL The parts of this great economy committed to Paul are: — (1) We are God's righteousness in Christ. (2) So complete is God's righteousness that all in man which compromised it has been judicially ended in the cross of Christ; the old man crucified with Christ. (3) Eternal life in Christ is given. (4) We are in the Spirit and not in the flesh. It is Christ liveth in us and we in Him. (5) The glory of God is our hope and we are there through the same righteousness in Christ. (6) We are now united to Christ in heaven and as we realise this we are for Him on the earth. (7) We look for Him to come to change our vile bodies that they may be fashioned like unto His glorious body. (J .B. STONEY in Present Testimony, vol. 1:79).

MINUTE ASSIDUOUS ATTENTION. The way our blessed Lord carries on with each of us, step by step, is amazing! The more we muse on His ways (and even words) to us, the more we are comforted with His minute assiduous attention; perfectly holy yet perfectly tender. The Queen of Sheba learned Solomon in his glory and thus we now know Him. This knowledge introduces us into His things, while we have His sympathy in our own sorrows here, like Mary in John 11:1-57. As I learn Him in the latter way, I feel that the One most necessary to me is no longer here. As I know Him in glory I am beside myself, no spirit left in me; and I am filled with praise and worship on account of his greatness. May these two lines of knowledge abound in us! (From "The Voice," 1891).

PAUL'S WORD FROM THE PRISON.

Php 1:1-30. is marked by a collection of beautiful jewels: — Fellowship in the Gospel (5: 5), mutual thought (7), deep-seated love (8), intelligence of God's ways in blessing above sight (12), love for Christ's name (18), balance between being with Christ above or here for the sake of those loved by Him (23), suffering for Christ, a gift (29); then in Php 2:1-30 humility, 3 energy, 4 contentment imparting perfect peace, when a chain binds in prison him who displayed the energy of Php 3:1-21. These are three brilliants of extra magnitude! The epistle is not marked by doctrine, but by

spirit, conduct and walk in believers commended by the Holy Ghost! Joy is the special mark, furthered by gift whilst here (1:25); but not lessened when the gift is taken away. (2:17). (From an anonymous writer in "The Voice," 1873). THE GLORY(John 13:31-32).

There is a glorified Man in heaven. The Holy Ghost is on earth in consequence of that! It was God's purpose that glory should be connected with man. In Exodus 40:33-34, the glory filled the tabernacle and in 1 Kings 8:10-11 the glory filled the temple. In Isa. 6:15 the glory is disturbed because of the refractory state of the people. In Ezekiel 1:26-27 there is the vision of the glory retiring from the earth, but the prophet sees in the brightest spot the likeness of a Man 1:1 :e., an intimation that God would yet have a Man in the glory. In Luke 2:9, the glory returns to announce the birth of the Saviour and God's good pleasure in man. In Luke 3:21-22, at the end of 30 years of private life when everything therein was beautiful and according to God; on taking His place publicly with the remnant, heaven was opened to Him and God's good pleasure in Him was expressed. In Luke 9:28; Luke 9:32, after three years of public service the glory invited Him. He could have gone free; He not only kept the law, but He was the expression of divine righteousness. He would not go free. His exodus was accomplished at Jerusalem. In John 12:24, the corn of wheat must die and bring forth fruit after its own order. "Both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one." In John 13:31, He glorified God at man's farthest point of distance in death; God was indebted to Man for glory and man was glorified in God. He was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father. In Acts 7:55, Stephen saw the glory of God and Jesus. He testified that the Son of Man is at the right hand of God. They stopped their ears and murdered the witness! In Acts 9:3, the glory looked down on a man at the greatest distance from God. In 2 Cor. 4:46 we have the Gospel of the glory of Christ, the image of God; the glory is not veiled, it shines in his face! In 2 Corinthians 3:18, we behold the Lord's glory, as we look we are metamorphosed; there is moral correspondence. Glory is every attribute of God in manifestation and perfectly balanced. This is manifested in Jesus. J. B. STONEY.

DEVOTEDNESS. The act of devotion recorded in 2 Samuel 23:13-17 occurred more than 40 years before the period of record. That was testimony to the lasting impression the act had made on David's mind. It is common experience amongst men, if a good work escapes notice at the time there is little likelihood of its coming up for commendation at a later date! Scripture affords examples, such as, the butler who forgot his promise made to Joseph in the prison, although only two years had elapsed (Genesis 38:1-30). Mordecai's good service to the king had been completely forgotten, but God disturbed the mind of the king and he sought that the book of records should be read to him and there was found written that Mordecai had saved the king's life, and that he had not received a reward. Then, he was the man the king delighted to honour! (Esther 6:1-14). In 1 Samuel 22:1-23, we see the setting of the first mentioned incident. David was rejected, hunted and suffering and became the centre of attraction for broken men in distress, debt, and discontent. But it would appear that the three mighty men were of a different type! They came to David in the Cave of Adullam in harvest-time, 1:e. , the very best time of the year, when they could have been employed to the best advantage. But they were attracted by the magnetic power of David. Subsequently they remained near to him and they heard his expression of desire for the water of Bethlehem. (He did not command them to do anything). But the magnitude of the host of the Philistines did not restrain them from consummating the wish of David; they acted in unison "perfectly joined together "in one mind, to fulfil the will of their master. They were separated

from every other interest so that they might the more wholeheartedly work for him. In writing to the Philippians commending devoted Timothy the Apostle lamented that the general state was "all seek their own "(Php 2:21). What an outstanding privilege it is for two or three to be gathered unto the Lord cleaving to Him and to be near enough in the apprehension of their souls to hear the expression of His mind. We shall then act unitedly for His glory, keeping His word, and our conduct will not deny the significance of His name! Such action will receive His commendation in the day of perfect appraisal to a much greater extent than performing brilliant individual deeds which may attract the attention of men, yet miss His approval. T. OLIVER. THE SECRET OF POWER

God will take care what you go through; do you take care how you go through it! If Christ's love is not filling my heart, I will go to some variety in a shop and satisfy it. The secret of power without and peace within is only and always to be occupied with God! . . . There is plenty of work but there is reason for complaint of the way I do it, because it is not the amount we do but to do what we have in hand well, as His eye is on us. There never was a moment lost by the Perfect Servant ("straightway" occurs repeatedly) yet nothing was ill done. At the same time He felt the danger of overwork for others, as we find His invitation, "Come ye yourselves apart with Me, and rest awhile." Are we as happy and peaceful sitting alone with Jesus, as when mixing with the toil of commerce or in the excitement of nightly meetings? The true secret of happiness is to sit at His feet while we serve enjoying His presence continually which is quite possible amid bustling scenes. May we abide in Him (fruitbearing results therefrom), and in His love wherein joy results!" ("Words of Truth.")

EXCLUSIVENESS. The point of departure must be the point of recovery, and that invariably is the point most difficult to reach. One will admit and confess anything but the motive. The motive exposes the nature. Self-respect prevents me from allowing any eye to penetrate to my motive, simply because I know it will not bear the light, and if it were known, not my conduct or my ways (which might be considered, and often are, mere accident), but my nature would be exposed and condemned. No one is really humble unless he has lost self-respect. An honest man cares very little about the respect of others if he cannot accept it as his due. Hence there is really no humility until I am so entirely disappointed with myself before God that I can say with Job, "I abhor myself." Now it is remarkable the various ways by which God in His faithfulness brings every one whom He leads into this experience. One in this experience never likes to refer to himself, and not only this, but he thinks everybody's nature is better than his own. Hence there is no rest or sense of escape from self-condemnation but in Christ, where there is no condemnation, and where this is the known region of the soul, everyone begins to be looked at from Christ's side and as they relate to Him. He, the life and rest of the heart, necessarily becomes the spring and standard of everything. If He be exclusively my life and joy, and I have nothing outside of Him but a nature that I abhor and condemn, how must all my desires run in concert with His, and everything else which is contrary to Him is not only avoided because contrary to Him, but also because it claims kindred with me and addresses my nature, making me feel still more excruciatingly that I not only have a nature that I am ashamed of, but that everything which opposes Christ, who is now everything to my heart, finds an auxiliary in it.

Extract from J. B. STONEY, (1813-1897). THE SECRECY OF THE RAPTURE.

Many notices prepare us for such an event, as the secret rapture of the saints. We have no single type of it, but many things prepare us for it : e.g., "the natural man discerneth not the things of the Spirit of God." The eye of the natural body cannot see nor the ear hear the visions or voices of the Spirit! Horses and chariots filled the mountain but the prophet's servant had no eye for them until the Lord pleased. Neither would that prophet have witnessed the flight of His master to heaven had his soul not passed through a testing process. Daniel was given to see a glorious sight and to hear the voice of a multitude but the men with him saw nothing, only a terror fell on them and they hid. The glory on the Holy hill shone only in the eye of Peter, James and John though One object in it was as the brightness of the sun so that there was light enough to have lighted the whole land. Many bodies of saints arose, but only those to whom it was given knew of their resurrection! The heaven was opened to Stephen and Jesus and the Glory were seen by him, but the assembly saw nothing; their only object was their victim. If Paul went to paradise in the body (whether or not he could not say), none saw him. Philip was found at Azotus, no one tracked his flight from Gaza, for the Spirit had borne him away. In the light and the voice of Jesus which arrested Saul in his journey to Damascus, there was no word for his companions, nor form for their eyes. But Saul, the object of the visitation, knew it all, not in his eye and ear merely, but in the depths of his conscience. Have not all the circumstances of the taking away of the saints been thus anticipated? We have visions, audiences, resurrections, flights and ascensions and the heavens opened and yet neither eye nor ear conversing with a ray or utterance. For all these belonged to the region and energy of the Spirit, and lay outside the natural faculties. What will there be in the resurrection and ascension of the saints which will go beyond these notices when taken together? Beyond all these Jesus rose from a tomb of hewn stone and from amid a guard of wakeful soldiers but no eye or ear was in that great secret. This was the first fruits, the pledge and sample! After He was risen though He walked the earth, He was seen only by them to whom it was given Him to appear. He could vanish out of sight or appear in various guises so as to escape discovery as He pleased. These help us to apprehend the manner, silence and secrecy of the rapture.

Extracted from "The Voice," 1876. (Unnamed author).

TWO CORRELATED REGIONS. In Ephesians 2:6, we sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus; 1:e., the region where Christ is. In Romans 8:23, we, the first fruits of the Spirit, ourselves groan within ourselves waiting for the adoption (Sonship), the redemption of our body, 1:e., the region where the Holy Spirit is, and in which we are subjected to trials, where Christ is not, but where we are under His Lordship. In Romans, Christ's resurrection is adduced in order that we should walk in newness of life, in the region of our responsibilities. (Romans 6:4). In Colossians, granted that we, too, are risen with Christ we are to seek the things which are above where Christ sits on the right hand of God (Colossians 3:1). The Apostle goes on to put emphasis on a development of the subject, "for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." So that in the foregoing we get the practical results of the operation of the Holy Spirit. In the proportion that we live in the region where Christ is, we shall be acting in the power of the Holy Spirit in the region where He is not! The apprehension of the correlation of these two regions led the Apostle to press toward the mark for the prize of the calling on high of God in Christ Jesus. When he beheld Christ in glory, then Christ was increasingly manifested in him on earth. Forgiveness of sins makes heaven secure in the future, but to see that the man who committed the sins has also been put away in the death of Christ and a new order of Man introduced, is a further apprehension. We shall

only seek power according to our need and desires, until the Holy Spirit leads us in spirit to where Christ is, and we realise that God sees us in Him there. As a consequence in the lower region by the mercies of God, we shall be able "to present our bodies, a living sacrifice, acceptable unto God, our reasonable service" (Romans 12:1). If we do not see the distinction between these regions and their marvellous correlation, we shall be in great confusion of thought. Death or the body-change at the coming of the Lord will take us away from the lower region, but our portion in the higher region will not know any change by either of these contingencies. As in spirit in the latter region we shall have power according to the power of His glory to mortify (or keep in the place of death) our members in the lower region, wherein also we are "partakers of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God, who has saved us and called us with an Holy calling" (2 Timothy 1:8-9).

T. OLIVER. THE MAN OF SYCHAR.

"My precious Lord Jesus; Thou knowest how fully I can say with Paul "to depart and to be with Thee, which is far better." They come and talk to me of a crown of glory, of the glories of heaven; I bid them stop. I am not wanting crowns, I have Himself — I am going to be with Himself! Ah! with the Man of Sychar; with Him who stayed to call Zaccheus; with the Man of John 8:1-59; with the Man who died! Oh, to be with Him before the glories, the crowns, or the kingdoms appear! It is wonderful! With the man of Sychar alone, and I am going to be with Him for ever! Exchange this sad scene which cast Him out for His presence! Oh, the Man of Sychar." Some of last words of J G. Bellett (1795-1864).

FRUIT, FRESHNESS, SOUL PROSPERITY.

Paul commended the elders of Ephesus in Acts 20:1-38. to God and the word of His grace. We are built up and we get to know the inheritance of all saints by the word. In Jeremiah 17:5-8, we see that the man that trusts to man is blind to good; but the man who trusts in the Lord does not see the evil. He is not taken up with the barrenness, but with God — the fountain of living waters. He spreads out his roots by the river and so he does not cease to yield fruit. See also Psalms 1:1-6, wherein we see separation from evil men and meditation on the word of God day and night! The clean animals chew the cud and part the hoof in Leviticus 11:1-47. They ruminate on what they have taken in and that is manifested in the path of their feet! That idea is also conveyed in Jeremiah 15:1-21. The word was in his mouth; he ate it — but he did so alone. He was not among the assembly of the mockers. He took the precious from the vile! But others got something too, because Jeremiah became God's witness. "Thou shalt be as My mouth." The word was joy and rejoicing unto the heart of Jeremiah, but it brought suffering and reproach (Jeremiah 20:7-13). That is ever the way it works! Jeremiah thought he would keep silence, but the word was in his heart, and like a fire burning in his bones, so he had to speak. In Jeremiah 23:28-29 the word is likened to wheat with the strange attendant characters of being like fire and like a hammer breaking the rock in pieces. God can use His word to feed or to break hard hearts! Our business is to get the word in to the people and God will see to the rest of the matter!(Notes of an address by the late R. K. WILSON at Carlisle, 27/12/15) THE FATHER'S WILL.

There is but one will consulted or regarded there; the infinitely perfect will of our Father in heaven. Happy, happy place! No struggles of the creature's will for pre-eminence there! No disobedience — no self-will! How happy that family, even on earth, where the children delight to obey their

parents; or rather, in the intelligence of affection, to anticipate their wishes and fulfil them before they can be expressed. What profound happiness there is in the spirit of obedience. What must heaven be, where every movement of the affections, every word, every action is in perfect obedience to our Father who dwells there! What will earth be when this prayer is answered? "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven" (Mark 6:9-10). (Present Testimony V. 65:1853).

FIVE ELEMENTS TRUE "NOW."

(1) "The spirit that now worketh in the children (sons) of disobedience" (Ephesians 2:2). In that statement is set forth the work of the enemy (the prince of the power of the air) in the Jews, but it is the same spirit which expresses the universal condition of the world at large. But that is the foreground to a blessed transformation expressed in: — (2) "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes (formerly) were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ" (Ephesians 2:13). That is true of all "in Christ Jesus," whether they once were either Jew or Gentile. The result of bringing near has been effected by the blood of Christ. Later in the chapter, varied aspects of the oneness are presented, e.g., (a) one new man; (b) reconciliation of both unto God in one body by the cross; (c) through Him both have access by one Spirit unto the Father; (d) an habitation of God through the Spirit. (3) A further thought is unfolded in connection with the mystery which "is now revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit" (Ephesians 3:5). That had been hidden in past ages, but God would have all to see its administration through the Apostle. (4) But a further purpose is shown in: — "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God" (Ephesians 3:10). The all-varied resources of God are being manifested to the spiritual intelligences in heaven so that they may know the character of the execution of God's plans. (5) The fifth thought is conveyed in: — "Now are ye light in the Lord" (Ephesians 5:8). This is presented so that there may be a practical result in walk as befitting "children of light." The elements of the nature of God, viz., "love and light," are to come out as fruit. The fruit of the light is in all goodness, righteousness and truth. These five statements coupled with the present moment "now," bring out what God is doing for Himself and for Christ. They shew the features of the working of God in new creation and finally there is indicated the path for every saint in which to walk. So the privileges and blessings of the present moment are beyond our conception!

(Notes of an address by the late Dr WARREN at Carlisle, 27-12-15) THE RAPTURE, OUR PROSPECT. (1 Thessalonians 1:4.).

Grace turns everything to the praise of God when His children walk in obedience. The Thessalonians could not solve the difficulty of those who had gone to the Lord and occasion is taken of that to open out fresh and glorious truths. The great thought in Ch. 1. is waiting for God's Son from heaven! Individual hearts are set upon a Person out of sight; nothing can satisfy them but Himself. The thought of belonging to Him on the throne while bearing our names there, is surely enough to make us respond to His love and to wait for Him from heaven. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 turns on individual love to Christ! It is about God's next step when He puts forth His Son bright with crowns of glory. What is that to me, if I do not love Him? If I do, shall I not care for His glory? It is the Lord Himself who shall descend! His actions express the will of God. Through the connecting link between me and the Father's House, I say "Come." The Lord who has been

guiding my steps through the wilderness speaks the word. How shall I know His voice? Faith knows Him and when He speaks, faith will respond to His shout. Christ, the regulator of everything, will give the regulating word. What a thrill will pervade all minds in harmony with God, when God's beloved Son rises from the throne to fetch His children home. Angels would not grudge Him any place, so the archangel takes up the note, and God gives full sanction with His trump to what His Son has done. What a sight that will be when you and I shall see the Lord descend to show the character of His Father's love and give confidence to the hearts of His people to be ushered into His Father's House? "The dead in Christ shall rise first, then we who are alive and remain will be caught up." The double glory of the resurrection and of the life stands out, and according to His grace, the weakest are first thought of. He puts forth resurrection power. The burnt bodies of the martyrs may have ashes scattered to the winds, but the Lord knows where all are and His virtue attracts every particle to be raised a glorious body! "So shall we ever be with the Lord" is the climax. With Him in the Father's House in glory is my prospect! Then what manner of person am I? Let us challenge our hearts as to whether we know the love that the Lord has toward us and that He is coming to take us to the Father's House. (Unknown author in the "Voice," 1869).
THE HEAVENLY CALLING.

People often talk of the heavenly calling as if it were a theory. Was it such to Enoch when he walked with God, or with Moses when he endured as seeing Him who is invisible? Do not let our minds take it as knowledge, instead of realising a living Christ in heaven. He has distinctly called me by name and bears my name before God, as one for whom He has done a good deal. Oh! that living Man who has stolen my heart is up there! He came off the throne to go to the cross as my substitute to take the cup of wrath due to me. God has put His Amen upon this love which was stronger than death. It is reasonable that if the Son of God loved me and gave His life for me, I must love Him in the place where He is. He is occupied with a suffering people in all the circumstances they have to pass through. Enoch walked with God 300 years when there was no scripture. Such walk makes little noise in the world. It was very quiet and unostentatious. He walked alone with God. What is true of faith at one time, is true at all times. Where faith calls me, there will I be found in separation with God. (Extracts from G. V. WIGRAM). THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CROSS. The material cross is not symbolical of Christianity although it is often employed for that purpose. But the One who hung thereon shewed the wisdom of God in the cross. Christ is made unto us wisdom (1. Cor. 1:30). The result is that we are wiser in the things of God than the greatest natural intellect is. No flesh can glory in God's presence. The cross is the end to all pretension. Christ is also our righteousness. The righteousness of God by faith of Jesus Christ is unto all but only upon those who believe. In new creation old things are passed away, although as we see each other they are very much in evidence (2 Corinthians 5:17). Thirdly, Christ is our sanctification. So in His prayer of John 17:1-26, He sanctified Himself for the sake of His own and also He sought that His Father might sanctify them through His truth. Fourthly, Christ is our redemption. Justification by the grace of God is through the redemption in Christ Jesus (Romans 3:24). Finally, the Holy Spirit of promise is the earnest of our inheritance (Ephesians 1:14). The ground was cleared through Christ being crucified and the Spirit being communicated. Justification is by faith in the blood of Christ; sanctification by energy of the Spirit in the new nature. (Extracts from address by the late Isaac Elliot at Workington, 26/3/37).

"TO HIM THAT OVERCOMETH" To Thee, O Lord, we cry; For many a saint feels weak and faint,
And fast the arrows fly. The closing battle rages fierce, The still small voice, thrice blessed Lord,
From the glory where Thou art, Comes down through the air in accents clear, To cheer each loyal
heart.

"My power and might are thine, faint heart, Say, why art thou cast down?"

Yet hold thou fast what in grace thou hast, That no man take thy crown."

Then may each saint his courage take From Thee, victorious Lord; And still hold fast to the very
last, Thine own most sacred word. For yet a few short hours of toil, And the conflict will be o'er:
And echoing cries of triumph rise From the glory-lighted shore.

(Extract from "A Voice to the Faithful," 1880).

REST.

There is no rest to be found here for the saint; but it is written, "there remaineth therefore a rest to
the people of God." (ver. 9). To know this is both full of blessing and full of sorrow: sorrow to the
flesh because as it is always seeking its rest here, it has always to be disappointed — blessing to
the spirit, because the spirit, being born of God, can only rest in God's own rest, as it is said, "If
they shall enter into my rest." There are indeed joys by the way, but the moment we rest in them,
they become as the quails of Israel, poison (Numbers 11:1-35.). Every time we find something on
which we attempt to settle, that very thing proves but a new source of trouble and conflict to us, a
new source of exercise and weariness of heart. God loves us too well to let us rest here. Rest,
blessed be God, is not to be our portion here. His holiness will not let us rest where there is sin;
His love will not let us rest where there is sorrow. There "remaineth a rest" for us, His own rest —
God's rest. There will be neither sin, nor trouble, nor sorrow, in God's rest. There will be Himself
there. And we shall rest in Him. J.N.D.

HEARING AND FOLLOWING.

Feebleness of apprehension is marked as to these two points. The quietness of communion is little
enjoyed in this busy day. The moment speaks loudly of unrest and unreality; little is known of
deep, personal joy in Christ. Heart satisfaction in personal nearness of the Lord is true
communion. Then we know the mind of our Lord and are qualified for service as Christ's
confidential servants; that is not constituted by the amount or laboriousness of our work. The two
attitudes of soul are intimately connected. Christ alone is the blessed source of all satisfaction in
Himself. To be a good listener, one must be free and at rest. The Son, ever the Father's delight,
came into a world of slavery and sorrow to bring liberty to the captives, as well as relief of
conscience and rest of heart to every weary soul. The disquietude of the age infects the saints,
both relative to this life and with God. Such have not settled peace! Unsatisfied longings abound.
Conscious knowledge of union with Christ glorified alone can impart rest and detach from earth
and its things. The ear waits upon His words and the soul treasures them! Then we sit under His
shadow with great delight and His fruit is sweet to our taste. We grow in personal acquaintance
with Christ as the solitude of His company is cultivated. This is illustrated in Elijah. His inward life
was not sustained in proportion to his outward testimony. With him, the fire, wind and earthquake
were everything and when outward testimony excited the malignity of the enemy, his faith was not

equal to the pressure. But mark the blessed tender way of Jehovah! (1) Elijah is called to stand before the Lord, proving that the solitude of disappointed nature is useless. There is no liberty or rest therein. (2) The demands of nature must not be yielded to; typified by the prophet's fasting forty days and nights. His supplies had been provided by Jehovah, so all the claims of nature could be set aside. (3) The consequence is that the prophet listens. "A still small voice" communicates to him what previously would have been unintelligible. Following comes as a consequence of hearing (John 10:27). The Shepherd's voice is heard and they follow. The blessed Lord scorned and reproached, leaves the fold of Judaism, going before His sheep, secures to all His own that it was the true way and the authority for them to follow Him. Their security is in knowing His voice (not in knowing all the false voices). THE ISSUE OF TRIBULATION.

We heard of your great loss as the climax of the trial you have passed through during the long illness of your dear wife. We are not chargeable with the allegation of being fatalists as we bow to the storms which break over us. We see therein the rich abundant mercy of God. How much more in these long years of trial you have been caused to know the wealth of God's resources, than you would otherwise have done. Nevertheless, you cannot but mourn the severance of the most intimate link in life here. We offer our deep sympathy to you and yours. (Well do we remember being present at your marriage. The happiness of that day would have been impaired if we had seen the sequel here); but we can look beyond the night of trial and hail the eternal day of His presence. May we rejoice in that prospect! (Extract from a letter of condolence). T.O. THE SUBTLE OPPOSITION OF THE ENEMY.

Nothing can be more solemn than that we are living on earth, the theatre of the great struggle between good and evil. That question was morally decided at the Cross where God was glorified, but the decision will soon be manifested in the complete victory of good over evil by the God of Glory over the enemy. The grand effort of Satan is directed against the testimony of the true character of Christianity, 1:e., walking according to the power of the risen Christ, the centre of the glorious counsels of God. The Holy Ghost makes clear the love of His heart; all the glory of His purpose is already known to faith. At the end of the period of grace, God has been pleased to lead us beyond the question of personal salvation to interest our hearts in the Son of His love and His own glory. These are extraordinary difficulties to be met! A faithful picture of our day is given in 2 Timothy 3:1-17. The love of self, money and pleasure rather than God is going on around us. Man may have the form of piety and be incapable of coming to a knowledge of the truth. The apostasy is not far off! The opposition to the truth by the enemy is a desperate imitation as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses. The magicians held their own fairly well, until they were called upon to give life to an insect, 1:e., God's prerogative! Satan may merit the title of destroyer, but cannot give life. Faithful hearts feel the peculiar opposition and the more the love of God is felt and the glory of Christ known the deeper will be the need to draw on His resources. We see in the Apostle calm confidence and God's power in his quiet perseverance; he left the enemies to God. We, too, are kept in calm dependence by the word of God. "They shall go no further" (2 Timothy 3:9). (Abridged from E. L. BEVIR in "the Voice," 1892). THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST.

Everything will come out there. There can be no disguise in the pure light before the throne of the discernment of Christ, where the full intelligence of His mind will beam on His people. It is not the question of being saved, but how the saved have been walking. Is it strange since it cost Christ so much to accomplish that sacrifice that when he gets his people home, He should say, "Let us look

at their walk without question as to their acceptance. If according to my Father's thoughts who would have His sons and daughters walking as those who are separated unto Him by the blood of His Son. As those bought with such a price did they walk worthy of it?" (G. V. Wigram, 1805-1879).
THE CROSS AND THE GLORY The personal glory of the Lord Jesus shines out nowhere so much as on the Cross, when the hottest furnace of the wrath of God for sin came on Him. When He came to the Cross He was the perfect servant and a poor thief could touch His heart. . . Without one ray of light this perfect One could vindicate God! Praise can never flow save as God gives power, but in this One was the eternal spring whence it flowed. Christians have but few thoughts of all the divine glory connected with the Cross, but when we reach the glory in the view of its widespread character we shall understand its connection with Him who hung upon the Cross. What does the Cross say to your soul about your connection with the world? We should be glorying in the Cross and to follow Him who died on it, and I have seen my connection through that Cross with the glory and am separated to God by the power of it! (G. V. Wigram).

GRACE AND MERCY.

Paul and Silas sang in prison. Grace supported them there. Then the Lord took them out of the prison; that is mercy. Grace is the principle on which God acts. Grace sustains, mercy delivers. Grace is effected in me. Mercy is done for me. Grace is according to the measure of God's heart; mercy according to the measure of man's need. Grace is the height to which we are brought; mercy the depth from which we were taken. (J. B. Stoney, in "The Voice," 1891).

MILLENNIAL GLORY. (Mark 9:15). The mind of Peter on the hill was very much that of Jacob at Bethel. It was delight to him beyond expression, so that He might have said "there was no more spirit in him." "Master it is good for us to be here" tells the unforced joy and satisfaction inspired. He feared as feeling at the gate of Heaven and saying how dreadful is this place (Genesis 28:1-22.). It is a necessary state while man is as he is. Glory has ever proved too much for man! Freeness was needed to give him ease in its presence. In the third heavens, Paul had no alarm. Peter on the hill was still flesh and blood. Paul in Paradise was "a man in Christ." The body was neither a help nor a hindrance to him. But mark the operation of this glory further. When the Lord reached the foot of the hill, the multitudes "were greatly amazed" (same as "affrighted" in 16:5). The Lord doubtless bore on His person the reflection of the glory unto which He had been transfigured on the hill top. All this is designed to bear us on to the day when the glorified family in heaven will visit the earth, to be recognised in their peculiar heavenly persons They will be known in the footstool that they belong to the scene above, surpassing their own. The throne will be known to be theirs, while the footstool is the place of those whom they occasionally visit. But this sentiment felt, owned and acted on in its perfect measure will not be overwhelming. They saluted Jesus though amazed! (Extracts from J. G. Bellett, 1795-1864).

WHETHER WE WAKE OR SLEEP. An extract from address at burial of Mrs Lowden (Workington), 13-1-43. The fifth chapter of Thess. is taken up mainly with the present consequences of such a prospect as the rapture of the saints, at the coming of the Lord into the air. The passage concludes in the middle of the chapter with the encouraging statement that whether we wake or sleep we shall live together with Him. Waking and sleeping are frequently invested with a moral bearing, but not so here. The expressions refer to the body. Waking is living in the body, as the objects of mercy. Sleeping is having passed over like our dear relative and friend to the condition of being

with Christ. Observe that the Lord died for us in order that whatever may be our condition, we shall live together with Him. After such a long trying illness our sister has ceased to need mercy, but has now the far better part of being with Christ. She is still in the hands of the Lord of Glory! Again note that the Scripture does not refer to her part as "the best." That term is reserved for what she and we will have, when the Lord will come. Then from the tomb and the earth, we shall welcome our blessed living Lord, and we shall be welcomed by Him! Can we have greater comfort than is inspired by such words and prospect? At the end of the parallel passage in 1 Corinthians 15:1-58, the Apostle exhorted his beloved brethren to be steadfast in continuance of his course, immovable as to the Christian position and always abounding in the work of the Lord, for our labour (or toil) is not in vain or empty-handed in the Lord. T.O.

WISE DISCRETION.

"If any speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." This does not mean necessarily that he must use only words of scripture, though if led of the Spirit he will not contravene scripture. An oracle is the audible word of wisdom for the moment to those who hear. Few Christians but can give utterance to truth, but that may be a great trial to the saints. We want more than this to have the "oracles of God," otherwise there should be no speaking at all! This leaves no room for the flesh nor for man's wisdom. "Have I the word from God for this people at this moment" is the question! On the other hand, we would be led to be courageous to utter His message when committed to us as to make room for those who have it, when we have it not! (Extract from H. C. A. in "The Voice," 1891). THE PRISONER GREATER THAN THE KING.

Agrippa's answer to Paul's appeal (Acts 26:28), was ironical. We cannot wonder that a Roman proconsul should think Paul insane. His speech had the eloquence of conviction, not religious nor philosophic teaching; but it bore the impress of the supernatural, founded on resurrection, full of the light above the sun! Agrippa felt Paul was pressing him and escaped by an ironical remark. He was a religious Idumean, but far from Christianity! Saul had been stopped on a wrong course and converted in a peculiar way. His natural conscience had led him to do much against the name of Jesus. Educated and religious yet he was the blindest man in Jerusalem, and became the instrument of the blind rulers. (Are better influences now at work in the world than then? Man is morally blind!) At the climax of his career of persecution, the light of an infinitely brighter sphere shone around Saul. He received new and spiritual power to behold the glory and majesty of Christ. His pharisaical glory was ended for ever! A new man with new eyes had one employment to open eyes of men and to turn them from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God. Paul, fired no longer by Judaism, but by the splendour from the face of Jesus, carried out fervently his mission. The events of the self-denying, extraordinary life of Paul are attributed to the power of the glorious Christ. Paul's answer to Agrippa is true Christianity; there was no ill-feeling to those who had unjustly chained him. Nothing could be more beautiful! If we know Christ by faith, may our lives be truly of self-denial and grace with the fervour accompanying so wonderful a calling! (Abridged from E. L. BEVIR in "The Voice," 1893).

HOLINESS (1. Peter 1:14-16).

He hath called us and made us His children. The appeal is this, seeing He who has thus acted in such grace, and brought us into such relationship, is Himself holy, so should we be holy. The principle is this, the children should be as the parent. God is holy; hence His children are to be

holy. As holiness is a characteristic of the Father, it should also be a characteristic of the children. I am sure of this, if we would serve the Lord, we must be holy: not in self-righteousness, but "as obedient children"; as those that wish to be as He is. Every exhortation to His children, and every recognition of them is full of this principle — holiness. For it is evident, from the Word, and from past experience, that God's work is accomplished by means of holy and godly people. A true position and clear knowledge of the truth will not suffice; holiness is what God looks for. The reason is evident, since to do God's work He must have the soul walking with Himself, in communion with His mind. Witness the contrast between Abraham and Lot. (Present Testimony 6:305). A STRAIT TESTS. In a strait, one either rises by the Spirit or sinks in the flesh! The unjudged covetousness will be brought to light and everyone will appear in his true colours. One may move commendably until a crisis in one's history occurs, then the strongest influence controls. In such, Lot betrayed the ruling desire of his heart; up to that he seemed as much in the path of faith as Abraham. Again Abraham failed in going into Egypt. He returned and began again, but eventually had to cast out the bond woman and her son. In an important crisis a very small thing swayed Isaac! Jacob in the hour of his prosperity forgot his calling, and betrayed his leading desire in buying a field! The circumstances which disclosed unbelief in ten of the spies woke up faith and courage in Caleb and Joshua. How unexpected, when Barnabas was carried away! Demas did not desert Paul, when prosperous and his ministry popular! In every defection it is not the crisis which is the origin; the moral bankruptcy occurred before. There is a long preparation for a fall! When the Lord is with His own in any strait, there must be power and maintenance of His counsels. The glories of the sanctuary are better known, and the testimony brighter. (Extracts from J. B. S. in "The Voice," 1888). THE LORD'S SERVICE. In the Lord's service, we shall never need to be unemployed! Moreover, it will be unnecessary to fill in time sheets, nor to send reports to a central bureau (although much christian effort is expended on that line). We can be sure that the smallest element in that service will not escape the assessment of the overseer! In Revelation 1:1-20, He is in the midst of the seven candlesticks, relative to responsibility. His eyes are as a flame of fire, seeing perfectly the most intimate relation of mankind! — T.O. OUR CALLING. A Christian is called — (a) out of this world to God (Php 3:14; 1 Peter 2:9); (b) to share an inheritance with Christ (1 Peter 3:9; 1 Peter 1:4), leading the heart into joys beyond things here; (c) to follow in Christ's steps (1 Peter 2:21; 1 Corinthians 1:9). That leads into divine fellowship practically. The heavenly man is a contrast to the world and a witness to the death of Christ, and thus a joint heir with Christ wants nothing here. The man who follows is (1) close to the Master, (2) subject to Him, (3) tastes the sorrows and joys of the path. The path of true service and testimony is an exact reflex of His path when here, hence downward. All vainglory must be set aside. All principles valued by men must be disused! The world seeks its own and its principles are for self-aggrandisement, while the Christian's for self-abasement! "He must increase, but I must decrease." The throne of glory is the answer to the cross! In the path of testimony the Lord's company is known, His love, joy and support. I get the first two in bearing fruit (John 15:10-11). The third is made manifest to me as I feel what He felt relative to things here. (Sin and the animosity of the world to the truth!) "He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." The more we know our place there in Him on high, the more we shall value that path of separation and holiness in which His divine love is tasted and His sympathies known. (Extract from A. W. in "The Voice," 1893.)

We do not endorse your contention about occasional reception of individuals from the sects, as not constituting open communion. You make a hairline distinction! You quote an isolated passage from J.N.D., without location or context, and thus capable of bearing any whimsical construction. It was certainly not representative of his general outlook! We do not accept your plausible abstractions as a practical basis of inter-local responsibility. In making them we do not see that you are doing any good in the Lord's service. They are likely to lead to "estrangement amongst the people of God" which we deprecate as much as you say you do. You need not blame us for unfairness. Your statements are obviously evasive and indicative of a process of peaceful penetration of subversive principles, 1:e., in current usage "fifth column activities." (Extracts from recent editorial letters to correspondents).

LORD OF THE DEAD, AS OF THE LIVING.

Throughout her long life, your sister adorned the doctrine, always instant in season to promote the Lord's interests in her little circle of contact with people. As we are getting older we feel more than younger people do, when pillars on which we have leaned are removed. But it is a great comfort to know that the Lord remains the same! We read in Romans 14:1-23, that "Christ lived again that He might become the Lord both of the dead and of the living." So that His claims are eternal. He has an inalienable right over us! Again we read, "whether we die we are the Lord's and we die unto the Lord." So the Christians' relation to the Lord is the same "whether we wake or sleep, we live together with Him." Those who have gone before sleep in the Lord Jesus, enjoying perpetual rest and happiness and their part is described as "far, far better." It is hard to realise when a dear one slips away from our side that it is true. Hence we need all the consolation that Scripture, administered by the Holy Spirit, can afford for our encouragement in such circumstances. (Extract from a letter of sympathy by T. Oliver).

035 From Above.

From Above.

Omicron (T. Oliver). The Lord Jesus answers the deadly enmity of the Jews around Him by telling them that He was from above (ano.) He employs this locative adverb to emphasise the moral antagonisms of the earth generally, and particularly that of their hard hearts in unbelief, for they were from "beneath," 1:e., they belonged to a distant sphere in which enmity to God was paramount (John 8:23). He goes a step further in their condemnation, 5: 44, "Ye are of your father the devil," declaring that these antagonisms had their inspiration and parentage from a still lower region. To a ruler of the Jews, Jesus had said, "Except a man be born again (anothen = anew, or from above), he cannot see the Kingdom of God." Anothēn, akin to ano is a temporal and a locative adverb, relating to creative beginnings, as well as to the upper and highest sphere and source of divine power. Palin is the customary Greek word for "again" = a simple repetition or continuance of the natural process, whereas anothen = an analogous process in the higher sphere of the Holy Spirit's power, and consequently a divinely pure, and entirely new beginning, opposed to the natural order. The spiritual significance of the temple veil being rent from the "top" (anothen) is well known, as well as the garment of the Lord, "woven from the top" (anothen). In John 3:31, "He that cometh from above (anothen) is above (ep-ano) all." Here the preposition epi, compounded with ano intensifies the adverbial force to the extent of a superlative, thus bringing into prominence the supreme value of the testimony of the Son of God, with regard to heavenly things. In Luke 1:3, anothen is translated "from the very first," 1:e., another aspect of the temporal force of the adverb with regard to the creative beginnings of the new era of grace. The eye witnesses had imparted in detail events which he had not seen. Being divinely inspired, Luke wrote from this supreme authority with confidence as to the events surrounding the holy incarnation of the Son of Man, His pathway, His cross, and its glorious sequels. In the most remarkable of existent genealogy (Ch. 3.), the inspired Evangelist traces on the upward line, through many generations, covering thousands of years the lineage of Jesus, to God, the source and origin of all blessing for man!

Man (anthropos), the generic name of one having the upturned countenance, in contradistinction to the beasts of the field whose gaze is directed earthward, he is the object of the love of God. This love is reciprocated by the believer, who like the apostle Paul stretches out, and presses on for "the prize of the calling on high, (ano) of God in Christ Jesus" (Php 3:13-14). All is of God, so that even the bodies of our humiliation will be conformed to His body of glory, by His power, at His coming for us, when He shall carry us above to His own home of perfect light and love and joy (verse 21).

036 Fruit-bearing

Fruit-bearing John 15:5; John 15:8.

J. F. English.

What a wonderful privilege is opened up to the saints of God today; those who once were the slaves of sin and Satan, far away from God and without hope in the world. Now, through the work of the blessed Lord Jesus Christ and the power of the Spirit indwelling, it is possible for each of us, no matter under what circumstances our lot is cast, to be living in such a way as to glorify the Father, and to have that life working in us which is in Him, so that there is much fruit to the glory of God the Father. He is the true Vine outside of Whom there is nothing in this world for the good pleasure of God, and happy are we to whom He can say, "ye are the branches." We know that in all that He was here on earth He fully glorified the Father. In His prayer to the Father in John 17:1-26. we have the privilege to hear Him address the Father as "Holy Father" and "Righteous Father." He Himself was the Holy One and True, of whom it was prophetically spoken in Psalms 45:6-7, and again quoted in Hebrews 1:8-9. "Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity." If we are abiding in Him and He in us, then we shall be in the true path of discipleship, the path of Holiness and Righteousness, wherein is that much fruit which is to the glory of the Father. In this pathway we shall have the answer to all the questions that can be raised as to our associations on earth, and what more blessed path could we have. It is that which has been trodden by our adorable Lord before us, the path marked out by the Son of God, the Father's delight and joy. The Apostle John exhorts us, "and now children, abide in Him," also "he that saith he abideth in Him, ought himself to walk, even as He walked" (1. John 2:6; John 2:8). This wondrous pathway does not lie in anything very difficult to be done, or that which calls for some special intellectual qualifications, it is simply, "Abide in Me." Of course it does mean a true knowledge of Him, and of subjection to God the Holy Spirit always through prayerful communion and reading of His Word. Alas, however, we have to confess how little we know of this; so we are not sufficiently careful to guard against all which would come in between our souls and Him. We fail to Abide in Him, which is the secret of our being so unlike Him and there is so little to the glory of the Father. If we are entangled in unholy associations which are characterised by a worldly Christianity as in Christendom, that is not abiding in Him, and so there cannot be much fruit to the glory of the Father. If we are in a path of unrighteousness where we are unable to manifest the love of the Father to His own, we are not abiding in Him, and there is not the much fruit to the Father's glory in the Son. May we therefore be stirred by the Spirit's voice calling us to listen more earnestly to the Voice of our Beloved Lord. It is a day of inestimable privilege; we may have but a few more steps to travel before He comes to take us home. The judgment seat of Christ lies before us, where everything will be fully brought to light as He appraises it. May He give us true spiritual to Abide in Him. He, on His part, in His faithfulness will abide in us. We shall find ourselves in the path of true discipleship, and there will be much fruit to the glory of the Father, and the glory of the Son, our beloved Lord and Saviour.

037 The Fulness of Christ.

The Fulness of Christ.

John 1:35-39; John 14:1-3; John 17:24; John 20:17.

Notes of an address by John B. Duff. In the first passage we have John the Baptist's testimony to Jesus as the Lamb of God, which when two of his disciples heard, they left John and followed Jesus. What a blessed day for them! Now they were to exchange mourning for rejoicing, fasting for feasting, and the wilderness for the comfort of home! The other Gospels present Jesus as having nowhere to lay His head, but here He is the only begotten Son in the bosom of the Father, declaring God that we might even now find our home in the Father's affections. Truly this is heaven upon earth! (The Baptist's ministry was negative, but Christ's positive; the one emptying, the other filling! "Of His fulness have we all received and grace upon grace"). The second Scripture gives the Lord's words to His own on the eve of His departure from this world, and He seeks to comfort their troubled hearts by telling them of the Father's House, and that He was going to prepare a place for them there. He said, "If it were not so I would have told you"; indicating that He would never have called them to share His temptations and forsake them at the last: nor yet would He have given them a taste of heaven here, if they were not to share more deeply its joys hereafter. Our present knowledge of the blessedness of the Father's House is surely measured by our knowledge of the Father and the Son; and this knowledge is ours by the Holy Spirit given to us. By the Spirit we are brought into the present good of that which has been brought to us in divine revelation by the Son. This is why the Spirit is spoken of so much in this Gospel. The Lord's prayer to the Father in chapter 17 shows the wonderful place His own had in His affections. In verse 24 He expresses the longing desire of His heart, "Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which Thou hast given me." Shall this desire be denied to Him? Far be the thought! And this glory tells of the eternal love of the Father for the Son, "For Thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." Here we may take up the language of the Song of Songs and say, "I am my Beloved's, and His desire is towards me" (Song of Solomon 7:10). We are also reminded of Psalms 21:2, "Thou hast given Him His heart's desire, and hast not withholden the request His lips." In the last Scripture we have the words of Jesus after He was risen from the dead. Mary had sought to touch Him but He gives her to know that she cannot touch Him in the old relationships, for death had ended these, and now in resurrection new relationships which were heavenly and eternal had been established. He presents Himself as the ascending One, soon to take His place in the Father presence, the Head of a new race, the Firstborn among many brethren. What a portion is ours! — the Father love; and what a prospect! — the Father's House. (What a fulness there is in the person of the Son of God. The world could not contain the books that should be written!)

038 Fulness of Joy.

Fulness of Joy.

P. Willis.

Amongst true believers there is nothing more lacking than spiritual joy. It is all bright on God's side. Our place before God is in all the acceptance of the Beloved. Our privilege is to share the fellowship of the Father and His Son — the circle of divine love. What wondrous grace that God should be pleased to take us up! . . . "As He is so are we in this world." Many and varied are the causes which operate to hinder our enjoyment of what has been given to us in Christ. There are weights hindering, sin besetting, Satan behind all seeking to entrap our feet and impede us; but there is no necessity that we should be overcome. God is for us, and the Holy Spirit strengthens us. If we grieve Him He will not be free to minister Christ to us. In John's gospel, the Lord speaks of joy (1) re. obedience (John 15:1-27), (2) re. dependence (John 16:1-33), (3) re. separation (John 17:1-26).

(1) In John 15:9, the Lord assures the disciples of His love for them. His love to us is measured by the Father's love to Him. Have our hearts taken in this wonderful truth? Notwithstanding all our fickleness and feebleness the Lord's love is just the same towards us; it cannot change because it is divine and eternal. He will never love us less nor more; yet the enjoyment of His love may be lost to us because of our not seeking to please Him by walking in the path of His will. Happiness lies in obedience, but this requires the setting aside of ourselves and the renunciation of our own will. We may not always be prepared for this. But the Lord sets Himself before us as our example (Read John 15:10).

(2) In John 16:24, we find our resource in His absence. What more could we desire? We are to ask the Father in His name. Prayer is the expression of dependence. How blessed for us to be so consciously weak in ourselves that we are absolutely cast on the Lord as our resource. Conscious weakness is the pathway to divine power. Paul glorified in what made little of himself before men, that the power of Christ might rest upon him. Obedience and dependence are inseparable. The Lord will not support us in any path of our own devising. The latter is the cause of manifest want of joy amongst God's people. In Psalms 81:1-16, we have a striking instance of what Israel lost through their disobedience. Jehovah reminded them, in 5: 10, "Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it." They would not hearken to His voice and the later part of the Psalm is His lament for what they had lost. We are often like them in our unbelief, trying to do better for ourselves than He is doing for us, and so are robbed of the blessedness found in simple dependence. The Lord is our helper (Hebrews 13:5-6).

(3) In John 17:1-26, the Lord takes His stand on the ground of accomplished redemption. He sets His disciples in His own position before His Father and they are sent into the world to represent Him. His separation from all here is the measure of our separation. We are sanctified according to the place He has taken for us. What an honour He has conferred upon us! Oh for grace to rise to

the moral dignity of such a position and ever seek to be more separate in heart and ways, and to live Christ, occupying for Him in sphere He has placed us and to have His joy filling our hearts. It is important to maintain a holy separation from this defiling world. Any compromise will hinder the realisation of His joy. Its friendship is enmity with God (James 4:4). Nothing is more insidious and subtle than worldliness. It is sure to creep in if we are not watchful. We ought to seek grace to refuse absolutely. 1 John 2:16, classes the world under two heads, (a) self-gratification, (b) self-exaltation. Each one can test himself or herself on these. We are called to follow in the footsteps of a rejected Christ. (Read Galatians 6:14; Romans 12:2). Extracts from Philip Willis in "Christian Friend," 1896.

039 Notes of Readings on Galatians.

Notes of Readings on Galatians.

Whereas the Corinthian error had been licence, the Galatians were apt to be slaves to ritual. Flesh manifests itself in different ways. The Galatians had sought to restrain the flesh by law. Restraints view the flesh as living whereas God's method is to treat it as dead. That is not congenial to nature! The Apostle is more scathing in his indictment of the Galatians than of the Corinthians. The Galatians did not detract from the Lord's person (as the Colossians did), but they sought to add to His work. That God doing part and man completing the remaining part is very plausible! Legality militates against grace, declaring indeed that Christ has died in vain (Galatians 2:21, also 5: 4). The introduction to the epistle comprises the first five verses. Human authority and apostolic succession are set aside in Galatians 1:1. The glory of God the Father required that One who could accomplish the work of redemption should be raised from the dead. He is the centre of authority, the source of the Apostle's commission. He is the Lord requiring undivided allegiance. Albeit grace and peace came from Him. He gave Himself for our sins with the express object of delivering from the present evil age (where law operates), 1:e., all in accordance with the will of God the Father. The world is under the control of the devil; hence evil. He led the world to crucify Christ. Christianity does not shift the metropolis from Jerusalem to Rome, but to the right hand of God, 1:e., outside the world altogether. Hence the goal of christianity is heaven! Thus the doxology "to God be glory throughout the ages." Immediately Paul denounced the subverters of the Gospel with a terrible anathema! The apostle's gospel and ministry were by revelation (the apocalypse of Jesus Christ), (Galatians 1:11-12). He claimed scope for his ministry apart from the confirmation of men. The only way to keep the flesh in subjection is to be under the control of the Spirit. But we shall not boast about the Spirit's work in us, or think ourselves superior to others, who may appear to be less favoured with knowledge of divine things. Paul proceeded to unfold some details of his life. His conversation (or conduct) in the Jews' religion, his persecution of the Christians, his zeal for the traditions were all matters of common knowledge. All that proceeded from the pride of the heart of man! Legality or orthodoxy always persecuted grace. But it pleased God Who had in purpose, marked him out from his birth for his mission, called him by grace "to reveal His Son in me," (not "to me"), in order to enable him to preach Christ among the Gentiles. What a graphic description of a marvellous chain of events! In that sequence the Lord wrote death on everything that Saul was as a man. Immediately he was emancipated from the fear of man and he retired into Arabia for solitary meditation and to learn gradually the person of the Son who was to shine out from his person in such a marvellous way! But the main point was his emphatic disavowal of receiving certification from the highest authority on earth, viz., the Apostles in Jerusalem. The tendency to envy in the latter was completely disarmed in his brief interview with them, three years after his conversion. So that they glorified God in Paul, 1:e., he was the occasion for giving praise to God. Galatians 2:1-21, opens with the incident 14 years later when Paul returned to Jerusalem and gave the orthodox a rude jolt by taking Titus, a Greek convert, with him. In spite of the usual clamour of the Judaizers, no one pressed the matter of circumcision to a logical conclusion. The

interview was important as demonstrating that the acknowledged leaders in Jerusalem did not add any lustre to the Apostle in conference with him, because he recognised that God was no respecter of persons! Apparently the incident which brought about the conference in Jerusalem, was the "peaceful penetration" of false emissaries or spies from Judaea who sought to impose a yoke of bondage on the necks of the Gentile converts. Paul's communication of his gospel was not broadcast, but explained privately to the men of repute in Jerusalem (Galatians 2:2), lest a premature disclosure might wreck his mission! In all the apostle would not yield an inch to the encroachment of legality which had submerged christianity in Jewish circles. It has been well said that "Jewish environment was the cradle of christianity and but for God's mercy and grace, it would have become its grave." The result of the second interview was that James, Peter and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace in Paul, and gave the right hand of fellowship to Paul and Barnabas, recognising their work amongst the Gentiles, even as the apostles in Jerusalem had addicted themselves to the ministry to the Jews. They could not add anything to the Lord's equipment of Paul; "the mighty ordination of the pierced hands." Someone has said "it takes much grace in me to see a little grace in another." They only stipulated that the poor should be remembered. But Paul had already been diligent to follow Christ's example in that respect!

Paul's short interview with Peter is narrated (Galatians 2:11). The first interview displayed friendship; the second, recognition of equality in spheres of labour; but in the third, Peter, Barnabas and others dissembled for fear of offending the authorities in Jerusalem. But Paul publicly rebuked Peter. He would not yield an iota of the truth of the Gospel. At this point the Apostle leaves history to unfold the doctrine of the incongruity of legality and Christian standing. Justification was entirely by faith of Jesus Christ, Who gave Himself for us. The Law cannot justify, it can only condemn! The Apostle personally applied the truth in the power of a living faith! "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live." (Only the erstwhile malefactor could say, "I was crucified with Christ"). But the Apostle could state that apparent anomaly as a present personal apprehension. By faith's assessment he could see the old "I" (that life to which sin and the Law attached). "Dying Christ's death is in order that I (the individual) might live Christ's life!" The penalty was borne by my substitute thus I no longer live as the old I, but Christ lives in me. So these three usages of "I" are identified, viz., the old "I," the individual "I" and the new "I" which is essentially Christ. The individual becomes the transparent casket for the display of the jewel, the new "I" (Christ); but we are not yet in the home of that life and since on earth we must live by faith, that of the Son of God as object. (So that Law not the rule of life!) The personal love of Christ to me as an individual is the motive, and the proof of that love is that He gave Himself for me. But His love went through death and continues unchanged in His present exalted position now all that is faith's assessment. Judicially the foregoing is true of every Christian, but experimentally it is true only of those who count on God, and who practise what they believe. (Observe the singular first personal pronoun "I and me" throughout). Peter was frustrating the grace of God by His contention. Circumcision and Christianity were mutually inconsistent. If righteousness could effected by the Law then Christ's death was unnecessary. In Judaism man was under probation; but in Christian doctrine, man is proved hopeless, helpless, corrupt, and that is confirmed by his murder of Christ. Hence all is of the grace of God. Christianity is Christ! Justification faith, the ground of Christianity was recovered in the Reformation, but that the old man was crucified at the Cross was not maintained. They refused the exactions of Romanism but recognised the flesh as before God and thus became subject to impositions, so a new ritualism sprang up. If man is dead,

there is no room for form or exaction!

Galatians 3:1-29 opens with reference to the strange fascination that the Law had for man. The Galatians had been deceived! The Apostle demonstrated that the Galatians inherited the blessing of Abraham, the first in the line purpose and thus the progenitor of the line of faith. . Promise is the declaration of purpose. Abraham believed God and his faith was an example for the Gentiles. God promise was to his seed being as the sands of the sea relative to earth and as the stars of heaven as to the heavenly aspect of the promises. Abraham knew nothing about the Law! The Law could only curse. Then the 600 years old dictum of Habakkuk "the just shall live by (out of) his faith" is adduced to show that no one is justified in virtue of the Law. The just lives by faith not by law-keeping. Faith, not law, is the rule of life, hence Law and faith are incompatible. The legalist never attains to justification, so "doing the best one can" is a principle nearly 2000 years out of date! The only deliverance is through the redemption in Christ Jesus Who was made a curse for us. Ever in the mind of God was the promise of the Spirit, who would subdue everything in a subjective way. The blessing of Abraham was righteousness, not circumcision! (On the 430 years problem of Galatians 3:17, see Q. and Ans.). Then the thought of "mediator "is presented (Galatians 3:20). He is, normally, between two parties, but mediation was vitiated in the first covenant, because of the failure of one party (man) to do his part; but the second covenant is based on the absolute promise of One (God), on Whom all depends. The Law did not oppose the promise not simply demonstrated to man his inability. The Scripture shuts up all under sin, in order that the promise by faith may be given to the believer. The Law was a pedagogue, 1:e. , the servant who led the child to school, but when faith had come that was no longer needed. "Ye are all the children (sons) of God by faith in Christ Jesus "(Galatians 3:26). As children of God we have part in the reproach of Christ sharing His rejection by the world and are under discipline and are the special objects of the Father's love. As sons we are in relation to God, possessing unique dignity which connects with the coming day of glory, the real attainment of majority! Being baptised unto Christ we have put on Christ, why then should we seek to put on Moses? In Christ Jesus, the greatest racial, social and human distinctions disappear and we are all one therein, 1:e., in blessing and privilege but not in responsibility! (Galatians 3:28). The great distinction to be recognised in responsibility is that between the Christian and the world, of which the Cross of Christ is the symbol! Life, righteousness, the Spirit, the inheritance, Sonship (and all other blessings) are secured on the principle of faith in Christ Jesus. Christ is proved to be the Seed of promise. Since He is Son, we are also sons by faith.

Galatians 4:1-31 presents sonship with heirship and liberty as a consequence of what came out in Galatians 3:1-29. Blessings, the fruit of the purpose of God, are involved in the promises which are also the fruit of purpose. The Apostle insists that the heir while a minor is as a servant. So the Jew knew nothing of liberty! He was under authority until the appointed time (Galatians 4:2). He was in bondage under the rudiments of the world (the Law), 1:e., until the full proof of his failure had been demonstrated. God sent forth His Son made of a woman (by whom sin came) made under the Law (which brought transgression). Sonship conferred on us is a transcendent dignity! We have the confidence of God the Father through the Spirit of His Son sent forth into our hearts giving consciousness of the Father, thus effecting deliverance. There will be liberty in place of servitude. Abraham's heir is a great honour, but that is quite eclipsed by the heirship of God. The inheritance is two-sided. We inherit suffering with Him for a brief period and then we share in the incorruptible

inheritance reserved in heaven for us; Galatians 4:8-9, refers to the previous Gentile condition, after conversion there had been a reversion to the effete practices of Judaism. They had turned back to these weak beggarly rudiments! The ritual of Christendom but illustrates the lack of the knowledge of God. The observation of saints' days is a mixture of the persistence of heathen ideas and the customs of obsolete Judaism. There is only one day in Christianity and that is the first of the week! The Apostle was free. He besought the Galatian Christians to imitate his example. His language at this juncture was very affecting. Their zeal was commendable, but nevertheless wrongly directed. Paul's consuming desire was that Christ might be formed in them. Their apparent condition led him to have grave doubts of them. In Galatians 4:22, the Apostle opened up a new section of the chapter dealing with liberty, illustrating the principle by an allegory (i.e., a description of A under the image of B), referring to Sarah and Hagar in the O.T. There are two principles or covenants and two cities contrasted, viz.:— a covenant tending to bondage connected with the earthly Jerusalem, while the heavenly Jerusalem, our mother (the true metropolis), is free. Even as of old, the attempt to retain the two sons in the same house was a failure so in this era Judaism and Christianity cannot stay together. The parallel features contrasted in pairs are:— bond and free, and their sons with births of flesh and promise, Sinai and Zion, law and promise, earthly and heavenly cities, servitude and liberty, fruitful and barren (yet ultimately reversed), persecuting and persecuted, expulsion and establishment, law displaced by grace. They are incompatible. Christians may well challenge themselves as to which city they belong! Will they decline the position of glory to grovel in the mire of earth? That they were not children of the bondmaid-servant but of the free woman, is the antecedent to the exhortation opening Galatians 5:1-26. Christ has set us free in a free state, hence stand fast and do not revert to out-of-date practice. There can be no successful occupancy or progress apart from the recognition of the principle of the new life in the power of the Spirit (Romans 8:2). Neglect of these considerations results in being enmeshed in the net of ritual. Slavery is inconsistent for free men. When the officials said, "does not your Master pay tribute?" Peter thought his Master as a good Jew would be sure to answer in the affirmative. The practice of earth was to exempt the sons and exact from the strangers. As sons they were really free, but so as not to offend the authority, His creatorial power presented the exact sum from the least likely place (Matthew 17:24-27). The proposition is adduced that if circumcision solved the problem, then Christ's death was invalid, but if they elected to adopt the former then they were indebted to fulfil every iota of the Law. No partial obedience would suffice! They were fallen from grace. V. 5 refers to the hope of righteousness by faith. The goal of the Law was to reach righteousness by effort. We have righteousness by faith. But that is not its absolute fulfilment in display, for that we wait through the Spirit. Hence the Spirit is that of hope directing to the glory of God, in which we rejoice (Romans 5:2). In Christ Jesus, circumcision and uncircumcision are of no moment, but only faith working by love. The bright unflinching prospect manifests itself in our love towards all who belong to Christ. So faith is no theory based on ethereal nothingness! There are practical visible results, in conjunction with continuous expectancy that the prospect will at any moment give place to the actual transition to the glory of God (our destiny). In Galatians 5:7, the Apostle was obviously disturbed by his converts having been frustrated in their obedience to the truth by legal advocates. The Law suited men of earth but was unsuitable for those with a heavenly calling. The Law shows what man should be for God; the truth shows what God is for man, and that was evinced in the Cross. They had been called out of paganism to liberty and glory and not to Judaism! The insidious nature of the addition is illustrated in the thorough

permeation of leaven in the lump. Subtle and hidden in action at first but ere long complete, every particle partakes of the foreign character. Evil doctrine makes evil people! Nevertheless faith in God leads him to have confidence that they will respond to his exhortation. The Cross is death to the flesh, but entailed persecution. Although the cross is worn frequently as an adornment, the wearers do not see its significance applied to that which it adorns! Our calling is to liberty. The new life will exhibit love in service to do the will of God. But liberty for the new life is not license for the flesh. Love fills the Law to overflowing; previously the Law only yielded sparingly, but under Christianity love is the prime mark of the life. Legality only leads to wolfish tendencies (5: 15). Galatians 5:1-26 deals mainly with holiness and sanctification. Righteousness was previously the principle in view. They run perfectly together. All of the nature of God loves good and hates evil. Sanctification is the practical result of holiness in the power of the Spirit. We are judicially sanctified by (1) the will of God, (2) the blood of Christ and (3) by the Spirit; but here sanctification wears the practical aspect in walk, 1:e., general conduct. The Spirit enables the new entity to effect the desires of its holiness and to lift it above the desires of the flesh; e.g., a flying fish is delivered from its enemies in the water when it rises into the air! Flesh and Spirit are opposed in nature and action. The works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit are contrasted. The fruit is of one character! Love, joy and peace are Godward primarily. Long-suffering, gentleness and kindness are to those around. Faith, meekness and self-control are individual assets. God produces the graces of Christ in those precious to Him. Thus the Spirit is the rule of life! In Galatians 6:1-18, we are not to indulge delusions of superiority, hence we are to deal kindly with the fallen, for we may fall. Restoration is analogous to "setting a broken bone" which if properly done is stronger than before breaking. We are not to criticise others but to test our own work. In any case everyone will bear his own burden (phortion) or responsibility. (The burden (baros) in verse 2 is a weight which can be shared). Verse 6 speaks of the learner sharing material things with the teacher. But we cannot trifle with God for what a man sows he will reap! Corruption results from flesh and everlasting life from the Spirit! These are the principles of God's administration. The whole universe will yet display the precision of the ways of God in the same administration; therefore we should not slacken our Christian efforts. Let us do good to all but especially help the household of faith. It seems a moot point in Galatians 6:11, whether the Apostle refers to the size of the letters in his calligraphy or the extent of his writing. The advocates of the former urge that as evidence of his failing eyesight and that he merely took the pen from his amanuensis and wrote the concluding part. But we prefer to think that Paul departed from his usual practice and wrote the whole epistle with his own hand despite his disability. Circumcision was used as a ground of boasting and to evade persecution. But the only ground on which the Apostle would rely was the Cross whereby the world was crucified unto Him. In the blissful sphere of Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor its omission was applicable. All therein is new creation, and that is all that God recognises. On such peace and mercy are invoked. They constitute the Israel of God who are circumcised in heart and not in flesh and who rely on the Cross. Finally, the Apostle bore the marks of the Lord Jesus, just as a slave bore the brands of his master. So the criticism was irrelevant. His salutation was brief; he does not utter affectionate words. Nevertheless, that grace alone will preserve a local company in allegiance to an absent Lord.(Galashiels, 1940).

040 The Ground of Gathering

The Ground of Gathering A. E. Walker (1929). A new basis of fellowship has sought to be introduced of late years by well meaning brothers "to meet simply as Christians" — but it is not the ground laid down in Scripture, and by the Lord Himself*, and it is better for us to go by "The Law and the Testimony" than by "expediency." The object is well meant, for it avoids conscientious differences and difficulties — but it is catering for the circumference and not the centre, and rather a scheme to meet the confusion into which the professing Church has fallen — and it tends to come down to their moral level, and the principle of holiness is eliminated from "fellowship." Where there was a low state of things in former days, and a sense of departure from God, God's prophets ever had recourse to God, and He brought them back to the beginning. No new human methods will purify from worldly ways: we must get back to God and the Word of His grace (Acts 20:32)! Love to Christ, and love among one another, marked the early saints; it is to Ephesus that the apostle writes the confirming word (Ephesians 4:2-3). "With all lowliness and meekness endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." We cannot alter or keep "the unity of the Body," for this is the work of the Holy Ghost, and this new ground of meeting "as Christians" only is an effort to show that, but we are enjoined to endeavour to "keep the unity of the Spirit" — for this is so easily broken — here is all the exercise and discipline of heart, so that we may be in heart that which fits us for a fellowship with One so Holy that the very "heavens are not clean in His sight." We desire to go on, beloved, by the grace of God, however difficult the path in that narrow way, in which we feel the Lord of the House has been leading His own in separation for so many years, so that we may know the joy of fellowship in its true character as in 1 John 1:3, "with the Father, and with His Son, Jesus Christ.

*The appellation "Christian" was not known till years afterwards.

041 Gideon's Ephod.

Gideon's Ephod.

Judges 8:27 (Extracted from S. M. Anglin in "The Voice," 1895).

Gideon sought to perpetuate the blessing that had been vouchsafed to Israel by setting up an outward sign of it. The snare in this was that the true secret of the deliverance was lost sight of, and the outward thing valued. His history bears witness to the goodness and sovereign compassion of God towards His people who were constantly dishonouring Him and bringing chastening on themselves. Gideon was God's choice, for the time, to deliver His people and his moral fitness shines out in his replies to the angel. Two things mark him as suitable for God's work:-

(1) His own heart was in harmony with the thoughts of God about His people. He identified himself with them feeling their sorrows. "The Lord is with thee," said the angel. "If the Lord be with us" was Gideon's response. Every true service is the fruit of the mind and spirit of Him who took upon Himself the form of a servant! The Lord's answer to Gideon marks His appreciation. The angel looked on him and said, "Go in this thy might and thou shall save Israel."

(2) He had a sense of his own weakness and incompetency; a prerequisite for effectual service, far removed from the self confidence of the man of the world! We have to learn to humble ourselves as the way to true greatness. God shows His tender solicitude for His servant, when Gideon was ashamed to ask for any further proof of God's faithfulness. In His abounding goodness, God directed him to go to the camp of the Midianites, where listening to the dream of one of them and its interpretation, his heart was encouraged, yet reminded of his own weakness as a "barley cake." How well the blessed God knows the tendency of our poor hearts, to shrink from His support, else when He has given us the victory to vaunt ourselves and forget that we are weak! The way that Gideon's army was reduced from 32,000 to 300 men bears witness to the same truth. God indeed gives us the victory, for "by strength shall no man prevail" It is instructive to see how Gideon went on from victory to victory while acting in dependence upon God. But after all he fell into the miserable snare of taking ornaments from the people and making an ephod which diverted his mind and the minds of the people from the living God to what was an outward witness of past blessing which could not secure present good and power. But by which he evidently sought to connect the deliverance with himself and his house.

Let us briefly notice the moral victories of this man of God before the enemy ensnared him. He acted at home in faithfulness to God in breaking down the image of Baal, etc. Faithfulness to Him must begin at home and God must have His right place there first. He proves us there, and we learn what He is, and then we can confront the enemy outside. The spirit of Gideon in meeting the chidings of the men of Ephraim was very fine. He exhibited lowliness of mind that disarmed all opposition. He esteemed others better than himself and gained a greater victory than that over the Midianites. Another subtle snare was presented, although he bore the slighting of his brethren

becomingly, they now desire that he should be their ruler. His heart was steadfast, he rebuked the people who could so soon lose sight of God and exalt the vessel used for their deliverance. But alas! the way of the flesh is unbelief; though Gideon refused their proposals it affected his spirit. He seemed afterwards desirous to be something and to connect the deliverance with himself. He was not proof against the enemy's wiles! He came down from his moral elevation occupied when in distrust of himself with a sense of his littleness. But Gideon broke down. Sorrow and darkness shrouded the rest of his history and that of his family. That is an impressive lesson of the need of abiding in dependence upon God, walking in faith before Him. No past victories will secure the next step.

042 Gift and Office.

Gift and Office.

T. B. Baines. The confusion of gift and office has led to great disorder and wide departure from God's thoughts. In Eph. and Cor., where we have teaching with respect to gift, office is not named. Complete instruction as to the latter is contained in 1. Tim., where the subject is the administration of the House of God. Gift is the provision by the ascended Christ for the building up of His body, the Church. While responsibility is associated with the ordering of the Church administered by man. Scripture names elders (overseers or bishops) and deacons. Both were ordained by apostles or apostolic delegates and exercised their office in the assembly of their city, which consisted of all believers in the city who were gathered together. Because no such assembly is now found, there can be no longer any officers, similar to those named in Scripture. Even if there could be a restoration to Church unity in any particular town, it would still be impossible to have officers, as there is no longer any scriptural mode of ordaining them. Man may invent substitutes, but they are mere arrangements of human convenience without Scriptural sanction. The use of the same names as given to the officers in the apostolic Church is misleading: a denial of the Church's ruin and an usurpation of apostolic authority. The distinction between gift and office is important, for had gift been dependent upon office, it must have ceased. As it is, office has ceased through failure and disorder, but grace bestowed by the ascended Christ is as free as ever. (Extract from T. B. Baines, 1879).

043 Going Out and Going In.

Going Out and Going In.

(Notes of an address by Wm. Huggings, at Hawick, 1898).

It is well to be reminded of the importance of the Old Testament. There is immense blessing for us in the private reading and study thereof. We go back to the Old Testament to learn details of the divine principles of the New Testament by way of illustration. Referring to the history in Genesis of Abraham, he is more briefly recorded in Hebrews 11:8, as the man who went out; while in Joshua 14:10 on the other hand, Caleb is referred to as the man who went in. May these two examples be taken to heart so that we may be moved thereby to go out and go in relative to the two thoughts presented! Just in the measure that we go out we shall be able to go in. Abraham was responsive to the call of God to go out from his own country to a land he knew nothing about, but he did so relying on God. Lot followed in the steps of Abraham, but he had no faith of his own. We are very liable to imitate a brother or a sister who is a little more advanced in divine things than we are! Whenever we give up anything of the truth we are in the process of going back in the history of the soul. When Abraham's father died, and later when Lot left him, Abraham got rid of two great encumbrances and afterwards he made much greater progress. Lot undoubtedly had a work of God in his soul, nevertheless he was a real hindrance to Abraham. So in the early chapters of his history, Abraham was very slow in progress; but in contrast to his earlier dilatoriness, it is shown in Genesis 22:3, how he acted promptly. He got up early in the morning! The Hebrews' record goes on to say that he sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country. Moreover he looked for a city whose builder and maker was God. That was a further view than Canaan presented. If we are to get on spiritually we must go out. In his responsible life in the world every Christian is a stranger and pilgrim, and our being true to that character is according as we are affected by the revelation of God in our souls, and that brings in what is set forth in Caleb. From the day that he saw the character and extent of the pleasant land when he had the privilege of being sent as a spy, he ever had it before him as the Lord's inheritance. He had gone on with vigour unimpaired. He was strong and had confidence in God. He brought a good report when the spy majority reported ill. As a reward, he got Hebron, the place of fellowship. He knew the Lord's mercy and he confessed that it was the Lord who had kept him alive through all the trials of the intervening 45 years. Response in our souls is what God wants; no mere novel thoughts. There is no such thing as standing still. Let me encourage young Christians to go on with the Lord. It is well to observe that Caleb's action did not spring from mere mental assent. He was not merely a fund of information about God's things. (Knowledge puffs up; love edifies. 1 Corinthians 13:1-13). We grow in the divine nature, our spiritual stature is increased by the work of the Holy Ghost who is Christ's vicar here. Realising that we shall not be inflated as the Corinthians were. The great point in the Hebrews epistle is the person of the Son of God; but the Apostle was hindered in speaking to them of that glorious Person on account of their state and dull hearing. He devoted over a chapter (5-6) to open their dull ears and hearts. If we had better spiritual hearing we would hear more of Christ. We need not blame the ministry for any backwardness in evidence. We need to be

drawn up in our affections. The truth does not put us in bondage under legal enactments. So that we need not be afraid to go in like Caleb and take possession thereof. Make it our own! On the other hand that will entail our going out from the world that cast out Christ by way of the Cross! That world still casts out His name. Our being associated with Him in the outside place will involve our losing our own place, prestige or position in the eyes of the world!

044 The Good Pleasure of God.

The Good Pleasure of God.

Notes of address by Wm. Huggins at Hawick, 1/1/1898. The good pleasure of God's goodness is presented from God's side in 2 Thessalonians 1:11. It is the privilege of every christian in the world to be for that. The question may well be asked "for what are we here?" We should be able to say that we are here for the good pleasure of God! The Apostle's statements were not legal prescriptions or enactments, but the expression of exercises in the soul of the Lord's servant. The Spirit of God would so minister Christ to our hearts that they would be made good in us in a practical way. We require a deeper apprehension of the One who was here perfectly for God's good pleasure. Luke 2:14 speaks of God's good pleasure in that One when born in Bethlehem's manger and the heavens burst forth in glad acclamation. Near the close of His pathway in Luke 19:1-48 we see a sample of earth joining in that acclamation. Man had been 4000 years on earth and God had not found his good pleasure in any one. When man was set up at first in innocence in the Garden of Eden God pronounced everything very good, but man's disobedience led to an unhappy sequel of sin and corruption in the human race. It was necessary that a man of a totally different order should be disclosed, viz., the second man, the Lord out of Heaven; in whom God could find His good pleasure. He was the centre of His purpose and His pleasure. The first man was morally set aside when the Lord Jesus was born and at the Cross he was judicially set aside. Finally at the Great White Throne there will be a complete blotting out of his remembrance! Consequent on the Lord Jesus going into death, rising therefrom, and being placed above everything the Holy Ghost has come down to make good the truth of God; a living reality in our souls according to the purpose of God. That is no mere mental assent, but the Spirit forming us in the divine nature. The result will be that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ will be glorified in us. That is not only light but a deeper acquaintance with His love and of the Person Who is crowned with glory and honour. John 8:1-59 says, "We shall know the truth and the truth shall make us free." That liberty will not be to do our own will but to be here for God's good pleasure!

Php 2:12 speaks of working out your own salvation with fear and trembling. How many stop short at that! It is quite scriptural, but only part of the truth. The next verse goes on to say, "that it is God who works in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure." We are to work out what God is working in. The consequence on the practical side will be "that we shall be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom we shine as lights in the world." While He was here the Lord was the perfect answer to what we have read. There is no question about the particular nation to which we belong. All are in the nationality of fallen man. The only light shining in this dark world comes out in the bodies of the people of God. The light is to shine out in the christians holding forth the Word of Life. That is not a question of preaching but of practice. It is the privilege of every christian to be in this verse. Preaching would shut out all our sisters and many brethren, but the Lord is the great administrator of the word of God in the pleasure which is worked in us. We have a responsibility as lampholders to display the light. God lights the candle. Paul said to Timothy, you have fully known my doctrine

and manner of life. They were in accord with each other. He lived as he preached. He went on to adjure the young man to take heed to himself and the doctrine. He was not merely the depositary of God's revelation. I do not believe that there is anything going on in our hearts if it does not come out in our bodies. We may have much in our heads and little in our lives. We are to be living exponents of the truth! May the Lord deepen the work in everyone who has been taken up by sovereign grace and the love of God.

045 The Gospel of the Glory of Christ.

The Gospel of the Glory of Christ.

Notes of an address by J. A. Trench, 1913. In 2 Corinthians 4:4, the "glorious Gospel" does not merely express the quality of the Gospel, but it describes the source of the Gospel as the Glory of Christ in the exalted position in which He now is, and from whence the testimony issues. God has found such glory in the work of righteousness accomplished by the Lord that He has exalted Him above all heavens. In 2 Corinthians 3:1-18, the Law had promised life on the condition of doing, but to be able to do required life, and so it was necessary for the Spirit to give life and that was a contrast to the letter of the Law which could only kill or condemn. It is evident that the glory of Christ concealed under the letter of the O.T. had been in the mind of God. Now in this dispensation, the Spirit reveals Him to faith and so gives life alone in Christ. As we have seen the Law required righteousness, but the Law could not bring it, and there was no righteousness in man. Therefore the Law became a ministry of condemnation and death. On the other hand, the Gospel is a ministry of righteousness from the glory where Christ is; the righteousness of God was so perfectly adapted to His glory that it took Christ there as man from the bottom of the judgment where love had taken him on our account. "God made Him sin for us that we might become God's righteousness in Him" (2 Corinthians 5:21). To those who have received Christ as life and righteousness, the Holy Spirit has come as the power to enjoy the wonderful revelation. The end of 2 Corinthians 3:1-18. brings to the point of contrast between the position of the Christian and that of Israel, where we read "we all beholding the glory of the Lord with unveiled face are transformed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the Lord the Spirit." The glory of the Lord in our face is unveiled. Moses had to put a veil on his face for Israel. The Lord does not do so for us. But there is a great difference. It was only the reflection of a partial glory in the face of Moses; but the whole glory of God streams from the face of the Lord Jesus. What would have destroyed Moses is the liberty of the Christian in the power of the Holy Spirit, "Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty" (2 Corinthians 3:17). The glory conveys the intelligence of peace made by the blood of His cross. In all the perfect character of that work we are identified with Him in life and righteousness. His love leads our hearts to be occupied with the radiant glory shining in His face. By faith, we wait for the glory of God which is the hope of righteousness. That hope becomes so real as to be the support of overflowing joy in our lives. The Apostle unfolds the contrast between the glory of the era in which Moses lived which was to be done away and the excellent glory brought in by Christ. The contrast is also between the powerlessness of the Law and the power of the Gospel of the Glory of Christ, forming the Assembly as a letter commending the virtues of Christ to the attention of all. The ministry was through the Apostle by means of which the Spirit of the living God wrote Christ on the affections. The realisation of the wonderful responsible place is dependent on the response of the hearts of individuals to the ministry. The formative power is:- (1) by the object presented to our hearts, (2) by the indwelling Spirit. Viewing the glory of the Lord, we are transformed into the same image by the Lord the Spirit. The Spirit dwelling in us is the power both for the objective presentation and the subjective result. The affections take the impression of the

object; the glory of Christ is reflected in the lives of those who belong to Him. Moses bore the effects of the partial glory he had witnessed. So with so much greater force should the glory in the face of Jesus result in the features of His glory and lowly life be reproduced in us. While here it will only be in measure! Perfection will only be reached when we are with Him. That will be the consequence of seeing Him as He is. Growth in His likeness will depend on our continually being occupied with Him. We shall not be occupied with the results. Moses did not know that his face shone, but Israel saw the glory in his face! So the people around us will take knowledge that we have been with Jesus. We shall then answer increasingly to the description of being the epistles of Christ known and read of all men!

046 Headship.

Headship.

T. Green.

There is great value accruing to every believer who realises the Headship of Christ. Science, philosophy and deceit are abounding in destructive character. 1. Cor. 11:3, suggests that the saints recognise Christ's headship of every man, so that we might have the value of His superior wisdom. He is made unto us wisdom from God. Every one is passing opinions. "Be silent and know that I am God." It is not a time for displaying what we know. We should rest in the consciousness of what Christ is as Head. He is Lord of all. God has made Him Lord and Christ. All power has been given to Him. But all that is held in relation to what He is as Head! He has rights over men. We need to value the way in which things have been put in the new creation through redemption under Christ as Head. Everything created passed under Adam as head (even Eve his wife). The moment she left the principle of headship and recognised the subtle wisdom of the enemy, ruin came in which involved the Son of God, when He was made sin at Calvary. There he was without a Comforter, man sitting in the place of honour and authority boasted of his superiority over creation. "Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." But the One who was wisdom became obedient unto death. Now He is out of it and God has made him Lord and Christ. The danger at Colosse was the seeking to interfere with divine counsel, but the Apostle assured them that they ought to be united together in love, unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding. The only wisdom of any value is held within the compass of the mystery of God, for in that are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. The trouble in the world is because christians have been led astray by the teaching of men through philosophy and vain deceit. How wise the world is today! But everything militates against the cross, the suffering of Christ and His Headship. In Him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead! Headship is outside all the fiction of men. "In Him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and ye are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and authority." So that we might have the benefit of all that is directive in wisdom, perfect love and grace. The world to come has not been subjected to angels, but to Christ as Head. The mind of the flesh is powerful in the counsels of the church through not holding the Head, from whom all the body ministered to and united by the joints and bands increases with the increase of God. When we are in the good of His fulness we shall not want to drink at the beggarly streams of the world, but would remain at the Fountain. (Extracts from notes of address by T. GREEN).

047 Heaven Our Home.

Heaven Our Home.

John 13:1-10; John 14:1-18; John 20:11-18.

(Notes of an address by J A. Trench, 1890).

It is a wonderful thing for our souls to have the Father's house revealed to us, so that we can enjoy it before we get there. There is no moral link between the Father's house and this world; no possibility of putting them together in our hearts. Do we know anything of the complete break between these two scenes? The moment the Lord knew His hour was come, His first thought was, to give those whom He left in this world part with Himself where He was going. There is the first communication of divine life and nature, that brings with it the capacity for the entrance into our souls of all these things: it needed the knowledge of what He had wrought, to enter into them. But He knows the need we meet at every turn, and He provides for it. All this is preliminary; up to this the Father's house has not been mentioned. When the Lord Jesus is able to count upon the sorrow of hearts that will miss Him, He says, "Let not your heart be troubled . . . , in my Father's house are many mansions." What a revelation There had been no such thing up to this time in Scripture. Much of the Lord's ministry had prepared the way for it; now the moment has come for the full revelation to break on us, a home where He has gone, His own home, now revealed and made ours.

Then He goes on to address His disciples, "Whither I go ye know, and the way ye know." How were they to know it? Philip thought, if only he knew the Father, he could know the Father's house. Jesus says, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." Every trait of the blessedness of the Father's house was revealed and shining forth in the Person and ways of the Son here below. The heart that knows the Son, knows the Father too, even the feeblest babe, for it is no matter of attainment; the Lord Jesus would start us with it. The cardinal truth of the revelation of the Father is found in the Gospel of John, as the One to Whom I am related. For this reason we all turn to the Gospel of John, for there we have all the precious revelation of the Father in the Person of the Lord Jesus here.

"I go to prepare a place for you." There is nothing more important than to seize the meaning of that little sentence; it is not that any preparation is going on now, but how did I ever come to have a home prepared up there? Accomplished redemption prepares us for it. The Lord Jesus closing our whole history here, opens to us a heavenly home, fitting that home for us by His presence there, and fitting us perfectly for that home. Thus, at the very opening of our way, we can give thanks to the Father; He has made us meet. Truth only becomes real to us as it supplies a need created in our souls. That need had been created in Mary Magdalene. The disciples were satisfied when they had inspected the sepulchre; they returned to their homes; but Mary had no home to go to, and she stood without the sepulchre weeping. He had delivered her from the fearful power of Satan, and the sense of what He was detained her there, until His voice broke upon her ear. She wished

to resume the intimacies with which she had known Him before, but He says, "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father." He was going to introduce her into far deeper and fuller blessing than she could have known before. "Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God and your God." What additional light this is upon all that we have found of the revelation of the Father's house. He is now able to open to us the place where He has gone and to associate us in the fullest way with Himself. "I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also." How simply this gives us our place; the yesterday of my life closed in the cross of Christ; the to-morrow to be with Him in glory, and the present so wonderfully filled with all we have been brought into while here. Are we living in the power of the things that are ours already? Do we know what it is in a little measure to bask in the light of the Father's love? We have the Holy Ghost to be the power of the enjoyment of all these things in our souls, while we are waiting on the tip-toe of expectation for Him to come again, that where He is, there we may be also. What I seek is that we may enter into the power that is given us for the enjoyment of these things. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him" (1 Corinthians 2:9). Arrested by this thought, many of us stop there, and put it all off to the future; but the Apostle only quotes this from Isaiah to contrast it with what we have. "But God hath revealed them unto us, by His Spirit." The things that God has prepared in His eternal counsels, are now revealed to us by His Spirit, that we may know them, and enjoy them as our present possession; that our hearts might live in them as a present reality.

"We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen" (2 Corinthians 4:18). Do we know anything of such an attitude? Have we been looking at the things which are seen, today, or at the things that are unseen? These things are revealed so that we can look at them. "Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth" (Colossians 3:2). Associated with Him, risen with Him, set your mind (N. Tn.). The affections and the mind are distinct things; the Spirit assumes that the affections will follow Christ there, but is the mind there? The cross upon earth answers to the heavenly glory. How fatal the influence of man that comes between me and that risen, glorified, Christ. Are our hearts lingering in the scene out of which He has gone? Or are our hearts and minds set upon Him, where He is in the glory? "Our citizenship is in heaven" (Php 3:20). Citizenship was everything to a Grecian, it came before the dearest relationship. All that forms the moral life is in heaven now. How feeble is the grasp of these things! What is the practical power of them? Does everything about us, bear witness to them, so that we are only waiting for Him to come, to take us to Himself, in Whom all our joys and our hopes have centred while here? Not one thing has been withheld from us, and He is engaged in service for us in the glory, so that there may be no hindrance to our enjoyment of these things, so that we may be going about this dark world with our faces lit up, or at all events our hearts, with His love. We have found what satisfies us divinely and for ever.

048 The House of God.

The House of God.

T. Oliver.

No. 1. Evidence in the Pentateuch The house of a man is where he dwells, similarly the House of God is where God dwells. The term "house of a man" is used in various relations, prominent amongst these is the material structure, since man has a body. But God is a spirit, and as the martyr Stephen in his masterly arraignment of the Jewish leaders said, "the Most High dwells not in temples made with hands" (Acts 7:48). While the Apostle Paul in his address to the Athenian philosophers made a similar statement. That thought was even apprehended at the zenith of the era of material display by Solomon in the dedication of the Temple (2 Chronicles 2:6). Yet there are many illuminating passages in the Old Testament, throwing light on features of the New Testament doctrine of the House of God.

Since Genesis has been well termed "the seed-plot of the Bible," we are not surprised to find that the first intimation in Scripture of the subject appears in Genesis 28:10-22, describing Jacob's dream. Therein he was transported outside his circumstances to witness the purpose of God as to the earth. Four prominent features of the doctrine to be unfolded later received emphasis, viz. (1) "Surely the Lord is in this place" (5: 16) i.e., the presence of the Lord was apprehended. (2) "How dreadful is this place" (5: 17). He apprehended that entailed reverence in accord with its holy character. (3) "He beheld the angels of God ascending and descending on a ladder, thus it was the gate of heaven" (5: 12-17). Hence the realisation of heavenly administration in the presence of God who is a consuming fire must impress fear on one who comes in contact with the House of God. That is easily understood. Our first parents after they had sinned hid themselves from God. The company of Christians (and most of all their company in a Gospel meeting) is disagreeable to anyone who has not come to know God as a Saviour. (4) "Jacob set up a pillar and poured oil on the top of it" (5: 18). The pillar indicated testimony or witness (Genesis 31:52). In this case the witness was to the unfailing faithfulness and mercy of God (the Lord God of Abraham, etc.). The oil was typical of the Holy Spirit who makes the House of God a living reality now. Jacob named the place Bethel or House of God, although no real house was then existing. Since that day many have sought to imitate Jacob's example by erecting houses and memorials of different kinds and have described them as relative to God, but without prophetic insight. So that the features of the real house have been obscured. Then Jacob sought to drive a bargain with God. If God would prosper his way then he would own God and would give back 10 per cent. of whatever God gave him. That showed splendid business instinct! A moiety of 50 per cent. would have been the lowest terms he could have offered to man with any hope of acceptance. Frequently people of God nowadays do not reach Jacob's modest standard, they take all from God without thanks or recognition of His interests. Twenty years of circumventing circumstances by his own cleverness brought Jacob to an extremity (Genesis 35:1), and God said to him "Arise go up to Bethel and dwell there." Jacob realised that there was much in his house which was not consistent with the

holiness of the House of God so he commanded his household to put away the strange gods and to be clean and change their garments. He hid the idols under the oak by Shechem (usually considered as typical of the significance of the cross of Christ). Behind all the circumstances was the hand of God in discipline. Expediency, hitherto the guiding principle of Jacob, would no longer serve. He would thenceforth have to act according to the righteousness of God. Living away from God inevitably leads to our contracting many associations which are not compatible with the holy character of the House of God. When Jacob got everything cleared up he erected another pillar at Bethel and anointed it in the same way as he had done 20 years before. He had returned to the testimony with which he was connected at first. But he understood it in a much better way. The hard discipline throughout the 20 years had caused him to apprehend the perfect administration and the holiness of God. In Genesis the idea of the House of God was only in embryo form since God wished to dwell in the midst of a people, and these did not appear until the record of Exodus was reached. The first eighteen chapters of the book occupied mainly with the statement of what God did for the people notwithstanding their waywardness. The remainder of the book is more taken up with what man was to do for the Glory of God. In Genesis 3:1-24, God appeared to Moses in a burning thorn bush which was not consumed. The love and grace of God (a consuming fire, nevertheless) were to be manifested amongst the people of Israel just as miraculously as the fire in the midst of the bush which did not consume it. Forty years before Moses had given up the people in disappointment. Since then God's dealings with him had disestablished his opinion and he had reached the point that he could serve God. Although Israel might be well described as a worthless thorn bush, when God as a consuming fire dwelt in the bush, then all was transformed. (As another has said, "for the first forty years of his life Moses was learning to be something, in the second forty years he was learning to be nothing, and in the last forty years he learned that God was everything"). The ground was holy. As God of Abraham, His will is paramount and unchallengeable. He consumes in discipline what is unsuited to His will, even as in abundant grace and mercy He moulds what is pleasing to Himself so that he can dwell amongst the people. Subsequently the display of Himself as Jehovah (1:e., Lord, I am, the self-existing One), would come into view. Therefore in spite of Pharaoh's stubbornness God would have His people free to serve Him outside Egypt. A two-fold action was necessary to attain that end: — (1) External power would be manifested to deliver them. (2) Their hearts had to be cleansed and unbelief displaced by internal power. In the series of God's acts of power in Egypt, there was a distinction or separation made between the land of Goshen where God's people dwelt and the rest of Egypt. The various agencies of judgment on Egypt did not affect Goshen. The ninth plague of judgment was thick darkness which could be felt. For three days no one could stir, but the children of Israel had light in their rude dwellings while the ornate temples of Egypt were shrouded in a more complete blackout than a London night fog! (That is indicative of the spiritual darkness which envelops man's philosophy, while divine light fills the hearts of the people of God, because God is there). The tenth plague was the culmination of God's dealings in smiting the first born in every household in Egypt, from the greatest to the least. But the families of Israel were sheltered inside the houses with bloodstained lintels and sideposts (1:e., the Passover, typical of the death of Christ in one of its aspects). The accompanying bitter herbs indicated self-judgment, wrought by the grace of God in the soul engrossed with the love that averted the judgment stroke of the angel. The unleavened bread showed the separate character to be sustained by the people of God. God could not tolerate in His people the leaven or evil he had to judge in Egypt (typical of the world).

The Passover celebration indicated three prominent ideas (a) protection, (b) food, (c) exodus from Egypt. Redemption or deliverance by blood was not complete redemption. It was necessary that the people should be taken out of Egypt. When all hope seemed to vanish as they were hemmed in by the Red Sea in front and the Egyptian host behind, God intervened and they passed through the sea as on dry land. What was their salvation became the destruction of their enemies! Exodus 15:1-27 gives the redemption song (the first song in scriptural record). That was contingent not on safety from judgment through the blood of the Lamb but on complete separation from Egypt and the destruction of the enemy's power. The redeemed people then knew that God was for them: 5: 2 sprung from thankful hearts who wished to prepare a habitation for God; 5: 17 speaks of the sanctuary and 5: 13 of the abode of God's holiness. Exodus 19:1-25 introduced the thought of man's response towards God. In obeying the voice of God and keeping His Covenant they would be to Him a peculiar treasure above all people a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. (All the people were to form a royal priesthood. The special family ultimately honoured as priests came into function through the failure of the people).

Exodus 25:1-40 records the instruction of God, "let them make me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them." All the material was to be given as a freewill offering by the people. That could not have taken place until redemption had been effected. The House of God or Tabernacle had walls of imperishable shittim wood, made up of 48 boards, 10 cubits high and 1 1/2 cubits broad, each with two tenons at the bottom fitting into two silver sockets (which were typical of divine grace by redemption in its two constituents, the death and resurrection of Christ). So that the components of the House of God were based on redemption They did not touch the sands of the desert at any point. Moreover, the boards were bound together by bars and the corners were specially strengthened. Over all was a layer of gold, typical of the righteousness of God. The tabernacle or tent was completed by a covering, composed of ten curtains of fine twined linen and blue, purple and scarlet, with embroidered cherubim thereon (typical of the display of the varied glories of Christ). Over that was a goats' hair covering of eleven curtains (typical of the Holy Nazarite separation of Christ while here). Further coverings of rams' skins, dyed red (consecration unto death) and badgers' skins (holiness excluding evil) completed the roof of the tent. The oblong shaped tabernacle was divided into three compartments. (1) The outer court which was open above and surrounded by hangings 100 cubits long and 50 cubits broad supported by pillars and sockets of brass, while the connecting hooks and fillets were of silver. The brass was indicative of the righteousness of God testing man in responsibility. So brass was prominent of the outside as gold was of the inside of the tabernacle. At the same time the connection with silver declared the value of the redemption of Christ then future. Man's need discovered by the test was at once met by redemption! The hangings as well as the curtains of entrance to the second chamber bore no cherubim which brought in the thought that although cherubim and a flaming sword kept man out from the tree of life in Eden, no such barrier would exist in the era of display of heavenly things of which the tabernacle was a type. (Christ would be the door and living way). The brazen altar was for the burnt offering (indicating God's satisfaction in the death of Christ) and the brazen laver (between the altar and the entrance to the Holy place) was for the priests washing their hands (1 Timothy 2:8), and feet with water (John 13:1-38) (2) The second chamber, the Holy Place, comprising two-thirds of the covered space (30 cubits long, 10 broad, 10 high), contained the table of shewbread, the pure gold candlestick and the golden altar of incense. The table of shittim wood overlaid with gold had an encircling border and both had crowns. The table bore the twelve loaves

or pierced cakes (Leviticus 24:5), showing Israel before God maintained by Christ. (3) The third chamber, the Most Holy, consisting of the remaining one-third of the tent, was separated from the second chamber by a veil of the same figured fabric as the curtains forming the roof. The veil was supported by four pillars of shittim wood overlaid with gold and had four sockets of silver and furnished with gold hooks. The contents of the chamber were: the Ark of testimony (2.5 by 1.5 by 1.5 cubits) also of shittim wood overlaid with gold (type of the true Manhood and Divine Glory of Christ), and the gold lid of the Ark formed the Mercy Seat. On its two ends all in one piece were two gold cherubims with their faces looking down on the Mercy-Seat (witness of the perfect redemption in the blood of Jesus). In the Ark were to be subsequently put the golden pot with manna (God's treasure in memory of Christ here but now Man in the Glory). Aaron's rod that budded (Christ's priesthood in power of an endless life), and the tables of the Covenant (all God's promises with His people secured in Christ). Everything was constructed according to the pattern shown to Moses in the Holy Mount, so that no detail was left to the fertile imagination of man. The Tabernacle of testimony was in relation to what was in the mind of God to be manifested publicly in the world to come. At the end of Exodus we read that the tabernacle or tent of the congregation (literally "the tent of meeting") was covered with the cloud and, filled with the Glory of the Lord which was the guide for the people in all their subsequent journeys. Exodus closes thus, and Leviticus commences with the Lord speaking to Moses from that a centre. Leviticus is occupied with the description of the offerings and the offerers and the general service connected with the Tabernacle, the House of God. In Numbers, emphasis is put on the Levites bearing and taking charge of the tabernacle of testimony in its movement through the wilderness, also on the prominence of the tabernacle as the central feature of the camp. In Deuteronomy reference to the tabernacle is only made at the close of the book, when the Lord communicated to Moses the intelligence of his approaching death. Moses and Joshua were to appear before the tabernacle of the congregation and the Lord appeared in the pillar of cloud over the door of the tabernacle and spoke to Moses therefrom. T. OLIVER. THE HOUSE OF GOD. No. 2.

Subsequent evidence in the Old Testament. Part 50: In the Book of Joshua, reference is made: — (1) to the valuable part of the spoil of Jericho being put in the treasury of the House of the Lord (typical of what the triumph of Christ has secured for God's glory). (2) to the Gibeonites being condemned to be hewers of wood and drawers of water for the House of God (teaches government). (3) after the land had been conquered the tabernacle of the congregation was set up at Shiloh. (4) when the 2 1/2 tribes were free from warfare returning to their lands beyond Jordan they built an altar at the passage of Jordan and were accused of seeking to break away. The whole congregation indicated the land of the possession of the Lord as wherein the Lord's tabernacle (His centre) dwelt. In the chaos marking the period of the Judges people paid little attention to the tabernacle. In only one instance is mention made when they sought to punish the tribe of Benjamin for an evil deed wrought amongst them. Israel went to the House of God, sought counsel and after their defeat, they returned, wept, sat before the Lord, fasted and presented burnt and peace offerings before the Lord. In Samuel, his introduction to the House of the Lord and subsequent service and the calamity of the Ark being captured by the Philistines were prominent points in the early part of the book. Then interest was transferred from the Tabernacle to the Ark and God's holiness was vindicated amongst the Philistines, at Bethshemesh, at Kirjath Jearim and in the house of Obed-edom, until the Ark returned to its proper place after the absence of nearly a century. It would appear that Gibeon superseded Shiloh as the place of the Tabernacle. (1

Chronicles 16:39). As soon as David was secure on the throne of all Israel, he essayed to build a house for the Lord, but he had to learn that however laudable might be his desire, the proposal was not according to the will of God. The acquiescence of the king in the decision was beautiful! He devoted himself with unabated zeal and love to finding a habitation for the mighty God of Jacob in spite of affliction. Although he was not permitted to build the temple he secured the place and found the material. God helped him marvelously in acquiring a vast treasure of gold, silver, etc. The temple or house could not be built until the kingdom was established. All the wealth and resources of the kingdom contributed to the grandeur of the house. The people were delivered from every foe. They dwelt safely under their vines and fig trees. God gave them rest on every side. Whereas in the tumultuous conditions in Judges every man did what was right in his own eyes since there was no king, everyone in David's kingdom was controlled according to the will of God. All these features are beautiful types of what would come to light in the spiritual house of the following era. In the Psalms the aspirations and the exercises of the soul of the Psalmist relative to the House of God are shown in a remarkable way. The desire for and communication of instruction were prominent features relative to the Temple, e.g., beholding the beauty of the Lord and enquiring in His Temple (Psalms 27:4), also therein every whit spoke of His glory (Psalms 29:9). The usage "House of God" is more comprehensive and more frequent than "the Temple" in the Psalms, especially with relation to dwelling therein and going thereto, and His appreciation of even such an external connection as being a doorkeeper, rather than dwelling in the tents of wickedness (Psalms 84:1-12). But in his exercises the Psalmist did not dwell altogether in the future, his thoughts were constantly recurring to the tabernacle, e.g., in the secret of His tabernacle shall He hide me and the offering of sacrifices of joy (Psalms 27:1-14.); and worship in the tabernacle (Psalms 132:7). Those showed the prophetic bearing of the passages, as the Psalmist could not have access to the Tabernacle then existent, since he was not a priest! Holiness was the prime feature. "Holiness becometh Thine house, O Lord, for ever (Psalms 113:5). At length the desire of David was consummated in the early part of the reign of his son Solomon, the King of Peace, The structure of the Temple in the main followed the lines of the Tabernacle. In the fourth year of his reign Solomon began to build the House of the Lord, in Mount Moriah, where the Lord appeared unto David his father and in the place David had prepared at the threshing floor of Ornan where God's grace and mercy intervened on the ground of the acceptance of the burnt offering. In the temple the dimensions of the tabernacle were doubled, both as to length and breadth. In addition there were extra features such as a magnificent porch and two gigantic pillars, viz., Jachin meaning "beauty or established") and Boaz (meaning "strength" , each 60 feet high, said to have contained about 300 tons of stone and 900 tons of brass, then a molten sea was borne by twelve oxen besides a large brazen altar and ten lavers were in the outer court. In the Holy Place there were 100 bowls of gold, 10 golden candlesticks and 10 tables with 12 loaves on each and in the middle between was the golden altar of incense. In the Most Holy Place (20 cubits square) stood the Ark containing the two tables of stone. (Apparently Aaron's rod and the golden pot of manna had disappeared!) Solomon made two new cherubim of olive tree, their faces looked towards the house as the witness of blessing for the earth in the day of glory to come secured through redemption by blood. These overshadowed the two small golden cherubim forming part of the ark. The wings of the former stretched across the width of the House. The walls of the Temple consisted of fine cedarwood and hewn stone (polished marble). The inside was carved with figures of cherubim and palms and the whole was

overlaid with gold. No light was admitted to the Holiest, but the larger external chamber had narrow windows. The two chambers were separated by the veil. In the Tabernacle there was no room for the priests dwelling, not even a seat for resting, but in the sides of the Temple were 90 chambers hence the House was not only for approach to God but a place for the priests dwelling, so beautifully indicated in the Psalms. (In the Lord's closing ministry in John 14:1-31 : he made analogous reference "In My Father's house are many abodes or rest rooms.") In the Tabernacle there was no singing but in the Temple certain families of Levites whose primary function was bearing the burdens of the House of God came under instruction in the use of musical instruments for the service of the House of God; that was typical of the day of glory yet to come, and also significant of the Spirit's Day when those who by grace partake of the resources and gladness of the House of God are praising people. The temple was seven years in building and near the end of the eighth year just before "the feast of tabernacles" the Ark and other furniture were transferred from the Tabernacle to the Temple and Solomon dedicated it with a transcendent prayer. Just as he finished fire from heaven consumed the burnt offering and the glory of the Lord filled the House so that the priests could not enter. Then the king made a vast peace offering of oxen and sheep, and kept a seven days feast. After that the people were sent away with glad hearts due to the goodness of the Lord (The tabernacle was the pattern of things in the heavens and was anointed with oil. The temple was neither!) The fact that God should dwell on earth with men was prominent in all Solomon's arrangements (2 Chronicles 6:2; 2 Chronicles 6:18). The result was blessing to man and its reflex action praise to God The first twenty years of Solomon's reign were occupied with the building of the House of the Lord and his own house (which took thirteen years), and many other works and his way was prospered greatly. The Queen of Sheba attracted by the fame of Solomon from distant Ethiopia, tested his incomparable wisdom and viewed his resources and works, but the coperstone of wonder was reached when she beheld the ascent by which he went up to the House of the Lord, her heart was completely captured and she broke out into majestic panegyric! Solomon's unparalleled success seemed to have made him careless, so that in the latter half of his reign he sadly belied the principles of the House of God, getting a multitude of horses from Egypt and taking many foreign wives who turned his heart from the Lord so that he built high places and offered sacrifices to the gods of the nations around. His example induced the people to imitate his practice. T. OLIVER. THE HOUSE OF GOD, No. 3.

Subsequent Evidence in the Old Testament, (Continued).

Shortly after the accession of Rehoboam the son of Solomon as king, the kingdom was divided by rebellion. A little later Shishak, king of Egypt, robbed the Temple of many of its choice golden treasures, so that the Temple only lasted about 30 years in its pristine grandeur. Under later wicked kings the Temple fell into decay, although repaired by Joash, Hezekiah and Josiah successively. The kings in general used the treasures for mercenary purposes. Indeed Manasseh raised altars to the heathen gods in the sacred courts of the Temple. Uzziah usurped the place of a priest and was smitten with leprosy and cut off from the House of the Lord. On that occasion Isaiah was witness of the majesty and holiness of the Lord in the Temple. The features of recovery in Hezekiah's day are instructive: (1) the altar and table with their vessels were cleansed, prepared and sanctified (2 Chronicles 29:18-19); offerings were made for all Israel (although ten-twelfths had disappeared); the Levites and their instruments were set in the house of the Lord according to the command of David, Gad and Nathan (although these worthies had been dead for 250 years).

Nothing new was introduced; all details in worship and praise were arranged according to the word of God. The feast of unleavened bread was revived in the pristine purity of its institution and that became a logical antecedent to the revival of the passover feast a century later. At the later date, Hilkiah found the book of the law in the House of the Lord and the reading of it to King Josiah affected the king so greatly that it led to a revival such as had not been seen since the days of Samuel. In the closing years of the kingdom in the brief reigns of the sons of godly Josiah, the chief priests polluted the House of the Lord. The Lord sent His prophets with messages having compassion on the people and His dwelling place, but they mocked and misused them, despised His word until there was no remedy and the wrath of the Lord arose against them. Nebuchadnezzar attacked Jerusalem, took away the treasures and demolished the temple and city.

Ezekiel had a vision of the glory of the Lord (1) going up from the cherub, (2) departing off the threshold of the House, (3) going up from the midst of the city, (4) standing over the mountain on the east of the city, successively as if reluctant to leave (evidence of God's long-suffering).

Yet Ezekiel did not close his prophecy until he saw the glory of the Lord coming back to the House by the east gate and then filling the House (Ezek. ch. 10:11 and 43). In Ezekiel 40:1-49; Ezekiel 41:1-26; Ezekiel 42:1-20; Ezekiel 43:1-27; Ezekiel 44:1-31; Ezekiel 45:1-25; Ezekiel 46:1-24; Ezekiel 47:1-23 we get remarkable details of the house in its latter glory. Everything is divinely measured, from the details of the wall and the gates to the inheritance of each tribe. The wall sets forth that all evil will be excluded; the gates that there is access for God's people. From the house there issue the living waters for the blessing of the land; and the trees of the river shall be for food and the leaves for medicine. In Ezekiel 43:10-12 the pattern and law (or principle) of administration of the house are referred to tersely "most holy"! The last verse of Ezekiel states the privilege of the house, viz., "the Lord is there."

After 70 years of the captivity, the Lord stirred the spirit of Cyrus, the king of Persia, to invite volunteers in exile to return to Jerusalem and erect a house to the Lord God of heaven. So a remnant under Zerubbabel returned to Jerusalem. Their first act was to erect an altar on which they offered burnt offerings to the Lord. Although the city was in ruins and the wall not rebuilt, enemies around and the bulk of the people still in exile, they clung to the word of God and offered for all Israel. The adversaries in the land sought to help in the building of the house but on their offer being emphatically declined they sought the aid of friends at the Persian court to hinder the building and they succeeded in getting an interdict which lasted a few years until another king arose who was favourably disposed to the building of the house. The prophets Haggai and Zechariah stirred up the people in Jerusalem to renew building. In spite of many hindrances, the work was finished in about 20 years from the start and dedicated to the service of the Lord. The rebuilt temple lacked the Ark and associated furniture, the Shekinah glory of the Lord, the holy fire and the Urim and Thummim (oracle). The old men who had seen the grandeur of the former house wept, but the young men who had not seen anything better shouted for joy, nevertheless all praised the Lord. Haggai in the word of the Lord of Hosts encouraged them by saying that the latter glory of this House shall be greater than the former (Haggai 2:9). About 80 years after the first return of the exiles, Ezra of Aaron's priestly family requested the king to be allowed to go to Jerusalem with a band of volunteers. At Jerusalem they found that separation had become largely a lapsed principle! Ezra proclaimed a fast, assembled the people, prayed and confessed the

general sin before the House of God. The people wept, repented and decided to cut their wrong associations. The recovery of Ezra's remnant has marks similar to that of Hezekiah's. Their worship, as presented in the altar was "as written in the law of Moses the man of God" (Ezra 3:2). Their praises were "after the ordinance of David, King of Israel" (Ezra 2:10). Every activity in God's house must have the sanction of His word.

About ten years later Nehemiah, who had attained to high position in the Persian court, heard of the sad plight of the remnant in Jerusalem. He wept, fasted and prayed before God. His sorrowful countenance led the king to enquire the reason, with a result that Nehemiah got leave of absence and in due course arrived in Jerusalem. He successfully exhorted the priests to rebuild the walls and gates which had been destroyed. The stubborn proud nobles shrank from the humiliation of manual labour! The powerful enemies were angry, ridiculing the work and even threatening to use force in restraining the builders. When they saw that these tactics were unsuccessful, they tried to entice Nehemiah to leave the work and meet them in an outside village. But Nehemiah was a man of unswerving purpose. Then a false friend suggested that Nehemiah should seek seclusion in the temple in case he should be assassinated. The suggestion was met beautifully in the words "should such a man as I flee to the temple to save his life? I will not go in." Immediately he perceived that the suggestion was not of God and that the enemies had hired the counsellor. In 52 days the wall was rebuilt which is one of the greatest feats in history. Nehemiah committed the charge of the gates to faithful men. The people were gathered together and heard Ezra read the Law and the people bowed their heads and worshipped the Lord. They kept the feast of tabernacles, dwelling in booths, in a way they had not done since the days of Joshua. They kept the feast for seven days and on the eighth was a solemn assembly with fasting and repentance, the Levites confessing the goodness of God and their own sins. Throughout the proceedings the attention paid to the word of God was an important feature. The result was separation from what was inconsistent with the principles of the House of God. A grandson of the High Priest had married a daughter of the chief opponent of the work. Nehemiah chased him away. It has been said that the youth ultimately became High Priest in Samaria where a spurious imitation of the ritual at Jerusalem was instituted!

Four centuries later, Herod, to win the support of the Jews and foster his own vanity, built a new temple which took 46 years to erect. The building did not follow the pattern of the original. It was sought to eclipse its grandeur and magnitude. The front, composed of white polished marble, was specially beautiful. The enclosure, over 200 yards square, was surrounded by a wall of huge stones on the verge of a precipice over the valley 600 ft. deep. At the top of the precipice were wonderful galleries supported by marble pillars. Solomon's porch, called "Beautiful," was at the East Gate. The gates were 50 ft. by 25 ft. The roof, covered with gold, had a glorious appearance in the sunshine. That was the temple when the Lord came in lowly grace. It existed less than 70 years, serving as a fort in the famous siege by the Romans, when to the great sorrow of Titus, the Roman General and contrary to his command, it was accidentally burned by one of his own soldiers. Two subsequent attempts to rebuild the temple ended disastrously. These were in defiance of the words of the One greater than the Temple Who said, "there shall not be left here one stone upon another." Could anyone gainsay that dictum? A Moslem mosque now occupies the position of the former Holy Place!

T. OLIVER. THE HOUSE OF GOD.

Evidence in the Gospels. In the New Testament, the doctrine of what has been presented previously in a material or typical way is unfolded. There was nothing real or living in either tabernacle or temple. It was all symbolical but in the gospels Christ entered and that infused life into the types. The House of God was only in a representative way in the Old Testament and could not be formed in reality until redemption was accomplished. Therefore we are not disappointed to find in the Lord's own ministry the main features of the House of God. In Matt. Ch. 16 we have its divine foundation and constitution contingent on Peter's confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God." The Lord answered "Thou art Peter (a stone) upon this rock (what Peter's confession set forth) I will build my Church and the gates of hell (the administration of the authority of darkness) shall not prevail against it." No human organisation has a place there in spite of the way in which the scripture has been perverted to prove the opposite contention. The complete revelation of God is declared in Christ, the Son of the Living God, 1:e., the foundation of the church, the intrinsic element of the House of God. What purported to be the House of God was full of dead ritual. But "christianity is Christ," and that is living. The Holy Spirit stimulates fresh exercises of soul and thus the expression in true prayer and praise will never be formal. May we be delivered from mere correct recitation, which springs from the exercises of yesterday! In all the gospels the record occurs of the Lord's cleansing the temple and driving out those who had so grossly misrepresented God therein. Shortly after the start of His ministry, in John Ch. 2, He recognises it as His Father's House in which as a house of merchandise they had prostituted its purity for material profit, while the other gospels refer to the incident near the close of His ministry of similar character. While still referring to it as the House of God which should have been maintained for prayer for all people (one of the initial aspects presented in Genesis 28:1-22 as "the gate of heaven") the leaders of the people had made it a den of thieves. A little later in His ministry He disowned the house as of God and called it "your house shall be left unto you desolate." The two-fold aspect had been apparent from the outset but so long as the Lord was on earth it was God's centre for those who feared the Lord and thought upon His name. So there were those like the widow who bestowed all their possessions (even two mites) in the treasury of the house irrespective of what base gain others might be extracting from contact with the temple. There had been at the birth of the Lord antiquated people like Simeon and Anna, but intelligent as to the mind of God, who clung to the temple (blind to its blemishes) not in a vague sentimental way but positively waiting for the consolation of Israel and looking for its counterpart, viz., redemption in Jerusalem. Although the Jewish leaders had given a false impression, the true character of the house was unchanged and the Lord could speak of it as "My Father's house." In John Ch. 1 we have the record that the Word was made flesh and dwelt among the disciples. That is the true idea of the Tabernacle and in the next chapter the thought of Christ's body as the Temple is expressed definitely. The mind of man was so absorbed with the grandeur of Herod's temple that it failed to see that the Lord's words implied a vastly greater work than that conception implied. In John 1:38-39, the two disciples said, "Master, where dwellest Thou?" He answered, "Come and see." Their seeing Him at home must have affected them greatly! God was revealed as dwelling in Jesus. In Ch. 14, He was going away to prepare a place for His own. In the interval till His return, the Comforter was to be here and abide with them. God would dwell here in consequence. The Son dwells in the Father's love; we dwell in His love and He dwells in our love. In John 20:1-31 administrative forgiveness in the assembly or House of God (but not in a public way) has reference in the words "whosoever sins ye remit they are remitted, etc," which is analogous to the

commission to Peter in Matthew 16:1-28. In spite of the fact that the hands of the people were imbrued with the blood of the Lord of Glory the Holy Spirit could speak of Jerusalem as "the Holy City" at the moment! (Matt. 23:53). In the great supper of Luke 14:16-24, it is shown that all who are brought into the house come by receiving the Kingdom (viz., by the compulsion or sway of grace). The thought of the House of God is contiguous to that of the Kingdom of God in the passage. The latter is individual, the former collective in bearing and is consequent on the individual's reception of the kingdom by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, accepting God's testimony of accomplished righteousness.

Evidence in the Acts.

Although the term "House of God" is not mentioned in the Acts except as referring to the material temple, nevertheless its more visible features are prominent throughout the book. Indeed the prime cause of the formation of the spiritual house is seen in the second chapter, ten days after the ascension of Christ, when the Holy Spirit came upon the Apostles and filled the house where they were sitting. So what is set forth doctrinally elsewhere is exhibited practically in the Acts, consequent upon redemption having been accomplished. The death, resurrection and ascension of Christ had taken place and the Holy Spirit had come down to earth in consequence. There is a man in the Glory of God and He is Lord of all! The third person of the Godhead came down to earth to testify to the glory of the Lord. The One who came down is as great as the One who went up! Therefore He is able to reveal the precious things of heaven to our souls. The coming of the Holy Spirit was not confined to the twelve disciples but fell upon the whole 120 gathered in one house. That was the proximate fulfilment of the prophetic word in John Ch. 11, that the scattered children of God should be gathered together in one. That was the institution of the House of God in an entirely new character. The people of God on earth became the dwelling of God. Hence the presence and guidance of the Holy Ghost became prominent. The disciples were filled with the Holy Ghost who empowered them to act, gave them right words and utterance, crushed opposition by spiritual power, excluded fleshly considerations, e.g., in Acts 5:1-42, deceitful reputation was summarily annulled by death. In Acts 6:1-15, murmuring was disarmed. In Acts 7:1-60, Stephen met persecution to death by the power of the Holy Spirit. In Acts 8:1-40, Philip was guided by the Holy Spirit. Every possible contingency was met by the same power. Subsequently, the lapse in Christian progress has been due to the gradual loss of appreciation of the significance and presence of the Holy Ghost. Ecclesiastical organisation can never make up for spiritual enablement which is entirely due to giving the Holy Spirit His rightful place!

Then the House of God is where His love towards all men is known. What unsurpassable love was manifested in the fact that God proclaimed an amnesty to the murderers of His Son in the very place where He was murdered. That offer included Pilate, the unjust judge, the religious leaders, the wicked accusers, the jeering mob, even the brutal ruffian who drove his spear into the side of the dead Christ after his fellows had done their worst while their victim was alive. The injunction of Peter to all was "repent and be baptised" without qualification, and obedience to that command would entail the forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Ghost to each. That magnificent good news went forth from the House of God! The testimony that emanated therefrom was God's message and sent forth in His way by His selected messengers. They were not philosophers nor men of renown nor of noble origin. They were simple fishermen and rustics from despised Galilee! They were erstwhile illiterate people, yet on that day of Pentecost there was not a language under

heaven but received recognition. The confusion of Babel which had been introduced by the power of God was neutralised for the time being by the same means. The prophetic word in the message of the Apostle was "the promise is unto you and your children" (Acts 2:39). To win over the vacillating governor Pilate, the people had lightly said, "His blood be upon us and our children" (Matthew 27:25), now the proclamation annulled the vow for the repentant Jews and their children. The latter were admitted to a place of privilege on earth, viz., the House of God. The promise was to the very people who had so flagrantly abused God's approach to man in Christ. The external sign was in baptism. "They that gladly received his word were baptised." That suggests the thought of separation from the world which crucified Christ. In Matthew 16:1-28, Peter received the keys of administration. In Acts 2:1-47, he opened the door to the Jew and in Acts 10:1-48, to the Gentile in Cornelius and his house. In Acts 16:1-40, the households of Lydia and the Philippian jailer entered into the new sphere of life in separation from the sphere of death in the world. They came under the authority of the Lord. It is quite likely that however different had been the features which marked those households previous to the conversion of the heads, subsequently they agreed in the essential character of being run under the same management, viz., that of the Lord. Nowadays the promiscuous association of christians and worldlings in what is described as "the House of God" shows the grave slump in appreciation of the divine principles relative thereto! The converts continued steadfastly in the Apostle's doctrine or instruction. The House of God is where intelligence as to the mind of the Lord is manifested. Therefore, it is a prime necessity that a premium should be put on collective reading of the scriptures because therein is enshrined the doctrine which is not affected by the flow of time and the changing fashions of men. The next feature was that they continued in fellowship, 1:e., in consequence of the enlightenment from the Apostle's doctrine. They owned the one Lord and partook in the community of interest of His administration. He is the bond of the partnership. The practical expression of that fellowship was in the breaking of bread! The concluding element of the manifestation of the House of God was in prayers. That is where we express our need of the help of God, first as to the needs in the work of the Gospel and then as to the interests of the people of God. The Evidence in Paul's writings. In the Corinthian First Epistle, essentially setting forth the principles of local responsibility, we are not surprised to find at the beginning "to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling," 1:e., the inner aspect indwelt by the Spirit of God. Holiness is the first principle of God dwelling in His temple, 1:e., the saints collectively, even as righteousness should mark them individually. Therefore that corresponds to the inner shrine or naos of the Temple from which perfect illumination or instruction was derived and grace and light diffused, but immediately the Apostle proceeded to refer to the outer aspect in the words "with all that in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord" (1 Corinthians 1:2). That statement indicates profession, 1:e., the aspect to which reference is usually made in the New Testament under the term "House of God." In Ch. 1-4. the prominent thought is the resources of the House of God. In Corinthians the main aspect of doctrine which receives emphasis is that the Church building is by the instrumentality of man who may build what is valuable or defective or detrimental.

Nevertheless although mainly viewed in human responsibility it takes character from the truth, e g., "We are workers (or labourers) together with (or under) God, ye are God's husbandry (or masterpiece), God's building." The resources are fourfold (1) Christ as wisdom (1 Corinthians 1:30); (2) Holy Ghost (1 Corinthians 2:1-16); (3) the Temple (1 Corinthians 3:1-23); (4) the ministry of the Apostles (1 Corinthians 4:1-21). From 1 Corinthians 5:1-13. onwards the responsibilities

receive emphasis. The responsibilities have also a 4-fold aspect (a) purity (1 Corinthians 5:1-13); (b) fellowship (1 Corinthians 10:1-33.); (c) unity (1 Corinthians 12:1-31.); (d) service (1 Corinthians 14:1-40.). "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God" (1 Corinthians 3:9; 1 Corinthians 3:16). The Corinthians possessed that character although not composing the whole entity, therefore they were responsible to conduct themselves in view of that intelligence and dignity. That they failed miserably did not change their responsibility! God does not reduce his standard according to the measure of attainment existing. In the same chapter there is presented that no other foundation can man lay than Jesus Christ. The Apostle on that foundation was fellow worker with (1:e., under direction) God! In New Testament doctrine the heavenly aspect of the Church is presented under the figure of the "One Body," but the correlated idea of the "House of God" appertains entirely to earth. It has been put in the responsibility of man where failure and defection occur. In 1 Corinthians 3:1-23. various materials are built in the local assembly and are tested, but only what is of God will remain, such as gold (indicating divine righteousness) silver (divine grace) and precious stones (features of Christ), wood (deposit of the first man), grass (man's prosperity), stubble (what resembles food but has no nourishing quality). Then there is also present what corrupts, e.g., deceitful workers (1 Corinthians 11:13) who introduce defiling teaching, subversive of the truth. 1 Corinthians 6:1-20. shows the believer's body as the temple of the Holy Ghost, which involves individual holiness. 1 Corinthians 12:28 gives a summary of the constitution and service of the House of God, while in Ch. 14. the Holy Spirit will direct oral ministry in the local assembly. That tends to prevent clericalism. On receiving the Holy Ghost, we belong to the House of God where He dwells! Therein we receive divine instruction and take up responsibilities in the place of testimony. These can only be discharged satisfactorily as the instruction is obeyed. (Mary sat at the Lord's feet and heard His word, Luke 10:39). The testimony depends on revelation relative to the future day of display. We are responsible to maintain every Scriptural principle, irrespective of the conditions ruling in society or in the profession of Christ's name. Responsibility does not alter with the times! Relative to fellowship, all should rally to the support (and in the love) of the Christian company. There is protection from the influences of evil there! The Jewish altar, the Christian fellowship and the table of demons were severally exclusive of each other. The spirit of division mars the testimony! The service of the House is to be maintained through unceasing exercise, interest and instruction. We are responsible to demonstrate the unity by maintaining peace and love among ourselves.

2 Corinthians 6:14-18 expands the idea of holiness required and involves a complete separation from contact with the defilement of the world. Thus the truth as to the House of God will exclude evil associations which will compromise its holy character, even as in 1 Corinthians 5:1-13. evil persons are excluded. In the Ephesian Epistle in its main outline of doctrine the Church is presented according to the purpose of God in her essential constitution relative to the purpose of God, whereas the Corinthian epistle was more taken up with man's responsibility. The Church is the fulness or complement of Him who fills all in all. That is the result through all eternity, but that has not yet emerged to view. Meanwhile all the building is growing into a Holy Temple in the Lord (Ephesians 2:21). "He is our peace who has made both (Jew and Gentile) one, who has abolished the enmity to make in Himself of the twain one new man that he might reconcile both unto God in one body for through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father" (Ephesians 2:14-18). In Ephesians 2:20, God alone builds on the foundation of the teaching of the New Testament apostles and prophets who unfold the glories and person of the Son of God and the

building is for His glory. The building of God is growing into a Holy Temple. His authority is its controlling principle and holiness its character. Although incomplete now, it will be the eternal dwelling place of God. But the Holy Spirit has already taken possession! The stone foundation is compared with the rock foundation of Matthew 16:1-28. and 1 Corinthians 3:1-23. All the parts and lines of the structure of the House of God converge on Christ as the corner stone. Man could not fit that stone anywhere in his conception of the structure, even as the dihedral angle stone could only fit the top of the pyramid. In Him can be seen and apprehended all God's thoughts and purpose (Zechariah 3:9). Ephesians treats of the growth and glory of the House. The Holy Temple in the Lord indicates the administration of the glory in the future, meanwhile it is God's dwelling place by or in the Spirit (Ephesians 2:22). In Acts 2:1-47, the apostles did not apprehend that the new entity included anyone outside the house of Israel, Peter's eyes were cleared from that fallacy in Acts 10:1-48. But the Jew and Gentile cease to be such when they become incorporated as "one new man" in Himself. No mere fusion of interests and characteristics would do! All these are obliterated in the new entity, the House of God, in which God can dwell in the Spirit. All the saints on earth as indwelt by the Spirit are builded together so that God can have a dwelling on earth. His grace and qualities are apprehended there and shine forth in testimony. The House is filled with heavenly light to be transmitted in gracious blessing to mankind. The saints on earth at any moment form only part of the final entity in which the Lord will be admired by a wondering universe in the Day of Glory (2 Thessalonians 1:10). Hence in this further aspect the building is growing and at any moment may be completed by the coming of the Lord! (1 Thessalonians 4:1-18).

Then in Ephesians 3:1-21. there is the further communication "that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith." He is the source and dynamic power through the Holy Spirit of all true expression of godliness in our lives. Apart from that we could only exhibit what would be a spurious imitation in sanctimoniousness! In Ephesians 4:1-32, the character befitting those in such intimacy with God is set forth, viz., walking worthy of the calling with all lowliness as to ourselves, meekness as to others, in general, longsuffering as to our brethren, even if requiring "forbearing" (1:e., suffering gladly) one another in love; being diligent to demonstrate the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace which would be evident in the local company of Christians with whom we have the privilege to be associated! The first Epistle of Timothy deals with the order and administration of the House of God, and the important feature of the glory of the blessed God and its Gospel. In 1 Timothy 1:1-20 the Commandment or the law of the house (1:e., its principle of administration) shows the great end or object to be secured by those who form the house of unfeigned faith. Holiness is the great mark of the house (Psalms 93:1-5, Ezekiel 43:1-27). In 1 Timothy 2:1-15 the Christians are exhorted to display the true dependent character of the House of God, making prayers and giving thanks for all men because that is God's disposition for all that all may be saved. The testimony of God is in the house (1 Timothy 2:4-6). Then the importance of prayer receives emphasis, "I will that men (not merely clergy) pray everywhere and lifting up holy hands" and that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel and sobriety not with ornament conspicuous in the world but what God works, as women professing godliness. The good words of the men are in beautiful harmony with the good works of the women. The House of God is marked by godliness and becoming manner! The activity of the men and the passivity of the women illustrate the character of the House in accord with subjection to authority. God is made manifest in a way intelligible to those around, so giving God His true advertisement is incumbent on Christians. It is in the House of God that God makes contact with all men. The man, Christ Jesus is the mediator between God and

men. In the House, prayer is offered for all, even for those who do not pray for themselves! The House of God has an abiding character as the Church of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth. God dwells there by His Spirit. (1 Timothy 3:15).

Ch. 3 refers to service in the House of God which has a much wider scope than while we are together in local assembly. It enters into the most minute detail of our daily lives. Hence behaviour is to be suited to its character as the witness and support of the truth. Bishopric or oversight is exercised as to the advancement of the soul. Deaconship or care refers to the needs of the body. These features are not evinced by culture or pagan ideals in the world. Dignity in the House of God is shown in man being taken from his state of alienation by nature and restored to the true knowledge of God and communion with Him. These features were perfectly seen in the mystery of godliness displayed in Christ. Moreover the people of God are the dispensers of God's blessing to mankind! 1 Timothy 4:1-16; 1 Timothy 5:1-25; 1 Timothy 6:1-21 set forth the details of conduct in the House of God, and commences with the Spirit speaking expressly or like an orator who cannot brook opposition and cannot be withstood, thus the living voice of God in His house. A man is qualified for administration in the House of God according as he acts rightly in his own house. In the former, light is received from God and testimony goes out therefrom. Holiness, dependence, obedience and care are manifested. Oversight for souls and ministry for the bodies show the perfection of the order of the House of God. From the Old Testament scriptures we see that Israel failed in admitting strangers with worldly principles who flouted the holy character of the House of God, thus they used the House for their own interest. The same features have been manifest in the history of the people of God in this era. In 2 Timothy unmistakable instructions are issued relative to the ruinous condition consequent on man's failure. 2 Timothy 1:1-18 shows that everything vital depends on God's sovereignty and promise, yet there is a divine deposit to keep by the Spirit in spite of the external failure. 2 Timothy 2:1-26 begins with an exhortation to be strong in the grace in Christ Jesus, since all is secured in the resurrection of Christ. The failure indicated in 1 Corinthians 3:1-23 results in the likeness to a great house with vessels to honour and dishonour; although the house may no longer evince the true character of God, the only safeguard for the individual is in maintaining separation from evil teaching of systems and people, and preserving association with good which will fit him for the Master's service. The unsatisfactory state does not change the essential character of the house, the foundations of which stand sure. The individual should follow righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who manifest the essential principle of the house of God, viz., calling on the name of the Lord out of a pure heart, 1:e., without ulterior motives and thus marked by transparent honesty. Therefore the path of separation will not involve monastic seclusion. There will be others who have kindred characteristics with whom we can associate. The issue of the process will make for peace. That will not be tolerant laxity or peace at any price involving compromise with a world filled with evil, faithlessness and hatred, but will be the result of righteousness, faith and love! Such a course will call for patience and meekness, with those who will raise foolish questions. It will be necessary to instruct those who oppose which is usually the condition manifested at first, so that God may use the instruction to cause them to bow to the truth! 2 Timothy 3:1-17 sets forth that the mass of Christendom has lapsed into a state which manifests pagan characteristics, persecuting the godly, but the Christian's resource is in the truth of God enshrined in the Scriptures. 2 Timothy 4:1-22 shows the work and attitude of the service of the Lord, when the truth will not be tolerated by Christendom at large. The House of God refers to profession in general and never to a local

company of Christians, still less to the building where they meet periodically! The Epistle to Titus issues instructions for God's steward (Titus 1:7), and the teaching of grace (Titus 2:11-14).

Evidence in Hebrews. In Hebrews the analogy of the House of God with the Old Testament types relates entirely to the Tabernacle, which was the pattern of things in the heavens. Christ is the builder of the House because "He was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as He who built the House hath more honour than the House" (Hebrews 3:3). But in the Spirit's power the building grows! There are certain leading thoughts relative to this subject in the epistle, viz., (1) Christ, is Son over God's house (Hebrews 3:6). Moses was only a servant therein. The House is also where the Holy ghost speaks (5: 7). (2) "We are God's House if we hold fast the confidence and joy of the hope (or prospect)." Profession may retain the name of God's House and lose its character. If we lapse into worldly practice and associations the question may be well asked, what real value attaches to our profession of the Lord's name? We shall simply be innocuous or harmless, indistinguishable from the world. That recognises the christian profession as the sphere of privilege. (3) In another aspect the whole universe is the House of God (Hebrews 3:4, also 1 Kings 8:27) 1:e., in the ultimate issue Christ is over the whole system for blessing. (4) Christ is the Great Priest over the House of God (Hebrews 10:21) as well as the Apostle thereof. The apostle introduces; the priest carries on! Under the head of the priesthood, Christ is (a) the Offering Priest (Hebrews 7:27); (b) the Intercessory Priest living in the power of an endless life, since His priesthood is intransmissible there is no discontinuity in person or function as in the old era (Hebrews 8:3); (c) Minister of the Holy Places (Hebrews 8:1-2). In spite of defection, God in mercy dwells amongst His people on the ground of Redemption, also in relation to Government and Priesthood. The House of God is the place of privilege but of responsibility as well. In scripture, possession and profession are not put in contrast as is so often declared in current preaching, but they run parallel with each other. The only one who has title to profess is the one who possesses! If people take Christian ground, they are responsible to walk as on such. Time will prove the merits of their profession before men. Hence they are warned of consequences of unreality. The "day" will reveal matters as to eternity! In Hebrews 12:1-29, the discipline of the House of God is described. However much we may have to lament the paucity of oral ministry we can be thankful that the ministry in the way of discipline is perfect! Every element in our lives is in perfect adjustment with every other element, so that we are set in the best circumstances to learn the sympathy and help of our Great Priest. The pressure of circumstances curbs the development of fleshly ambition and the desire for the world. Discipline operates so that we may be partakers of the holiness of God, emptying our hearts of self and worldly interests making room for Christ who cannot brook a rival in our hearts. Discipline may be (1) punitive (if we sow to the flesh we can only reap corruption therefrom), but in that aspect restoration is in view; (2) preservative, we may find our course blocked by an insurmountable obstacle which prevents us from going wrong, 1:e., evidence of the rich mercy of God; (3) promotive, all discipline has the object in view that we may grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Most of our discipline is private so that we may not require to come under public discipline by our associates! God will not let us have our own way. In His house we come under His influence and care. He loves His children and chastens them so that they may be kept in accordance with His love and will. So we do well to meditate on our privileges.

Evidence in Peter's Writings. In Peter's first epistle, 1 Peter 1:1-25 shows the origin and incorruptible nature of the material with which Christ builds. Moreover the material is living with a living hope (or prospect) on account of the resurrection of Christ, meanwhile preservation is by the power of God through faith unto salvation. The apprehension of the living character of the house relieves from mere dead religion and brings into loving one another with a pure heart fervently (or expansively) in contrast to the dead formality of Israel's ritual. 1 Peter 2:1-25 presents the privileges and responsibilities peculiar to the House of God: offering up spiritual sacrifices and evincing the excellent qualities of God and Christ in a world of darkness, thus it corresponds to the approach to the Gate of Heaven (the Godward aspect) and the testimony of the pillar anointed with oil (the manward aspect) of Genesis 28:1-22. The spiritual house composed of living stones emerges to view, wherein a Holy Priesthood can offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ; but on the outside of the house there are displayed the royal priests who advertise the excellencies of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvellous light. The stones have no responsibility for their position, they are put in the building. "Coming to Christ as Living Stone" is contingent on having tasted or tested His goodness and His value as Lord in relation to our need. Then we leave the responsible sphere and apprehend Him as Living Stone in His sphere which is filled with His things — "things of mine" of John 16:1-33. That conveys all that He is as man Godward in relation to the purpose of God. We are then brought to know the Father. The living stones are kindred to Christ and have their origin in the purpose of God, the Father. Christ draws our hearts away from what is in man's world and we become "living stones" characteristically, 1:e., not merely in an abstract sense. As living stones we apprehend and appreciate His love and we love in response to that appreciation. We are under His influence as abiding in Christ. The House of God must declare the character of God. Put in order that this may be effected practically the features of that House must be maintained. The breakdown in man's responsibility involves that judgment will begin at the House of God, which is the most valuable spot on earth, so that the glory of God may be vindicated (1 Peter 4:17). Public judgment is left till the Lord's appearing. Peter was a sample stone (not the rock). Although his confession was wonderful he had subsequently to apprehend in his soul's history what depths of meaning were concealed therein! Spiritual good of what comes to us as light from God is only afforded later by the work of God in the soul. We cannot understand the principles of the House of God if we fail to recognise that the Lord Jesus Christ is rejected here. The religious leaders threw away the "corner (or angle) stone" as unsuitable for their use. He is nevertheless the keystone of the pyramid in God's architecture. He is precious to God and thus so to those who believe.

Evidence in John's epistles. In John's epistles the term "House of God" does not occur, but it is implied by the constant recurrence of the reciprocal statement of our dwelling in God and God dwelling in us (1 John 4:1-21). In John's gospel it was shown that Christ dwelt in God and that God was in Him and in the epistles we see the same home features attributed to what is normal in the Christian. As indwelt by the Holy Spirit we are instructed in obedience and love peculiar to that home circle. Great as indeed that feature is it takes second place to its counterpart that God should dwell in us. The results are that we love because first loved; we trust God so that our prayers are effectual; we bear testimony to the world; we lend a helping hand to our fellows; we are not deceived by Satan's emissaries who have been let loose in the world. The love of God can only be appreciated in the death of Christ and as a consequence of that apprehension we lay down our lives for the brethren (1 John 3:16). The House of God is the home circle of the family of

God; its atmosphere is love. The new nature is invigorated and cherished by its warmth. In the 19th century a great religious teacher wrote a book on love as "the greatest thing in the world." But although his essay was freely interspersed with references to Scripture texts, he did not touch the fringe of the subject of love as of God. He treated really of human love ignoring that the antecedent of these references is to the love of God which is radically different!

Evidence in the Revelation.

Although the term "House of God" does not occur in the Revelation the whole history of the Church in its features relative to the earth, 1:e., appertaining to the House of God, passes in brief review before the prophetic vision, in seven short letters to representative local assemblies in Asia Minor. The features in the responsibility of man receive emphasis, such as the danger of lapses from faithfulness, but here and there the loyalty of those who maintain true remnant character emerges to view (Revelation 1:1-20; Revelation 2:1-29; Revelation 3:1-22.). In the complex condition evinced, there is seen unmistakably the mind of the Lord on the points under review, just as the Urim and Thummim formed the oracles for Israel. That is not now in public display, so sets forth the thought of the temple.

Christendom will be the scene of unparalleled judgments. The responsibility is proportioned to the light rejected! The history of Babylon shows the character of the fearful judgments which will fall on a Christless church from which the Holy Ghost has departed and which has been spued out of Christ's mouth as nauseous!

Later in the book, the seat of heavenly light or instruction and of administration is clearly presented in the heavenly city, the new Jerusalem. The foundations are furnished with all manner of precious stones manifesting distinction by refracted and reflected light. The gates of the City showing its completeness and perfection are twelve pearls involving distinction in perfect harmony. (The prophet Haggai predicted that in the millennial age the latter glory of the House would eclipse all the splendour of the former glory). It is the temple (the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb) which is mentioned in connection with millennial display, as appropriate to the idea of the Kingdom (Revelation 21:22). There the Temple and the City ideas coalesce. The glory of God and the Lamb will be the light thereof and the saved nations will walk in that light, 1:e., in perfect intelligence of the mind of God.

Beyond the changes of time are presented the new heaven and the new earth, heralded by a great voice from heaven making the statement, "Behold the tabernacle of God is with men" (Revelation 21:3). That is not with a chosen nation nor in the selection of grace. In the final emergence to view of the ways of God, the whole universe will manifest the features of the House of God. God will dwell with men in keeping with His eternal characters of constancy and consistency. There will be no question of distinction between light and darkness. There will be no possibility of the intrusion of contrary elements. So the oracular manifestations peculiar to the thought of the temple will be unnecessary. No shrine is seen, for the glory of God shines from every atom of its constitution. There is no Holy place nor Holy of Holies, for every part of it is New Creation, wherein righteousness is static! That will be the consummation of the eternal purpose of God in grace. We trace through the dispensations God's dwelling on earth as the temple displaced the tabernacle and in turn was superseded by the church, embodying both ideas in a living way; the temple will again emerge in the millennium and finally on the new earth the tabernacle of God will be with

men!

049 The Humanity and Deity of Christ.

The Humanity and Deity of Christ.

E. H. B.

Inferiority of rank as man, as mediator, as the apostle and servant of His Father — having for us spontaneously stooped from the throne of His glory — is asserted in John 14:28 : equality of nature as to co-operation, self-existence, infinite knowledge, universal trust, is proved in John 5:17-23. The texts which declare the humanity of Jesus, are sufficient to refute those who from them would deny His Deity. How could a mere man, without absurd presumption, solemnly announce that God the Father was no greater than He? How could He be made flesh? How could it be a proof of His humility that He was made in the likeness of men? The Jews accused our Lord of making Himself equal with God, because He said God was His Father. Instead of protesting against their construction of His words, which, if only a man,

He would have done with indignation and abhorrence, He proceeded, while acknowledging the subordination of His mission as man, to set forth the essential supremacy of His person as God. For if the Son doeth whatsoever the Father doeth: if the Son quickeneth whom He will: if the dead shall hear His voice and live: if He executes judgment on the universe: if all men must honour the Son, even as they honour the Father: then is He equally Almighty, the communicative fountain of life, God who alone can raise the dead, the Omniscient who alone can judge an assembled world, and equally the centre of universal homage and adoration!

If our souls are filled with the condescension of God we shall not be stumbled at passages which speak of his exceeding humiliation. As we assign no limit to the height of His glory, we shall assign none to the depths of His grace. Yea, so far from taking offence at the inferiority of the position which He assumed, the very lowliness of his incarnation and degradation of His death will kindle in us a brighter and more burning gratitude, when we remember that though rich it was for our sakes He became poor; and that for us, His wayward and wandering sheep, the chief Shepherd offered up Himself as the Lamb of God, laying down His life of His own accord and taking it again to die no more. Every generous feeling brands it as the basest ingratitude to allege these proofs of His humanity in disproof of His Deity, trampling on His lowliness to pluck the diadem from His brow, finding cause in the true sympathy of Him who was in all points tempted like as we are, and touched with the feeling of our infirmities, for denying the excellence of that glory which He had with the Father before the world was. If a sick prisoner in Newgate, nursed and taught by the philanthropic Howard, had argued from the self-devotion of that noble man spending long hours in the loathsome cell, that he could not possess a princely mansion and a fortune. Even if he had reproached that ministering angel, saying, "You must surely be a wretched convict like myself," we might pity his infatuation and pardon his ingratitude: but can we forgive ourselves, if we deliberately select the instances of our Lord's humiliation and cast them in His teeth, as proving that He never dwelt from eternity in the light that no man can approach, nor inhabited from everlasting that shrine of unfathomable delight, the bosom of the Father? Let us beware and

remember the solemn warning, "Whosoever shall fall on this stone (Himself in prostrate humility) shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall (Himself returning in glory), it will grind him to powder."

If our doctrine is the truth, that there subsist in the essence of One Jehovah, three who are called the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, co-equal and co-eternal; and that it is the design of the Father and the will of the Son with the consenting pleasure of the Holy Spirit, that the Son, for the recovery of fallen man, should empty Himself, not of His Godhead, which were impossible, but of His glory, and take our human nature into mysterious union with His Divine nature, so that God and man make one Christ: if this is spoken of in Scripture as the extremity of Divine condescension and humiliation that hereby guilty men might have a medium of access to the Holy Deity or have a mediator betwixt us and God, one with God by reason of His eternal essence, one with us by reason of the humanity He deigned to assume: how otherwise could such a relationship have been expressed than, "There is one God and one mediator betwixt God and man, the man Christ Jesus; who gave Himself a ransom for all?" or such a salvation than, "This is life eternal, that they should know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent?" Looking forward, as the man Christ Jesus, to translation from this world of suffering to the glory of His Father's throne, how otherwise could He describe His return from that present estate of afflicted humanity, than, "If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father; for my Father is greater than I?" Having descended with the express design of doing the Father's pleasure, of serving a perfect service, of rendering a spotless obedience to the law, of exhibiting a Divine model of self-denial; how otherwise could He declare His mission than "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me?" Standing forth the exemplar of that faith we are to copy; as man, working His miracles not by virtue of His Divinity ever inherent in Him, but by virtue of a perfect faith in the power of the Father; that faith which with us is intermittent, being with Him constant without defect and victorious without defeat; how otherwise could He reveal the entire dependence of His soul on God, than, "I can of mine own self do nothing." "The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works?" E. H. B.

050 Indifference to Christ.

Indifference to Christ.

"Thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot."-Revelation 3:15.

Worldliness and earthly-mindedness have blinded the minds and hardened the hearts of Christians, now-a-days, to an extent very few have any idea of. There are, I am persuaded, very few cases touching upon the safety, and well-being of the Church of God, which can be left to be judged by the mass of believers. On whom can one cast one's burden of responsibility as to the spirituality of the saints' walk and conduct? In innumerable cases which have occurred, I have found that the affections to the Person of Christ have not been lively enough to make Christians indignant at open insults put upon Him — and they have had neither the heart nor the mind to stand apart from that which was the expression of indifference to Him.... Many can contend earnestly for love to the brethren, and warmly resent failure in this respect, yet remain unmoved when the truth of God, on which it is based, is sought to be undermined... Dishonour to the Lord is less thought about than disrespect to one another.

(Present Testimony 9:207; 2:30-31).

051 The Maintenance of the Truth.

The Maintenance of the Truth.

Three years of A Scripture Quarterly Editor Dr T. Oliver, Galashiels This Magazine is Devoted mainly to the Exposition of Scripture.

"Till I come, give attendance to reading to exhortation (encouragement), to doctrine." (1 Timothy 4:13).

Introduction. As a preface to the first issue of this new quarterly magazine, the following extracts from a letter written over 40 years ago would seem appropriate.

"In the issue of a new serial it is important to make plain that its object is the maintenance of what is true in doctrine not the promulgation of what is new. No intelligent Christian can gainsay that in this (19th) century there has been a remarkable revival of the truth of the Church, and the effect has been felt beyond the immediate circle formed by the truth, revived in God's goodness. How are the great truths involved in the Church, e.g., the calling of God, eternal life, new creation and union to be maintained? Fixed statements and conventional terms have proved inefficacious, as has also the attaching of everything to the believer as a possession, the good of which is experienced in the power of the Spirit. Souls so trained must necessarily stop short of apprehension of new creation. A Christian's apprehension of God's calling cannot be beyond the measure of God's work in him. He may claim standing, privilege, having prophecy, understanding mysteries, and without love. be nothing. A Christian's measure for God and for the assembly is love The only real way to secure truths is in our being their expression; holding the truth in love We cannot have the consciousness of any truth, save as we are in the state which corresponds to it The first light of God in the soul was by faith. We are justified, saved, sons of God, risen together with Christ, and Christ dwells in our hearts by faith. At the same time the work of the Spirit of God forms the believer for approach to God in the consciousness of his soul, 1:e., in the new man In this way our souls are in the brightest light as the fruit of God's work in us and in the apprehension of the greatest things which are for God. We have not only the faith but the consciousness of all that is of God's grace for man. Truly we can then say that we have been brought out of darkness into God's marvellous light!"

STATEMENT OF POLICY. (Vol. 1, No. 2.) As several correspondents have asserted that this is a party magazine, possibly due to judging by signatures rather than contents, I may state that after 26 years' exercise it was initiated by me without consultation. In 1915, its advent was hindered by several circumstances and not until 1940 was I free to do the arduous work entailed. All expense has been met by me and no subsidy, other than the advertised price, has been or will be taken from any one. So the "party" allegation fails! Current ecclesiastical matters will be rigorously eschewed! I desire that brethren may dwell together harmoniously, expressing the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Hence this "Quarterly" will (D.V.) proceed with the exposition of Scripture, all fragrant with the preciousness of Christ which alone can lift us above dissension and

will cause our thoughts and speech to spread refreshment instead of discontent wherever we go.

T. Oliver.

Editorial Notice. (Vol. 1, No. 2.) The Editor cannot undertake to answer correspondents on what may be published from time to time as he is single-handed for both editorial and publication work. Any letter which he deems to be of general interest may be published if space will admit. A letter requiring reply should be accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope! Articles on the lines of those already published may be submitted on the understanding that sentences may be altered or omitted or the whole article rejected without apology. (Letters should not exceed 300 words nor articles 600 words). Prolivity next to inaccuracy is the greatest fault in writing! "Masterpieces" from living poets are not received, as the Editor is unable to assess such. Genuine enquiries on doctrine distinct from mere quibbles may be answered to the best of the Editor's ability. Money is not received for any other department of the Lord's work, as there is no intention of interfering with existing stewardships.

052 Isaiah 60.

Isaiah 60:1-22.

D. Chisholm. No O.T. Scripture makes known to us the Lord's coming to the air for His saints; it is a N. T. revelation and not the subject of prophecy. The Church of God has a heavenly destiny and came into being consequently on Christ's ascension, so it is not to be expected that this hope which may be realised at any moment would be revealed until after the assembly was formed to receive it. A little band of faithful followers were the last to see the Lord leave this earth; those who will see and join Him at His return to the air are Christ's own people (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). Unlike the coming of Christ to the air, His return to set up an earthly kingdom fills largely the O.T. prophecies. The latter event, however, takes place some time after the former. Isaiah in striking language gives details in our chapter of God's order of blessing and future well-being for Israel and the nations. The inspired writer's description of this order contrasts sharply with the final condition to which our boasted civilisation and modernism advance. Between the two events referred to at the beginning of this paper the former part of 5: 2 "For behold the darkness shall cover the earth and gross darkness the people" is what will characterise Christendom. Whatever order leaders in our day propose for the future, "New Birth" must be the starting point if permanent blessing is to be the result: "darkness" here does not mean irreligious or uneducated, but ignorant of the true God and His purposes. The new era according to God's plan assumes a certain order for Christ's appearing to establish His kingdom, takes precedence, and Jewish restoration is vitally connected with it. The Lord will "shine" upon Israel and repentant and fully judging past sins they will receive the Messiah Who as the Deliverer brings them again into divine favour, for "thy sons shall come from far" 5:4, 1:e., the twelve tribes uniting in Zion at Jehovah's side. In this "order" God decrees Jerusalem to be the world's centre, neither the Stock Exchange nor Wall Street will be the pulse of the world's values; for the wealth of the nations flow eastward and all join together to "glorify the house of Thy glory." The good things of that day extend to others, for through Israel testimony reaches the Gentiles and "times of refreshing come from the presence of the Lord"; they also form part of the divine purpose. Paul in his great dispensational discourse (Romans 11:12) declares if the temporary fall of Israel means present blessing for Gentiles "how much more their fulness." Israel reinstated will be the channel of blessing to all peoples. If lasting blessing be entered upon by men or nations, irrespective of dispensation, light is the first requisite — this light is Christ, Who is the world's hope. As in patriarchal days, God's promises are here made good and all nations "together" share in the common desire "to beautify" the place of His presence.

It could be said that from 70 A.D. to the present time as in 5: 10 "in my wrath I smote thee": but "favour" rests so markedly upon Israel restored that it is added "the sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee." These nations that caused God's chosen people so much suffering in the past shall then call them blessed. Readers of Isaiah's day would think it strange indeed to speak of the city "gates open continually"; safety for them meant the gate was closed by night! However, the subjects of this kingdom are not only blessed but have embraced the principles laid down by the King in Matthew 7:1-29; Matthew 1:1-25 :e., they reflect His character.

"Thy people also shall be all righteous" and "violence shall no more be heard in Thy land" (5: 21). Blessed indeed are the peacemakers! Their office-bearers too are messengers of peace and righteousness and far beyond Israel's shores are borne the beneficent results of Christ's reign. It was doubtless reports of this nature which set the Queen of Sheba on her worthwhile journey to Jerusalem centuries before. The titles of 5: 16 invite special attention. They convey no ordinary meaning! First of all blessings rightly appreciated lead to the Blessor, so the people of God find their highest joy in what He is in Himself. Lord is Jehovah in covenant-keeping relationship; Saviour most comprehensive in its meaning; Redeemer what He has done, and Mighty one of Jacob, tells that He knew the kind of people He was transforming. "For brass I will bring gold," etc., there will be no comparison between the return and the expenditure! To-day under man's administration the necessities of life are afflicted, e.g., margarine for butter. If earth derives all blessing and prosperity from the "sun" the glories and prosperity emanating from the Light of Israel transcend all joys. "The days of thy mourning" end in joy.

Duncan Chisholm.

053 Isaac or Ishmael.

Isaac or Ishmael.

J. W. H. Nichols.

Genesis contains in germ every elementary principle afterward developed in God's ways with man. It has fitly been called "The seed plot of the whole Bible." We are not surprised, therefore, to find in Galatians 4:1-31. that Sarah and Hagar are taken as representing the two great principles of law and grace. It is important to understand that the law applies to man in the flesh, and produces a condition of bondage. Ishmael is a type of the natural man, "born after the flesh," who for a time dwelt in the house of Abraham, until Isaac, the true heir, was born. Ishmael speaks of our condition by nature, when the flesh has undisputed possession, and we live to gratify self; while Isaac typifies that which is born of God — the new man: as the apostle wrote: "That was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; afterward that which is spiritual" (1. Cor. 15.). It was not an improved Ishmael, that was to become the depository of God's promises, but Isaac, the new man, child of Sarah and child of faith (Genesis 17:15-17). But, the birth of Isaac brought conflict, it soon manifested the character of the bondwoman's son. New birth is not a change of the old nature, and does not in the least alter the character of the flesh. The flesh "is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Romans 8:7). The cultured natural man remains man still. Ishmael might become "a great nation," the father of twelve princes, but he was the son of the bondwoman still. Ishmael and Isaac in Abraham's house were a striking illustration of the two natures in the believer. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh and these are contrary one to the other" (Galatians 5:17). There was a struggle in the house of Abraham as to who was to have first place. He that was born of the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit (Galatians 4:29); even so it is now, there is a struggle between the flesh and the Spirit in the children of God, until "He that is born after the flesh" is cast out — disowned as heir. Of Ishmael, God had said: "He shall be a wild man." Could fitter words be used to describe what the flesh is? So we must learn — as the apostle said: "I know that in me — that is in my flesh — good does not dwell" (Romans 7:18, N.T.). Therefore, to walk according to the mind of God, the flesh (the Ishmael in us) must be disowned. "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh and the affections and lusts" (Galatians 5:24). Shrined with the blessed truth of what God has made us "in Christ" we are enabled to "put off the old man with his lusts and put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness (Ephesians 4:22-24). Isaac's place in the house of Abraham as the heir, was manifested on the day he was weaned. It was a day of rejoicing for all in the house. Henceforth Isaac was supreme, and Ishmael was cast out (Genesis 21:8-12). All this is full of salutary instruction for the people of God. The flesh cannot be allowed to hold sway in our lives, and our Lord Jesus Christ has His rightful place, and while such a state may exist there can be no fruit for God. What a day of gladness dawns, when the soul is able to say: "For me to live is Christ," and the flesh with its lusts is disowned. Worldly associations and desires (everything that savours of "Ishmael") lose their hold then, and the soul seeks "those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God" (Colossians 3:1). May we be true to all this, not

striving to see how much "Ishmael" can be tolerated in the presence of Isaac but absolutely refusing the flesh a place. Alas! how often we apologize for the bad conduct of our "Ishmael," instead of casting him out! While dallying with the flesh, what blessing we alas forfeit! The day of feasting and gladness in the house of Abraham only came when Isaac was weaned; not until Christ has His rightful place in our hearts and lives, can we know full liberty and blessing. It is one thing to be "sealed by the Spirit" (Romans 5:1-21.) and quite another to be in the liberty of the Spirit, as developed in Romans 8:1-39.

054 Some Thoughts on Joh_5:1-47; Joh_6:1-71; Joh_7:1-53.

Some Thoughts on John 5:1-47; John 6:1-71; John 7:1-53.

J. S. Bertram. In John 5:1-47 there is a marvellous setting-forth of the Glory of Christ as Son; in John 6:1-71, of the Father in rich grace; and in John 7:1-53 of the Spirit as the power for testimony. In John 5:1-47 the personal glory of Christ and His work shine out in contrast to the Law and man's condition. The blessing which the Law promised was like fruit on lofty branches which fallen man could never reach, hence the Son had come in rich grace as the communicator of power and life. What the Law could not do has been effected by God sending His own Son (Romans 8:3). The poor man in his despondency in Bethesda (the house of mercy) at the five porches (weakness) said, "I have no man." He was completely unable to avail himself, or find help to do so, of the limited remedial measures provided in the mercy of God, who never left Himself without witness even although there was such failure in Israel. This case depicts man's moral condition, but as in Israel's thirty-eighth year in the wilderness, and consequent upon the brazen serpent incident (which in type sets man aside) they journeyed forward, so in this man's case which is also typical, law and his condition are set aside completely and the Son comes into prominence as the communicator of power, "take up thy bed and walk"; he is now transferred from law to Christ. Such a mighty work only brings a storm of abuse from the Pharisees, which in turn brings into relief Christ's personal glory as Son, here in manhood working in conjunction with the Father for the blessing of the creature, the object of the Father's love, the Father loveth the Son, and as the Father had life in Himself so had He given to the Son to have life in Himself, He stands alone in His holy dignity, the Giver of life. The hour is come and now is when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God and they that hear shall live. As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom He will, it is the Son's divine prerogative in that he has taken up manhood. He has also been delegated of the Father to execute judgment. The chapter concludes with a fourfold testimony as to Christ, that of John, Christ's own works, the Father's testimony from the opened heavens and the scriptures; "they are they which testify of Me." The two incidents in John 6:1-71 are again typical, the first setting forth Christ's perfect administrative power for the present, and sufficient left over for the world to come. The second sets forth the moment when He will join the remnant in their hour of affliction and bringing them safely to the haven of rest. These become the occasion for the enforcing of the grand fact of His incarnation and precious death and ascension as man. Thus He becomes available to men for life and the object of faith, these great matters but serve to bring to light the Father in His rich grace, the source of all blessing. The Father sent the Son 5: 28 points out that God the Father sealed Him, and that, as Son of man in regard to the giving of everlasting life. V. 32, the Father is the giver of the true bread from heaven. It is the Father that draws to Christ; and the Father that gives to Christ. This leads us to the grand fact of the Father's will, His pleasure which Christ came to do. V. 45 points out that they who have heard and learned of the Father come to Christ. V. 57 is most remarkable. He is spoken of as the living Father, and Christ lives by or on account of the Father and as a consequence of our eating we live by Christ; a divine order where divine life permeates

all, when we are brought to live with or in divine persons.

John 7:1-53 gives us the great fact of the Spirit being here resident in the believer, the intimation of this was made on the last day of the feast, the eighth day, thus connecting matters with resurrection glory. The Lord although making Himself available to the thirsty soul on the last day of the feast was speaking and acting in view of an accomplished redemption, and His having gone on high a glorified man, 5: 39 bears this out, "The Holy Ghost was not yet because Jesus was not yet glorified." Thank God for the Spirit here, the grand witness to a glorified Christ there. There is nothing vague about it. Out of the inwards of those who believe shall flow rivers of living water, this spake He of the Spirit, rivers of blessing, the celebration of the glorification of Christ, carrying the knowledge of God, and refreshment for the soul in its mighty onward flow. Such is known now to faith in a specialised way. "There is a river the streams of which make glad the city of God" (Psalms 46:4). In the celebration of the feast of tabernacles in the world to come the river shall flow from the throne of God and the Lamb. There shall be universal blessing. At present these matters are known only in the Spirit sphere.

055 Attraction and Attachment

Attraction and Attachment

John 1:1-51.

J. S. Bertram.

God has given us marvellous illustrations of His way with His own, impelled by the mighty force of divine love. In relation to the two disciples which were with John (the man sent from God) in John 1:1-51, there are three distinct matters come before us, leading up to this, John give presentations of Christ which brought about decided results. In regard to the "Lamb of God that beareth away the sin of the world" (5: 29), that finds its complete solution in Him, whether ultimately in the clearance of every trace of evil from the universe, or as to the present relative to the conscience. In type we see it on the great day of atonement when sins were borne away on the scapegoat (Leviticus 16:1-34.). Now that the conscience is freed from every charge of guilt, we are free to be engaged with the adorable One who has effected such a wonderful work. As John and two of his disciples were together he looked upon Jesus as He walked. What an object to gaze upon with rapture! What delight was brought to the Father's heart in that walk of perfect obedience. "I do always those things which please the Father." With what ecstasy John exclaims "Behold the Lamb of God," the One who was the delight of all heaven was now presented to His own. Note that the two disciples who heard John speak "followed Jesus." They were drawn by that mighty constraining power which they then could not interpret. These matters have a present bearing on us. "Drawn by such love we onward move." It is a grand thing to be attracted to follow Jesus. In discipleship there is something positive, we cannot deny ourselves and follow save in the power of attraction. As they were attracted they followed, and as they followed their interest increased. They desired to know where He dwelt; they were encouraged with "Come and see." What a welcome! How the Lord encourages interest and brings His own unto His very presence. They abode with Him that day. They were brought to know something of the inner circle. Doubtless the Lord unfolded something of the Father's bosom wherein He dwelt. In that sphere His own glory shines out; as the result there was affection for Him. Our course is not merely to follow Jesus (blessed although this is); but He brings us into the circle where divine affections flow, in that atmosphere of holy love, where the Father loves the Son and the Son loves the Father. We are the objects of that same love; "that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them and I in them" (John 17:26). There is an answer to that love, "We love because He first loved." Love permeates that blest abode. What holy communion and intimacy are there where love divine rests. "Bright inlet to the light of heaven above." There we shall bask eternally in the sunshine of that love, the love of relationship. Such a hallowed experience does not lead to self-complacency. In the case of Andrew, it led to fruitful activity, He was able to give a definite statement as to the person of Christ. He found his own brother and brought him to Jesus. The Lord addressed to the latter the striking words, "Thou art Cephas, (a stone)," He knew the import of that later, in epistle when he wrote of the living stones which form the grand edifice instinct with divine life, being reared to the Glory of

God. All true evangelism works out from the divine centre and completes the circle in bringing in the trophies of grace.

056 The Life and Times of Josiah.

The Life and Times of Josiah.

(The power and authority of Holy Scripture illustrated in 2 Chronicles 34:1-33; 2 Chronicles 35:1-27) Summary made by a correspondent from C. H. Mackintosh.

2500 years have rolled away since King Josiah lived and reigned; but his history is pregnant with instruction which can never lose its freshness or its power. The moment at which he ascended the throne of his fathers was one of peculiar gloom and heaviness. The tide of corruption, swollen by many a tributary stream, had risen to the highest point; and the sword of judgment long held back in divine patience and long-suffering, was about to fall, in terrible severity, upon the city of David. Thus, a child of eight years found himself on the throne of David, surrounded by the accumulated evils and errors of his father Amon and his grandfather Manasseh; yea, by forms of corruption which had been introduced by no less a personage than Solomon himself! If the reader will just turn for a moment to 2. Kings 23, he will find a marvellous picture of the condition of things at the opening of Josiah's history. There were idolatrous priests who burned incense unto Baal, to the sun, the moon, the planets, and to all the host of heaven. "But further, there were high places which Solomon the King of Israel had builded for Ashtoreth, the abomination of the Zidonians, and for Chemosh, the abomination of the Moabites, and for Milcom, the abomination of the children of Ammon. All this is most solemn, and worthy of the serious consideration of the Christian reader. It is not as though we were reading the historic records of Babylon, Persia, Greece or Rome. We should not marvel at the kings of those nations burning incense to Baal, ordaining idolatrous priests, and worshipping the host of heaven; but when we see kings of Judah, the sons and successors of David, children of Abraham, men who had access to the book of the law of God, and who were responsible to make that book the subject of their profound and constant study; when we see such men falling under the power of dark and debasing superstition, it sounds in our ears a warning voice, to which we cannot, with impunity, refuse to give heed. We should bear in mind that all these things have been written for our learning (1 Corinthians 10:2). But how are we to account for all those gross and terrible evils into which Solomon and his successors were drawn? By NEGLECT OF THE WORD OF GOD! That was the source of all the mischief and all the sorrow. How important, then, is the study, the diligent, earnest, prayerful study of holy scripture! How needful to cultivate a spirit of reverential submission, in all things, to the authority of the word of God! The eighteenth year of Josiah's reign was one of the most memorable in his history. It was signalled by two great facts, namely the discovery of the book of the law, and the celebration of the feast of the passover. Stupendous facts! And it came to pass, when the King had heard the words of the law, that he "rent his clothes." He was in truth a man of a humble and contrite spirit, who trembled at the word of God, he was a man thoroughly in earnest. He felt the power in his own soul; and he could not rest satisfied until he had gathered the people around him, in order that the light which had shone upon him might shine upon them likewise. There is a fine moral lesson in all this for us. Josiah felt his responsibility to those around him. The great practical truth of the unity of all believers in one body ("There is one body and one Spirit") was not known to

Josiah, but nevertheless there was the unity of the nation of Israel and this unity was always recognised by the faithful; e.g., by Elijah on Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18:1-46), by Hezekiah (2 Chronicles 29:24) and by Paul (Acts 26:7). And now Christian reader, mark the application of all this to our souls, at this present moment. Do you heartily believe, upon divine authority in the doctrine of the unity of the body of Christ. Do you turn round and ask, "Where is this to be seen?" This is the question which unbelief must ever put as the eye rests upon Christendom's numberless sects and parties, and to which faith replies, as the eye rests upon that imperishable sentence, "There is one body and one Spirit." Mark the words:- "There is." May God's Spirit lead all Christians to see this great truth in all its bearings!

057 Justification.

Justification.

A. Whitesmith.

"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth" (Romans 8:33). From the above Scripture we learn, that to be justified is to be free from the charge of sin. Until we believed the gospel the charge against us was, that we had "sinned, and come short of the glory of God"; but, having believed, we have the privilege to know that we have been "justified from all things" (Acts 13:39). To any who would question our right to this position or bring any charge of sin against us the divine answer is: "It is God that justifieth." If God, the God against whom we had sinned has justified us, who is he that shall condemn? In the epistle to the Romans, justification is said to be (a) by grace; (b) by blood; (c) by faith.

Justification by Grace (Romans 3:24). Until, by the advent of Christ, the grace of God was revealed, the Jew was under the law. But as Romans 3:20 tells us, the law did not justify. It had, indeed, quite the opposite effect. The law was a standard by which man's shortcomings were revealed and instead of clearing him of the charge of sin established his guilt. But what of the Gentile? He, too, is proved to be "under sin" (Romans 3:9). True, he was never tested by the law publicly; but the trial of the Jew was sufficient to prove that "by the deeds of the law no flesh" (neither Jew nor Gentile) could be justified in God's sight. All human effort as a means of obtaining blessing is thus ruled out and God discloses that "by His grace" He can justify all who believe.

Justification by Blood (Romans 3:25; Romans 5:9). It is never God's way, however, to act in grace at the expense of righteousness; nor does He justify the sinner by ignoring his sin. Sin is a challenge to the righteousness and supremacy of God and to vindicate His righteousness, God must judge sin. But how could God execute the judgment on sin that His righteousness demanded and yet justify the sinner according to the desire of His grace? It is in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ we find the answer to this question. On the cross, the unsparing judgment of sin that God's righteousness required was carried out and thus His attitude to sin was plainly declared. Since the Lord Jesus has borne all the weight of divine wrath against sin, God is just in justifying all who have faith in that which is the witness of His death — the blood.

Justification by Faith (Romans 5:1). If on God's side justification is by grace, on man's side it must be by faith. Grace is in contrast with law: faith is in contrast with works. Grace implies gift, and no one works for a gift. "To him that worketh," says the Scripture, "is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt." That is to say, had it been possible for men, by works of righteousness to have fulfilled God's demands, then they would have been entitled to justification. But, as we have seen, law and the deeds of the law are ruled out; hence if men are to be justified it must be by grace on the principle of faith.

Alex. Whitesmith.

058 That I may know Him.

That I may know Him.

Php 3:10.

P. Jackson.

These words were from the pen and heart of the Apostle Paul. As I meditate upon them in faith in the presence of Christ, my own heart also breathes out, "Oh, that I might know Him." It may seem strange that such words should be written by the Apostle Paul who: (1) When journeying to Damascus to persecute and imprison the saints had been arrested by the Lord, who spake to him from heaven and drew him to Himself in true heart repentance (Acts 9:1-43). (2) was caught up into Paradise and heard unspeakable words (2 Corinthians 12:4). (3) was many times in bonds for Christ (Php 1:13). (4) could say, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Php 1:21). (5) counted the things which were gain to him naturally as loss for Christ (Php 3:7-8). (6) declared, "For 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 Timothy 1:12). Surely none knew the Lord Jesus Christ like the Apostle Paul! It was because He knew Him and loved Him with deep devotion, that he desired to know Him fully, even to conformity to His death. We may well ask, Who is this person whom the Apostle desired to know? In the past eternity He was with the Father "Daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him" (Proverbs 8:30), whilst by Him all things were created (Colossians 1:16). (We do well to remember this and to be in the good of it at present, when kingdoms which appeared stable are oppressed by another power!) In the fulness of time He had come forth from the Father into the world (John 16:28) and, whilst in it, so delighted the heart of the Father that He declared from heaven concerning Him, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye Him" (Matthew 17:5). In John 10:17, we read the Lord's words, "Therefore doth my Father love Me, because I lay down my life that I might take it again." Of His own volition He went to the Cross in our stead, "His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree" (1 Peter 2:24). Before He bowed His head and gave up the ghost, He said, "It is finished" (John 19:30).

Now our precious Saviour is alive for ever more, and He has entered into heaven itself, having obtained eternal redemption (Hebrews 9:12). He now appears in the presence of God for us (Hebrews 9:24). Soon He will come and take us to heaven to be with Himself and like Himself for ever (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). What a wonderful Saviour He is, how deeply we should love Him and desire to know Him more! If we are willing, He will draw us to Himself, into a sphere which is abiding where all is of God. There we learn Himself in the preciousness of His love, there we long to dwell for ever with the Lord. If we are there already in spirit there will be the corresponding answer whilst we are left here. There will be flow of worship to the Father, acceptable through Christ Jesus our Lord; there will be love one toward another as those who are members of His assembly; also there will be ministry of Christ amongst us followed by the telling forth of the glad tidings in the power of the Holy Spirit. May the true language of each of our hearts be THAT I MAY KNOW HIM!

059 Laodicean Unreality.

Laodicean Unreality.

Abridged from W. T. Turpin in "The Voice," 1879.

We are living in a day when men and their principles are plainly manifested as "Man's day," and there is a revelation of that expression of the Spirit, solemn and momentous. The lapse of more than a quarter century has found many to be little spiritually able to detect where the rights of Christ or the principles of truth were encroached upon. In that period a character of professed Christianity has sprung up which finds its appropriate expression in the title "Human." A degenerate seed has been produced of this stock in whose hands the honour of Christ and interests of truth are unsafe. There are to-day the anti-type of the two and a half tribes, as well as of Lot. In former times, "coming out" and "separation" meant what they conveyed. Nothing is now challenged which those who first separated left behind them! There is much coming in or brought in; in the modern phraseology, exclusive means inclusive, separation means toleration; unity of the Spirit, coalition; unworldliness, as much of the world as you can keep; that which scripture designates as covetousness, money loving and making, means being prudent; and exalts itself to occupy a place which spirituality alone could secure in past days! "Judgment is turned away backward and justice standeth afar off; for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter. Yea, truth faileth, and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey" (Isaiah 59:14-15). The insensibility to gross outrages upon the truth are lamentable. This is the spirit of Laodiceanism, the last phase of the professing church (Revelation 3:1-22.). It is the characteristic feature which will brand it when spued out of Christ's mouth. There are some peculiar snares important to detect; there is nothing in it that would outrage the conscience; it is not a denial in terms of the truth; on the contrary, the truth is owned (not opposed) save that which is so practical that worldliness in connection with doctrinal acquiescence would be condemned by any with some conscience, or where the acknowledgment of it would interfere with the world which so many hold fast! Alas, it is sorrowful to own that the Laodicean shroud is being fast wrapped round the church. Satan's great aim is to present in the same person or company an acknowledgement of the truth with a certain credit and at the same time be a practical denial of it. In this way, he especially damages the truth; because exhibited by those on whose conscience it has no power. It is equally true as regards the position to which the truth conducts the soul: this is boasted in so that the truth and the ecclesiastical position suited to it are both accepted. Herein consists the greatest snare of lukewarmness! That the truth can be accepted without any divine answer to its claims is worse than if openly refused, because in the latter case it might be supposed what effects would follow. But the other presents the glaring inconsistency of truth accepted and its practical power denied; this is the moral swamp in which Satan will land the church, so nauseous to Christ. This leaven is rapidly at work and finds its most apt expression in principles and ways openly adopted and contended for on every side. There is nothing so well suits the devil as saints holding a position without practical effect, while open worldliness and looseness creeps in unchallenged, under the garb of divine position. In 2 Timothy 2:5, the Apostle by the Spirit describes the state as "having a

form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." This answers to Israel's description in Ezekiel 33:30-31; and in Jeremiah 7:3-4. When the Lord Jesus as Son of Man turns His eyes as a flame of fire upon this great unreality, mark His words, "I would thou wert cold or hot, so then because thou art lukewarm . . . I will spue thee out of my mouth" (Revelation 3:15-16). Another snare connected with the Laodicean state is the way man imitates the real. This is clearly made known in 2 Timothy 2:1-26, Satan will reproduce the character of past days, he will have his Jannes and Jambres, and as Moses was withstood, similarly is the truth being resisted. How solemn! May the Lord keep us very near and true to Himself! Where this principle is not detected, the Laodicean haze blinds the eye. The leaven is permeating the Church rapidly. It was foreseen long ago in many phases of service; the way in which what professed to be the Lord's mind was carried on has been disquieting to many. Man had been acknowledged instead of ignored, addressed through his intellect or senses, given a place, so planting the seeds that ripen in the end. What began in the Gospel comes to a head in the Church. The skilful wile of Satan introduces a principle which violates the truth of God. Truly as the acorn contains the oak so do such thoughts embody the great unreality spreading abroad. The state of characteristic indifference is tested by Him who is "the faithful and true witness." How soon then must the moment come when it can be no longer fit for God on the earth! Well may we say, "How is the gold become dim . . . Her Nazarites pure as snow . . . their skin cleaveth to their bones, it is withered and is become like a stick" (Lamentations 4:1; Lamentations 4:7-8). May the Lord in mercy in the midst of this growing evil preserve to Himself a few of whom it may be said, "they that feared the Lord spake often one to another . . . "(Malachi 3:16).

060 Extracts from Letters.

Extracts from Letters. The days are ever more difficult and the wisdom that is from above is a desirable possession. If Proverbs is the book of sonship and family relationships, then we do well to note that wisdom and understanding are characteristics of that sphere of activity....

I have found S.Q. very helpful. We need writings in the power of the Holy Spirit. The tendency of things in the world is to draw us down. We need more than ever to be kept fresh in love to Christ and His Word dwelling richly in our hearts by faith. Also we have the great privileges of remembering the Lord in His death, and ministering the Word to saints and sinners, even if few in number.

[We are apt to hold "the two or three" as a theory; nevertheless it is a real test of faith.-Editor.]

Every religious thought of man confesses that he wishes to get to God by prayers or ordinances. Man is told he must do this or that. The Law confirmed the injunction, but the Gospel says, "you have done this and that and yet come short of the glory of God." Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption in Christ Jesus Whom God has set forth a propitiation through faith in His blood, so a man comes in for eternal blessing.

Friends of the Christ, our earnest expectation, Here to Hold Fast and magnify His Name, In this poor scene of woe and degradation, Rising superior to our former shame.

Little in strength and weak our best endeavour, Even to maintain His Word and Name and Cross, This be our joy, mid sorrow, trial and pressure, Waiting in patience for His well-known Voice.

W. T. Turpin.

It is only as the heart is fresh in communion with the Father and with the Lord Jesus Christ that there is real love to the brethren. The children of a family are not found together because of one father and mother. If the tender mother or the beloved father be gone, the power that kept them together is gone from among them. So with regard to fellowship with the Father and the Son, if that be not maintained with all freshness, love to the brethren fails. G. V. Wigram.

(1) It is a great joy when we come together to realize the preciousness of the company of Christ and to pour out our hearts relative to all that He is, what He has done and the place into which He has brought us. If the joy of His realized presence affects us so greatly here; what will it be when we shall be with Him for evermore? "There only to adore" God, by the Holy Spirit is reproducing in His own the features of His beloved Son....

(2) I learned that if there was division in the house (Luke 12:52; John 14:21), Christ came into the heart in sweetest sympathy and comfort. I recognised the seeking to drive me from the ground of witness for the truth as Satan's efforts permitted of God to sift and humble me that my will might be broken and thus Christ might be magnified in my body. I learned to praise that One through all. I learned, too, that nearness to the Lord (in the House of God) involves Satan's rage, our Father's

discipline and, that we should not go to the world for shelter. Our resource is in God! (Written over 50 years ago-as viewed from 1942).

(3) The articles in S.Q. impress me as being timely for our day. May our adorable Lord guide you in this labour of love! (From U.S.A.)

(4) "It would be a real loss if we have to forego this refreshing ministry." (By some mishap, the last issue of S.Q. had not reached this isolated Christian).

Exxtracts from Letters.

I conclude you have two readings weekly, and feel sure you find them profitable. It makes such a difference when one remembers that we go not to meet man but the Lord, and though there may not be always the same body of truth brought out, yet it is good that all should be led to search for themselves and contribute their share to the general profit. The presence of prominent gift is so far a disadvantage that it may produce laziness in searching the Word for oneself! In its absence each must bestir himself to contribute to the general benefit and thus individual communion with the Lord, seeking Him to give light, is produced. The result is positive blessing! It has often been remarked that in X-where teachers are constantly present the saints are much less in dependence on the Lord than in other gatherings, where through weakness, they are necessarily cast on Him. (From a letter written in 1874). The Lord has been much with me since we parted and His presence is everything. How often we are like the two disciples on the road to Emmaus who, though the Lord was with them all the way, did not know it was He until the end of their journey. But when once they had the sense of His presence they thought no more of their fatigue, but went back the whole eight miles to tell the others of the One who had revealed Himself to them as the Firstborn from the dead. What we need is to cultivate the sense of His presence all the day long, then the wilderness would be no longer weary. It has often struck me what a distance the wise men from the East came to worship the Lord and how richly they were rewarded! How the One who was weary with His journey of 25 miles can perfectly sympathise with those who like Paul know the meaning of "weariness and painfulness" and "journeyings often" (2 Corinthians 11:1-33.). May you have the constant sense of the Lord's presence as your daily hourly portion! (From a letter of 70 years ago).

We live in a day which calls for much dependence on the Lord and a deep consciousness that we are loved with a love that knows no let! (Written recently). By nature, man cannot meet God's requirements. Indeed God has dealt with that man who was an offence to Him. Religious or irreligious, mental or sentimental, rude or cultured, man of that order cannot please God. As a contrast, while Enoch was still here he received the testimony that he pleased God. (Extract from the late WM. Huggins).

Extracts from Letters.

(1) I have been struck with J.N.D.'s remarks that at the end of Romans 5:1-21; Romans 6:1-23 the point is that it is not in Adam. He also dwells on the fact that in Romans we only get the Christian privileges brought out in ch.5:1-11 and in ch. 8; also that nowhere in Romans does the Apostle attempt to develop the thought of "In Christ Jesus." There is only the reference in Romans 8:1 which he connects with Romans 7:1-25. rather than with Romans 8:1-39. "In Christ" in Eph. seems to be connected with the purpose of God.

(2) We learn from our day to day condition that "our outward man perishes," but also (praise the Lord!) "the inward man is renewed (also) day by day" (2 Corinthians 4:16). How precious it is to be learning more of our adorable Lord by walking intimately with Himself! How blessedly true that He fills our souls now and that all we learn of Himself we enjoy now and also take it with us to glory; 1:e., in spite of our poor pupilage and slow learning. (Recent).

I see in my late affliction no defeat from Satan. Contrary to that, I had been asking the Lord for more practical separateness to Christ for myself and His people. In taking from me to Himself her who, He had given me as a companion and an ensample of unearthliness, I can see a lesson quite in harmony with the Father's love and ways. So far as I walk in heaven, I am not bereaved; it is only when walking apart from the glory of Christ or when the weakness of the earthen vessel is in question, that there is a void for me to bring Christ in to fill. But He guides me afresh and will lead me Himself whither He wills. G.V.Wigram. The old letter on p.111, vol. 2, was as you surmised abridged from two letters written by J.N.D. I trust you are being encouraged in the distribution of publications. May they deepen the sense of the Lord's glory and increase desire to be in His presence! (Recent extract). The peace of God passes all understanding, the peace of Christ I have in my heart. There is nothing more dangerous than for the soul to speak of truth when not living therein. It is the road to a fall! It is by maintaining the positive that we help souls, but we must not make our light the measure of the conscience of others. Here is where divine grace comes in, to lead on the soul into the truth of the Assembly, so as to judge as unrighteousness any form of independency! The difference between ecclesiastical evil and that which any true conscience can take cognisance of, is that the former only becomes such to the conscience when enlightened with the truth of the Assembly of God. The abstract is sometimes difficult to meet as compared with any given case when it arises, but for this we may count on the Lord to guide us how to deal with it, where it is not contravening some principle of Scripture, expressly laid down for our direction. (J. A. Trench, 1917).

Extracts from Letters. (Vol. 3 No. 9, Jan, 1943)

(1) While around the Lord what wonderful times we have calling to mind the deep suffering He passed through that God might be glorified and the way of approach might be opened that we might reach Him in Spirit where He is. He transfers our affections from earth to heaven so that we may enjoy Him in the new place He has entered as man and to taste of the Father's delight in His well-beloved. In Him, He has graced us in His favour that we may enjoy with Him the moral perfections shining forth in Him as man before His face. What encouragement and joy there is in meditation on the fact that the Son has come into manhood, remains a man for ever, and of necessity takes everything now from the Father's hand. (Recent).

(2) We live in a day of small things, but it is good to encourage each other in the Lord's interests and to seek to be for Him where He is rejected. (Recent).

(3) A correspondent in Australia says "The Quarterly has come safely over the oceans and I am thankful that we have not missed one so far by the Lord's goodness. We look forward to the cheer it brings and some parts always seem to meet our special needs. We should be well grounded in these troublous days!"

Extract from a letter by J. A. Trench to Mirza Saeed (Teheran), 1919. The terrible war goes on but how well it is to have our dependence not upon armies, navies or alliances but upon the Living God. The only thing that gives me any doubt as to the issue is that He may have to say to this privileged and responsible nation that seems so far from recognising His hand upon it and the other professing Christian nations. Meanwhile His mercy to us is great in the way this country has been preserved from being the actual battleground of contending forces for so many centuries.

(J. A. Trench, 1917) In 1908, E. L. Bevir publishing "Meditations by J.B.Stoney." in "Helps," said that they had not been printed previously, and thus were not as a correspondent had averred "on the shelves of the Brethren." As we have been subjected to similar criticism, we feel that history repeats itself and that we are thus in good company! However, we may add that Brethren are apt to leave the literature on the shelves and not being acquainted with their wealth, do not invest it in dealings with their fellowmen. Thus their spiritual income will be low in the assessment of the Lord. We should not "shelve" the Truth! Editor.

061 Coming to the Living Stone.

Coming to the Living Stone.

1 Peter 2:1-10.

Notes of Reading with J. McDonald at Walkerburn, 15th Oct., 1897. The only One behind the counsels of God is God Himself! His counsels are in perfect accordance with Himself. God is behind everything working out His own will. Verse 23 of the preceding chapter shows the beginning in our souls. The Word of God is the only permanent thing. We are born of incorruptible seed by the sovereign act of God. God never takes up anyone with the view of letting go. Verse 24 shows the passing nature of everything else. Dispensationally, the flower (the choicest part of the grass) represents the Jew. That brings to light unmistakably the conclusion that the creature could not meet the case. That was the way God took to teach man. So we need not look for anything from man. If we do, disappointment will be the result. On the other hand, if God has taken anyone up it may be confidently expected that He will complete the work. About that each one should be able to speak for himself. If born of incorruptible seed that is a proof to me that I am in the counsels of God, which take in the Church, Sonship, and the Calling, etc.; indeed everything that will go on to eternity when God will find His rest! Because His counsels will be completed and every attribute of God vindicated, hence all can be at rest. A new-born soul can rest on the knowledge of redemption. Redeemed by blood, we learn that His Word, enduring for ever, alone brings lasting realities before our souls. The first verse of chapter 2 invokes the laying-aside of the qualities of the first man. The believer is entitled to see that not only are his sins gone, but the man who committed them is gone too. All the counsels have been made good in Christ already. All the promises are "yea and amen" in Christ Jesus. What is made good in Him, will be made good to us. The second verse does not imply that we are new born babies, but the example is adduced to show that we should have the same desire as they have. If we are going on in our souls we shall be going on with the Word of God. There will be correspondence with the incorruptible seed by which they are born. If our source of life is in the Spirit, let us walk in the Spirit. The incorruptible seed never gave rise to one of the qualities indicated in the first verse, e.g., evil speaking shows that we are out of communion. If in the presence of God, we cannot be speaking evil. We should be here for the glory of God. No one can really hurt a man but himself. External influences may cast a cloud over you, but God will ultimately bring into the light everything which is untrue. "He is near that justifieth me." Many do not get on in their souls, because they are seeking favour from their brethren. We are enjoined to love the brethren not to fear them. It is not helpful to our brethren, if we curry favour with them.

Verse 3 introduces the condition of tasting (or testing) that the Lord is gracious or good. Then having tasted of His goodness we are attracted to Him in the character of Living Stone. There is no forced work. It is not put in consequence of being born again. The Jew in the coming day of blessing although born again will never touch this building, the Spiritual House. But the saints on earth to-day are in it. "To whom coming," Hebrews 13:13, says, "go to Him outside the camp." That

introduces the thought of separation. The one relationship is distinct from the other, although the same person is involved, e.g., a man may be husband, father, master and neighbour all at once. We do not come to Him as "Living Stone" in the character of Saviour or Shepherd, Living Stone is connected as builder. There is an analogous thought in baptism. We also lose individuality when put into the body. The individual is merged in the corporate! In contrast with the material temple of old, the Living Stone is in correspondence with the revelation of God at this time. Of old God dwelt in a material temple with His people. But He dwells in a spiritual house now. The material sacrifices, quite suitable in the last dispensation, are displaced by spiritual sacrifices. We have nothing to do but to place ourselves in His hands. Spiritual experience does not imply "tasting and feeling," but "tasting and seeing"! "The eyes of your heart being enlightened" is the same idea. The responsibility and privilege of every believer is to come. In Matthew 16:1-28, when the Lord said, "on this rock (the subject of Peter's confession) will I build my church," Peter came to that apprehension in his soul. Christ received the church consequent on the refusal of the kingdom on earth. Heaven was set forth in symbol in "the far country" of the parable. At His first coming to earth peace was proclaimed, but when He comes back it will be vengeance! Unless you see Him in heaven you will not come to Him. Coming to Him as the Living Stone, the rejected One, is outside everything. Man gave him nothing, God gave him everything! All those who are in affinity with Him can answer to the invitation. Matthew 14:1-36. is a striking illustration. Peter saw the Lord walking on the sea, superior to the power of the elements and could not be content with any place short of being with Him. Having received the invitation, he fixed his eye on the Person who engrossed his heart and he descended from the boat and walked on the water, superior also to the elements by divine power. (The artists usually show Peter sinking, but Scripture does not). Affection took Peter out to Christ, nothing else will take us out to Him. Nothing else can feed our affections like the knowledge of the goodness of the Lord. That will give us joy and spring to go to Him. We shall be attracted and attached to Him. The more that is true, we shall be detached from everything here which will hinder us.

062 The Significance of the Lord's Supper.

The Significance of the Lord's Supper.

J. F. English. In Luke 22:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:20-26 there is brought before us the institution of the Lord's Supper. In Luke, we have its record by the Lord, and in 1 Cor. a reference to the ministry of the Supper which the Apostle had previously communicated to the saints at Corinth. It is mainly from the record in 1 Corinthians 11:1-34. that our thoughts regarding the Supper are formed. That is to be expected, as in this epistle we have the truth of the administration of the assembly in the light of the fellowship to which we have all been called. Evidently the Corinthians had been meeting together, professing to take the Supper, but their conduct called forth the corrective reiteration which the Apostle had previously delivered to the saints at Corinth. In order to add weight to the seriousness of their conduct the Apostle calls their attention to the significance of breaking the bread and partaking of the cup, for he adds to the words of the Lord, "For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do announce the Lord's death till He come." This is the great appeal to self-judgment so that the Supper might not be partaken unworthily as the Corinthians appear to have been doing, but it is not that which the Lord has asked us to do; His request is simply that we might do this "for a remembrance of Me." The Lord does not say in what way we are to call Him to mind, but if we refer to the Scriptures in which there is a word of God to His own in regard to that which is to be remembered by them we will see that it is the significance of the incident in relation to the dealings of God with His people that is to be before them. The Passover and all the various Feasts inaugurated by the Lord God, were for a remembrance of the way in which He had acted towards His people and their relationship with Him. For us today, we can see how all these were shadows of that which was going to be true of the Lord Jesus and has been and is being effected by Him. When we come together in Assembly, we lose our individuality; we are part of a whole; this should make us sensible to the fact that the remembrance of the Lord and His death as it applies to us personally, should be before us before we come to the Assembly meeting, rather than when there. Surely each one of us should ever have before us the remembrance of our Beloved Lord in His sufferings and death on the Cross for us; we do not need to come together to bring this to remembrance. This ought to be continually before us, drawing out our hearts in love and thanksgiving to Him, and creating in us a desire to be in our place around Him in His own appointed way, in Assembly. On the evening of His resurrection day, when He appeared in the midst of His own gathered together we read "then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord." He lives for us. In His great love for the Church He gave Himself, and He says to us, "This is my body which is given for you." We remember His words in Matthew 13:46, having found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it." Is not this what He would before us, rather than that which was substitutionary? His intense love for the Church lies behind these sweet words and the giving of Himself. As we think of what that giving of Himself involved for Him, we learn the more to value His precious love and wonderful thoughts to us. We also learn in Him the love of the Father towards us, in that He gave His only begotten Son for us. What did this mean to the Father? Nothing will affect us more when we are with the Lord in glory,

realising our place and blessings as the great love that has us there. Then the cup surely speaks to us of the Father's blessing in His great love for us as His own. In the account of the Supper we read "This cup is the New Covenant in My blood." It expresses the present attitude of the Father towards us, as His own. He loves us with the same love wherewith He loves the Son, and we are brought into the place of sons with the Father. The precious blood of the Lord, the token of His life laid down, is the ground on which God is able to forgive sins righteously and bless us according to the desire of His Heart. We know, as we partake of that cup, there is nothing in the heart of God for us but love, the love of the Father for His sons, in no less measure than that with which He loves the Son. How precious this makes the Son of God to us, in the joy of His presence, being with Him in spirit where He is with the Father, we worship as we contemplate the way that love has taken to bring us to Himself. We rejoice with the Father in His joy over His Beloved Son in all that He has accomplished in His death, as far as we are now by the Spirit able to comprehend it. It is joy to know that the Father has Him again in His presence eternally, the Man of His Right Hand, ever His delight and joy in the highest place of glory.

We thus see that the Supper is the introduction to our Assembly worship. When we are with the Lord in glory, we shall not need it to bring Him before us; we shall be in His blessed presence in all the joy of the Father's house. In the meantime, however, the Lord in His love for us and great grace, desires to have us near Himself where we can participate in our blessed portion in Him with the Father now. Where there is simple subjection to the Holy Spirit (He who knows the mind of the Lord) we should find each recurring Lord's Day morning meeting increasingly precious in the foretaste of the portion that awaits us when at home with Him. Even in the Tabernacle worship, the High Priest was able to go into the Holiest, where everything spake of the glory of God and the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. If this was so true with the shadow how much more so now that the substance has come. May the Lord grant that we may be able to take up our priesthood, as sons with our Great High Priest, the true Aaron, in the power of an ungrieved Spirit, worshipping as we gather around Him, our beloved Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God who again repeats to us "Do this in remembrance of Me."

063 The Lord's Supper.

The Lord's Supper.

T. D. Wood.

There are two rites or ordinances in Christianity: (1) Baptism, which puts the baptised person on ground of profession; (2) the Lord's Supper on the line of privilege. The truth of the latter was clearly given to Gentile believers through the Apostle Paul, "I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you" (1 Corinthians 11:23). It is primarily a memorial feast, having its inauguration and type in the memorial and ordinance of the Passover. In Exodus 12:1-51. we get the type; the slain lamb, unleavened bread and bitter herbs speak of the character of the passover feast; while the girded loins, shoes and staff set forth the pilgrim features of the participators. It would seem that it was the custom of the Jews to "break bread" and "drink of the cup of consolation" for their departed parents (Jeremiah 16:7; also Deuteronomy 26:14; Job 42:11, and Hosea 9:4). This "mourning feast" would have significance to a godly Jew familiar with the Hebrew scriptures.

Now on the night of his betrayal, the Lord instituted this feast of remembrance on the day of unleavened bread when the Passover must be killed (Matthew 26:1-75, Mark 14:1-72, Luke 22:1-71). Luke distinguishes between the "cup after supper" and the "cup of the Passover supper" of the preceding verses which refers to the "fruit of the vine" in the coming kingdom. Thus the Lord leads on to our present portion, the loaf speaking of His body given for us, and the cup His blood shed for us. Clearly "the cup of blessing which we bless" is "the communion of the blood of Christ" and "the bread which we break" is "the communion of the body of Christ." The one loaf also sets forth that believers "being many are one bread," which is in contrast to the twelve cakes of Leviticus 24:1-23 setting forth administration and the 12 tribes in their representative character. The "shewbread" upon the table of Exodus 25:30, speaks of Christ, "the bread of God" and "bread of Life" (John 6:33-48). The manna sets forth Christ in His path of humiliation (the living bread from heaven), the wilderness food of the believer. We keep the feast, but, we have the sheaf of the "morrow after the sabbath," Christ risen!

It is important to see that while 1 Corinthians 11:1-34. gives the order and privilege of the Supper, 1 Corinthians 10:1-33 that with which the Supper has identified us. It involves our baptism, to which the Apostle refers in type "our fathers were all baptised unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea Believers are baptised into His death (Romans 6:3). Then he adds "they did all eat and did all drink," alluding to the cup and the bread. This is fellowship (as to our participation), the New Testament anti-type of the peace offering! Moreover it is the anti-type of the Passover for "even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us" (1 Corinthians 5:1-13). But where do we eat it? As to our place, in the wilderness, but to faith within the borders of the land; as another has said, "between Egypt and God's Israel rolled the Red Sea and the Jordan." Yet how different is this to the Egypt Passover; there judgment was impending, now in the wilderness observance we partake as a people wondrously blessed, a "people near unto Him" (Psalms 148:14). The Supper is the

assembly's greatest privilege, the rallying point to Christ, the Divine Centre. This involves both privilege and responsibility. As our highest privilege how blessed it is to respond in bridal affection to our absent Lord's request "this do in remembrance of Me" (Luke 22:19). The Supper is our response to His love. In the early days of the Church's history, the act of "breaking bread" had its own peculiar place in the lives of the early believers (Acts 2:42; Acts 2:46; Acts 20:7). It is clear from 1 Corinthians 10:1-33 : we have three centres, (1) the Jewish altar, (2) the Lord's table, (3) the table of demons. We must distinguish these, the "table" sets forth the fellowship into which we are called, of which the Lord Himself is the bond (1 Corinthians 1:9). The Supper is the supreme expression of this fellowship (1 Corinthians 10:16-17), and the Holy Spirit, the power (2 Corinthians 13:14). From the solemn words of 1 Corinthians 11:27-34 we learn that self judgment is needed in order that we may be in a right spiritual condition to take the Supper. We are not told to examine ourselves and stay away but "let a man examine himself and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup." The Supper sets forth the assembly's privilege, that of all saints, and being the Lord's Supper it should be taken in character with the holiness of the House, where God dwells; where the Father's love is known and enjoyed; where the glories of the Son and the wondrous depths of His love become real and blessed to faith. We see in the fine flour of the meal offering and the frankincense beautiful types of the Lord's life (Leviticus 2:1-16.). The sin offering is expiatory and substitutional and the trespass offering is making restitution. Yet we show forth His death and the fragrance of His life and His death sets forth the undying devotedness of the Son to His Father's will. "This is the law of the burnt offering because of the burning upon the altar all night unto the morning." "The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out" (Leviticus 6:9; Leviticus 6:13). Let us not forget that we show the Lord's death "till He come," when the night of His absence will end in the "morning without clouds"; His blest presence for evermore! Meantime how blessed it is to respond to His request, to keep the word of His patience, and though marked by little strength to keep His Word and not deny His Name (Revelation 3:1-22).

064 Love and Grace.

Love and Grace.

T. Oliver. In the minds of many these terms are interchangeable, but that is erroneous. Love is "reciprocal," or giving and receiving mutually, a to and fro operation: but grace is "unilateral" or one-sided. "We love Him because He first loved us" (1 John 4:19). God is love: that is a terse description of what God is. It would be incongruous to say, "God is grace." He is gracious or the God of grace, the giving God; but grace is not reciprocal, it only acts in one way, 1:e., between God and man. God was manifested as the God of grace in giving His Son; but obviously grace cannot flow in return from man to God. But there is a further transmission of grace from the individual receiving to those around. So even epistle closes with the invocation that grace (that of the Lord Jesus Christ) may be with every local company of Christians. Originally that grace flows from God and after permeating the individual Christians overflows and forms the medium between them, but it does not stop there. It goes outside the Christian sphere to the strangers around! What proceeds out of the Christian's mouth should be good to the use of edifying that it may minister grace unto the hearer; that will reach further than the Christians. (Ephesians 4:29). The love which subsisted reciprocally between the Father and the Son before time, continued while the Son was here and is the same now in His place of exaltation. But grace could not be, until there was the need of man in consequence of the entrance of sin. "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." So that the reign of sin unto death is superseded by the reign of grace unto eternal life, on account of righteousness having been accomplished by Jesus Christ our Lord (Romans 5:20-21). The reign of grace has the object of bringing man into the enjoyment of the love of God. The reign of grace will terminate when righteousness becomes dominant in the world to come. Grace removes every hindrance to that end and subjugates refractory elements to the authority of the Lord. Who could have predicted the reduction of Saul of Tarsus from the state of an overbearing Pharisee to that of a humble worker in God's service? Grace will then have served its purpose, but love will continue. God will ultimately rest in His love. He will rejoice over a redeemed creation which He will have brought to rest in His love. But there is a present aspect for the Christian. The appropriation of that love is hindered by fear or apprehension! "Perfect love casts out fear, because fear has torment." "Herein is love with us made perfect (or complete) in order that we may have boldness (confidence) in (or in view of) the day of judgment, because as He is so are we in this world" (1 John 4:17-18). "As he is" implies being in the atmosphere of love which envelops the Father and the Son. It is not "so shall we be" but "so we are" in this world. If we realise that we are loved as Christ is loved, can we have any apprehension as to the present or the future?

065 Notes of Readings on Luke's Gospel.

Notes of Readings on Luke's Gospel.

Luke presents the Man of Sorrows and the good pleasure of God. God was in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:1-21). Throughout the Gospel, two classes come before Christ's eye:- (1) the self righteous who justify themselves, (2) the repentant sinners who justify God. (Wisdom's children). It has been well said that the subject begins with a dumb priest, an empty temple and barrenness and it ends with a fruitful praising company in the temple. In His public ministry Christ came in priestly grace to secure everything for God, and thus infuse new life into the dead barren condition, and so caused those who received him to be vocal with praise to God. Luke 1:1, says "many" had attempted to declare the basis of the Gospel (evidently more than three). The eye witnesses were ministers of the Word, lit. personal attendants forming a bodyguard of those who treasured every saying. The artists depicting the disciples surrounding Christ evidently hanging on every syllable, apprehensive that not one should be missed is a well known picture. 5: 3 "From the very first," obviously could not apply as to time since Luke did not appear in the record until 20 years after the Crucifixion, but the expression means that Luke did not get his information by hearsay, but from the fountain head through the Holy Ghost. Theophilus, probably a Grecian convert, was true to the meaning of his name "a lover of God!"

"First born son" of Luke 2:7, proves the perpetual virginity and the mariolatry of arch ritualism to be fictions. To simple shepherds was given the angelic announcement of good news for all. (That they watched their flocks by night disposes of the current idea that the transcendent incident happened in mid-winter). The theme was that the good pleasure of God was manifested in a man towards men. He was and is the Son of God's love. The shepherds were stirred and published abroad what they saw. Their audience wondered, but they did not move a step to see the child! Mankind generally was not in harmony with the angelic testimony. The poverty of the parents was evident in the offering of two birds instead of a lamb. The first mention of "comfort" occurs relative to Simeon who was warned by the Holy Ghost that he should not die until he had seen the Lord's anointed. (The Pharisees were insensible to the Holy Spirit). Simeon's heart was full and he poured out the matchless prophetic statement as he held in his arms the true Ark of the Covenant. Then Anna, like Simeon, did not come in by chance, she was in time to join in the thanksgiving and to testify to all who looked for redemption in Jerusalem (1:e., the counterpart of the consolation of Israel). The subsequent twelve years are tersely summarised in Luke 2:40. His conduct as a child was perfect. The incident in the temple occurred on the occasion of His first visit to Jerusalem. He did not teach, he simply asked questions and heard the answers. Those present were amazed; Luke 2:49, gives His first recorded statement (John 5:17, is analogous). In the 18 years following there was no premature assumption of authority but simple obedience. Mary in faith waited patiently for the solution of her perplexities. She was probably the only one mentioned at the beginning of the Gospel who survived to the end thereof. We may be sure that these obscure years were marked by the same features as emerged in His later years when under the searchlight of scrutiny by carping critics! An important event was the advent of John the Baptist

who emerged from his seclusion in the wilderness much like Elijah of old. He preached the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins and the fulfilment of Isaiah 40:1-31 (the lowly valley of penitents, the lofty mountains of Pharisees, the crooked publicans and the rough soldiers, would all be dealt with by the power of God). Was this the Messiah? John dispelled all illusions, proclaiming the forthcoming baptism of the Spirit and fire. The Pharisees were exposed in their essential character as vipers which had contaminated the people. Grace can flow forth to all (not merely to Israel). All flesh shall see the salvation of God (Luke 3:6). External formalities and reliance on national prescriptive right would be useless. He warned vehemently of coming judgment, yet preached good news. John's baptism was a preparatory work and to the life of the Coming One. (Christian baptism is to the death of Christ). John preached in the wild region of Jordan, not at the seat of man's authority in Jerusalem, where boasted light and learning were. In due course Christ presented Himself for baptism, while praying He received Heaven's salutation of good pleasure. The genealogy is said to be via Mary, (as Matthew gave that via Joseph), although credited via Joseph as head, both came to a focus in David. Luke 4:1-44. opens with the temptation in the wilderness. 40 days formed a perfect test (it is instructive to see the recurrence of 40 in the O.T.). The test was not in a garden of delights like Eden, but in the desert. The order of the temptations was moral. (Matthew gives the historic or time order). The order and character of test in Eden is an important analogy. The devil appealed to the same cravings which had been so successful there. As in 1 John 2:1-29, the lust of the flesh is seen in the need of bread; the lust of the eye re the kingdoms of the world. (The Lord could not take the kingdom from Satan, nor later, from the mob which was His by right). The pride of life was seen in the advice to test God's care. (In Eden to the man and woman the fruit appeared to be good for food, pleasant to the eye and desirable as making wise). These were the same three elements in evidence with disastrous results to them, but the elements appealed in vain to the Lord, because these elements making up man's constitution found no reciprocation in Him. The enemy was countered in all the tests by the word of God. He knew that the words were no mere words of Moses or other scribes and thus made no protest against their use. The same principles based on the value of the Scriptures as the word of God are valid for the christian now. The devil's quotation of scripture was faulty and his contentions were lies!

After the test the Lord began his public ministry. Luke dwells chiefly on that part in Galilee. The Lord had bound the strong man and now proceeded to spoil his goods! The powers of evil were manifested in two ways:- (a) allurement, appealing to lust or desire, (b) the threat of the power of death, which the Lord came to annul. He began at his home town of Nazareth. V. 18 presents Him as the vessel of grace which arrested attention but was despised by the mob. Israel had always done so. "Is not this Joseph's son?" Grace had leaped over the wall to the helpless widow and to the hopeless Naaman (26, 27). As of yore they could not bear free grace and would have killed Him, but His hour was not come. He moved to Capernaum. In the synagogue he would not receive testimony from the devil in the man. (The devils see, only men are blind). The devil had to quit his victim at the word of the Lord. Then in the case of Simon's mother-in-law, disease had to go. His great business was preaching the kingdom of God. In Luke 5:1-39 by the lake He preached the word of God. He was not long in Peter's debt for the loan of his boat as a platform. He was the Creator and so His word had authority over created things. The dubious Peter obeyed the command. The partners in the other boat shared in the privilege of fishing in the lake. James and John were more intimate with Peter as partners in the business. To express the distinction two

different Greek words are used (vv. 7, 10). Peter's confession was similar to those of Job and Isaiah of old! The sequel was they forsook all and followed Him to be fishers of men. The cleansing of the leper followed (type of the hideousness of sin). None could have touched the leper with impunity but He! Note the leper's faith, "Lord if thou wilt," answered by "I will." No one appealed in vain. The priest was to certify the cleansing. The fame of Jesus spread abroad, yet He was ever dependent; he prayed. Next the helplessness of paralysis is reviewed; note the perseverance. Forgiveness of sins is more important than healing of the body! But the criticism of the Pharisees was crushed by the body being healed with surplus strength to carry the bed which had hitherto carried the palsied. Strange things indeed were being seen (a new day had dawned, antecedent to grace reigning through righteousness). Levi who had been hitherto squeezing out the resources of the people, left all at the word of the Lord and followed Him. His enlarged heart made a great farewell feast to a great company and doubtless he received great grace in return. This was a great blow to the Pharisees who misapprehended the meaning and they were astonished to hear that sinners were the very people wanted. To the quibblers he answered "could the sons of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom was with them." The cross was implied in the days of fasting later! Christianity and Judaism were incompatible, just as a new unfelted cloth could not hold with the old and the old skins could not accommodate the new wine. The Spirit and ordinances were inconsistent! The disciples enjoying His presence could not recognise old practices irrespective of the taste of those who did not know grace and pronounced the old wine or pleasures better. In Luke 6:1-49 that tradition was hostile to grace and man's interest is seen in the plucking of the ears of corn and the sequel. The formalist could not stand grace, and appealed to tradition not the word of God. A new principle was introduced in the Lord being supreme over the Sabbath, the sign of the covenant. The man with the withered hand could not work. There was no Sabbath for man under such conditions. The Lord asserted His right to do good and the restoration of the hand was a work for God. But to maintain tradition the cavillers would forbid God's mercy. Subsequently the Lord went into the mountain and prayed all night. Next day, His love was active in the choice of the twelve who were attracted to Him as centre. They were an inner circle in the multitude of other disciples and without these there was the great multitude of needy folk. His goodness flowed out to all in healing, then their minds were free to hear the Gospel. Then followed the "Sermon on the Mount" more tersely stated than in Matthew. That was moral instruction for the new company; the remnant and yet the nucleus for the heavenly calling. The sermon is full of paradoxes to those who judge by external evidences. Their reward was in heaven! The disciples were taught how to view their enemies, showing abundant love and mercy, avoiding a censorious spirit, exercising self-judgment. (The blind Pharisees could only fall in the ditch). The man who attended to the Lord's words would be like the builder on a rock; while the negligent would be involved in the same irrevocable disaster as the builder on earth or sand. (Galashiels, 1940-41). In Luke 7:1-50, the principles and powers of the Kingdom are recorded. The centurion's servant (who was "precious") was sick. As a proselyte he induced the elders to intercede. The centurion truly discerned the situation and had his servant restored according to his faith. In simplicity the unnamed centurion achieved undying fame! Then followed the raising from the dead of the son of the widow of Nain. The pressure of bereavement was there, but the Lord had compassion on her. His power triumphed over death, and the lad was delivered alive to his mother. God had indeed visited his people, just as in the dark days of Elijah and Elisha. Then John the Baptist thought the coming kingdom was of a curious nature when it allowed its herald to be imprisoned. Was He

really the Christ? The Lord's answer was by exhibiting the powers of the world to come. Disease, death and devil had to yield their prey! "Go tell John, what things ye have seen"! They were more potent than words and restored the faith of John, then followed rich testimony to the greatness of the herald, yet there was a great change of dispensation taking place. Wisdom's children justified God; but the self-righteous rejected the counsel of God against themselves. They behaved with the captiousness of children. John was too righteous, Jesus too gracious for them! In the next incident the devotion of the woman was in striking contrast to the calculating criticism of the Pharisee. (It is pure speculation to identify the woman with Mary Magdalene and most unlikely). The incident led to the unfolding of "grace abounding "in the creditor's treatment of the two debtors. Forgiveness of sins, salvation and peace were exhibited! In Luke 8:1-56, the characteristic features of the Kingdom were continued. Devoted hearts were drawn to Christ, appreciating the power of deliverance. The parable of the sower evinces what and whom Christ was gathering. In the world there was no good seed. There had been no crop previously; the soil was variable and so also the results. The devil, the flesh and the world were adverse! The responsibility of the manner of hearing was enforced. Moreover relationship was essentially spiritual and not natural. The storm on the lake showed that the disciples did not apprehend who He was. So to-day in adverse circumstances often accentuated by the enemy, especially re our Christian associations, do we exhibit more faith than they? The demon-possessed man illustrates mankind, as the sport of the mighty forces of evil. These were completely dissolved and departed to their proper place at the word of the Lord. The man (changed, clothed and sane) found his proper place too at the feet of Jesus, forthwith to be a willing slave according to the instructions of his new Master! Faith was evident in the woman with the issue of blood. She tasted that the Lord is good, even to the hem of His garment. The conduction of good was only through faith. He was insulated from the faithless, curious crowd! Jairus daughter was dispensationally the picture of Israel. She was past all hope, but that only enhanced the greatness of the miracle performed by the One Who is the resurrection and the life. So helpless, hopeless (yea! dead) Israel will not be delivered by Zionism, but by the coming of the Lord! In Luke 9:1-62, the Lord sent out the twelve disciples, arranged their circumstances, invested them with power over the devil, instructed them as to their attitude to their surroundings as preachers of the Kingdom. These epoch-making events perturbed the usurper, Herod, as he feared it was the Baptist who had risen again. what must be the inmost thoughts of a despot whose conscience is stained with the blood of myriads of innocent people? But Herod wished to see and identify the miracle worker! The apostles returning from their successful mission were drawn aside into the desert. It is not good to have continuous publicity! But the Lord's ministry and grace continued. The multitude needed bread, the disciples were at a loss. The lad with five rolls and two fishes was the only one of the crowd who had a day's provision for himself! But in the hands of the Lord administered through the disciples, there was abundance for all. The residue of twelve hand baskets was adequate testimony (dispensationally) of the overflowing grace and blessing in the Millenium after the Church period has been completely filled. In our immediate connection Christian affairs may be at a low ebb; but we need not despair because there will not be any shortage of resource in our time! Thus there is no excuse for half-heartedness Peter's confession of the Christ of God led to the unfolding that no longer the Messiah but the Heavenly Christ would occupy attention, and that called for patience and discipleship. But they were to expect the coming glory of which the Transfiguration was a picture and of which there were Three chosen witnesses. The giver of and the recaller to the Law were

also present in glory. They conversed of the accomplishment of righteousness, on account of which grace would reign. But the greatest men of the Old Testament could not share the place of honour with Christ. Coming down from the mount they were met by a crowd, Satan's handiwork and the disciples' unbelief and powerlessness. The result was that another only child was healed. The devil holds men captive here, but on high all is in accord with the will of God! Then the disciples disputing about their relative positions in the coming Kingdom, called forth the Lord's rebuke and a little child served as an object lesson. That "the least should be great" is a contrast to what obtains in the world; then the Lord set His face to go to Jerusalem and the fleshly zeal of the disciples was rebuked as incongruent with the spirit of Christ. Forwardness, backwardness and lukewarmness of would-be disciples concluded the chapter. In Luke 10:1-42, the sending out of "the seventy" begins the new section of the gospel. The same gracious features were evinced as with "the twelve." But the centre of reference had been shifted to the glory! Their power in subjecting the demons through the Lord's name was a minor incident, compared with the value of their names being written in heaven, forming a Burgess roll beyond the reach of the eroding influences of time; that is subsequent to Satan's lightning eclipse from the heavenly sphere. The comparative judgments of the cities (Luke 10:12-16) have an eternal bearing. The transcendent prayer puts emphasis on the exclusion of the wise Pharisees and the revelation to faith's babes, 1:e., all in accordance with the Father's will. (It has been said that the mission of "the twelve" illustrates the Gospel of the Grace of God, while the mission of "the seventy" connects with the Gospel of the Glory of God). The lawyer wanted to inherit eternal life by doing. He was an apt reciter of the Law, but evaded the implication of neighbourship. "This do and thou shalt live" does not imply participation in eternal life; but simply continuing to live here. Then follows the incident of the Good Samaritan, who did not quibble about who was his neighbour, but acted in grace. The Law on both spiritual and material sides could only pass by the distressed man! The lawyer found the pill difficult to swallow, but had to admit that the neighbour was the dispenser of mercy. The conclusion of Luke 10:1-42. presents Mary sitting at the Lord's feet hearing His word (the good part which cannot be taken away)! She appreciated His preciousness. Martha's service would have been quite right at another time, but she was missing the needful thing! In Luke 11:1-54, at their request the Lord taught His disciples a prayer. The old petitions were inept. The prayer was fitting for the revelation extant, but was not descriptive of what would be revealed later. It appertained entirely to earth and secular relations, nevertheless the prayer is comprehensive. Daily bread, forgiveness of sins, and deliverance from trial are sought. Then emphasis is put on perseverance and brevity in prayer ("ask, seek, knock"). The gift of the Spirit was contingent on asking by the people connected with an earthly calling! Then the Lord casting out the demon was attributed to His being an agent of the devil! There was rich irony in His words "by whom do your sons (or disciples) cast them out?" It was ridiculous to contend that the devil would destroy his own work. But only the finger of God was required to evict demons! Thus the Kingdom of God in His person was among them. Moreover, there was no neutrality in that war. The unclean spirit had left the Jews since their return from Babylon, but the rejection of Christ would lead to a worse state than at first! The ritualist would bless the Lord's mother, but greater blessing attached to hearing and keeping the Word of God. The Lord then proceeded to brand the generation as apostate. The sign of Jonas indicated the repentance of the hearers as well as judgment proclaimed and the Queen of the South believed the word without miracle. But the Lord's contemporaries had not been attracted as the latter had been to Solomon nor had they listened as the Ninevites had to

Jonas. Yet He was greater than both! As to the light, it is intended to be displayed. The nation had boasted of illuminating those around who had been sitting in darkness. But in reality their eye had been astigmatic and had twisted the rays of light so that the boasted knowledge transmitted and reflected had been "darkness." An eye of "transparent honesty" was needed to fill the body with the true sense of the Glory of God. A Pharisee seeking advertisement entertained the Lord. Their external punctiliousness and internal evil were condemned. They had taken away "the key of knowledge" (spiritual meaning of the Scriptures) by their tradition. In Luke 12:1-59, the Lord warned His hearers against formalism and the world's hostility (even in its best estate). Then God's care received emphasis especially as to its minute details. If such great provision for small creatures what care may be expected for man! The transcendent ministry seemed to be missed by a bystander who was worried about share of an inheritance. A man's life (zoe, what he is) is not to be confused with his living (bios, what he has). Then the rich man provided for the future of his body and failed to take account for his soul! He was certainly a fool. Then the disciples were instructed that they could safely trust every secular issue to the administration of God. Therefore they needed not to be racked with anxiety! In the second section of Luke 12:1-59, the true servant is watching, waiting, working; that the Lord on His return should gird Himself and serve them is contrary to secular practice. Love serves, selfishness desires service. The faithful steward administers well, giving meat in due season and is commended. On the other hand, the selfish servant may abuse his position, but he will be held responsible. Christendom will receive greater punishment than the heathen! Symbolically there are indicated, in Luke 12:32 the remnant, 47 Christendom, 48 the heathen, 59 Judaism. The Lord's first coming did not bring peace but discord. Christianity would not be popular in the world which rejected Him. Households would be disrupted; having ability to read the signs of the physical universe and unable to judge moral right was hypocrisy, they would be punished in consequence. In Luke 13:1-35, the great principles of God's government in the world, justice and mercy, are adduced. The Galileans slain by Pilate were no worse than the-others who were all responsible to repent while mercy was still available. God's long-suffering is indicated in His patience with the unfruitful fig tree (Israel). The tree was cut down, not rooted up, Israel will spring again! The chronic crooked woman (yet daughter of Abraham) was made straight; she glorified God. The indignant ruler upheld tradition, he was scathingly condemned as a hypocrite. Temporal interests vitiated all fine profession. The rapid and widespread growth of profession (Christendom) is illustrated by the parable of the mustard seed. The fowls (forces of evil) lodge in the branches. The permeability and limited sphere of operation of the leaven are shown in the next parable. The question of the number of the remnant sought by the curious was ignored. Many will seek to enter, but at the wrong gate of human effort. The individual should see that he is right. The real gate is narrow, because it will not admit pretension. The solemnity of the closed door was then enforced! The Lord disregarded expediency. He owned only the will of God which determined his demise at Jerusalem, the headquarters of all the prophetic murders. The chapter concludes with the Lord's tender solicitude for Jerusalem and its unhappy prospect. In Luke 14:1-35, he took a meal with a Pharisee (never with a Sadducee). In healing the dropsical man, mercy was before ceremony. His advice in the parable to the guests was contrary to the current practice. His advice to the host was equally at variance with the practice, then or now. The pious ejaculation of a guest led to this parable, testing the hearts of man. But a deeper lesson was enforced in the Great Supper parable, type of God's boundless grace in Christ. God's disposition was evinced in that he "bade many." The invited pleaded

harmless necessity of temporal interests to evade the invitation (1:e., the attitude of the Jew dispensationally). But the angry host was not to be frustrated. He commanded to bring in the outcasts of the city and its surroundings (1:e., the Gentiles dispensationally). Grace does not exclude. The sinner's own course shuts him out from blessing! Note the growing insistency, "bade" "bring" and "compel"! Salvation, satisfaction and endless joy are implied. (The end of the supper is the celebration of righteousness in the day of display). Outside the Pharisee's house, the Lord showed the spirit of true discipleship, self-renunciation and sacrifice. Then prudent people count the cost either of building or war. Salt is grace in spiritual power. Failure to maintain discipleship was analogous to salt losing its savour. (The salt would be ammonium carbonate from which the ammonia, the great principle in manures, had evaporated, and the residue was useless). Dispensationally the leaders of Israel were useless. In the three-fold parable of Luke 15:1-32, the Lord gives the full display of God's love to the publican and sinners as they drew near. They were the fruit of the preceding chapter, typified by the younger son. In His infinite grace He received sinners! How fitting it was that the shepherd, the woman, and the Father should rejoice while the critical Pharisees murmured, (typified by the elder son). The wayward sheep illustrated the course of this world; the insensible coin, the dead sinner; the younger son, the child of disobedience (Ephesians 2:2). All set forth features in sinnership. The son's pre-conceived ideas and speech are all eclipsed in the unexpected wealth of unconditional forgiveness. "They began to be merry" indicates consonance with the endless joy of the Father's heart. The elder son had only done his duty, yet his heart was far off, as evinced in "my friends" and "thy son." The oracles and promises were still viewed as pertaining to Israel (15:31). In Luke 16:1-31, the idea is continued in the parable of the unjust steward spoken to the disciples, in which God was discharging the Jew as an unsatisfactory steward. The Lord enforced the satisfactory use of material things with the everlasting future in view. None can serve two masters : (a) God and (b) material things. Character is evinced by conduct. Our own interests are eternal. The present things of which we are life-holders belong to God. Then followed perhaps the most solemn incident in Scripture, it is not a parable although resembling one. That is indicated by "there was." The nameless rich man was primarily the Jew, but essentially the careless voluptuary of every generation! The beggar, the perfect antithesis of his name, Lazarus (O.T. Eleazar=God helps) in the depths of his misery, probably did not get the crumbs he desired. According to the common-lot, they both died; but death was not the end. Abraham's bosom (the Jewish thought of bliss) was the future portion of the beggar, while Hell (where his previous wealth was valueless) was the portion of the erstwhile plutocrat. In Hell, the smallest mercy was not available and the impassable gulf was fixed. But his selfishness had vanished !He thought of his five brethren. He had no use for God's word or messengers previously, but thought that the resurrected would obtain a hearing. The sequel is shown that the time-seeker pays no attention to the word of the One who rose from the dead! In Luke 17:1-37, God's grace is contrasted with self-righteousness. Forgiveness was enjoined. The disciples thought that the injunction was too hard to believe! All ten lepers were healed, but only the Samaritan recognised God's glory therein. The chapter introduces the new section of the gospel in the manifestation of the kingdom in power (meanwhile it does not come by observation or evidence to the eye). The kingdom was among them in His own person. People who wanted ocular evidence would be chasing an ignis fatuus or "will o' the wisp", looking here or there. The days of the Son of Man entailed responsibility now. The Lord cited instances from the O.T. of judgment after warnings had been ignored. Similar will come on this world with lightning speed

which cannot be detected by the eye. In the O.T. for example the careless world went on regardless of judgment to come but that did not avert the blow which fell, when God intervened in judgment. So it would be logical to expect that God's final intervention will be of similar character. His judgment will discriminate! One will be taken for execution, and the other left for earthly blessing. Divine judgment will be inexorable and inescapable. Safety for the disciples will be found in dissociation from the world and its things going on to judgment. All must be given up which man values. "Remember Lot's wife" who was loth to give up Sodom. These matters relate to the Lord's coming with His saints to put the world right!

Luke 18:1-43 opens with the resource of the righteous in prayer. The widow, type of the remnant, had no redress from the oppressor, until the judge became tired of her importunity. If expediency should result in relief, then we can depend upon God, the righteous judge, effecting deliverance. Moreover, He is long-suffering and the delay results in blessing for others. The humility of the publican was acceptable rather than the self-satisfaction of the Pharisee who paraded his virtues. Then children were ignored under the Law, but childlike obedience, simplicity and faith are essential to the Kingdom. The ruler sought to ingratiate himself with the Lord but he ignored sin and the need of grace. Even such excellence in man only ensured continuance of life here, but gave no title to eternal life. His riches were the stumbling block for complete fulfilment of the Law and had no relation to the results of grace. A complete revolution was taking place. Under the Law riches formed a token of God's approval, but they had no place in the new Kingdom. That provoked the question: "who then can be saved?" The solution rests with God! Peter wanted credit for their faithfulness. True discipleship would be recompensed in the present time; while everlasting life would ensue. Then the Lord showed that His pathway would lead to death, but he was misunderstood. At Jericho, he was accosted by a blind man in the place where Zedekiah, the last king of Judah, had lost his eyesight. But the blind man there would prove to avail himself of the last opportunity for blessing which was according to his faith. The result was glorifying God by the man and the people.

Luke 19:1-48 opens with the last public testimony of grace mentioned and it is peculiar to Luke's gospel. The Lord entered Jericho for the last time. Zaccheus overcame difficulties to see the Lord, who also saw Zaccheus and invited Himself to be a guest. (The only instance of the kind). The crowd murmured; Zaccheus vindicated himself; the Lord ignored both; saying, "this day is salvation come to this house, etc." That was of infinitely greater moment than any matter for time. The "pounds" parable emphasises opportunity, as the "talents" parable of Matthew 25:1-46 ability. The reward of satisfactory occupancy is increased sphere of service. The idler (primarily the Pharisee) sought to besmirch the nobleman's reputation in the description as harsh oppressor. On that conclusion, he should not have obstructed progress by failing to pass on the pound to another who might have used it satisfactorily. Then follows the description (fourfold in the Gospels) of the Lord's entry into Jerusalem as Messiah. In the matter of the colt, there was no gainsaying the Lord's claims. The outburst of the disciples fulfilled the prophetic word in the Old Testament. The only alternative to that was the stones uttering praise. The creation groans towards that end! The Lord knew how unreliable was the popular acclamation and wept over the city's fate and its subsequent destruction owing to failure to appreciate the opportunity presented in His coming. Meanwhile He asserted His authority in suppressing the base use of the temple which was essentially the House of Prayer and it had become on the pretext of convenience really a nest of

unrighteousness. The leaders sought to kill the Lord, but were undecided because the people hung on His words!

Luke 20:1-47 goes on with the incidents arising during the four days of His teaching in the temple. The rulers demanded His certificate of authority. They were put in a dilemma by the question about John's baptism, thus they evaded the answer. To the people the Lord propounded the vineyard parable. The Pharisees were face to face with their secret thoughts and seeing its implication exclaimed "God forbid." The rejected stone, becoming the cornerstone of the pyramid Godward, would also have a manward aspect! The one who repented and fell thereon would be blessed in being broken, but the opponent would be ground to powder under it in God's unswerving judgment. Still the chief priests could not pluck up courage to seize Him and they employed secret agents (hypocrites) that they might have plausible excuse to put Him under Roman condemnation. So they subtly desired the Lord's mind on paying tribute to Caesar. If the coinage belonged to Caesar, it was right that he should receive it, nevertheless God's claims over the people should also be recognised. The hecklers were silenced. Then the Sadducees received their only notice in Luke, in the question of marriage and resurrection. (They were not greatly concerned about doctrine of any kind, they corresponded to the modern rationalist). Their question was hypothetical and most unlikely. Their theory was demolished as they were ignorant of Scripture and the nature of resurrection. Marriage appertains only to this life, but death is not the end. God is the God of the living! Then the Lord put an insoluble problem to the Jew as to how Christ could be David's son and Lord (Adonai in Ps.). The chapter closes with the solemn denunciation of the self-interest of the scribes.

Luke 21:1-38 presents the contrast to the scribe in the poor widow contributing all she had to the treasure. The Lord's companions marvelled at the embellishment of the temple which called forth the solemn prophecy of its destruction, but they were not to be occupied with rumours. They would be persecuted but they would receive eloquence and words for adequate testimony. Then followed the prediction of the Roman invasion and the sad fate of the city. From that period on to the fulfilment of the times of the Gentiles, Jerusalem would be crushed under the oppressor, but the ruling powers and their nations would come under great distress. When the climax of trial would be reached, the Son of Man would intervene with great power and glory. The people of God were not to be cast down, they were to look up for the redemption which would be near. The fig tree parable illustrates the point. In Luke 5:32, the generation has the moral character of the remnant which will persist. (Moreover, the Jews continue and other nations vanish.) The parenthesis of grace is bridged over. They were to be watchful and not abusing the mercies supplied. (By day He taught in the temple, but at night He was on Mount Olivet.)

Luke 22:1-71 begins with Satan possessing the traitor who doubtless thought that the silver would be easily earned and his Master would soon use His power in getting free. But what must have been his thoughts as he still continued in the company? His covetousness was his ruin! In spite of the rulers' ban, the man with the pitcher of water provided the guest room without demur. Luke's narration differs from the others in distinguishing the passover cup from that of the Lord's Supper, the cup of the New Covenant. The reference to the traitor, the strife about position in the kingdom and Peter's boastful confidence follow. They had had direction for every contingency but they would now be left without their protector. Their stolid literalism misunderstood His reference to the sword! The Lord's agony in Gethsemane proclaims the climax of His obedience. While He was

reproving the disciples, Judas and his motley crowd appeared and the sword was used, but grace healed the wound. He told the rulers he had not sought to evade them! (No reference to prophecy occurs at this point). There were three arraignments. The first was informal in the High Priest's house, where Peter's threefold denial occurred. The second trial took place at daybreak in the council chamber where the Lord proclaimed His deity.

Luke 23:1-56 opens with the third trial before Pilate who sought to evade his responsibility. Before Herod, the Lord would not recognise the usurper and He was silent. (The enemies were reconciled). On His return to Pilate, Barabbas was chosen. The vacillating timeserving governor yielded to the popular clamour! On the way to Golgotha, the Cyrenian was impressed to share the burden of the cross. The Lord advised the weeping sympathisers to retain their feelings for their own sad lot. Man rejected the true life in the green tree, but God will reject the dry tree. In Luke, the Man of Sorrows shows grace on the cross in three recorded statements:- (1) "Father forgive them for they know not what they do." (2) "Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise," (to the thief). (3) "Father into Thy hands I commend My spirit." The rough centurion gave glory to God. If Satan had his agents there God had His too! The secret disciple, a man of quality, who only could have had access to Pilate boldly claimed the Lord's body, which was buried in the rich man's tomb, according to prophetic utterance. (Isaiah 53:9).

Luke 24:1-53 shows the faithful band of women who had rested obediently during the Sabbath, early astir on the first of the week at the sepulchre. They were too late to render the customary service, because the Lord was risen, the stone was rolled away and the angelic testimony stated that it was useless to seek the living among the dead and that everything had been foretold by the Lord while in Galilee. Then the thrilling episode on the way to Emmaus is recorded. Evidently the testimony of the women had been treated largely as an hallucination, because the couple were on their way home with their backs to the company of disciples on the greatest day that had ever dawned in human history. A man had risen from the dead, on the merits of His work and Person! Their conversation had been gloomy and the stranger alluded to that fact as an introduction. He was indeed a stranger in Jerusalem! To them apparently He had been no more than a prophet. They had trusted that He would have redeemed Israel, etc. How they must have been thrilled as He challenged their dull apprehension and as He demonstrated from the Scriptures that Christ could only enter the Glory through sufferings! He would not press His company further but they could not let Him go, and He accepted their hospitality, but suddenly took the place of the host. Immediately He was recognised in the act of blessing and He vanished. The result of His burning words was burning hearts, and the long rough dark road was as nothing to them. They speedily retraced their steps to their own company and no sooner had they added their testimony, when the Lord appeared in their midst with His customary salutation, "Peace unto you." He invited them to handle Him to assure themselves that He was a real man. He confirmed that by eating before them. Then He referred to the fulfilment of the testimony to Himself of the three main parts (Pentateuchs) of the Old Testament. He opened their understanding to comprehend the Scriptures. Then He told them that repentance and remission of sins, the great elements of the preaching, to be instituted at Jerusalem, would spread all over the world. They were witnesses of His death and resurrection. But for the execution of the commission they required to be endowed with power from on High! Then He led them out to Bethany and while in the act of priestly blessing He was carried into heaven where He has continued ever since in the same attitude. Thus the

book which commenced with great ebullition of joy ends on the same note. (Galashiels, 1940-1).

066 Mephibosheth.

Mephibosheth.

(Extracted from S. M. Anglin in "Christian Friend," 1897). The grace of God to the sinner has been beautifully illustrated by the "kindness of God" shown by David to Mephibosheth. But not all the types in the O.T. together can adequately set forth that grace. One would desire that we may value them as directing our minds to Him of whom they speak and the exceeding riches of God's grace. What is the effect produced in the heart and thus on life and character by the revelation of that grace? I desire to consider this subjective side of the truth. Have we not to own that while the grace to us surpasses that of which he was the subject, yet his answer towards David affecting his course and character, makes us conscious of coldness of hearts, little affected by the love of God. Hence the little effect either in separation from the course of this world or in devotedness to a rejected Christ! We do well to deal honestly with ourselves as to the cause. There is a sure remedy and we can hide nothing, for all will yet be made manifest (1 Corinthians 4:1-21). We have to do with the God of all grace who commends every desire after Christ. On the other hand, no mere profession deceives Him. It affords great comfort that He discerns everything perfectly. What joy it would have been to Mephibosheth, could David have appreciated his motives instead of judging his case hastily. But there was true affection for David and faithfulness which were not understood by the self-seeking Ziba. But what produced such beautiful fruit with Mephibosheth? Great and unmerited kindness had been shown to him by David. He belonged to the family of David's enemy — Saul. He was poor and helpless and felt and owned it. He was of "the poor in spirit" who could be blessed and hence had a deep sense of the grace shown him by David. (Because the nature of God's grace is not rightly understood, many are defective in proper effect in our day). He rightly understood and accepted the place assigned him thereby and this brought him into personal contact with David continually. Because of that position he grew in attachment to David and in the favour of such companionship. All this but faintly expresses that of which we have been the recipients. Indeed David never expressed love for Mephibosheth. He showed 1000-fold more for his reprobate son Absalom! Mephibosheth was at David's table "as one of the king's sons," but no conscious bond of relationship existed. But all this puts us to shame, comparing the effect on his life and that in ourselves. The feeble answer to such mighty grace and love is because our true distance and moral condition have not been sufficiently apprehended and the place of nearness which love has assigned us has not been accepted by the soul. True, that acceptance is only reached through accepting His death in its application to all that ministers to "the old man." If we prefer life here we cannot enjoy "life eternal" that circle which His death and resurrection have opened for us now and into which the Holy Spirit would conduct our hearts. In few words the divine record tells us of that which marked a devoted heart to David during his absence from his rightful place (2. Sam. 19:24). We covet a corresponding answer in our lives to the fact that our Lord is rejected here. Mephibosheth's answer respecting the inheritance speaks in no uncertain way of disinterested love for David and that he might enjoy again his company. All is beautiful to contemplate and is recorded that we may be exercised as to how far we have been

formed by that love which "passeth knowledge" and by the company of our blessed Lord.

067 Ministry to the Lord.

Ministry to the Lord.

L. B. Hogg.

There are many valuable lessons to be learned from the life of Abraham, the father of the faithful. We find activities common to saints, not the least of which is the one recorded in Genesis 18:1-8, to which we desire to draw attention. It is a detailed example of Luke 8:23, "and certain women which ministered unto Him of their substance." Not often do we find this; numerous occasions there are of the Lord ministering to others, for "I came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." Even the twelve were guilty of selfish desires. How happy to be as the women, so the appreciating recipients of His boundless grace and salvation, that we both follow and minister to Him. From Genesis 18:1-33. we learn the remarkable fact that the Lord seeks the company of those who, appreciating Him, are ready to accept an opportunity to minister to Him. We read "comfort ye your hearts . . . for therefore are ye come to your servant." The moral fitness of Abraham is most important to note. He was called out; obedient; and sojourner; looking for a city (see Hebrews 11:8-10); and, circumcised (flesh mortified) Genesis 17:1-27. His competence to meet His Lord's desire is seen also in the way he serves, as also the food he provides. The manner of ministering is delightful. His readiness, also that of his household, is noted. "He ran," 5: 2; "hastened," 5: 6; "make ready quickly," 5: 6; "ran," 5: 7; "hasted to dress it," 5: 7. Paul urges this spirit in 2 Corinthians 8:11.

Abraham's recognition of his visitor is striking, for despite the disguise, Abraham seems immediately to discern who it was, for he addresses Him by a title which in scripture is given to none but God. The provision for the meal showed his knowledge of the Lord's taste. Water to wash the feet provided, three measures of fine meal were in requisition. This sets forth the Person of the Lord as the One in whom dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. He was God manifest in the flesh. What praise there is as our hearts fill with a sense of the exceeding preciousness of this truth. In contrast, the parable in Matthew 13:1-58. shows the three measures of meal permeated with leaven, foretelling the pollution of this mystery of godliness by the responsible insubject church. Abraham then calls for a calf tender and good. This speaks of the work of the Lord Jesus and His character as a servant. In Luke 15:1-32 a calf fatted is the food of the Father and His now living son. How precious the communion there intimated as they feed upon the accumulated excellencies of the One who so willingly undertook, even to death, the will of God. But if in Luke the thought of "fatted" is presented, in Genesis we have the ideas of tender and good. Isaiah points to this when he writes, "He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant." What tenderness and godness are seen in our adorable Lord as He walked here as man. Isaiah surely states God's estimate of Christ, and we gather that Abraham too appreciated this in presenting the calf tender and good as fitting food to his heavenly visitor. To arrive at the meaning of the third provision, milk, we are helped by the description of Israel's inheritance, "a land flowing with milk and honey." Our heavenly inheritance is the place where there flows without limit, throughout its

vast extent, the "unsearchable riches of Christ." May we possess like spiritual substance, and follow in Abraham's steps, offering to our Lord that which is due. The order taken by Abraham indicates spiritual growth, for firstly we have the Person typified, secondly His work, and thirdly the riches of the inheritance. How proper!

068 But ye are come to Mount Zion.

But ye are come to Mount Zion.

J. S. Bertram. The blessed God would have us to know where in infinite grace He has brought us; but infinite grace on the part of God avails us nothing unless faith is active on our part for the laying hold of these matters. Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, so God by His word is the producer of faith. Grace on the part of God, and faith on their part linked the worthies of Hebrews 11:1-40 with an order outside the sphere of nature, where everything was stable! Abraham looked for a city which had foundations, whose builder and architect was God. Moses esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt; he had learned not to trust in the shadow of Egypt (Isaiah 30:2), although brought up in all the learning of Egypt. The light of another day and order had dawned on their souls and enabled them to make calculations according to God. Now in faith we come to something positive, a new day; a new order; another world (the world to come). Alas, to many Christians the world to come remains such, in place of allowing the Spirit of God to make future things (which now obtain the Spirit's realm) present to our souls. The apostle says, "Ye are not come to Mount Sinai, which brings to light God's righteous claim relative to man, man's unsuitability to Him, and maintains the distance already brought in by sin, whence comes the ministration of condemnation and death. But "ye are come to Mount Zion" (Hebrews 12:22), introduces grace and gives righteousness, 1:e., something positive. Here is a moral journey; not only come to Jesus the Saviour, thank God for that step! Mount Zion is where God has chosen to put His name, it speaks of Christ risen, all the era of shadows gone, the dawn of a new day, having its inception in His resurrection. After His resurrection Mary would have embraced Him as previously, His word to her was, "touch Me not"; that order was past. He was now graciously and tenderly leading her and eventually the other disciples into the light of a new day which must essentially take its character from Himself risen, not only a new day, but a new order and system, the city of the living God, which reflects the glory of God, the new seat of authority. When the people, the priests, and the king had failed God introduced Mount Zion and Jerusalem, wrested from the hand of the Jebusite as the seat of authority and the centre of the kingdom. In the new day, the seat of authority is in the city of the living God on the heavenly Zion. As heavenly in constitution, it is independent of outside contribution, self-supporting, perfect in harmony, and administration. Our souls derive from such now, whose builder and architect is God, in which there is the consummation of that hope connected with faith referred to in Hebrews 11:1-40; they looked for a city; the day of display will bring all this out to a redeemed universe. Connected with the city is the innumerable company of angels, the servants of the Divine Will, swift to do His bidding, messengers of mercy, a "vast universal gathering" (J. N. D. Tr.). The apostle in the thought of the city seems to touch on the line of the other apostles relative to the kingdom, now hid, but known to faith, and soon to be seen in display. He then comes to what is peculiar to his own ministry, viz., the church of the first-born whose names are written in heaven; this surely connects us with the eternal purpose of God, 1:e., His thought from the outset relative to Christ. No power in earth or hell can erase these names; the

gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Now we come to the supremacy of God, who is Judge of all, manifestly relating to the world to come, but at present evinced in connection with the spirits of just men made perfect. That perfection could only be imparted in virtue of redemption, God must be just to the work of Christ, How this enhances the perfect work of Christ, hence God is the great discriminator, His word is final. What follows touches the depths of our moral being. Jesus the mediator of the new Covenant (what He has done, and what He is in Himself) has endeared Himself to our hearts. He is the centre of all God's thoughts. In Him alone there could be a perfect display of all that God is. The terms of the new Covenant (the new conditions on which God can be with His people), are all of grace, forgiveness, and moral suitability to Himself. The writing of the Spirit of God on the fleshy (1:e., the impressionable) tables of the heart, implies that capacity in the Spirit for the reception of the revelation.

Finally we come to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. The blood of Abel cried for vengeance. "The blood of thy brother crieth out of the ground." The earth was not to yield its strength to Cain on account of his foul deed. The blood of Christ speaks of cleansing, and sanctification. The better things speak, too, of the bringing in of the world to come on the sure foundation of the precious blood of Christ. All now known to faith in Mount Zion shall be in manifestation in that morning without clouds, when the curse shall be removed, and the earth shall yield her increase, and be in accord with heaven. The desert shall blossom and all shall know the Lord from the least to the greatest. What a place of privilege is ours to be in the light of these things. May we then in these days of constant upheaval live in the constant good of these superb matters!

069 The Mystery

The Mystery

W. C. Reid.

Wonderful divine secrets have been disclosed in the revelation of "The Mystery." It is a treasury of truth, unveiling in "The Mystery of God" the secret of God's heart and counsels; in "The Mystery of Christ," the Headship and pre-eminence of the Son of the Father's love; in "The Mystery of the Church," the riches of God's glory in blessing the church in union with Christ; and in "The Mystery of the Gospel," that the great secret of the ages was now enshrined and proclaimed in the heart of God's Glad Tidings. The Mystery in divine revelation.

God was silent regarding the Mystery in ancient times, having purposely hidden it from the past ages and generations. It was not concealed among the mysteries of creation, to be discovered by the enquiry of the philosopher or the exploration of the scientist; nor was it revealed or hidden in the Old Testament Scriptures to be found by the prophets who diligently searched their own writings. The treasure of mystery of the kingdom was hid in the field; but "The Mystery" was hidden in the heart and counsels of God until the time for its revelation. Moses told Israel that God had secret things when he said, "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those which are revealed belong unto us" (Deuteronomy 29:29). The time for the revelation of the Mystery arrived, when the Lord Jesus, after manifesting the Father's Name and accomplishing redemption, sat down at God's right hand. A special revelation was made to Paul of this great truth, because he had been divinely chosen as minister of the Mystery. But God also made it known to Christ's "holy apostles and prophets in the power of the Spirit."

Fulfilling his ministry, Paul declared, "all the counsel of God" to the saints; and he communicated it in writing that the truth of the Mystery might remain for the saints down the church ages in "prophetic scriptures, according to commandment of the eternal God, made known for obedience of faith to all the nations" (Romans 16:26). The Mystery is the keystone in the glorious edifice of divine revelation: the foundation of which concerns the Person and work of Christ; and whose superstructure contains the counsels and purpose of God. Without this subject the canon of Scripture would be incomplete, for, said Paul, "It was given to me for you, to fulfil (or complete) the word of God; even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations."

Christ's place according to the Mystery. That Christ has a special place in relation to the Mystery is learned from Romans 16:25; "To him that is of power to stablish you according to my Gospel and the Preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the Mystery." Prophecy, in the Old Testament, pointed out Christ's place in relation to Israel; and even the blessing of the nations through Christ depended on Israel's blessing. In consonance with the prophetic word, the Lord Jesus while on earth, identified Himself with the godly remnant of Israel, though presenting Himself to the nation as Messiah and Son of God. But the preaching of Jesus Christ according to revelation of the Mystery, announces the heavenly glories of God's anointed, and the exalted

position of the Son of God at God's right hand.

Colossians 1:1-29 develops the subject of the "preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the Mystery." Speaking of the Lord Jesus as, "Christ — the hope of glory," Paul adds, "Whom we preach." The Christ, Whom Paul preached, is the Son of the Father's love, and the Head of the body, the assembly. He is not found to-day among an earthly people, as an earthly Messiah, displaying the glories of an earthly kingdom; but He is among the Gentiles, their Head and their life; and the glory they are to share with Him is in prospect.

Similarly, in Ephesians 3:8; Paul in pursuance of his ministry, was to "preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." Psalmists with raptured heart, and in glowing terms, described the searchable riches of God's king, the Son of David; and with exquisite language Solomon in his Song of Songs portrayed the deep affection of Christ for His earthly people: but how surpassing, the privilege given to the apostle Paul as minister of the Mystery, to unfold the wide range of Christ's unsearchable riches, as Head over all things to the church; and to speak of "the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge." The Church's place according to the Mystery.

Formerly, God had blessed Israel as a nation bringing them near to Him; and erecting in the Law, a wall which hedged them in, and kept them separate from the Gentiles. In the cross, God broke down the middle wall of partition and revealed in the Mystery the blessings existing in Christ for both Jew and Gentile. The elements of divine blessing, as found in Ephesians 3:6, are (1) Jew and Gentile are Joint-heirs, (2) Jew and Gentile form a joint-body, (3) Jew and Gentile are joint-partakers of God's promise in Christ by the Gospel. The inheritance in which believing Jews and Gentiles now jointly share, is not the inheritance belonging to man as derived from Adam; nor is it the inheritance belonging to Abraham by the promise of God; or that held out to Israel on the ground of law. Man has forfeited his right to the earth by reason of sin; and Israel by breaking the Law has proved the inheritance cannot be secured by human effort: and although the promise to Abraham remains, the fulfilment refers to a future day. The inheritance given to the saints is "in Christ," in Whom God will gather up in one all things, the things on earth, and the things in heaven, in the dispensation of the fulness of times. In that day, God will occupy the vast inheritance in His saints, even as He occupied Canaan in Israel, and shall yet occupy the earth in the princes of Israel. God desires that His saints should have the spiritual condition now, to know the "riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints." When the Lord Jesus is manifested as Head over all things in the coming day, the church will be united to Him as His body and fulness. Jewish and Gentile believers share jointly this wonderful place and privilege as Christ's body. Already they have been reconciled to God in one body; and without discrimination partake together of the blessings and benefits accruing from this place of nearness and intimacy. They receive the same care from Christ, and draw the same nourishment from the Head of the body; all the resource and wisdom of the Head being available to both alike. No hint of such blessing is given in the Old Testament; nor that Jew and Gentile should jointly participate in divine blessings without distinction.

God's promise in Christ by the Gospel is something outside any promise given to saints of old. Promises were made by God to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; to Israel and to David; but this promise "in Christ" which is brought to light in the Gospel is something of a new order connected with God's purpose. Consideration of 2 Timothy 1:1 and Titus 1:2 would lead us to conclude that

this is the promise of eternal life. Paul speaks of it as "Eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." It belongs to God's counsels, which existed before the world; and reveals a life which is heavenly, and which shall be ours in glory with Christ. John, who ministered the truth of eternal life, and shows it a present possession of the children of God also speaks of it as a divine promise, saying, "And this is the promise that He hath promised us, even life eternal."

"This is a great mystery — Christ and the church."

Although the mystery is not found in the Old Testament, God in making Eve from the rib belonging to Adam, had Christ and the church in view. Eve was derived from Adam, and was therefore suitable to be united to him. As Christ's body, the church is part of Him; being first taken from Him in His deep sleep of death and then by the Spirit united to Him to share His place of Headship and glory. Israel, as the King's daughter, all glorious within the Ivory palaces, was derived from the King: the Queen in gold of Ophir, at his right hand, shows Israel united to Christ in the display of His earthly glory. But the church is united to Christ for the display of His heavenly glory, and is in the nearest possible place of intimacy and affection. The ministry and administration of the Mystery.

God gave the revelation of the Mystery to the apostles and prophets of the New Testament; but the ministry was committed to Paul, so that the saints might receive its manifestation. Through this ministry, God would have His saints "know — the riches of the glory of this Mystery," and have them "knit together in love, and unto all the riches of the Mystery of God, in which are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. chs. 1 and 2). Possessing such a ministry, Paul realised his indebtedness to the grace of God; and also that the successful exercise of the divine gift depended upon the formation within him of God's grace by divine power. This spiritual preparation does not puff up the vessel; but gives the greatest servant of Christ to account himself as less than the least of all saints. As specially chosen, and as wrought upon by God, Paul was to declare to the Gentiles Christ's unsearchable riches, "And to make all see what is the fellowship (administration) of the Mystery." This administration delineates God's present purpose in creating the universe. When the creation came into being "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy," as they saw the display of God's wisdom and power: and in the ages to come God will display "the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness towards us in Christ Jesus." But in this day; the day of man's sin and ruin; God is making known to the great intelligences of heaven His all varied wisdom. All that the human eye can see in the church is failure and confusion; but among the debris of the old creation, God is producing in new creation, the vessel that shall display His glory and love in the eternal ages. To form such a vessel, from such material and in such conditions, demands not only infinite power, but wisdom of greater variety than that which brought the old creation out of nothing. God, then, created the present universe, that He might have a platform upon which to display to His heavenly hosts the wonders of His wisdom.

What the reception of the Mystery produces.

Romans 16:25 states that two things are necessary for the establishing of Christians: Paul's Gospel; and the truth of the Mystery. Without the knowledge of the Mystery we cannot therefore be established according to God. But Colossians 1:1-29 shows that if we are to be mature Christians

we must have the preaching of Jesus Christ, the hope of glory, as revealed in the Mystery: "Whom we preach — to — present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." Paul's prayer, after treating of the Mystery in Ephesians 3:1-21, makes known the result desired by God in giving this revelation: "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith"; "That ye might be filled with all the fulness of God."

What the reception of the Mystery involves. For Paul, the ministry of the Mystery brought reproach and sorrow; and those who receive into their hearts the truth he ministered cannot expect to escape these things. Paul's special sufferings as minister are recorded in Colossians 1:24, "Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His body's sake, which is the church." He specifically mentioned in his letters to the saints at Ephesus and Colosse that he was bound with a chain because of the Mystery; yet all Asia, which must have included these assemblies, turned away from him, evidently being ashamed of his chain. Had the truth of the Mystery gripped their souls, as holding the Head they could not have been indifferent to the sufferings of a member of His body; and had Christ been dwelling in their hearts by faith, they would not have turned away from the servant imprisoned for His testimony. Demas, who loved this present world, forsook Paul; and in his day of crisis the apostle has to say, "no man stood with me." But there was consolation in all thus. When no man stood by him, Paul could add "notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me"; and when all Asia turned away from him, he said, "Onesiphorus — oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain: but — sought me out very diligently." Reception of the truth of the Mystery involves a life of separation from the world, and this will bring the world's reproach. If we are faithful to the Lord in holding fast the truth as Paul was, we must expect to be "turned away from" by those ashamed of the testimony, and forsaken by those who love the world. We cannot expect to have many companions, but we can count upon the companionship and support of the Lord; and we can rely on the refreshment supplied in true fellowship by those who have Christ dwelling in their hearts. Wm. C. Reid.

070 The Broken and the Unbroken Nets.

The Broken and the Unbroken Nets.

J. Wilson. The comparison of the net in Luke 5:6, with that in John 21:11 throws much light on the way in which God is working now and will yet work for the satisfaction of His own heart and the blessing of men. There is much to be gained from the study of the way in which God presents His thoughts in the Scriptures, and these two nets give an illustration of this. It is clearly stated in the first incident that the net broke; and in the second that the net did not break; so that while the net would refer to the same thing in both cases, obviously, each must be connected with different circumstances. We enquire into this difference by considering the text of Scripture. As there could be no breakdown or failure with God, the broken net must be connected with the responsibility of man, and would refer to the period of time from the Lord's ministry on earth until the establishment of the Millennium. The metaphor of the net in Luke 5:1-39 would therefore appear to answer to the present system set up by God gathering in men for blessing. While the context of John 21:1-25 would indicate that a millennial scene is in view. In support of this, confirmation can only be sought from the Scriptures, and Acts 27:1-44 and 2 Timothy 2:1-26 would yield abundant proof for what is suggested. Man in responsibility (that is in his ability to respond) has always failed even under the most favoured circumstances and God shows carefully from His word that while the present period is no exception it is possible to be individually in spirit separate from it.

Acts 27:1-44 would give the apostolic signpost and 2. Tim. 2 would put the individual in the proper path. Reference is made to the shipwreck from which it is evident that there was no salvation except through being with Paul. So amidst the mournful breakdown which exists, is it not great encouragement to remember that is the case? Paul has put himself in touch with us through the medium of his epistles, and for the individual 2 Timothy 2:1-26 would clearly indicate the path for any believer sincerely desiring to be a vessel unto honour. Where this individual faithfulness is found there is the maintenance of what is according to God so that while the net broke in Luke 5:1-39 the fish were landed. But let it be noted that the fishermen were out of the ships washing their nets, suggesting the purity of the word presented by the individual. In Mark 1:19, they were mending their nets which would relate more to soundness, but in verse 7 the collective thought would be reached when they beckoned to their partners, obviously referring to fellowship. There is fellowship in the Gospel (Php 1:5), although largely overlooked to-day! But if the system broke down, thank God, there was that which He could use for the landing of the fish! In turning to the second net, there is a distinct halo of the Millennium around it! The confession of Thomas in Ch. 20 would bring us to the confines of the day of the Lord, but the haul of fishes to the time when all will depend entirely on the Lord. Singularly perhaps as the Apostle John is not dispensational in his writings generally. The success of the fishing depended on the Lord who commands and directs all. But John 20:9, shows that the Lord already had fish on the shore, quite distinct from the haul. Probably Matthew 10:1-42 would refer to the former, for that commission has still to be fulfilled, and the wider commission of Matthew 28:1-20 might be fulfilled in this great haul. Matthew 25:1-46 and Revelation 7:1-17 seem to refer to the beginning of the Millennium; but the net being

full might throw into relief the result from the sea of the nations.

It is remarkable that at the end of the three Synoptic Gospels the Lord gives a commission which embraces the period from His sojourn on earth until He comes to reign. At the end of Mark the commission was clearly accomplished (Ch 16:20). The commission in Luke is what was taken up in the Acts and what is being carried out to-day: whereas that in Matthew 28:1-20 awaits fulfilment. How perfect Scripture is! There is no overlap! The Lord dining with the disciples would complete the picture. May the Lord give us to enter into His gracious dealings with men, both for the present moment and for what is yet to come.

Note on the "Nets" article in No. 1. In Luke 5:1-39, we see a scene short of Resurrection . . . In John 21:1-25, we see a scene teeming with Resurrection:- The Lord was associating the disciples with Himself, thus the net did not break. At His word, the net was cast on the right side. The effect on Peter was that he cast himself into the sea to get to Jesus The millennium is short of Resurrection, although in spirit looking on to it. T. Fawcett.

071 The Two Word Aspects of "New."

The Two Word Aspects of "New."

Omicron (T. Oliver).

There are two Greek words *kainos* and *neos* translated in our New Testament by the word "new." *Kainos* is new in kind and in contrast to what previously existed, so taking the place thereof. In that sense *kainos* looks backward, while its synonym *neos* looks forward. *Kainos* is equivalent to "not yet having been": *neos* is "not having long been." The conjunction of the two words occurs in Matthew 9:17. Luke 5:38, where new (*neos*) wine is put into new (*kainos*) skins and both are presented. *Kainos* looks backward (retrospective) in that the skins had never been used before, opposed to those which had lost their strength and elasticity through age: the new (*neos*) wine was of that vintage or harvest looking forward (prospective) for future use. In Luke 5:36 a new piece of cloth (*kainos*) is opposite to old garment. This receives emphasis in Mark 2:21 where the new unmilled piece of cloth was unsuited to patch the old, for even then the new by the grace of God was being wrought out; not for the old garment of a legal system or for the first man, but for those who by virtue of divine power were fitted to receive the blessing. In Matthew 27:60, the new (*kainos*) tomb had never been made ceremonially unclean by a dead body. It might have been hewn out of the rock years before, therefore it is not called *neos*. In Hebrews 12:24, a new (*neos*) covenant is fresh and perennially new by virtue of the link with its mediator Jesus, looking forward it will retain eternally that youthful character. While *kainos* is the word mostly used for New Covenant, *neos* is the word here, but not in contrast to the old; it is not the old, but what God had recently given.

Kainos is the typical word in the Revelation as in name, song, heaven, Jerusalem, etc., and finally "all things new." The antithesis which *kainos* bears to the past is in evidence in Revelation 21:1. The new (*kainos*) heaven and earth supersede the first (*protos*), again Hebrews 8:13, in saying new (*kainos*) covenant, he has made the first old (*protos*). On the other hand, *neos* does not express opposition to what already existed, so in Colossians 3:10, having put on the new (*neos*) man, who is being renewed (*anakainoo*, compound of *kainos*), in the character and spirit of the ideal, 1:e., according to the image of Him who created him thus excluding and supplanting the old. The compound *ananeoo* is simply to renew in youth; has nothing to do with the old (Ephesians 4:23). Hence the same subject may be *kainos* or *neos*: if contemplated under aspects of time as recently given or inaugurated, it is *neos*: if contemplated as a new and specific kind in contrast to the old as outworn and effete and taking its place, it is *kainos*. In their derivatives and compounds as above, the same distinction is clear as in 1 Timothy 4:12. "Let no man despise thy youth" (*neotees*), but (*kainotees*) newness of life in Romans 6:4, is newness as being entirely different according to the resurrection life in Christ thus supplanting the other.

072 New Creation.

New Creation.

Wm. C. Reid. In Scripture "creation" is mentioned in different ways, each presenting some special feature for the instruction of the saints of God, e.g., Proverbs 8:1-36. brings the Lord Jesus before us as the Man of God's counsels, witnessing the scene in which He would be found with His companions for the pleasure and glory of God. John 1:1-51, Colossians 1:1-29, and Hebrews 1:1-14, declare the glory of the Person of the Son; whereas Ephesians 3:1-21 tells us that the present purpose of the creation was to make known to heavenly intelligences in the church, the manifold wisdom of God. The most detailed account of creation is that given in Genesis 1:1-31; Genesis 2:1-25; and there man is presented as its head and centre. The ruin of the old creation. That God has spoken of "new creation" in His word, implies that the creation connected with Adam has become old, and is passing away. Scripture confirms this, showing too that the creation has become ruined by reason of man's sin. When Adam fell, all under his headship shared the consequences of his fall (Romans 8:19-22). In this Scripture God has shown that before the old creation shall pass away, it shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into which Adam brought it. The passing of the old world: the beginning of a new. From Adam there has sprung a race of men, connected with him in the old creation, all sinners by nature and practice. Cain, Adam's firstborn, demonstrated the hatred that lay in the nature of man, by killing his brother; and soon the world that was stained with Abel's blood became so corrupt that God had to cleanse it with a flood of water. A new world emerged from the Flood, with Noah as its head; but soon poor Noah showed he could not control himself, much less the new world. Although it was a new world it was not new creation: every successive generation and development of God's dealings with men proved that man was incorrigible, and that the old creation was ruined beyond recovery. Headship in Noah was debased; Priesthood was defiled in the sons of Aaron: the sons of Samuel perverted judgment. Royalty was dishonoured by the sons of David, the Kings of Israel, and by the great Gentile monarchs. All this evil was consummated in the world's rejection of the Son of God. In His cross the world was exposed by God, and its judgment was sealed.

God working — amidst the ruins of the old creation. When the Jews persecuted the Lord Jesus for healing the impotent man on the Sabbath day. He replied, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work" (John 5:1-47) From the moment of man's fall in Eden, it would seem as if the rest of God was broken, and He began to work afresh in view of a "new creation." In consonance with His Father's activity, the Son had come into Manhood and to the earth to work for the establishing of a scene where the Father could rest in His love, no more to be disturbed by the entrance of sin or any evil that would grieve Him at His heart. To secure this the Son would be found here in toil and labour, laying the foundations in His work and death of that new world where the glory of the new creation could be displayed in those who once were sinners far from God.

God working — preparing vessels for glory. In the riches of His glory, God is preparing for glory, vessels of mercy (Romans 9:23). These are the saints who at present have earthly tabernacle

houses, while awaiting their "house not made with hands eternal in the heavens" (2 Corinthians 5:1-21) God has wrought His saints for this glorious destiny, by forming them spiritually in new creation; so that while they are connected with the groaning creation in their bodies they are already in new creation as to their spiritual condition. Amid the ruins of the old creation, God is working to produce the vessels in which the glory of the new creation shall be displayed. A beautiful illustration of this is found in 2 Chronicles 4:1-22, where, after describing the vessels of the Temple, it says, "In the plain of the Jordan did the king cast them, in the clay-ground between Succoth and Zeredathah."

God working — preparing vessels for testimony. But God has not only been preparing the saints for glory; His new creative work is to produce vessels in which His grace may even here be manifested. This is the teaching of Ephesians 2:1-22, "We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Good works can never be produced by man in the flesh, but those who have been created in Christ have divinely given ability to work in a manner that glorifies God and gives Him pleasure. As created "in Christ" we partake of Christ's character and are thus enabled to manifest His features of grace and beauty. From this we learn something of God's present triumph. Satan in getting rid of Christ doubtless thought that he secured a complete victory, but God wrought in such a way that many vessels, every one of Christ's order and character, as created in Him, are now upon the earth continuing the heavenly life that was perfectly manifested in Him here.

Relationships of the flesh, and the new relationships. The subject of new creation in 2 Corinthians 5:1-21 is introduced with, "Wherefore, henceforth know we no one after the flesh: yea though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more. Therefore, if any man be in Christ (there is) new creation." After the flesh, the Lord Jesus was of Israel, and the Son of David; but none of the relationships that were His on this line, belong to Him in the new conditions into which He entered in resurrection. These were all relinquished at the cross, when He said to His mother, "Woman, behold thy son," and to John, "Behold thy mother." This was further emphasised when in resurrection the Lord said to Mary Magdalene, "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God and your God." In those words, which told that Mary could no longer know Christ after the flesh, there was the divine revelation of the new relationships into which the Lord had brought His own in resurrection. The disciples were called "friends" previously by the Lord, but not until He had entered the new conditions of life in resurrection could they be called His "brethren."

"Old things are passed away — all things are become new." The things that have been corrupted and defiled by man in the old creation have no place in the new creation. Everything in this spiritual sphere is new and of God. The life and relationships are new; so are the affections, joys, blessings, riches and glories. In this new order our thoughts and feelings are new, and the desires of the heart and disposition of the renewed mind are toward things that the natural man has never known. Much that exists in the old creation was introduced by man; but in the new creation all things are of God. Not a single principle of man's world is there; none of his philosophy or vaunted learning, none of the embellishments that adorn his city, nor any of the attractions that appeal to the flesh.

Reconciliation and New Creation.

All the things of this new creation have their origin in the God Who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ. Evidently God has brought us into right relations with Himself to have us engaged with the things that belong to Him. Through the death of His Son He has brought us near, who once were far off; and in shedding abroad His love in our hearts by the gift of the Holy Spirit He has displaced the enmity towards Him that once was there. Now, as before God in the sense of His love, and as being His workmanship, we are free to explore the wonders of the new creation centring in Christ His beloved Son. These two matters are not only associated in 2 Corinthians 5:1-21, but they are found together in Ephesians 2:16. In the latter Scripture, Jew and Gentile are reconciled together to God in one body. As forming the body of Christ in new creation, the church is the vessel in which the features of Christ are manifested now upon the earth and in which the glory of God shall be , displayed in the coming ages. A man in Christ.

Paul by the Spirit said in 2 Corinthians 5:1-21, "If any man be in Christ (there is) new creation." Chapter 12. of this epistle gives the experience of a man in Christ. Viewed abstractly as a man in Christ, Paul reveals that he was caught up to the third heavens, the home of the man in Christ. There, in Paradise, the place of delight, he heard things he could not speak of on earth. Our present condition of flesh and blood hinders our knowing the full blessedness of what is ours in Christ, for we only "see through a glass darkly"; but there are many things we can know, the things freely given to us of God, the things "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man — God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit." The new man — his creation. When the Lord Jesus was on earth, the Father opened the heavens and said, "This is my beloved Son, in Whom I have found my delight." Here was a Man entirely different to every other man; and it was God's purpose to have a race of men, all like Christ. In the "new man" this race has been created. The Jew and Gentile were two men at enmity, because of the law; but in the cross the cause of the enmity was removed, and Christ created in Himself of both one "new man," and so made peace. Neither of these two men could give God pleasure; so that an entirely new kind of man had to be created in Christ's features. This new man has been created after God in righteousness and true holiness (Ephesians 4:24); and in him there is nothing of "Greek, Jew, circumcision, uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman, but Christ is everything, and in all" (Colossians 3:11). Not only are the distinctions between these different kinds of men not found in the new man, but not one of them bears his features, for all his features come from Christ; and Christ is the life of all partaking in this new created man. The new man — his testimony.

After disclosing in Ephesians 4:1-32 that the new man is created after God, the saints are exhorted, "Wherefore putting away lying, speak truth every man with his neighbour." From this and the verses which follow we learn that the features of the new man are to be manifested in all our dealings with our neighbours. Then there are exhortations with a view to the manifestation of the traits of the new man in the family and business circles. Finally, in the conflict, with the panoply of God, which is the dress of the new man, we are to stand for God in the evil day. In all these spheres the features of the new man are to evince the testimony of God. The display of new creation.

God's purpose in quickening us and setting us in Christ in the heavenly places is in order "that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness towards us in

Christ Jesus." This is the display of grace in glory; and for this God is erecting a Temple, a shrine, in which His holy nature shall shine forth, in those united to His Son. The church is this vessel of glory; seen in Ephesians 2:21 as "A holy temple in the Lord," and in Revelation 21:1-27 as "The bride, the Lamb's wife — the holy city — having the glory of God." Amid the tumults of the systems of this present age, loudly proclaiming their own greatness and glory, God is silently raising His structure, which is the fruit of Christ's work, and the crown of His workmanship. Long after every human system has perished for ever, this glorious church, conceived in divine wisdom and wrought by God's power shall subsist in the eternal display of His love and glory in new creation. The rule of new creation.

After discoursing on law and grace, in his defence of the Gospel, towards the close of the epistle to the Galatians, Paul says, "For in Christ Jesus, neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision; but new creation. And as many as walk by this rule, peace upon them and mercy, and upon the Israel of God." Judaism and its ceremonial rite of circumcision were for man in the flesh, and in them Israel boasted; but in the light of new creation they have been exposed as valueless. The old order, which supposed there was ability in man to obtain divine blessing, has been closed in the cross; and the new order, in which "all things are of God" has been opened up for us in God's grace in new creation. Those who walk by the rule of law cannot have peace while striving for blessing which they cannot obtain; but those walking by the rule of the new creation, who do not depend on their own efforts, receive divine mercy, and the peace which comes from relying solely on God. May we therefore live by the faith of the Son of God, seeking the things that are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God, and thus be blessed by walking by the rule of new creation. Wm. C. Reid.

073 The New Start and its Results.

The New Start and its Results.

Notes of address by R. K. Wilson at Galashiels, 1914. In Numbers 21:1-35, we get Israel's new start in another life. They had been much discouraged because of the way and their souls loathed the light bread. Their murmuring brought the fiery serpents and death. But God's remedy was the serpent of brass lifted up and whoever looked at it, lived. Then they set forward, journeying towards the sunrise and singing to the well. John 3:4. speak of the same subject. The Son of man lifted up on the cross: God and Christ giving the living waters to the believer. There is a new start to the soul that looks to Christ, believes on Him, drinking at the fountain of living water. The three world-enemies (the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life) are dealt with in Numbers 21:1-35. The devil works through these, but the Word of God and the love of the Father work in the believer doing God's will. In Numbers 23:1-30, Balaam, hired to curse the people of God, was prevented by God because the people had been blessed. Nothing could alter God's purpose. They were separated from the nations for God's pleasure. (Now the saints are in Christ — sanctified and justified, 1 Corinthians 1:1-31). But later, Balaam succeeded in mixing the people of God with the Midianites. So the doctrine of Balaam does the harm in mixing the saints with the world (Revelation 2:1-29.). "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers" (2 Corinthians 6:1-18). The wiles of the devil as of the Midianites are to be feared. Saints are hindered if mixed up with the world (whether social, religious or political). Man is exposed thoroughly in the Word. But all the searching is with a view to Spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ. Nothing can separate any of the saints from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:1-39).

074 Christ our Resource.

Christ our Resource.

G. V. Wigram. In the present time things viewed morally and spiritually are like things after an earthquake; all is out of order and disjointed. We cannot now turn round and view the church as it once was — a body of heavenly-minded men keeping themselves unspotted from the world, manifesting the presence of Christ by their holy walk, shining as lights in the world's thick darkness. We must each feel his own individual weakness and failure. The heart is very apt to take counsel of self, and droop under the circumstances around, but instead of being cast down, the question should come in, "What is the spring, what the source of the sustaining strength on which we lean?" It is in Christ Himself and in His power. If two or three desire now to meet in His name, and to walk unspotted in the midst of evil and failure, it is in the mighty power that never yet failed and never will, that they can do so. The church is loved and cherished by Him who is to present it to Himself. Nothing in earthen vessels can do this. Christ's own living power alone can sustain, nourish, and at the end present it to Himself without spot or wrinkle. How precious to be able to turn from our weakness and failure, and see this power up there in the living Person of that One who is the "Same yesterday, today, and for ever," to see Him sustaining and nourishing me because I am bone of His bones, and flesh of His flesh, risen with Him, one with Him.

075 The Path of Faith in a Day of Ruin.

The Path of Faith in a Day of Ruin.

(Notes of an address by J. A. Trench, 1890). In the beginning of Ephesians we have the wonderful place which is ours as in Christ before God the Father in unclouded perfection, and the counsels of God according to His glory. Then, besides our individual place, God carries us on to these corporate relationships which we have with Christ as Head of the body, and with God as a dwelling place for Him. The connection of the opening of Ephesians 4:1-32 is with the end of Ephesians 2:15. There we read (1) "to make in himself of twain, one new man." What a wonderful thing it is to think that we have been taken out of what we were, dead in trespasses and sins and that we are quickened together with Christ, and made one new man. Then there are:- (2) the one body (5: 16). We are all united together and to Christ. (3) "Through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father" (5: 18). (4) we are builded together for an habitation of God" (5: 22). This is the wonderful position into which we have been brought. Ephesians 3:1-21, gives us, in a parenthesis, Paul's part in this blessed work, presenting him as the chosen vessel of the revelation to us of the mystery, and closing with that beautiful prayer, which is not so much a question of knowledge as in the prayer of Ephesians 1:1-23, but communion with Himself, that Christ, the object of the Father's heart, might be our object too. Now from the basis of this unfolding of our position, the apostle beseeches us to "Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called." Already in the earliest and brightest expression of the truth in the assembly at Ephesus, we find there was the need of this spirit of lowliness and meekness as the only one in which to walk worthily, using diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit. Then immediately, lest our thoughts of it should be limited in any way, we find three circles of unity: (1) one body, one Spirit, and one hope, where all is real; (2) one Lord, one faith, one baptism, 1:e., profession, where all may not be real; (3) "One God and Father of all," 1:e., the whole family, taking in the universe. The principles of God cannot change with the dispensation, they are given to us to form our path, and know no change, though we change alas! Everything is pressing that it is the last time, and to walk according to the vocation wherewith we are called, instructions are given to faith, for the change of things brought in by our failure, This we find in 2 Timothy 2:1-26, "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His." The principles of God know no change, but He knoweth them that are His. "And let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity" the unity of the Spirit can only be recognised in accordance with Christ's principles. Then the illustration of the great house is applied. The first essential step of the path is separation from what is evil. Then the loins must be girded. Take care lest the enemy get in and mock you in the path of separation, but follow righteousness, faith, love, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. There are the three steps; (1) separation from evil; (2) the loins girded; (3) seeking out those who are similarly separated. Every step of the path is ordered by God Himself. There remains another unchanging principle, Where two or three are gathered together unto My name, there am I in the midst of them," 1:e., the smallest company that could be found not meeting in man's will (in independency), but gathered to the divinely given centre, in the wonderful character of association

with Him. How blessed to be reminded of these principles; let them challenge our hearts as to whether we are really seeking to carry out the unity of the Holy Ghost (Matthew 18:20)!

Turning to Malachi we find an illustration of the fruits of His grace produced by the power of these things in the hearts of His people. We cannot imagine a darker day; profound indifference to everything of God marked the mass. The Lord had restored a remnant from the captivity, but all soon became clouded over by failure, and the restored remnant was profoundly indifferent, e.g., the priests that despised His Name, "Wherein have we despised thy Name?" The Lord said, "Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar," and they said, "Wherein have we polluted thee?" (Malachi 1:6-7). Of the table of the Lord they said, "What a weariness is it" (Malachi 1:12-13). Malachi 3:7, brings to the point when the Lord said, "Return unto me, and I will return unto you," and they said, "Wherein shall we return?" What indifference! So much for the dark side. Now turn to 5: 16 and 17. "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name." How sweet in that day of general indifference that there shone out of it a bright light for God. There were hearts knit together, who loved to meet, to speak of Him. He listened, and kept a book of remembrance for those who even thought on His name. We have the immense cheer for our hearts, that in the darkest days He will have a remnant whom He marks as His own — His seal is set upon them!

Four hundred years later, we still find a few cleaving to Him — Zacharias, Mary, Simeon, and Anna (Luke 1:11). In spite of her great age, Anna departed not from the temple, the centre of God's interest upon earth. As long as He owned it, she owned it (Luke 2:36-37). As one last instance refer to Luke 21:14. The poor widow cast in all the living she had for the maintenance of God's house (still recognised, so near the close). The Lord owns her devotedness, although in the next breath the Lord warns His disciples that not one stone should be left upon another. Up to the last there were some cleaving to His principles. In Revelation 2:1-29; Revelation 3:1-22, we have the history of the church in responsibility. At the close of it we can look back and see all the main features of the church's history stamped on the prophetic page. Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea are found together at the end. In the Epistle to Philadelphia, the Lord gives us what answers to His own heart in the midst of the ruin. He presents Himself in His own blessed character as the holy and the true, because that is what He would have in His people. He is looking for what is genuine! Then "He that has the key of David" sets before us an open door. Who will occupy the door He has opened? This depends upon condition. "Thou hast a little strength:" He is not looking for any great display of power, which would attract the notice of the world. "Thou ... hast kept my word;" He is looking for complete subjection to His Word, as the condition that answers to His heart. It is a day of subtle working of the enemy. We are called to uncompromising fidelity. Oh, that we may seek to answer to this revelation of what suits Him. Then He goes on, "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience." His whole heart is set upon having us where He is. He is patiently waiting for that moment; thus it is the word of His patience. Then He puts His seal on what His grace has produced, "I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation." It is deeply solemn that it does not secure that the one who has been in that path, will be preserved in it to the end, but it does assure us that some will be in it to the end. Some may be unfaithful, and have to be set aside! "I come quickly"; here He addresses those who are awake in their affections, so it is, "I come quickly," to sustain fidelity in the testing, "Hold that fast which thou hast." In 5: 12,

how often that little word "my" comes in; it is the association with Him of the heart, which faithfulness leads us into, right on to the heavenly glory. The last phase of things in Laodicea does not displace what has gone before. The very character of its judgment flows from the fact that it comes after the awakening of the hearts of His people. There is the indifference as in Malachi, and the Lord spues it out of His mouth, 1:e., judgment long forewarned. But how encouraging to know that what His grace has produced in the past, He can produce in the present too. The Lord grant that we may be found in that path, keeping His word.

076 Paul's Gospel.

Paul's Gospel.

Abridged from J. W. H. Nichols.

There are two expressions in Romans which indicate the special character of the apostle Paul's ministry. "The gospel of God" (Romans 1:1-17) clearly points to the source of the gospel; while "My gospel" (Romans 16:25), introduced in a sort of doxology, speaks of a blessed revelation, though not developed, which distinguished the apostle's teaching from that of the other apostles. It would be difficult to estimate our loss if we fail to grasp these two important truths. We live in a day when the faith of God's people is sorely tried! Many are perplexed by the condition of things both in the political and religious world. This, doubtless, is the result of the soul not being established in the truth, often due to wrong teaching as to the scope and purpose of the gospel. "Has Christianity failed in its mission?" is a question raised on wrong premises; it could never be asked were the natural man's condition and the purpose of God in the gospel understood. In the minds of many an idea exists that God has sent the gospel to improve the world, to make it a more congenial place for men to live in. To find the world more hopelessly evil than ever, after strenuously preaching its improvement, has dismayed many a "20th century" preacher, and thrown his listeners into confusion and despondency as to the outcome of what they thought was the gospel. Scripture has been misapplied to support the teaching that gradually the gospel preached must permeate the world and result in the establishment of the millennium which, however, is entirely foreign to the teaching of the word.

Nowhere do we find the apostleship of Paul placed on more positive ground than in Romans. He had not yet been at Rome, but, as the apostle of the Gentiles, he would fulfil his mission, which he had received from the Lord Himself for the Gentiles (Acts 26:17-18). According to God's administrative order, Peter was specially commissioned to the circumcision (Hebrews); Paul to the nations or Gentiles (Galatians 2:7-8). As recorded in the Acts Peter preached forgiveness of sins through faith in Christ, but did not associate with this the truth of justification; while Paul in his first recorded sermon, added this blessed truth (Acts 13:38-39). The gospel (or good news) was not about man though it was sent to man; there was nothing joyous to say about him — in heathenism, wantonly corrupt; in philosophy, hypocritical; under law, a transgressor: every mouth was stopped and all the world was shown to be guilty before God" (Romans 3:1). Man conclusively proved himself unable to bring forth righteousness for God. God's Son is the blessed theme of the gospel; the glad tidings are concerning Him. He is presented in a twofold way: (1) in connection with the promises, "Seed of David according to the flesh," and (2) "Son of God with power" by resurrection of the dead (plural equals dead ones). The gospel of God had been announced by the prophets in the O.T.; it had been promised before it came; thus every possible objection which might be raised should be silenced before the unfolding of what God's gospel is. In the person of the Son, God has found One able to accomplish all His purposes, and make known all His thoughts of love for men. He alone could solve the problem that man raised centuries

before, and could not settle - of good and evil — and settle it to God's eternal glory. What marvellous grace that He should enter the dark domain of death where man lay in ruin and exposed to eternal wrath, taking upon Himself all the weakness of man, once and for ever rob the enemy of his spoils, and completely triumph in resurrection over all the enemy's power. The new life received by the believer is a life given and founded on the eternal value of what has been accomplished by the Son of God. In this blessed gospel God reveals a righteousness for man who has none; but a righteousness God — is revealed to, and on the principle of faith. This is the grand theme of the epistle. In Romans the believer is looked at as justified, righteousness being imputed to him through the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, that he may walk here in this world in the power of the risen life of Christ, having the glory in view. This epistle and that to the Ephesians, are the only two written by the apostle to the saints which are not corrective; the others had in view certain existing conditions to correct. In these two epistles we have the unfolding of positive truth: the former laying the sure foundation, and the latter giving the blessed structure built thereon.

077 Phippians 3 & 4.

Phippians 3 & 4.

Notes of address by J. A. Trench at Hawick, Sept., 1891. In Philippians we find the normal experience of the Christian, the true fruit of the power of the Spirit. That is not presented as doctrine or theory nor as apostolic nor ministerial but as the ordinary Christian's life. The Epistle is not described as from an Apostle but from servants of Jesus Christ. Its chief characteristic is joy and that in the circumstances of daily life with Christ and heavenly glory as the goal. Paul's circumstances were very trying! Stopped in the midst of successful service, committed to prison from which he would only go free through a martyr's death; the visible results of his work largely gone to pieces, yet his heart was full of joy which he wished to communicate to others. "Finally my brethren rejoice in the Lord," who was the spring of his joy which did not depend upon the circumstances. Earlier he wrote "to me to live is Christ," as the all absorbing object! In the dark days of Nehemiah was the enunciation of the principle "the joy of the Lord is your strength." The returned remnant had started brightly, but their early energy had declined. In the present last days the principles of ruin have developed greatly, and the remnant although having a higher calling manifest worse failure. The apostle dealt with various hindrances to this joy being realised in order that we may know the resource which will cause us to triumph over every hindrance. In Php 3:1-21 he calls the Judaisers "the concision" indicating partial cutting off compared with the real circumcision which was complete cutting off from the world. The first hindrance is religious flesh, in which he had no confidence. When like Saul of Tarsus we gain a high position we are apt to be proud of it. The apostle described his credentials yet these were combined with enmity to Christ. But when the latter revealed Himself in the light above the brightness of the sun, how he was exposed! His gains became loss for Christ. He reckoned all his commendations to be simply refuse, to be dropped so that he might apprehend Christ. The Christian's place involves the renunciation of self! Divine righteousness eclipses the best righteousness of man. "That I may know Him" is an increasing matter! The longing desire of the soul was to know Christ. We begin with resting in Him as a Saviour, at peace with God, but continuing growth in the soul depends upon having Christ as the object! The power of His resurrection is the attractive power of the place where He has associated us with Him. Thus we shall know more of His path of rejection and test the fellowship of His sufferings, which is only to be known here. (David's mighty men were more intimate with him when he was a fugitive than when he was in the glory of his kingdom). The result is we are conformed to Christ's death. But the Apostle had his eye on the end of the path, viz., the resurrection from among the dead. That might be attained through a martyr's death, but he does not think of that. Such realisation entails complete deliverance from the world with its things which so often hinder the soul. The highest place in the world would offer no inducement to one who is pressing on to be conformed to the image of Christ. When the first rays of divine light showed us to ourselves and Him to us He laid hold of us to be like Him in glory. He had one consuming object on which his mind was concentrated. Energy of faith is required to pursue, not being occupied with past incidents of progress but always reaching forward and pressing towards the prize of the

calling on high of God in Christ Jesus. Now that normal Christian experience is not presented merely that it may be admired in Paul! Another tendency is curbed in Php 3:15. We are to seek out what we have reached in common with others, keeping rank and considering others. In Php 3:20, the Spirit sums up the Christian position. Our conversation or citizenship is in heaven, that should come before every other interest in life. All that forms the Christian life morally is in heaven now. We have been brought into a new circle of interests, from whence we look for the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour. How blessed to be found by the Lord at any moment that He comes pressing on in the power of the object to bear his image in the glory! Well may the apostle exhort "Rejoice in the Lord always" (Php 4:4). To most of us care is the greatest hindrance but He says be careful for nothing. That lifts us above our circumstances! It is God who says to you "Be careful for nothing but in everything (from the little trifle to the great concern) by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God," 1:e. , the Christian's normal confidence is in God. The result is that the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep our hearts and thoughts in Christ Jesus, 1:e., conditional on our trusting God, with what brings care. We may say that is beyond our understanding. Indeed the verse says so! We have only to confide in Him as to any element which would develop care and we shall prove the blessedness of that peace which defies description. May we realise increasingly the value of these things until we enter the scene where there will be nothing to hinder our enjoyment of heavenly things in His presence.

078 Power.

Power.

Abridged from G. J. Stewart in "the Voice," 1889. In Ephesians we have what the power of God is. It is displayed in four ways:- (1) What He is towards us (Ephesians 1:19-23). The Apostle prays that we may know it. To see a sample we are brought not to creation but to the grave of Christ. In creation everything was made out of nothing by the Word of God, without any enemy appearing; but at the grave of Christ, death, the great enemy, had swept the scene, so that even Christ (though in grace) yielded to it and died for sins. The power of God raised that blessed Man from the dead and put Him in the highest place at God's right hand. Thus power is displayed that no enemy could withstand.

(2) The power has acted upon us. God has a righteous basis for the exercise of new creation power, quickening together with Christ those dead in sins, whether Jew or Gentile. God operates on dead sinners and they live together with Christ. In this chapter new creation has three parts:- (a) New life, "quickened together with Christ"; (b) New position "hath raised us up together and made us sit together (not with as in quickening), in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus. God sees us in the One whom He raised from the dead. This also is a pledge that we shall be with Him there, by the application to our bodies of the new creation power; (c) New character "we are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works (Ephesians 2:10), New life and position demand new character.

(3) This power is in us. It was in the Apostle effectually working (Ephesians 3:7), and he desired that it should be in the saints! He prays that it may be known in the power of communion (Ephesians 3:14; Ephesians 3:16-17). The Spirit strengthens us in the inner man producing practical exercises of a living faith by means of which Christ dwells in our hearts. This brings us into the enjoyed communion of all His counsels with intelligence and love filling us into His fulness.

(4) He wishes that power displayed in us, not merely dormant. Here our responsibility comes in. It wrought in Paul for the administration of the mystery upon earth. There are four spheres, in the remainder of the epistle:- (a) the Church sphere (Ephesians 4:1-16), which is the most important. We need the power manifested in us to walk worthily of the calling; it is first applied to individuals; (b) the world sphere, in which we are to walk as exponents of new creation (although the old creation is in and around us) walking in truth, love and light; (c) the social and domestic sphere, in these we are to act with Christ as a pattern; (d) the sphere of christian warfare in the heavenlies (Ephesians 6:10-20), where the same power is needed to enable us to sustain the panoply of God, to fight the enemy who opposes the heavenly truth and above all the administration of the mystery of the Gospel. Thus there is a complete display upon earth of His power in God's people, that they may know it as wrought in Christ toward them, and that they are the subjects of its operation and that it may be practically in them in communion in the power of the Spirit.

079 The Power of Truth in Days of Weakness

The Power of Truth in Days of Weakness (Extracts from W. T. Turpin, 1879). No one exercised as to present conditions can doubt the low state on every side. The present distress afford abundant cause for sorrow. There are other causes than spiritual boasting; e.g., who can deny that open worldliness is not only allowed, but contended for. The families, houses, appearance of many tell a mournful tale. Such are the strongest opponents of the truth that our commonwealth is in the heavens! There is a very insidious retention of that element of the world which suits us, and branding as legal and morbid those who perceive that there is a manner of life suitable to the Apostles' doctrine. Legal effort and spiritual pride are not the fruits of the Spirit of God! Yet neither is "minding earthly things," (1:e., enmity to the cross of Christ), nor is worldliness (1:e., enmity against God). Many disparage divine teaching! After the truth is refused, the power for practice is gone. We admit it is quite possible to have correct doctrine and defective practice; still it would be a false line to disparage the truth in our zeal to expose defective practice. In Scripture we never find practice treated so as to weaken the truth; e.g., what could be more deplorable than the state of the assembly at Corinth. They were carnal, envying and contentious, yet the Apostle says, "I thank my God always on your behalf, etc. (1 Corinthians 5:4-9) again "Purge out therefore the old leaven" (5: 7). Notwithstanding all that, they were the epistles of Christ. (2 Corinthians 3:3). So it is true now that a Christian is in standing and destiny heavenly; hence he ought to be in practice, what he is by sovereign grace in Christ before God. The same truth underlies all the teaching to the Galatians. Satan sought to intrude false doctrine. At Corinth, it was bad practice or morals. The position in which sovereign grace has set us in Christ divinely known judges all that is contrary to it in our ways and enables us to use humbly the power which God has given in Christ. It is vain to insist on princely ways without princely position. If a man thinks himself to be what he is not, he is either deluded or deranged! If he be careful to be what he is, he is consistent and wise. This is not all in respect to the future. If a Christian is heavenly, then we expect a manner of life expressive of heavenly origin and destiny. The secret of our low walk is due to the reckoning and realisation of faith not being sufficiently prominent in our thoughts. "The bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus" is the only way to express practically what we are in Christ. There must always be circumcision, as both positional and practical (Colossians 2:11; Colossians 3:5). Some foolish person may say that certain parts of service are considered unsuited to the heavenly atmosphere. None would be more ready to serve in any practical act of Christianity than those conscious of their place in Christ, but they will seek His sending, His glory and His mind in regard to it. The Lord grant to His beloved saints in these last days more true apprehension of their origin and destiny so as to present it practically in ways and service!

080 The Preaching of the Gospel and the Cross.

The Preaching of the Gospel and the Cross.

J. Wilson. The fact that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable is calculated not only to develop the true Berean spirit in us but also to stimulate enquiry into the teaching connected with the different terms used therein. At first sight these two foundations upon which the Apostle Paul reared the edifice of his preaching at Corinth may not present the intended significance. It is, therefore, with a view to unfolding the thoughts suggested by these two things that a few words may not seem out of place. In 1 Corinthians 1:17, it is the preaching of the Gospel and in verse 18 it is the preaching of the Cross. This is godly order, for God is first of all introduced in all His grace before man is shut out in all his sinfulness. These two lines run parallel from Genesis to Revelation (see Genesis 3:9 and Revelation 20:9). The Gospel is a theme which thrills the heart of the believer and which may fall upon the ears of the unbeliever without raising either enmity or controversy for it reveals the love of God in all its surpassing excellence. It launches us into an ocean of salvation with no obstruction in the slipway as to the question of judgment. To this give all the prophets witness in both the Old and New Testaments; may we just cite three references from the New Testament? "God our Saviour who will have all men to be saved" (1 Timothy 2:3-4), "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself" (2 Corinthians 5:19), "The grace of God that bringeth salvation to all men hath appeared" (Titus 2:11). These and allied scriptures like 1 John 4:10 are all connected with the Gospel and present the attitude of God as being that of favour to all men. But let it be noted that this was only one of the Apostle's foundations, and he had two!

Coincident with his announcement of the Glad Tidings was the preaching of the Cross which is the abiding witness that man by nature will not do for God. It has often been said that the man whom God could not correct, He ended in the Cross. Scriptures such as Genesis 6:5, Luke 18:23, John 3:6 (first clause), and Romans 8:8 (the flesh being the body plus the will) reflect very accurately what man after the flesh is before the eye of God and suggest the necessity of the Cross before there could be anything for God's pleasure relative to man. Preaching of this description is foolishness to the unbeliever for it sets him aside as worthless before God, no matter what wisdom he may possess as to things here, but to the believer it is the power of God for it gives him the sense of his nothingness and causes him to look to the One who alone is his resource. Were the preaching of the Cross more fully understood amongst the Lord's people there would surely be a deeper realisation of the power of God and a corresponding depreciation of the wisdom of men! May the Lord give us to understand a little better the distinctions presented in the Scriptures of truth!

081 Queries and Answers.

Queries and Answers.

Q. 1 Is there any difference between the words "casting away" in 5: 1, and "casting away" in 5: 15 (Romans 11:1-36.)? The first would suggest that God has not cast away His people but the second rather says that He has.

Ans. The words used in these two places are distinct. In 5: 1 the word is, *apostato* = driven away. Its bearing is seen if we turn to Acts 7:27, "thrust him away." It means complete refusal. The word used in 5: 15 is *apobolee* = loss. This word is only used twice in the New Testament. The other occurrence is in Acts 27:22 : "no loss of any man's life." In 5: 1 the thought is that God has not driven away, or finally given up Israel, but 5: 15 would rather mean that the present loss of Israel has meant the gain of the nations. Israel nationally is lost at present but they will yet be brought in again as the latter part of the chapter shews.

Q. 2 In 5: 11 we have another difficulty. First it suggests that Israel has stumbled but not fallen, then goes on to speak of their fall. This fall is repeated again in 5: 12. Have they fallen then or not ?

Ans. The word "fall" is used thrice here as though it was the same word in the original each time. The second and third are the same word but not the first. It is *pesosin* = "to fall down." This word is used in 14:4, "standeth or falleth." It occurs again in 1 Corinthians 10:8, "fell in one day." To fall down following a stumble, is the meaning! The stumble in this chapter was the rejection of Christ. In the wilderness they fell never to rise again but here we are told, that though Israel has stumbled they have not fallen finally, they will yet rise again. Now the other word translated twice "fall" is *paraptomati* = transgression. This is the common word for transgression and is translated as "offences" in 4:25 of this epistle. In the Greek Interlinear New Testament translation it reads, "Did they stumble that they might fall ? May it not be but by their offence, salvation is to the nations for to provoke them to jealousy. But if their offence, etc." The New Translation does not make this clear for following the Authorized Version, fall is used each time! We have read earlier, "Behold I lay in Sion a stumbling stone and rock of offence" 9:33. Israel has stumbled and they have offended but they have not fallen for they will yet rise again. As branches they will once more be grafted in.

Q. 3 Who was the angel of the Church in Revelation 2:3?

Ans. Angel signifies a representative or messenger, hence in the aforementioned connection it can only mean the intangible representative of the Church, 1:e. , really the responsibility of the local company bearing the Lord's name. (The angel was in no sense an officer of the "synagogue"). The responsibility may devolve on individuals to discharge. Nevertheless, Scripture holds the whole local company responsible for its conduct.

Q. 4 Does "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (Luke 12:32), refer to Israel or to the assembly, and what is meant by "giving" the kingdom?

Ans. Primarily it referred to the remnant addressed, but "the little (minute) flock" is the character bestowed on all attached to Christ (irrespective of dispensation) in a world bent on display and greatness and antagonistic to Him. They were not to be anxious about temporal things as the nations were because they would be enriched beyond conception as the objects of the Father's good pleasure in giving them all the spiritual good of the kingdom immediately, and ultimately the remnant in lineal descent will rule the redeemed earth!

Q. 5 What is the distinction between "commandments" and "words" of John 14:21; John 14:23?

Ans. The words of Christ were special testimony to (and the revelation of) the Father while the commandments of Christ expressed the Father's will or good pleasure. Thus there is evidently a distinction between the person of the Father and His good pleasure or will. The cross revealed God the Father, but the resurrection expressed His good pleasure. Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father! The veil of the temple was rent in twain at the death (not the resurrection) of Christ. But the stone was rolled away to allow the disciples to look into the empty tomb and hear the words of the angels bearing testimony to the Father's good pleasure in Christ. "He who has My commandments and keeps them loves Me." We cherish His commandments and they dominate us in the measure that we love Christ. The truth cannot be compressed into creeds. The truth is maintained as it gives the character of Christ to the Christian, 1:e. , the truth is maintained by the power of the Holy Ghost in those who belong to Christ. The Word of God is living and operative!

Q. 6 What would "the living creatures" of Revelation 4:1-11 convey to us as relative to that coming day?

Ans.They are symbolic instruments of the throne of executory judgment, full of intelligence and power. They only celebrate and declare the judgment of God and are not agents in the execution thereof.

Q. 7 Who was the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews?

Ans.For centuries past that question has occupied the attention of theologians to little purpose. For our own part we have no difficulty in accepting the general belief that it was written by Paul, but the first word in the epistle, "God," shows the essential authorship!

Q. 8 What is the difference between "the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Corinthians 1:9), and "our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ" (1 John 1:3)?

Ans.The latter is apostolic! We come into that indirectly as having fellowship with the apostles as walking in the light (1 John 1:7). The former implies joint participation of all Christians in the results of the death and resurrection of Christ. We are all in one entity and the bond is the Lord. That is contrasted with the darkness and opposition outside in the world. Hence this aspect of the fellowship is objective and abstract; while that in John's epistle is subjective and specific!

Q. 9 In Exodus 12:40 (evidently referred to in Galatians 3:17) the time of sojourning in Egypt was said to be 430 years. How can the Apostle speak of the Law being 430 years after Abraham?

Ans. by a correspondent (abridged) — in Psalms 105:1-45, God made the Covenant with Abraham (5: 9) and confirmed it to Jacob (5: 10). In Galatians, the Covenant is confirmed not made. The confirmation is recorded in Genesis 46:1-4. God appeared to Jacob at Beer-sheba and confirmed the Covenant made with Abraham. In Genesis 15:13, God said that the seed would be afflicted 400 years, the time of peace under Joseph may fill up the other 30 years. (So as we should expect the quotation is strictly correct! This is a further example of the beautiful precision of Scripture! Moreover, the Pharaohs were oppressors for four centuries, we need not be discouraged through Hitler trampling down liberty of conscience for nine years! -EDITOR).

Q. 10 What does "delivered unto Satan" mean in 1 Timothy 1:20?

Ans. The two offenders were put outside the Christian assembly, thus they were deprived of the protection thereof. (God dwells therein as His house). They would be caused to feel their position in Satan's sphere of control (the world). Satan would afflict them so as to break their self-will. The love of God takes extreme measures to bring a soul into subjection to His will. The solemn discipline would ultimately lead to the person ceasing to speak in a derogatory way about God. Timothy could only deal with cases within the Christian company!

Q. 11 What is the distinction between "the times of refreshing and of restitution" in Acts 3:19; Acts 3:21?

Ans. The times of refreshing would seem to be the gracious prelude of that great consummation "the times of restitution" of all things when righteousness shall reign. It would seem also that the former will be accelerated through repentance and conversion of sinners. The better rendering is : "so that the times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord."

Q. 12 Is there a distinction between (a) entering the Kingdom and (b) being saved?

Ans. (a) is by new birth (God's work entirely); (b) is consequent on believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. God must begin or man could not. To deny that would be seeking to nullify that man is lost naturally!

Q. 13 What relation holds between the types of the death of Christ, viz.:- (1) the blood on the door posts in Egypt; (2) the Red Sea; (3) the brazen serpent; (4) the passage of Jordan ?

Ans. (1) sets forth security from judgment; (2) redemption in the death and resurrection of Christ; (3) condemnation of sin in the flesh; (4) death and resurrection with Christ (there was no ark in the Red Sea).

Q. 14. Is there a difference between : "My grace is sufficient for thee" (2 Corinthians 12:9) and "grace that is in Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 2:1)?

Ans. The former is the Lord's application of grace to His servant in trial. The latter is a characteristic quality realised in the soul of the Christian. Every moral quality was seen in Christ Jesus when here. There is a distinction between the use of "in Christ Jesus" in Eph. and in Tim.

Q. 15. What did the Lord mean in John 21:22?

Ans. A. Much has been surmised about these cryptic words to little purpose, e. g., that John would not die before the Lord's coming! Such interpretation is quite unwarranted. Peter was simply enjoined not to be curious about the future of others, but to mind his own steps which would be safe in following the Lord.

Ans. B. John 21:23, clearly shows that the Lord neither said nor meant that John would not die. Nevertheless, the fact that the Lord's words are repeated, seems to imply that they were of special significance. Is there not an indication that the Lord was giving to John a special character of ministry, which would carry us on to the Lord's return? John's Gospel is different from the three others. In it there is unfolded what lies outside of all dispensations, the Father's world, with all its affections, joys and glories: that in which there is no human failure, for these things subsist in the Father and the Son, and are brought to us in the power of the Spirit. Already, in Paul's day, he saw the ruin of the church, in those things committed to men; but after Paul had gone, John remained, and was enabled by the Spirit to bring out "That which was from the beginning," and that which abides till the Lord comes. Moreover John seems to abide till the Lord comes in a very different character of ministry; that unfolded in the book of Revelation. It is indeed in marked contrast to the spiritual, heavenly and eternal things, revealed in the Gospel. Here he shows God's government of the world in the period just prior to the Lord's return, and including it; and also records the prophetic history of the church in the addresses to the seven churches; the last four of which contain reference to the Lord's return. So that we might quite well understand the Lord to mean that although John personally would pass off the scene before He returned, John would abide in his special ministry.

Q. 16. What is the bearing of "my lie" (Romans 3:7) ?

Ans. A. The apostle is taking up his critics on their own ground and claims on their principles equal latitude for himself. Evidently the critics often averred that Paul was a liar! He makes the supposition as if he had uttered a lie, as an antithesis to the truth of God. He claims sarcastically exemption from the liar's death sentence.

Ans. B. Paul is evidently quoting the words of a rebellious reasoning sinner who attempts to prove that God is unrighteous in bringing him into judgment. Such seem to say, "Admitting that every man is a liar (5: 4); the fact that I lie but confirms the truth of the divine statement, and so glorifies God. Seeing then that my sinful condition glorifies God by proving His word to be true, why should He bring me into judgment?" It was not Paul, but these rebellious and perverted sinners who said "Let us do evil that good may come," and God's judgment of them was just.

Q. 17. Last year in an article "Concerning Justification" in another magazine, the author said that "Christ's resurrection did not enter into the justificatory act." He said that in the N.T. dia with an accusative case, always has the significance "because of," so that Romans 4:25 should read "was raised again because of our justification. What do say to that?"

Ans. These novelty-mongers with their pretensions to secular learning may be suspected from the outset. They know quite well that ordinary people, like ourselves, are not fitted to challenge their linguistic points. But if the "deep miners" of the 19th century failed to locate the averred "fault in the strata" of the Scriptures, then it is unlikely that an "outcrop miner," would discover it! His exposition of Romans 4:25 is not really new but an exploded theory of olden times! It does despite to the

integral thought of justification of life! We need not seek to found doctrine on one passage which will render invalid its import in another passage. Christ's death does not in itself justify one, yet justification is in the power of it. It is a necessary antecedent or basis. But "Christ risen" is our justification! His resurrection involves more than a receipt that the debt has been paid. (If the contention is right, then God cannot judge anyone!) We are taken out of death by the gift of the Spirit who is life in us. Hence we can practise righteousness and live to God. So that we cannot dissociate righteousness or justification from life. Christ's death does not clear us in order to start us once more in the course of the flesh. So that the justified need more than His death. We need His resurrection to be associated in His risen life in the power of which we have salvation (Romans 5:10). "Justified in Christ" (Galatians 2:17) shows that we are justified in the One who has completed the work. Found in Him, not having mine own righteousness (Php 3:9) and many similar Scriptures show that the assertion is invalid!

Q. 18. Does "at that day" (John 14:20) refer to the Spirit's Day or to the establishment of the Kingdom?

Ans. The context would decide that it refers to the Spirit's Day. Since He is the Spirit of truth, the revelation of the Father, such intimacy must lead to great progress in the apprehension of divine relationship. The reference to "the Kingdom" will be to the Apocalypse, because the coming of the Spirit introduced a phase of the kingdom but not subject to observation!

Q. 19. Please explain: "Though He were a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things that He suffered" Hebrews 5:8.

Ans. This unfolds the truth of Christ as a man and is not related to Him as God. He learned obedience in taking the place of a man. He had been in the place of administration previously. As He had no will to break, it was not learning to obey, but obedience. Although Son, He did not presume. He entered more deeply into the experience of obedience. His faith and obedience were tested by circumstances becoming more difficult even to death! "Having been made perfect" is "perfectly fitted" or "completed" as to obedience and suffering, for His subsequent function as Priest and author (or founder) of eternal salvation.

082 The Rapture and its Sequel.

The Rapture and its Sequel.

W. Bramwell Dick.

It is interesting to notice that among the last words spoken by the Lord Jesus as He entered upon the dark night of His betrayal was the promise of His coming, and that His very last message, ere the volume of inspiration was closed, was the renewal of this promise. It is also noteworthy that while the promise seemed to have been forgotten, or treated with neglect by His people, it was in what appears to be the beginning of the last period in the history of the Church as a responsible witness for Christ upon earth, that the precious truth was revived. We invite our readers to consider with us:-

1. The Promise.
2. Its Significance.
3. Its Practical Application.

(1) The Promise. It was in the upper room, on that darkest of all nights, surrounded by eleven sorrowing disciples, that the Lord Jesus told them that He would come again. Let us note three things in His announcement. (a) Who will come. When Israel will be regathered He will send His Angels to do that (Matthew 24:31). But when His Saints are to be gathered home, He will come Himself! "I will come again." (b) "I will come." That word could be used only by a divine Person. He who uttered the seven "I wills" recorded in Exodus 6:1-30 is the One who, having become Man, spoke the "I will" to His disciples that night. (c) "And receive you unto Myself that where I am there ye may be also" (John 14:3). He will take us home to be with Himself. It is the Person, not the place that constitutes home. It will be:- "The Father's house, the Father's heart All that the Son is given Made ours the objects of His love And He our joy in Heaven." That will make His dwelling place home to us. His presence, the Father's love radiating the whole scene, that will be our portion throughout eternal ages. But He waited till the whole divine plan had been unfolded, the blessings that are ours in Christ; the truth of the Assembly; the restoration of His ancient people; the heading up of all things in Himself; the ultimate and complete triumph of God; before He sought to stir the bridal affections of His Saints by presenting Himself as "the Bright and Morning Star." Thus showing that when the night was at its darkest; when things spiritually seemed to be at the lowest point, those whose hearts beat true to Him might be encouraged by the knowledge that the darkness of the night was nearly at an end, and that soon He would come to claim His bride. The effect, as set forth in Revelation 22:17, was instantaneous. Awakened from slumber, moved in response to divine love, the bride joins with the Spirit, and the Spirit and the bride say, "Come." Hearts, hitherto unmoved, are touched as they hear the call: — "let him that heareth say, come. And, O, so like our precious Lord! there sounds out a last invitation to those who do not know Him. "Let him that is athirst, come! And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Then, as if there were those who had heard of His coming, but, as time passed they asked, "How long, O

Lord, how long?" He gives His final message. "Surely I come quickly," which calls forth the glad response. — "Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." How it delights His heart to tell us. How it should rejoice our heart to respond. Are there things that hinder this? The intrusion of the world, the desire to get on, the pull of business, ambition for family prosperity, and, correspondingly, the slackening of interest in the Lord's things; in the furtherance of His interests; the prosperity of His Assembly; and, in a word, the settling down for a good time here? May it be the Lord is using present happenings in this war-stricken world to stir us up, to remind us that He is coming and that we may expect Him at any moment. May we hear His voice; respond to His message, and then we shall sincerely echo the closing prayer. "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with all the saints. Amen." W. BRAMWELL DICK. THE RAPTURE AND ITS SEQUEL — No. 2.

While the prospect of the rapture, of which we wrote in the last issue, must fill with joy the hearts of all who love the Lord Jesus, the knowledge of that which will follow gives cause also for unbounded delight. (1) Because Christ will have His rightful place. (2) Because all will be under His control; and, (3) Because all will lead to the fulfilment of the divine purpose. Following the rapture, interest will first centre in Heaven where two great happenings will take place: (a) "The Judgment Seat of Christ" for believers (2 Corinthians 5:10); and, (b) "The Marriage of the Lamb" (Revelation 19:6-9). The first is the necessary prelude to the second. The Judgment Seat will not be of a penal character. For those who will appear there "the sins" question has been settled at the Cross, and, on the ground of the work accomplished there, they will, when they stand before Him, be in the likeness of the One who died for them. Then all will be seen at its true value as appraised by Him.

"Deeds of merit as we thought them, He will tell us were but sin;

Little acts we had forgotten, He will tell us were for Him."

We cannot fail to see the connection between this and the bridal dress of Revelation 19:8; "for the fine linen is the righteousness of the Saints." What a day for our blessed Lord that marriage day will be! Great will be the day of His coming forth as "King of Kings, and Lord of Lords"; but greater far surely will be the day when He shall claim His bride whom He saw in the mirror of eternity; for whom He came into manhood and gave Himself; whom now He nourisheth and cherisheth; and whom on that day He will present to Himself all glorious (Ephesians 5:25-32). As to events that will happen upon earth, we cannot do better than refer to an informative pamphlet by our esteemed Editor, entitled "The Kingdom of God." If in the first Epistle to the Thessalonians we learn about the rapture of the saints, in the second Epistle we are informed as to the appearance of Anti-Christ, the debut of the Man of Sin, and we learn that those who would not receive God's truth will accept Satan's lie! Then there will be the remnant of Israel who will at last recognise and receive their Messiah. They will ask, "What are these wounds in Thy hands?" He will answer? "Those with which I was wounded in the house of My friends" (Zechariah 13:6). Then shall come forth their confession: "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5). These will be the Evangelists of that day, and going to the numberless people who have not heard the Gospel of the Grace of God (and to none other), they will proclaim "the Gospel of the Kingdom" (Matthew 24:14); will call for allegiance to Christ; and Matthew 25:31-46 indicates the result of their labours. Then will come the great tribulation when a man will demand universal worship and those

who refuse to do him homage will suffer. At last, and when least expected, the Lord will come in kingdom, power and glory, and there will be His beneficent reign for a thousand years. Finally, Satan, loosed from his imprisonment, will make his last attack only to see his hordes wiped out by fire from Heaven, and he himself will be consigned to his everlasting doom — the lake of fire. The last act in the drama of this world's history will be the "Great White Throne" for all those who have died out of Christ, and from which they will be sent to share the doom of Satan for ever. Thus will the way be cleared for the absolute triumph of God over the enemy, the victory of good over evil, and the introduction of a world "where sin, nor want, nor woe, nor death can come," but where God shall be all in all. The consideration of that, however, we must leave for our next paper, if the Lord will. W. BRAMWELL DICK. THE RAPTURE AND ITS SEQUEL — 3.

"Then cometh the end" — and what an end! What we outlined in our last paper is tersely summed up in the triumphant resurrection chapter:- 1 Corinthians 15:24-28. Religionists, politicians, social reformers and others may have their own ideas as to when the end will be and what it will be like, and these may be coloured by their particular obsessions. We turn, however, to the infallible Word, and there we find in a few sentences just what will happen. As we have already indicated, and as this chapter shows so plainly, the Lord Jesus Christ will take the reins of government. He will put down all that is contrary to God. "He must reign" and "He will reign." The last enemy with which He will deal, will be what was the first enemy, and which for well nigh six thousand years has decimated homes, has broken hearts, and has wrought havoc irrespective of position, nationality, age, or anything else. Death will be annulled, everything in the Universe will be brought into subjection to Him, and "then cometh the end." There will immediately follow "A new Heaven and a New Earth" (see Revelation 21:1-7), no more sea, which certainly means no more separation, but also no more commotion, no more war, no more evidence of the work of Satan. There the Assembly will have her own peculiar place as the bride of Christ, and, a thousand years after the marriage, she comes forth "prepared as a bride adorned for her husband," in other words, in all the loveliness and beauty of Christ Himself. God's original purpose to dwell with men will be realised, and He will dwell with them. All that marks and mars this world now, and with which we are so sadly familiar, will then be done away; no more tears, nor death, nor sorrow, nor crying, nor pain, but all things new! Then will sound forth the note of complete and final victory:- "IT IS DONE." He who on the Cross, with His dying breath, said, "It is finished," will, from the throne, exclaim, "It is done." The great, mighty, marvellous work accomplished. He will deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father, that God — the triune God, God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit — "that God may be all in all." In the Council chamber of Eternity the plan was formed; in the region of time, for some four thousand years, man took his own way, sinned with a high hand, disgraced himself and dishonoured God. His crowning act was when he "crucified the Lord of Glory." God made man's great sin the occasion for displaying His great love.

"Where sin o'er all seemed to prevail, Redemption's glory shed." At the Cross the foundation was laid in the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, on the ground of which every sinner can be saved who believes in His Name; for clearing the world of every trace of sin, and of meanwhile forming the Assembly to be the vessel for the display of God's purpose centred in the risen and glorified Man at His right hand. That accomplished, all creation will, we suggest, re-echo the cry, "IT IS DONE!" and will be vocal with the praise of Him Who has done it!

"To Him that is able to do far exceedingly above all which we ask or think, according to the power which works in us, to Him be glory in the Assembly in Christ Jesus unto all generations of the age of ages. Amen." (Ephesians 3:20-21, New Trans.). W. BRAMWELL DICK.

083 Reaction to the Ways of God.

Reaction to the Ways of God.

Notes of address by John Robinson at Workington (22/3/40).

It is well for us to know what God is doing and the end He has in view on the earth. Where God is working, Satan is working too. His is the great counterfeit of God's masterpiece. Taking account as moral beings involves responsibility to act according to the light God has given! In Genesis, after the Flood, God began with a new earth and Noah was set up in His favour. Immediately he offered a burnt offering and God smelled a sweet savour. Notwithstanding, shortly afterwards Noah failed grievously when tested by wine. A little later, Nimrod manifested purpose of heart in seeking self-exaltation He built a city which developed into Babel. It was the progenitor of the great Babylon yet to be destroyed; so that the end of all man's glory is destruction! Immediately after Nimrod's appearance, God called out Abraham from his country and father's house; that introduced the principle that God must have first place. Abraham, the man of faith, knew how to refuse what in itself might be perfectly right. But in the same chapter he failed in going down to Egypt. However, there was also recovery, and he returned to Bethel, the House of God. He was subjected to another test in the land to which God had called him, in that there was strife between his herdsmen and those of Lot. In spite of his natural right he left the choice to Lot. Then God came in again with the promise to Abraham of all the land in his view. However, he remained a stranger and pilgrim in the land. Following that, he was called to deliver Lot. After his victory he had to refuse the gift of the King of Sodom, as he could not be enriched by the world. He was dependent on God and received everything from Him. (Similarly the kingdoms of the world were at the disposal of the Lord when here, but He knew how to refuse. In the same way beholding the beauty and the glory of the Lord will render us immune from the seductions of the enemy). As we follow the history in the Old Testament, there was a very interesting time in Joshua. The people had come through the wilderness, crossed the Jordan and the reproach of Egypt had been taken away. As a company dependent on God they marched round Jericho and its walls fell down. Yet immediately after that the Babylonish element entered. Choosing the things of the world brought the people into bondage! After centuries of failure under tests, relieved by individual obedient reaction, the people were taken captive to Babylon; yet even there God was on behalf of His servants. They refused to partake of the king's meat. Subsequently, three of them were cast into a fiery furnace. But there they had the company of One like unto the Son of God. God will honour those who honour Him! He will open a door of escape. The fire set them free from their bonds. They were preserved in the midst of the trial in communion with the Son of God.

Coming to the Gospels we find "His Church" against which the gates of hell shall not prevail, established by the Lord Jesus Christ. On the other hand in the chapter where Peter boldly confessed the Lord, he was found refusing the Cross and merited the rebuke of the Lord. The precious things of Christianity can only be had through the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, which separates us from our sins and brings to an end that man who is obnoxious to God! In Romans

7:1-25, we see deliverance from bondage and death so that we may be in living association with the Son of God. The things of the world are going on to destruction but there is what belongs to the Lord with which he is occupied:- viz., His Body and His Bride. That will be taken up to meet Him in the air and subsequently to be manifested with Him. Babylon will come out in full bloom, but will have short prosperity coming to final destruction, but what belongs to Christ will come out as His Bride, "adorned for her husband," in spite of all the previous failure in responsibility. She shall display the beauty and perfection of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself! As His own peculiar treasure He can take delight for the joy and satisfaction of His heart of love. May the Lord help us to be occupied with Him and His thoughts, that we may become more like Him now, then when He shall appear we shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is!

084 Reconciliation

Reconciliation 2 Corinthians 5:1-21.

Notes of an address by J. A. Trench, 1891. In this passage the apostle carries us on from the ways of God with the poor earthen vessel, in which He has put this treasure, to the moment when we shall have done with the earthen vessel for ever : when there will be a vessel perfectly suited to the treasure. From chapter 4. we learn that He has put the treasure in the earthen vessel, that "the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us" (2 Corinthians 4:5; 2 Corinthians 4:7). Nothing but Christ could shine out of bodies of glory; but all the excellency of the power of God is put forth to make Him shine out of earthen vessels. In chapter 5, we come to the blessed moment when we shall have done with the earthen vessel altogether. "We know" — always the language of faith — is the divinely given certainty that characterizes the believer. The word here is really "tent," in contrast with what follows. A temporary kind of dwelling in contrast to "a building" where there is permanency, in other words, our glorified condition, that awaits us in His presence.

What is the effect upon our souls? We groan. Have we begun to know anything about that? Do we know what it is so to have our eye on the body of glory in His presence as to feel uncomfortable in these bodies? Have we thus the condition, for which God has wrought us, distinctly before our souls, so that we become less and less at home, so to speak, in these bodies? Is our eye so lit up with the vision of glory, "earnestly desiring" it? It is not the groan of suffering here; but "to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven." Here is the blessed light that Christianity has cast upon this subject of death. The 3rd verse comes in on account of the profession at Corinth. We are not looking for dissolution, although it brings no fear with it. The normal Christian hope is "The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven . . . and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air" (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17). Here it is not traced to the Lord Himself, but to the power of the life we already possess in Him, "that mortality might be swallowed up of life:" it only needs to be put forth at His coming. When the first arrow of conviction reached our souls, God had wrought us for nothing short of full conformity to His body of glory. Are you satisfied with this body of clay? "Present in the body" (N.T.) does not mean at home in it; a strange thing indeed to be at home in a body in which we are burdened. "Absent from the body . . . present with the Lord." That is the way dissolution comes in. It is one of the only four passages in the Epistles where the death of the believer is contemplated; and how sweet that is, no wonder that we can count upon death as one of our possessions

"We walk by faith not by sight" (verse 7). This is the effect of our present condition, we only enjoy these blessed heavenly things by faith, and that is so surpassingly sweet that we long to see them actually. "Wherefore we labour, that whether present or absent we may be accepted of Him" (verse 9). This is the motive of all the life; but after death the judgment. All is changed for the believer, but it is a universal principle, "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ." Here it is applied in its Christian bearing more especially. Every single man, woman, and child will

appear there. How do we get to be there? Not until the Lord has first come for us. How blessed that is; He does not send any intermediate beings; He comes to receive us to Himself. We only come to be made manifest at the judgment seat, but we are in bodies of glory like His own, we shall be perfectly like Him — no room for fear there, as, we know well, perfect love has cast out fear. We are made manifest there as the fruit of His perfect work on the cross in which Christ has so glorified God.

You may ask, why are we made manifest at the judgment seat of Christ? It is that there, for the first time, we may know His grace fully, as we cannot know it now. All our ways will come out before Him from the cradle to the glory, and more than that, all His ways with us, and then what a burst of praise, that will never die away, will come from our hearts. I cannot imagine the full joy of eternity without that. Apart from it how we should have wished, all through eternity, for a moment like that when we could go over all our past history in the light of His presence. We spoil it sometimes by bringing in others. The Lord is able to isolate us with Himself; it positively weakens it to bring in others. No, I shall be alone with Him to go over all my past life. It is needful that it should all come out there in order that His grace should have its full place in my heart at last.

Reward also comes in. Eternal glory carries no thought of reward for service, it is the fruit of the travail of His soul, that He should have us with Himself, in the eternal glory. But there is the kingdom, where there will be reward or the loss of it. Some will have all their works burnt up as rubbish, and how glad they will be that it should be so, but the solemn fact remains that they will have no reward in the kingdom; not that reward should ever be a motive for service, it would be rubbish then indeed. Christ must be the motive. The Apostle shows how this is meant to act on our souls down here, we anticipate that day, we can walk in the full light of it when divested of all fear. What a solemn incentive it becomes to holiness! The Lord give us to walk in view of that day. From the remainder of the chapter we get the divine foundation upon which all this blessed confidence upon God depends. In verse 19 we find three things: — God was in Christ; not imputing trespasses; putting in us the word of reconciliation. All rests on these three things. There never can be anything beyond this first immutable principle in one way; how needed this was as the basis of reconciliation. Satan early stole man's heart, and instilled into his mind the dark doubt against God, and all man's thoughts of God ever since have been founded on the lie of the devil, instead of the truth of God. So He showed Himself in all His grace to arrest man by the irresistible power of that grace, so that we might know and bless God. How blessed this grace comes out in such a scene as Luke 15:1-32, or John 4:1-54. "Not imputing their trespasses unto them." "He came to manifest Himself in all the goodness of His own heart here. "He . . . made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin." Not imputing trespasses was no ground of reconciliation. It would have been like Peter when he clung to the Lord's knees crying "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man O Lord." It would have only shown us how absolutely unfit for His presence we were.

Another effect of His presence here, in the full revelation of His goodness, was that it became a signal for the wild outbreak of all that man was against God. Thus all our state came fully out. Instead of reconciliation, His presence only drew out all the irreconcilableness of the natural heart. And "having made peace through the blood of His cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself" (Colossians 1:20). Having begun with the centre of the enmity, reconciliation will go out to all creation, but He begins with man. Man only was opposed to God's heart and will. His full state comes out now with all the added light of the cross upon that condition.

"If one died for all, then were all dead" (verse 14). Up to the cross God had been dealing with man as alive in the flesh : then He sent His own Son into the world, the only result being the outbreak of all the enmity of man's heart. Now God looks upon man as dead in sins; how blessed to have bowed to it, that we are absolutely dead in sins by the rejection of the Lord Jesus Christ. And now when we give ourselves up for what we are before God, reconciliation begins to shine out before us: not to do with sins, but with the state of enmity of man's heart. God has identified Himself with our condition, "He hath made Him to be sin for us" (verse 21). All our state having come fully out has been judged in the cross of Christ. That was the end, not merely of all that I have done, but of all that I am.

We know Christ no more after the flesh (verse 16). We know Him now as risen from the dead, a new creation, having entered that place as Man. It is a wholly new creation, where all things are of God. Thus we see a Man gone up in divine righteousness before God, and all that wonderful place into which He has gone opening up before us, as the home of our hearts. No disturbance can come there between your souls and God. The word reconciliation is a difficult one to explain. We find an illustration of it in Joseph and his brethren. After enjoying the fruit of his love for fifteen years, when their father died, they said, "Joseph will peradventure hate us" (Genesis 4:15). They were not reconciled. With how many is it thus now; often not known until a death-bed by one who has been enjoying the fruits of His work for years. There has been a lurking suspicion all the time, because they have never seen how God, has closed the history of the first man. What rest of heart when that is known.

There is another truth in verse 5 where we learn that we have "the earnest of the Spirit." What divine immutable foundations are these for our souls to rest upon. God come down in Christ; man reconciled, judged as to all that he was, in Christ; a Man gone up into the glory in divine righteousness, and now the earnest of the glory, the Holy Ghost, dwelling in us. In connection with this, there comes out the blessed spring of all this, "The love of Christ constraineth us." Not your love, as some think, but His. What love! And then we have the new object, that we should live no more to ourselves, but to Him. That blessed One that shines before our souls in all His excellency, all the glory of God shining in His face. We can gaze upon it with more confidence than upon the face of our nearest or dearest friend. We have the standard of what suits Him, and use diligence that "we may be accepted of Him." God grant that thus it may be with each one of us; that He, Himself, should be so before our hearts, that our life may be just seeking to please Him.

085 Redemption, Peace and Communion.

Redemption, Peace and Communion.

J. R. Gordon.

"I will pass through the land of Egypt this night and will smite all the firstborn" (Exodus 12:12). Solemn sentence! God's longsuffering could not continue any longer. But with the message of judgment came the message of redemption. "When I see the blood, I will pass over you." It was a message of hope for the people of Israel. It can therefore be seen with what eagerness they conformed to the conditions set out by God. Dear Christian, can we remember the eagerness with which we conformed to God's conditions when the thought of God's judgment first penetrated our darkened hearts. The Israelites were to take a lamb of the first year, without blemish, which was to be kept from the tenth to the fourteenth day of the month. This calls our minds to the words of John the Baptist. As he beheld Jesus as He walked, he exclaimed, "Behold the Lamb of God." The lamb of our chapter speaks clearly of "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." "The tenth to the fourteenth day " speaks of His pathway here before the eye of God and before the eye of man. There was no blemish to be seen by either in that Blessed One. As we read in 1 Peter 1:18-19, "Ye know ye were not redeemed by corruptible things such as silver and gold but with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." The lamb was to be killed and the blood sprinkled on the two side posts and upper door post of the house. They exalted the blood! It came between them and God. The blood indicated that another had died in the stead of the firstborn and God was satisfied; His righteousness was met. It is thus God views us today. The blood of Another has been shed on our behalf, the blood of the Lamb of God. As the Israelites could dwell safely and peacefully within their houses because God had said "when I see the blood I will pass over you," so we can be here in safety, trusting that same Word of God; "God is satisfied with Jesus, I am satisfied as well!" The children of Israel were not to be indifferent after they had a sense of safety and peace, but were to be engaged with the lamb under whose blood they were sheltering. "They shall eat the flesh that night roast with fire and unleavened bread and with bitter herbs shall they eat it." So God would have those who have taken refuge under the blood, to be occupied with the "Lamb that was slain." The "lamb roast with fire" speaks of Christ when He was exposed to the unsparing judgment of a Holy God against sin; when He bore "our sins on His own body on the tree." "Unleavened bread" shows there must be purity. "Bitter herbs" suggest self judgment. Only certain parts of the lamb were to be eaten by the Israelites on that memorable night, "his head with his legs and with the purtenance thereof." It is our privilege to have communion with our Lord as to His mind, as no doubt this is what "the head" teaches us. It is only as we partake of "the head" we can be marked by "one mind"; it is also the only way to intelligence in Divine things. The "legs" suggest the walk of Christ. We have to feast on His pathway here; what wonderful lessons there are for us in that beautiful life! As we feast on it so shall we be able to "follow in His steps." The "purtenance" or inward parts; this is the affections of Christ opened up to us. As we are engaged with His love fully displayed at Calvary so shall we respond in praise and adoration. There will also shine forth love one to the other, and in this way

men will know we are His disciples. As Israel partook of the lamb roast with fire they were to be ready to leave Egypt, having their loins girded, their shoes on their feet and staff in hand. So we who have been redeemed by blood, have peace through faith and enjoy communion with our Redeemer, are to be freed from all earthly ties ready to enter into our promised rest, there to join the whole redeemed company in singing the "new song" unto the "Lamb that was slain!"

086 Rejoicing before the Lord.

Rejoicing before the Lord.

(Notes of address by J. A. Trench, Galashiels, 1916). The Pentateuch has been the constant object of attack by the higher critics and Deuteronomy has always been marked out for special criticism by them. However, it is of prime interest to observe that in the Temptation in the Wilderness, the Lord Jesus met Satan with quotations entirely from Deuteronomy. The fear inspired by the reign of Law and the trials of the wilderness was displaced by joy in Deuteronomy. No other book of Moses presents this feature. In Deuteronomy 12:1-32, after unfolding the wonderful issue of the wilderness in the successful entrance to the Promised Land, involving their rest in the inheritance given by God, twice over Moses indicated that they were to rejoice before the Lord their God. Then subsequently on five great occasions joy was to be the prime feature which would mark the relationship with the Lord in the Land, He had given them to possess, viz.: (1) when the tithe of the increase of the Land and firstlings of the flocks were presented to Him; (2) on the feast of Weeks; (3) on the feast of Tabernacles; (4) when the basket of first fruits was presented; and (5) finally on entering the Land and setting up the altar bearing the inscription of the Law. If the heart is filled with gladness there cannot be any foothold for the enemy of souls! Obviously joy springs from possession. The deliverance effected in redemption lays the basis for the process which emerges in joy.

We are brought to the culmination of blessing at the end of the first section of eleven verses in Romans 5:1-21. After the long connected statement springing from the thought of justification, we read "We also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ by whom we have now received the reconciliation" (Romans 5:11). There could not be anything beyond that, and it is based on reconciliation to God by the death of His Son. Later we find the doctrine developed that it is in consequence of man being in Christ and new creation having taken place, that the ministry of reconciliation is effectual (2 Corinthians 5:17). If it could be conceived that there should be any vacant space in the heart it will be filled by the blessed God who will get in return the joy of that heart. At first consideration the passage in Romans may appear to hinder the outburst of joy because subsequent to the rejoicing in hope of the glory of God, tribulations are introduced. We do not usually associate these with the thought of joy. Nevertheless, the Apostle said "we glory" (1:e., make our boast or rejoice) in these also because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given to us.

We cannot but be greatly affected by the sense of deliverance gained at such infinite cost, but the difference between that and the subsequent joy is well illustrated for us in the Book of Deuteronomy. The Passover was the first great gathering of the Jewish year bringing to the people's remembrance the ground of deliverance, as well as of blessing typically in the sorrow and death of Christ. Thence joy would not be appropriate, but solemn self judgment is set forth in the unleavened bread which accompanied the celebration of the Passover. The contrast with that feast is found in Deuteronomy 16:1-22 where the feast of Weeks and the feast of Tabernacles are

brought together. The former was marked by freewill offerings unto the Lord, and the latter by the abundance of the blessing in harvest and vintage. In both feasts they were to rejoice as fitting to their typical significance.

087 A Suggested Remedy.

A Suggested Remedy.

Extract from "Reflections" by the late S. Scott about 1925.

Over a century ago, souls were retrieved from a condition of things far worse than anything that exists at present; a blight rested on the whole of Christendom and even a profession of religion was almost extinct! There was at that time a power manifested that enabled saints to walk in the light, see eye to eye, dwell in unity, harmony and mutual confidence. That developed such an atmosphere that looseness and kindred evils could not breathe and where the voice of contrariety could not find utterance. The vivifying effect of good was apparent in every feature of their activities; it was the secret of their power! It may be asked, "In what way was the good seen?" First and foremost, it was the truth of the oneness of the body of Christ expressing itself in a congenial medium; the truth of the Headship of Christ operating in that body in the harmonious working together of every part; there was the consciousness of the individual's part and place in the assembly, built on the foundation of the Son of the living God; the call of the saints from every worldly and ecclesiastical system being responded to, made them in reality strangers and pilgrims, while waiting for their Lord. Perhaps the knowledge of the fact of the organic link with a Man in heaven was as potent an influence as any other in the formation of a Christ-like walk here. Such being the hope of the Church, the ministry to the saints was naturally of the character that fostered desire after these realities. Service was carried on in the light of the unity of the Spirit and had the body in view. Fellowship in every sphere of the work of the Lord was co-ordinated by that one thought; the prophet, the evangelist, the pastor and the teacher wrought in harmony. Rivalries and jealousies of the gifts of others could not exist where the presence of the Holy Ghost prevailed; neither could the gifts to the Assembly be exercised in watertight compartments. These things known and ministered by the Holy Ghost will touch the consciences of the disorderly sooner than all else, and free souls from the ways of the world, coldness of heart and irregularity of walk!

088 Righteousness.

Righteousness.

Omicron (T. Oliver.). The Greek word dike carries the thought of a judicial sentence, penalty, and is translated in N.T. as vengeance, judgment. By itself it occurs only four times-judgment against Paul, Acts 25:15; re Paul and the viper, vengeance, Acts 28:4; Punishment of the unbeliever, 2 Thessalonians 1:9, lit. "shall suffer the penalty," so in Jude 1:7, "the vengeance, lit. 'penalty,' of eternal fire." Dike is the parent word of the group, and underlies every aspect of righteousness imputed to the believer. This enhances God's gift; we do well to ponder the fact carefully. Dikaios, is the adjective = right, just, righteous. The best English equivalent is "righteous," chiefly when divine persons are mentioned, as in John 17:25; 2 Thessalonians 1:5; 2 Timothy 4:8; 1 John 1:9; 1 John 2:1; 1 John 2:29; 1 John 3:7, and in God's judicial dealings with the earth, etc., in Revelation 15:3 the Song of Moses and the Lamb), also Revelation 16:5; Revelation 16:7; Revelation 19:2. The Just (One) is a Messianic title, Acts 7:52; Acts 22:14. Both Pilate and his wife in Matthew 27:1-66; Matthew 19:1-30; Matthew 24:1-51, as well as the centurion (Luke 23:47), said of Jesus "that just (righteous) man." Dikaios is also used in Matthew 27:19, etc., of a class or company, "the righteous." Dikaiosune, the noun (feminine), is always translated righteousness in our English version, and correctly so, as that relationship to dike which divinely fulfils its claims, 1:e. , when used with regard to sinful man. In Romans 1:17 "Righteousness (not 'the') of God," is revealed in the glad tidings. In this basic scripture there is no article before "R," which in this, and other instances, denotes that, of which there is but one in existence. This is practically equivalent to a proper name. There is but one righteousness! (See footnote, J. N. D's Trans. on Romans 1:17). This righteousness becomes a reigning attribute in the hearts and lives of the saints (Romans 14:17). This "R" is revealed (apokalupto), 1:e., had not been before uncovered in this new and full character of divine blessing. In Romans 3:21, it is manifested (phaneroo) a shining forth, radiance, Romans 3:25-26 (endeixis) is the word, A. V. declare His "R" set forth, manifest, 1:e. , a public declaration with proof. In Romans 4:3-6; Romans 4:8-11; Romans 4:22-24, logizomai is the Greek word, counted, reckoned, imputed. The gift (doreas) of Righteousness in Romans 5:17, is in reality, though not so treated here, a gift of love, and in 5: 15 the free gift (charisma) a gift of Grace, and in same verse the gift (dorea) in Grace of Jesus Christ, abounding in unrestricted fulness. The strong relation to justification of the above is seen in Romans 3:24, "being justified (dikaioumenoi) freely (dorean) or gratuitously by His Grace." Dikai-in this verse is a present participle and points to the abiding principle of justification, more than the process, which moreover is expressed in Romans 4:25, "raised again for our justification" (dikaiosin), a verbal noun implying the act of justifying. The verb itself is dikaioo, in Romans 4:5, its present participle expressing the abiding principle, "that justifies the ungodly." In this "unjustifiable" procedure God is just (dikaios), and the justifier (dikaioo) of him who is of the faith of Jesus. Christ has borne the penalty (dike) due to us, God has freely blessed us in Him and through Him, even constituted us righteous. God is love, for He so loved that He gave, and still gives in His abounding Grace. The adverb dikaios occurs in Luke 23:41; 1 Corinthians 15:34; 1 Thessalonians 2:10; Titus 2:12; 1

Peter 2:23 — justly, righteously. Dikaioma — a neuter noun, ordinances, judgment, the significance and result of legal action and of justice as "the fine linen which is the righteousnesses of the saints," Revelation 19:8. (Luke 12:14; Acts 7:27; Acts 7:35, etc., gives Dikastes (masculine noun) judge).

089 The River of Eden.

The River of Eden.

Genesis 2:2-15.

(Notes of an address by J.S. Bertram at Galashiels). As creator of the universe in bringing into being such a marvellous system, God had in His mind not only what was material but what was moral. In the material order that which was for the benefit of the creature essentially is a symbolism of that which must emanate from God Himself in relation to the moral or spiritual order. In this connection attention is drawn to the river in Genesis 2:11-15. It is striking that the river had its source in Eden, the garden of God, the earthly paradise. In issuing forth from Eden it became four heads, and went on its course for the benefit of the creature. The number "four" in Scripture signifies "completeness in relation to earth"; this forms a wonderful study throughout the Scripture. The river was one in Eden. The great teaching of the Old Testament is to put emphasis on the fact that "the Lord our God is one God" (Deuteronomy 6:4), but as the river flowed forth it became four heads, surely a beautiful type of God coming forth in Grace in Christ. In that connection it is helpful to learn from the meaning of the names of the rivers, the coincidence with the presentation of the Blessed Lord Jesus in the four Gospels. The first of these heads or rivers mentioned is Pison which means a "broad river," coinciding with the presentation of Christ in the Gospel by Luke, who gives us so beautifully His coming into manhood and standing in relation to man and creation as Son of Man, the broadest of all His titles, for all things will yet be put under Him as such (Hebrews 2:1-18). The river flowed through Havilah. The gold of that land was good. There was also the onyxstone (precious and durable). Surely we can trace in the steps of the perfect man that which answers to the gold, onyxstone, precious indeed. "Unto you therefore who believe is the preciousness" and its abiding nature.

Gihon is the second river which means "swift". From the books of Esther and Daniel we find that the king's message required post haste (swift action). We find the Lord Jesus spoken much of as the King in Matthew's gospel. There He was born King, although denied His Kingly rights. There is presented in this Gospel how He will act in Kingly dignity. His teaching in Matthew 13:1-58 in relation to the Kingdom of Heaven, indicates the heavens as the seat of authority of the King. In Matthew 22:1-46 is the supper where the king views the guests, He sees one who has despised His provision. His authority at once is exercised. Action is swift, He is also hailed as King. As the king in Matthew 25:1-46 He differentiates His word as final, "Then shall the king say, come ye blessed of my Father," also to the other company, "Depart from Me." No opposing power can stay His swift action. The third river is Hiddekel which means "sharp words." "The word of God is sharper than any two-edged sword." Connecting this with the servant character of the Lord Jesus as presented by Mark, we find His word fraught with power and authority, the sharp keen edge was felt by the opposing element all the way through. Demon, disease and death all fled at His word. The proud Pharisees and reasoning Sadducees felt the keen edge and had to retire. If it be the case of the paralytic, He dealt with the question of his sins prior to the needs of his body. There

is a laying bare of cause and effect : an essential ministry, that the Word is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. The fourth river, Euphrates, meaning "sweet waters." This speaks to us of the outflowing of the Father's love and grace in the Son of His love, who ever dwelt in His bosom and came to earth to make it known, as He is presented in the Gospel by John. He drew the thirsty of earth to Himself; whether the outcast in John 4:1-54 or the unsatisfied Jew in John 7:1-53. What sweet waters flowed for the thirsty. They would never, never thirst again. There would likewise be an outflow too (for out of His inwards would flow living water), reminding us of the words in Psalms 46:4, "There is a river the streams whereof make glad the city of God." As we pursue the course through the Gospel, we see the continuance of that rich, refreshing, sweet ministry as we come to John 13:1-38; John 14:1-31; John 15:1-27; John 16:1-33; John 17:1-26; just on the eve of the cross, the sweetness seems to increase! May the Lord enable us to drink more deeply into the river of His grace "which is flowing o'er this barren place where Jesus died."

090 Notes of readings on Romans

Notes of readings on Romans (Galashiels, 1942).

No. 1.

After Paul's salutation, he presents the Gospel which is about God's Son (not about the sinner) according to the Spirit of Holiness (totally opposed to the spirit of evil). Holiness required a sin-offering which could only be made by the Holy One. The same Spirit presents Him risen out from the dead without a trace of sin remaining! Paul received apostleship from Christ in glory. That resulted in obedience to the faith among all nations. The Roman Christians had answered, and were saints by calling of God. Their fame was world-wide. His prayers were continuous. He longed to give them a personal impress of Christ, while His comfort would be due to the reciprocation of faith. Paul had been hindered in coming to them. Probably he did not foresee that he would ultimately reach them in bonds. He assured them that he would not preach a modified gospel to the grandees in Rome, because he was not ashamed of the pure gospel as the power of God (supremacy) to salvation of the believer whether Jew or Greek. Therein is righteousness of God revealed on the principle of faith to the individuals with faith! He adduced the 600 year old dictum of Habakkuk as evidence that faith was not a new thought. Even in the era of law-keeping, living was really on the principle of faith. The need for the gospel is set forth in what follows. It had been previously a secret. God's righteousness implied His character of consistency. His wrath is revealed against ungodliness wherever manifested. All are responsible to God for conduct. The untutored heathen should have been convinced of the invisible things of God by the evidence of his eyes as to what is presented in the visible creation. Yet he foolishly sought to fashion gods after the pattern of things he saw. Noah and his sons had been worshippers of God; their descendants had deliberately turned from the light to darkness. Could any wonder that corruption enveloped the chaos which had developed? They who despised God's providential goodness were relegated to their own evil desires. Sin ruined men's bodies, affections and minds. God gave the Gentiles up to uncleanness, vile affections and to a reprobate mind. Worst of all, man was pleased with the results. So there is no beauty in primitive paganism. What a catalogue of vices is unfolded in Romans 1:29-31. But the philosophic Gentile was arraigned on the basis of his possessing an inner sense of right and wrong (conscience which is a great mercy of God); thus he was inexcusable. (Conscience came in as soon as evil appeared). His contempt for the rude pagan condemned him since in spite of his inner light (the sense of violation of right) he acted wrongly in the same way as the other. God has no favouritism. He will judge in inexorable righteousness. He will render to everyone according to works in the day when He will judge men's secret things by Jesus Christ according to Paul's Gospel (his warning). Then the Jew relied on the Law and boasted of God, i.e., his position. The Jew prided himself on being a leader of the blind Gentile, instructor of the unthinking, and possessing in the Law the outline of real knowledge. Yet he violated the Law and thus dishonoured God. Visible circumcision is valueless, only that of heart (in spirit, not letter) avails. But the Jew had great advantages in being trustee of the Scriptures (oracles of God). With the history of preservation through God's faithfulness to His word in view

who could question God's justice acting similarly in the future, although that might involve sinners in eternal loss? Man's unbelief does not alter what God has given to he believed (the faith). The Jewish claim to be exempted from the results of disobedience was really in line with the Jesuitical slander "do evil that good may come," imputed to the Apostle. Then followed God's verdict about man whose every member expressed the fruits of sin, so that there is none righteous! The law implied the knowledge of sin (not salvation) to all in its sphere of operation. The result is every mouth is closed and all (Jew and Gentile alike) demonstrated guilty before God

Romans 3:21, begins to unfold the doctrine of the fundamentals of the Gospel. God's righteousness is diametrically opposed to man's sin. that is the first principle in the doctrine. (Holiness is in nature, righteousness in bearing. God is holy and abhors sin; but He acts in righteousness). In Romans 3:1-31, God makes Himself known in righteousness in His own way apart from man's agency or type (Abraham and David are not cited till Romans 4:1-25.). Although re the sacrifices, etc., God acted in grace to sinners which witnessed to God's righteousness apart from law. That righteousness by faith of Jesus Christ is unto all, but only upon (or of value to) those who believe, so that there is no difference in blessing, even as there is none in condemnation! All had sinned and fallen short of God's glory in its most elementary phase, that of righteousness. So justification is causeless by God's grace though the redemption in Christ Jesus (the risen one). God presents Him as a propitiation (mercy-seat in O.T.), the meeting-place between God and the sinner, through faith in His blood. Primarily, that declares God's righteousness (consistency with His character) in passing over the sins of O.T. believers. While Law dominated all, God bore with sinners but He could not disclose the reason until He produced the solution of the problem in the death of Christ. But further, His consistency is vindicated in justifying the believer in Jesus in this era as well. Hence all boasting is shut out by the principle of faith irrespective of law. God is of the Gentiles as of the Jews. Justification is for both through faith and the law is magnified thereby!

Romans 4:1-25 puts emphasis on our righteousness (1:e., being reckoned righteous) even as Romans 3:1-31 is mainly concerned with the declaration of God's righteousness in doing so. Thus God's grace is prominent in Romans 3:1-31 and our faith in Romans 4:1-25. The apostle cites two test cases from the O.T. (Abraham before the Law and David after). God justified both. Abraham's faith (not works) led to his being reckoned righteous. His works might be evidence to his neighbours, but not before God! David spoke of the blessedness of the one to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works, and does not reckon sin. Then the circumstances of Abraham's clearance emerges. He was uncircumcised, and before the Law so that neither could be an element in the favour bestowed. Circumcision was given as a seal of the righteousness which he already had by faith. If law-keeping had been an element it would have vitiated all prospect of God fulfilling His promise. As it was Abraham became the heir of the world (not in its present constitution, but as "the world to come.") The Law only brought wrath to light for until its institution there could be no transgression. But the blessing is out of faith so that grace could have free scope not only to the Jew but to all of the same faith as Abraham. (Whosoever will may take!) Then the favour is bestowed on the principle of faith to the ungodly and is not limited to race. Moreover, Abraham's testimony was that he believed God's promise in spite of its apparent unlikelihood. But his record is not preserved as mere history but is significant for us now if we believe on God who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead. The sinner is justified in the same

way now as then! This is the first citation of the Lord's resurrection. He was delivered unto death and judgment for our sins; but it is on account of His resurrection we know God has been satisfied with His sacrifice on our behalf. That is a consequent effect!

NOTES OF READINGS ON ROMANS. No. 2.

Romans 5:1-21 opens with the blessing in the new sphere established in the Lordship of Christ. He is also the administrator thereof. Justification by faith; peace with God; the same circle of favour as He, the Risen One, is in; and the certain prospect of the Glory of God form a terse summary of the main features of the results of God's grace. But since we are not in the Glory yet, there follows the experience of those who participate in grace. We are enabled to rejoice in tribulations or trials which lead to patient persistency and in turn that develops proof of the process and experience of His sympathetic mercy. Finally there is definite expectation which results in the Christian not being upset or disappointed, because the love of God is poured into our hearts (as from a wide-mouthed vessel) through the Holy Ghost given to us unstintedly. (This is the first mention of the Holy Ghost in the epistle). The Holy Spirit is the seal given of the value of the blood of Christ. Relative to the past, Christ died for ungodly sinners without strength and God commends His love to us in that Christ died for us in such a state. (Mephibosheth is the great O.T. illustration of this). In the present time, we are justified in the power of His blood, reconciled to God by the death of His Son. In the future, we shall be saved in the power of His life, in contrast to His death. Finally we are carried beyond circumstances to rejoice in God Himself through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom now we have received the reconciliation! At this juncture the Apostle begins to look at the Christian's blessing from another point of view. He considers the question of our nature, transmitted from the first man after the fall, and God's method of delivering from the power of sin while here. That is a summary of the supremacy of Christ over judgment, which fell on all because of the one offence of Adam. Grace has acted towards the many who shall reign in life, because of the value of the righteous act of Christ. (Therein is the harmonising of the two issues set forth in the trees of responsibility and of life in Eden). The question of good and evil has been solved in Christ who bore the judgment and is the eternal life. Justification of life is simply that Christ in resurrection has become the new life, whereby the believer is entirely clear of every question of sin. The introduction of law could not make any righteous, but only showed the depravity and abundance of sin. But grace was superabundant, reigning through the accomplishment of righteousness with eternal life as the result by Jesus Christ our Lord. That eclipses sin with its resultant death. Death is not simply because of transgression of the Law, but of the wider principle of sin which reigned from Adam to Moses before Law was instituted! In the Epistle, previous to Romans 6:1-23, the prominent aspect of the truth is objective, 1:e., presented from God to man for the exercise of faith. In Romans 3:1-31, man is subjected to the righteousness of God. God has revealed Himself in the declaration of His righteousness. In Romans 4:1-25, His glory is manifest in the resurrection of Christ. In Romans 5:1-21, the administration of grace is through Jesus Christ our Lord. But in Romans 6:1-23; Romans 7:1-25; Romans 8:1-39, the aspect of truth is more subjective, 1:e., the result of the Holy Spirit's work in believers, thus the direction of operation is reversed, 1:e., from man to God. The leading principle of the first section of the epistle is "revelation," while in the second section it is "approach." As an illustration, the typical teaching of Exodus is on the former line, while Lev. and Numbers present mainly the latter line. So in the second section there is contemplated a man of a new racial character who can enjoy God in the

light of His revelation. So there emerge the constituent elements of what is formed in the believer by the work of the Holy Spirit. Deliverance is contingent and proportional to that formative work in the soul. In Romans 6:1-23, it is deliverance from sin which is impressed. The first constituent is that we reckon ourselves alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. The first point in Romans 6:1-23, re. continuing in sin is that Christ has died, in consequence we reckon ourselves dead; that is the significance of baptism. The old man and his works are judged by our profession of Christ's name. That the body (or totality) of sin might be annulled or rendered inoperative. A dead man has neither evil desires nor self will! Hence obedience to the righteousness of God and not to the desires of the body is impressed. A person realises deliverance when there is submission to righteousness. The first result of obeying the doctrine is emancipation from the old obligations. Since being under Law left man in the realm of sin, grace sets free from bondage. Then the apostle refers to the weakness of the flesh. The active life is no longer to be slavery to uncleanness and lawlessness, but to righteousness with its result holiness or separation of heart to God. Therefore deliverance is not to do our own will which ends in death, but to have our fruit unto holiness. Death is the wages of sin (not sins), but God gives eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. In Romans 7:1-25 we are shown to be free from the Law on the same principle that we have been crucified with Christ. That is illustrated by the marriage bond which is valid so long as both live but the survivor is free when the other dies. Now we are united to a risen Christ! By God we are no longer viewed as in the flesh. Formerly when in that condition the activity of sins brought to light by the Law wrought in us fruit unto death. Law did not take away the desire nor did it introduce change of nature. Restraint on a stubborn child increases the desire to disobey. So the Law and Christ are incompatible! Our deliverance from Law is by having died sin so that we should serve in newness of spirit not in the obsolescence of the letter.

Then the second part of the chapter is introduced by the question "is the Law sin?" No! They are opposed to each other. Sin and desire were condemned by the Law. State, not act, is in view! Sin is detected by its evidence, lust or desire. So that the Law is holy, just and good. "Is the good Law the originator of death to me?" is the second question. No! But sin is. Its character became developed thereby. Then follows a singular distortion in which it is shown that the Law and the flesh are incongruent. The new nature is powerless apart from the Spirit. Three great lessons are learned in the conflict: (1) There is no good in my flesh, (2) sin in me frustrates good intentions, (3) I am powerless to find the solution. It is the judgment of a nature and not of the individual Christian state. In the latter, we can do all through Christ. The laws of sin and of God are in perpetual conflict. But man's extremity is God's opportunity! Immediately when the hopeless conclusion is reached, deliverance comes in and through the apprehension of Jesus Christ our Lord. The flesh can only serve sin. In Romans 8:1-39, it is weakness rather than conflict. Before God that is ended, and faith accepts the conclusion.

Romans 8:1-39 opens with no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus. In that envelope there is no condemnation left into which we can come. The Spirit of Life therein has liberated me from the grip of the old principle. God has done what I could not do, by condemning sin in the flesh when His own Son came. He has ended the unmendable, so that now the righteous requirements of the Law having been fulfilled in Christ's death, and my death with Him I now live before God in a new life which walks not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

NOTES OF READINGS ON ROMANS. No. 3.

Romans 8:1, is said to be the text or summary of Romans 5:1-21 (displacement of the old nature in the new Head); Romans 8:2 of Romans 6:1-23 (dead to sin); Romans 8:3 of Romans 7:1-25 (dead to the Law); Romans 8:1, is a contrast to the Law which could only condemn.

There are two principles of walk after (a) the flesh, (b) the Spirit. The flesh is in the Christian, but he is not in the flesh in God's sight. There is no ground for walking after the flesh because the Spirit of Christ is in him! Our standing is in Christ; our state is in the Spirit. Romans 8:1-39 shows a third aspect of the death of Christ, viz., the brazen serpent. Thus we are formed in the new state, wherein are life and sonship. There is an unfolding of what the Christian has in the Spirit rather than what is the work of the Spirit in the Christian. The Christian has the life of Christ in the Spirit attaching him to Christ. The Spirit also is life because of righteousness and that is for practical righteousness. The Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ and the Spirit of Him who raised up Jesus from the dead are three characteristics; all conforming to Christ, (sonship). The doctrine of sonship is not developed here, but the spirit and expectation of sonship are stated. The Spirit of God's Son cannot be connected with the thought of "children," but the Spirit witnesses with our spirit that we are such! Sonship identifies with Christ as firstborn and is in connection with the glory according to the purpose of God. The term "children" refers exclusively to what we are on earth, as sharing Christ's rejection and as such we suffer; but in that place we have the spirit of sonship connecting us with Christ in glory. As children we enjoy the Father's love. "Abba, Father" is an outburst from loving hearts! Creation earnestly expects the display of the sons of God. That will be the liberty of the glory of the children. We cannot conceive the condition of affairs in the Millennium when earth which has been oppressed for 6,000 years by man's evil-doing will be governed from heaven; when God will open His hand in blessing and will satisfy the desire of every living thing! Man's inhumanity to man is permitted by God, but it is not according to His plan of action. Because of God's love He must be sovereign in His purpose for His own satisfaction; hence foreknowledge and predestination to be conformed to the image of His Son. Predestination involves calling, justifying, glorifying in the chain of the purpose of God. That end being reached necessarily brings to an end the doctrine of Romans 8:1-39. The last section introduces a series of conclusions of practical import. If we have been apprehended and drawn to Christ no agency, visible or invisible, temporal or spatial, can dissociate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. We are His absolute property! If God be for us, as also His justification and Christ's intercession, what opposition of the enemy (wilderness or infernal) can be of consequence. We have an overwhelming victory through Christ Who loves us!

Romans 9:1-33; Romans 10:1-21; Romans 11:1-36 give dispensational teaching showing that God's ways with Israel are in harmony with His purpose re. the Church. Nevertheless, the Apostle had incessant grief for the perverse unbelief of his kinsmen; but their guilt had not resulted in God's abrogation of His promises. But these had not applied to all in natural descent from Abraham Ishmael, etc., had been set aside in favour of Isaac. Again Jacob was selected and Esau repudiated. Thirdly, subsequent to the Golden Calf incident, Israel's blessing depended entirely on God's sovereign mercy. The same principle is illustrated in Pharaoh. He refused mercy repeatedly. God bore with long-suffering the resisters until they adjusted themselves for ruin that He might evince the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy prepared for glory! Hosea and Isaiah illustrated the same principle. So the Gentiles in spite of their condition through faith had reached righteousness, while Israel had failed to do so. They had stumbled on the stone of stumbling, but

whosoever believes in Him shall not be put to shame. In Romans 10:1-21, the Apostle expressed his intense desire for Israel's salvation, they had blindly sought to work out a righteousness, but Christ put an end to that for the believer. Christ's death and resurrection preclude man's effort upwards or downwards. Faith is in the heart unto righteousness before God, with the sequel of mouth confession leading unto salvation. Real faith always produces courage to confess Christ! All who call on the Lord shall be saved. O.T. scriptures are adduced to prove the need of Gospel preaching and the beauty before God of the path of the messengers. Faith is inculcated by hearing the Word of God. Romans 11:1-36 shows that Israel's disobedience had not forfeited the blessing permanently. The Apostle's case was evidence against that contention. Even in Elijah's time, God preserved a remnant. So that notwithstanding the nation's apostasy, blessing is ensured for some through faith. If their stumbling brings blessing to the Gentiles, their restoration through grace will ultimately bring blessing to the whole earth. Then the illustration of the olive tree and its branches is given. The Gentile must not presume! All Israel shall be saved and the Deliverer will appear in Zion. The gifts and calling of God are without retraction. It is inconceivable that He could go back on His word! God has closed the door on all in disobedience, that He might have mercy upon them. Well may we add our "Amen" to the profound doxology which ends the chapter!

NOTES OF READINGS ON ROMANS. No. 4.

Romans 12:1-21 deals with the practical consequences of the doctrine previously expounded. The Apostle exhorted by the mercies of God to offer our bodies as living sacrifices to God, (an intelligent service or deliberate self-dedication); not being conformed to the world fashion but growing in transfiguration through renewing of the mind, to discern the perfect will of God. We are to think soberly of ourselves according to the measure of faith received. Here alone in Romans is reference made to "members in one body" and that relative solely to harmonious performance of different functions according to the proportion of faith and without ulterior motive. (Here gift checks independency, as 1 Corinthians 12:1-31 checks clerisy). There is to be unfeigned abhorrence of evil and appreciation of good. Everything is to be done with wholeheartedness as serving the Lord, thus joyful, patient, prayerful, openhanded are prime features. But to bless the persecutor is a step beyond the natural man! The christian is not to be haughty, but full of lowly sympathies, not opinionative nor provocative, quiet, honest, suffering wrong, leaving the recompense to the Lord, thus conquering evil with good.

Romans 13:1-14 upholds authority; since originally ordered by God. There is no room for Bolshevistic tendencies, even against the rule of Nero! The christian is separate from lawlessness rendering honour, taxes and reverence where due; but avoiding debt, except that of love to all. Although not under the Law he fulfils its provisions. Love works no ill to his neighbour and thus displays the Law. The concluding part deals with christian duty in the light of the Lord's return. Being alive to the character of the moment, we walk honestly, eschewing the world's darkness, desires and discord, exhibiting the features of the Lord Jesus Christ. Romans 14:1-23 enjoins respect for the consciences of others. A sensitive person has scruples about much which we may deem trivial, but it is the tribunal of Christ, not ours, with which he has to do. Hence in view of such a heart-searching prospect let us not be critical, but filled with love so that we may not trip up our friend, nor reduce his interest in the only things worth while. If a brother is upset with our conduct we are not walking in love and may thereby ruin the testimony of one for whom Christ died. (The Kingdom of God is not material but spiritual, comprising therein the three immutable elements,

righteousness, peace and joy). Such service is pleasing to God and appears genuine to men; hence pursue peace and mutual edification. Self-gratification should not be allowed to frustrate the work of God by stumbling a brother. Doubt is condemned, since not of faith. Anything otherwise is sin!

Romans 15:1-33 enjoins sympathetic attention and helping of neighbours so as to edify; for Christ did not please Himself. The O.T. scriptures were for our instruction that through patience and their encouragement we might have hope or clear prospect. The God of that patience and encouragement was invoked to grant them to be of one mind according to the example of Christ Jesus, that they might unanimously glorify God, thus real fellowship would be secured. Christ is minister of blessing to Israel to ratify the O.T. promises and that the nations on account of mercy should glorify God. Then followed a citation of O.T. scriptures as evidence. On the root of Jesse shall the nations rely in harmony with Israel. There will be then no antisemitism! Then he wished that the God of that hope or prospect should fill them with all joy and peace in their believing. So that they might overflow in that hope through the Holy Spirit's power. But the Apostle was sure that apart from his advice the Roman Christians were brimful of goodness (Christian qualities) and knowledge, and so able to admonish each other. But he had written freely so as to remind them of their duty because of his commission as minister of Christ Jesus to the nations in His priestly service with the Gospel, that their offering might be acceptable and sanctified by the Holy Spirit. He only spoke of things which Christ had worked through him from Jerusalem to Illyricum (as the diameter of his circle of operations) with the gospel. He had endeavoured to preach not on the ground of others, but reached out to the regions beyond. He had longed to visit Rome on the way to Spain, but at the moment he was going to Jerusalem with the collection for the poor saints there. Since the nations had partaken of the spiritual things from that source, it was their duty to share the material things. He would come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel and he desired their prayers for the furtherance of his mission!

Romans 16:1-27 is an appendix of commendation and greetings. He commended Phoebe, the bearer of the epistle, as she had well-served the interests of a local company of Christians at Corinth and those of the Apostle too, that they might assist her in any way she required as she had been a real standby! Then they were to salute Priscilla and Aquila as co-workers in Christ Jesus, who had risked their lives for that of the Apostle, and so earned his lasting gratitude and that of the Gentile churches. Evidently they had made their house a focus of interest for the Christians in their neighbourhood who were also to be saluted. Then followed a list of nearly thirty Christians selected for honourable mention (representatives of little groups scattered over the metropolis). A parallel has been drawn of resemblance between them and the mighty men, faithful to David (2 Samuel 23:1-39). But the Apostle's list comprised one-third part women. A second appendix appeared for watchfulness against division-mongers, who served not the Lord but their own ends by specious pleas. But their safety lay in being wise as to good and untainted with evil. But the God of peace would crush Satan (the author of mischief) under their feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the universal solvent of difficulties, was invoked to be with them. Further greetings conclude the epistle!

091 Salient Features in John's Gospel.

Salient Features in John's Gospel.

Notes of an address by R. Duncanson, No. 1.

Scriptures read, John 3:35; John 5:20-26; John 12:27-28; John 13:3.

These Scriptures bring the Lord Jesus before us in the relationship of Son to the Father, and in the Son there exists a system of divine affections of which He is the centre. We have read, "The Father loveth the Son and hath given all things into His hand." This sets forth the complacent love of the Father in Him Who ever was the object of His pleasure. In eternity He was the constant delight of the Father's heart; the object of His love; and though here found in Manhood still retains the same relationship and the same place of affection. To manifest how great His love for the Son is, He gave all things into His hand. The measure of the gift is the measure of the love. Nothing has been left out of the Son's hand for the love of the Father to the Son is infinite, boundless and eternal. In John 5:20 the expression recurs with this addition, "And showeth Him all things that He Himself doeth." Here in the intimacy of love the Son is perfectly conversant with all the Father's work. From the very outset the Father had been working: now the Son says, "I work." The work of the Son was in unison with the work of the Father, since He had come to do the Father's will and to finish His work. The character of that work is brought out in John 9:1-41, where, in relation to the opening of the blind man's eyes, He said, "I must work the works of Him that sent me while it is day, the night cometh when no man can work." (John 9:4). But the Son is not only manifesting divine power as seen in many cases in this Gospel, He is the source of life: for "as the Father has life in Himself, so has He given to the Son to have life in Himself." He not only quickens, but He raises the dead; and while these things evince His equality with the Father, it is blessed to see that He receives these things as Man and as Son from the Father as an expression of the Father's love. The death and resurrection of the Lord are brought before us in John 12:27-28. Anticipating the dread hour of death His holy soul is troubled, and in His sorrow He turns to the Father, saying, "Father save me from this hour, but for this cause came I unto this hour." What that hour meant to Him could only be known to the Father, and so it is to the Father that He turns. In deepest devotedness to the Father and in subjection to His will as ever delighting in it, though it made Him a Man of Sorrows, He submitted Himself to all that that hour meant to maintain the Father's glory and secure all that lay in the Father's counsels. If in verse 27 He asks the question, "What shall I say?" He answers it Himself in verse 28, "Father glorify Thy Name." He would not say "Father save me from this hour," for then the Name of the Father would not have been glorified in the cross. Is it any wonder that the Father's voice is heard replying "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." The Father's Name had been glorified in the raising of Lazarus, but the Father would glorify it again in raising Jesus from the dead. In the resurrection of the Son the Father has established a circle of divine affections into which those who have been given to the Son by the Father have been brought.

John 13:1-38. unfolds how we are maintained in relation to this circle of divine affections. The Lord Jesus lays aside His garments and takes the place of a servant that He might wash the disciples' feet. What a wonderful stoop for such a glorious Person! He would ever have us in closest intimacy with Himself, hence the need for such a service. All the defilement contracted in our pathway here must be removed that no shade of reserve might remain upon our spirits in relation to Him. May the Lord give us to enjoy more deeply, part with Him, in this blessed sphere of affections in which He dwells and into which He has brought us.

Salient Features in John's Gospel. 2

John 3:1-36 and John 5:1-47 show the Lord Jesus to be the object of the Father's love; and in John 13:1-38 we see the circle of divine affections established in relation to resurrection, and the Lord serving His own to maintain them in moral suitability to Himself so that they might have part with Him in that circle. The Scripture read introduces us to the Home of Love. He Who had come from the Father is about to return to the Father, and because of this sorrow filled the hearts of His own. To comfort them, the Lord opens out before them the truth of the Father's House. Although He would be absent from them, He was to be the object of their hearts in the Father's House, and He desired that they would have the same confidence in Him as they had in God. While hidden from them, He would still find pleasure in them; and His going to the Father's House was to prepare a place for them. All that they were to Him He treasured with fond affection, and nothing would part them from Him, for in His own presence in the Father's House they would soon dwell. For this, He would soon return and take them to be forever with Himself. What a joy it will be for His heart when He shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied!

Next, we come to the source of love. Everything originated with the Father, and it was His purpose that the Son should not be alone, but that others should share in His place of affection and glory. This is most touching and bows the heart in worship! In verse 8 Philip says, "Show us the Father and it sufficeth us." This brings from the Lord such a wonderful unfolding, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." In the Person of Jesus, all that the Father is in life, nature, disposition and affection has been made known. His whole pathway expressed the Father's grace to sinners and revealed that the resources of the Father had been opened for the blessing of men. Every act of the Son, every movement in that life of perfect love and obedience and His every attitude Godward and manward proved that He was in the Father and the Father in Him. But the Father was not only revealed in what Jesus was Personally, and in His activities of grace, but also in the words He spoke, He said, "I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak, and I know that His commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak" (John 12:49-50). We see Him sitting at Sychar's well, wearied with His journey, pouring into the ears of that poor degraded Samaritan the words of the Father. But the Father was also made known in all His works of power, as opening the eyes of the blind man in John 9:1-41, and in raising Lazarus from the dead in John 11:1-57. Therefore in three ways is the Father revealed in the Son. (1) In all that the Son was in His Person. (2) In the words spoken by the Son. (3) In the works wrought by the Son. In verse 20 we learn that the Holy Spirit has been given so that we might know the present place of the Son. The Son is in the Father, and we can look up to heaven and by the Spirit see the Son in the bosom of the Father. As we learn of the Son's place in divine affections we learn our own place in Him. This is our present place and portion. We are in Him before the

Father's face to rejoice in the circle of divine love and favour into which we have been brought, and until the moment comes when we shall enter with Him the Father's House, He is in us down here that we might set forth in testimony and that under the Father's eye for His pleasure, the beauties of the Son. May we therefore ponder more constantly the Home of Love to which we soon shall be brought with Jesus; and as we do so worship the Father the source of love in the power of the Spirit; and in result be found here in the enjoyment of that love reproducing the moral features of Jesus.

Salient Features in John's Gospel. 3 In John 12:1-50 we have the hour of the Lord's death and resurrection, in chapter 13 the hour of His ascension noticed, while in John 17:1-26 it is the hour of His glory. Turning His eyes to the Father He says, "Glorify Thy Son that Thy Son may glorify Thee." Having glorified the Father upon the earth by the maintenance of all that was due to His holy Name, and having finished the work which the Father had given Him to do that a basis might be laid to give effect to the Father's eternal counsels, He takes His new position as Man in the glory that from thence He might glorify the Father. As receiving authority over all flesh, He communicates the blessing of eternal life to those given to Him by the Father: a life consisting of the knowledge of the only true God the Father, and Jesus Christ the Sent One. Verse 5 presents the essential Godhead glory of the Son; what He had with the Father before the foundation of the world. Here we have the privilege to listen to the voice of the Son speaking to the Father of the place of relationship and equality that were His with the Father before the world was. In these sweet and blessed communications there are depths beyond our feeble apprehension, but with adoring hearts, as we listen to the words of the Eternal Son, we wonder and we worship. In 5: 21-24 we have the prayer of the Son for those who should be brought into the Christian circle by the preached word: and this brings us, the saints of the present moment, into living touch with the very source of the affections that move our hearts. "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they all may be one, as Thou Father art in me and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me." As brought into communion with the Father and the Son we have the privilege to come out in this world in divine testimony expressing the moral features of the Man who is in heaven. Who can tell the blessedness of the communion in divine affection subsisting between the Father and the Son? Nothing can mar or hinder the sweetness of the eternal communion belonging to that circle. In the same way we are brought into a circle where divine communion and affection subsist, and as we enjoy what is there we come out in the features of the Son to represent Him in this world. At verse 22 we are introduced to the scene where in Christ's own company we shall share His glory which displays the moral beauties of the Son. The world will then know that the Father loved the Son and that He was the Sent One of the Father, when they see the features of the Son manifest in His own. Their being there is the fruit of His work: the result of His coming into the world; so that the presence of the saints in His company is the testimony to His being here as the Sent One. But the saints having the glory of the Son are sharing His place, and this is the public manifestation that they are loved by the Father with the same love as rests upon the Son. Then in verse 24 we have the Son's expressed desire to the Father that His own should be with Him in the Father's House. After the display of the world to come has served God's purpose, and we are with the Son for ever in that unchanging scene, we shall gaze upon the Son in that peculiar glory that is His and in which none can share. This glory is the eternal answer to all His toil and suffering here; but in that glory we shall read and learn that the Son was constantly the object of the Father's love before the

world's foundation. What an object is this for our contemplation and heart's affection for the ages of ages!

092 Sanctification.

Sanctification.

J. W. H. Nichols.

Perhaps no truth of Scripture has been more distorted and misunderstood than the doctrine of "Sanctification." The Scriptures are sublime in their simplicity, but often the simplest statements have been beclouded by those who have sought to find in them support for their particular opinions. Some of the misunderstandings regarding sanctification have perhaps risen through giving the word a wrong meaning. It comes from two Latin words *sanctus* (sacred) and *facere* (to make), 1:e., to set apart to sacred use. Its earliest mention is in Genesis 2:3, in connection with the Sabbath day. In Exodus 13:1-22. the firstborn of beast as well as of man was sanctified. In Leviticus 17:14, a man sanctified his house or his field (5: 17). The tabernacle and its vessels, the temple and its furniture, were all sanctified; so that it is evident sanctification had to do with things as well as persons. Certain misleading terms are frequently used now by some persons as "getting sanctified," "fully sanctified," "losing sanctification," etc. The users of these terms generally teach the doctrine of holiness by our own efforts; they insist upon a moment of definite surrender as the time when the "second blessing" is obtained. That every Christian should desire practical holiness is perfectly right; it is indeed the aspiration of the new nature, and Scripture ever exhorts to holiness of life; but this is not attained by human resolutions. Sooner or later the lesson must be learned which the apostle Paul experienced, "I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing" (Romans 7:18).

"How are we sanctified?" is a question answered by Scripture in Hebrews 10:10 — by the will of God and the offering of the body of Jesus Christ. 1 Corinthians 6:11 speaks of it as a definite act, "Ye are washed, ye are sanctified." Hebrews 2:11 also, "They who are sanctified. Again in Hebrews 10:14, "Them that are sanctified." All this is positional sanctification, the result of God's act in grace, and true of every believer on the Lord Jesus Christ the moment faith receives Him as a personal Saviour. Set apart to God by the work of the Lord Jesus and the sovereign power of the Holy Spirit (1 Peter 1:2), the believer's standing before God is unassailable. As born again by the Holy Spirit and the word of God (see John 3:5), and sealed by the Holy Spirit upon receiving the gospel, who in imparting this new nature separates us from the world to God (Ephesians 1:13), the believer's sanctification, positionally, could not be more perfect than it is. It is of this aspect of sanctification that Scripture most frequently speaks. To confound our "standing" before God with our "state," is frequently productive of much soul-misery. The believer can never be more meet for heaven than when he is first brought to Christ as Saviour. "Giving thanks unto the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light" (Colossians 1:12). Our meetness, then, is not the result of any effort on our part. The thief on the cross was made meet for Paradise by sovereign grace based on the sacrifice of Christ, else he could not have gone there. To make positional sanctification subsequent to justification is a great error, and destructive of the appreciation of the work of redemption; it casts the soul upon itself and its experiences, only

to result in self-occupation, and leads to self-complacency or despair. The prodigal in Luke's Gospel gives an illustration of this common error when in the far off country he soliloquized, "I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of Thy hired servants." His thought evidently was to crave an opportunity to improve his state, and enable him to prove himself worthy of a better place. How little he knew the Father's heart! How different the father's thought! The kiss of forgiveness settled the past and secured the future, so that the prodigal was unable to propose what he had purposed. Fellow-believer, you have been received, not as a servant but as a son! That the believer's condition, or state of soul, should ever be a cause for exercise before God, however, it is important to recognise; and the more we understand the wondrous position God has given us in the riches of His grace, the deeper will be our desire to answer in a practical way to this grace. Here comes in such scriptures as John 17:17, "Sanctify them to the truth; thy word is truth." 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4 "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification." 2 Timothy 2:21-22, "A vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, prepared unto every good work. Flee also youthful lusts," etc. We cannot detach practical sanctification from the new nature received at new birth, and it is important to see that we are dependent upon the word of God and the Holy Spirit for this. Man is mentioned in 1 Thessalonians 5:23 as "spirit, soul and body." By departure from God, he became enslaved to his natural lusts. Now grace has wrought, but this does not render one independent but rather brings into gladly recognised dependence upon God. Christ, who loves us is by the Holy Spirit set before our hearts as the object of our affections; and the Father's word to us is, "Be ye holy for I am holy." Being born of God, the new nature in the believer has holy tastes and desires; but because the flesh, the old Adam nature, is also in us, power for holiness lies in walking with God in conscious dependence. Judicially, our old man has been crucified with Christ . . . that we should no longer serve sin" (Romans 6:1-23) and we are to arm ourselves with this truth, to "reckon ourselves dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord," whose death entitles us to deliverance from sin and from the law. But how many there are who, conscious that they had no righteousness to present to God, came to Him for forgiveness and rest; but while receiving these blessings apart from works, now seek to gain sanctification by works. Practical, progressive sanctification is not by effort of the flesh therefore (for a legal basis is an impossible foundation for holiness), but as the soul realizes its standing before God and the wonderful truth that by faith in Christ (Acts 26:18) the believer is sanctified, the desire is inwrought by the Spirit that everything incompatible with this should be denied. The conduct is brought into conformity with the truth: "Ye are sanctified." The standard of holiness is not lowered thereby, but the reverse; for self is treated as worthless and corrupt, the true standard being normal conformity to Christ, and the Holy Spirit the only power for its accomplishment. "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well pleasing in His sight through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen" (Hebrews 13:20-21).

093 Winter, Spring, Summer, Harvest.

Winter, Spring, Summer, Harvest.

Notes of an address by J S. Bertram. In our everyday language we speak of spring, summer, autumn and winter, which is perfectly in accord with man's order, but in God's economy there is a very different order of things. Relative to man he was set up in Eden in the bloom of youth, the freshness of spring and knew something of the summer of God's beneficent goodness, but on account of sin he reaped a bad harvest, and his day ended in death; a winter scene indeed! What was true in connection with man was also true of Israel. Freshness, the expression of life, was in the early days of Solomon, but alas, he too reaped a sad harvest, and bitter winter moral conditions ensued. In John 10:22-23, our blessed Lord was in the temple in Solomon's porch. Despite its magnificent structure with all its show of religious service and the feast of dedication in progress "it was winter." True as to the season of the year, but it was also a perfect description of the nation's condition, where there was no life spiritually there was not a movement toward God with all its fair show; but there is something else to notice, "Jesus walked." What a delight to the Father to look down upon His beloved Son in that winter scene and find in Him alone something for Himself. There was One who walked for His glory, where every step emitted a sweet fragrance in contrast to the corruption. In 2 Samuel 23:20, we have another winter scene; again there is a conspicuous man. Benaiah (the name means "whom God has made strong for Himself"). He went down into a pit to slay a lion; surely a lovely type of the One who descended into the lower parts of the earth, having gone down into death. How blessed that in death's domain (man's unhappy lot, the result of his sin), the blessed God commences to work with the Man of His choice. In the scene where man is helpless God's man comes into view. When Benaiah went down into the pit it was "the time of snow," everything was in the grip of winter, there was not a vestige of life to be seen. So with the blessed Lord Jesus when He went down unto death to slay him who had the power of death, there was not a breath for God in the whole universe, everything lay in death, in the grip of winter. The hopes of the disciples were buried with Him. Marvellous are God's ways. The way of life lay through death. That condition of things which sin had brought in must be brought to an end in death. In the domain of death (man's dread enemy), the infinite love of God has been declared, and the power of God's man seen. So as Benaiah emerged from the pit victorious, having slain the lion; so the blessed Lord arose out of death having burst its iron portals and destroyed forever its power. In His resurrection there is the dawn of a new day, life from the dead. The winter is past and gone, the time of the singing of birds is come (Song of Solomon 2:11-12). In life out of death, spring time had come indeed! He communicated His risen life to His own; the time of singing had come. What joy and gladness filled their hearts as they were brought into the new association with Him risen as He manifested Himself to them during those forty days! But these conditions were preparatory for the introduction of the summer of God's rich grace. The One who went down into death, and rose again has been carried up on high and acclaimed by all heaven as the worthy victorious One God's glory now shines in His blessed face, and as the sun in summer rises in noonday splendour, shedding its beneficent rays over creation, so the Son of Man has gone to the

highest glory. From His place of supremacy and acceptance God's rich grace shines for all. We are now living in the summer of God's grace; what a favourable accepted time is the present. There never was a day like the present, when God's rich grace and love in superabundance are free for all. From Jeremiah 8:20, we learn that the summer of God's grace will end; 1:e., a very solemn thought for those who have not availed themselves of His grace, and they are not saved, let these solemn searching words sink into every heart. Oh, that men would avail themselves of God's grace in the day of salvation, the summer of His grace. There is going to be a rich harvest for God, whatever man may derive from His goodness, and it seems as if that rich harvest will soon be reaped. God's patient goodness and the sunshine of His love will terminate suddenly in the Lord's coming for His own, the first fruits of the harvest have already been reaped, afterwards they that are Christ's at His coming! What a harvest that will be for God; fruit of His love! That will also be a harvest for Christ; fruit of His grief and travail, when myriads are caught up in His likeness. He will rest in His love, He will joy over thee with singing (Zephaniah 3:12). When the harvest is gathered home God will be satisfied, Christ glorified in are redeemed and glorified company; His body and bride resplendent with His glory!

094 The Silver Cord Loosed.

The Silver Cord Loosed. By J. S. Bertram.

Some words spoken at the grave of Helen Hermiston (31/7/42).

Death, the blighter of hopes, the breaker of ties and the bringer of sorrow seems to reign undisturbed, but in the presence of such how blessed it is to possess the Word of God which enlightens us as to man's construction, as to the past, the present, and the future. The Lord God breathed into man the breath of life, and he became a living soul, so man is more than material, but sin has separated him from God bringing in death. The blessed God has now made Himself available to man as Saviour. The one whose remains we now lay in the grave, in her early days was brought to know and love the Lord Jesus, and through her long life knew His loving heart, and guiding hand. Now that hand which was pierced on the cross has loosed the silver chord that bound body and soul together, the golden bowl is broken (Ecclesiastes 12:6-7), (the casket that held the jewel), the pitcher is broken at the fountain which indicates a continued need; dependence is now no longer required. The wheel is broken at the cistern; all activity for maintenance has now ceased; all is still! "Our earthen vessels break." So we commit the dust to the earth from whence it came, but the spirit returns to God who gave it. In 2. Cor. 5:8, we see with what confidence the apostle speaks relative to the departed; a divine light resident in the heart imparts such confidence, and God gives it to us through the Scripture, so that we are assured that to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord; what security, comfort and bliss there is in the disembodied state, since "present with the Lord!" That is not an inanimate condition, but freed from the suffering and sorrow connected with the body and at home with the Lord. From Php 3:20-21, we learn that our citizenship is in heaven, God's thought for us then is heaven, "the sky, not the grave, is our goal." The One who has vanquished death and saw no corruption is going to wield His mighty power in connection with the bodies of His own, "He shall change our vile bodies that they may be fashioned like unto His body of glory, according to the working of His mighty power whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself." What a prospect is this for our hearts!

Christ our precious dust will take, and freshly mould:

He'll give these bodies vile a fashion like His own;

He'll bid the whole creation smile, and hush its groan.

095 Sons of Day.

Sons of Day.

1 Thessalonians 5:1-28.

Omicron. (T. Oliver.)

"The apostle continuing from the new revelation of the rapture, ch. 4, passes on to the Lord's appearing, 1 Thessalonians 5:1-28, in order to confirm both great dispensational truths in the minds of the young converts. He rules out the times and seasons (chronos = usually time in its course, and kairos, time, usually in detail or character, as time of figs," hence — more definite than chronos) because they accurately (akribos, 1:e., they had diligently) investigated, and knew (oidate = inward conscious knowledge), therefore awaited His sudden personal coming with intelligence and eagerness. As Sons of Day and Sons of Light, full and final salvation awaited them through (dia) our Lord Jesus Christ, the instrumental or mediatory genitive embracing all that His titles suggest with reference to His death for or on account of us (huper=with the literal and original thought of the preposition, of bending over, to protect from, and ward off danger by receiving the death blow Himself, for they would live (zao = life divine in fulness) together with Him. Here the adverbial notion of intensity is expressed by "hama" = together coupled with the preposition sun = together with, literally together, together with Him (Dative of fellowship and association in His coming glory). Surely this was compensation for the suffering imposed on them by their persecutors — "Wherefore encourage one another and build up each one the other" (1 Thessalonians 5:11). As Sons of Day, they already belonged to the day of glory; the light of which filled their hearts with radiant hope. Yet, the apostle, knowing the danger of an ever watchful foe, uses the cautionary subjunctives (5: 6, 8), "should not sleep, should watch, should be sober," 1:e., be true to the character of their relations, and derivation as Sons of Day and Sons of Light, for such is the force of the genitive plural article. They were enjoined to be transparent in motive, and in movement, alert, and marked by self-control and wakeful activity. "Having put on" (endusamenoī aorist participle as in Ephesians 6:14), denoting the act of donning the breastplate, etc., which had been done once, and had therefore become an historical event in their souls' experience. The breastplate encased and protected the vital organs; the heart, life centre and seat of affections — and the breathing organs for the inspiration necessary to the life of faith. It was moreover the breastplate (thoraka) of faith and love. They were wearing it, in practical testimony (1 Thessalonians 1:3; 1 Thessalonians 1:6), and an helmet, peri-kephale, literally "round the head," not merely "on," — hope of salvation, encasing and protecting the mind from the vagaries of human wisdom and from the dark and subtle suggestions of Satan. They were well armed in this triple panoply (Faith, Love, Hope), to meet the attacks of the evil one, from without and from within, so that the apostle has confidence that God being faithful to His promises will preserve them blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thessalonians 5:24-25).OMICRON.

096 Sonship.

Sonship.

Matthew 3:1-17, Matthew 4:1-11; Ephesians 1:1-14; Ephesians 6:10-13.

Notes of Address by J. A. Trench at Galashiels (2/7/1916).

It was a wonderful moment in the ways of God when John the Baptist, as the forerunner of the Lord Jesus Christ, went out with his solemn testimony calling upon the people to repent. It was he of whom it was prophesied as the voice of one crying in the wilderness, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His path straight." There were those attracted by his testimony, and they went out to him and were baptised in Jordan, confessing their sins. However it must not be thought that everybody went out. In point of fact the result was very different. The religious leaders had rejected the counsel of God. He addressed the Pharisees and Sadducees as a generation of vipers, as those who had not brought forth fruits meet for repentance. It was indeed a very small remnant of the most disreputable classes in Israel to whom his testimony found access. It was the moral refuse which were moved by John the Baptist's ministry. This is a blessed mark of God's sure work in the soul; and there was no work done until they were brought down before God, confessing their sins.

Doubtless it was no small surprise to John when Jesus presented Himself for baptism. He did so to carry out God's will. He identified Himself with what was approved to be of God in Israel. What a moment it was when Jesus came up out of the water. The heavens were opened. God in His wonderful grace sees the moment for the full revelation of Himself. The testimony of God had been tending right on from Genesis that He might reveal Himself, but the full revelation had never been made until that moment. "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." What a revelation — incomparable, infinite, of the Father and the Son and the Son in relation to the Father. How infinite was the grace of God found with the Lord Jesus Christ as intimated in Psalms 16:1-11, which is His own peculiar Psalm. It could only be applicable to the Lord Jesus, from the very outset. His interest was in the saints, the excellent of the earth, in whom was all His delight. This was not in the state in which He found them. As set forth in the end of the third chapter, the Lord Jesus became the pattern of all that He would bring them into, and us also now by the Gospel. Among the things which come out in these Scriptures are the Father's voice declaring His beloved Son as the object of His perfect pleasure, and the Spirit of God descending and abiding upon Him. I need hardly say that the Lord Jesus was absolutely alone in the position in which we find Him. He only was declared as the Father's beloved Son, the object of favour on whom the Spirit could descend. Never could this have happened upon any other apart from blood. He had taken up the place as a man before God, but not to remain as such. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone, but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit (John 12:24). He humbled Himself so as to introduce us into His own place before His Father. The fulfilment of His Father's will was His direction right from the opening of His path to His death on the cross. In Eph. the heavens are opened to us, and so the Apostle in the opening verses can say "Blessed be the God and Father

of our Lord Jesus Christ who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ." Could the heavens have been opened in any better way? The opening is of the richest character and in the highest place. We are identified absolutely with Him. It is no wonder then that the Apostle, before going in to the ordinary communications of the Epistle, had to relieve his heart in the way he did, which is the true character of worship. Worship is shown in the heart being full so as not to contain itself, and he goes on to say "According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love." I ask you to observe the standpoint God brings us to in His wonderful revelation. It is the standpoint of His own eternal counsels. To be before Him without blame in love is just as Christ was presented in Matthew's Gospel. What helps us in seeking to enter into these things is to apprehend the way in which Christ is presented to us in the Gospels. He was the complete expression of God in His own person, and this had to take place before any of us could have been actually introduced. We have everything set forth in Himself. He went down into death to carry out the eternal counsels of God. That is the standpoint of His choosing us in Him before the foundation of the world.

Into what relationships has the will of God put us? That you and I should be taken up out of the guilt and defilement made angels would never have satisfied the heart of God. He had to predestinate us unto sonship by Jesus Christ to Himself according to the good pleasure of His will. That was the position of Jesus as shown in Matthew 3:1-17. There we see sonship manifested for the first time. In the everlasting counsel it was set forth that we should be introduced to sonship. There is no activity in counsel. There was none in choosing what was according to desire. He chose us in Christ. He wanted to have us before Him perfectly suited to Himself. Then the activity comes in. All this is very wonderful. God's counsel was for Himself, not merely to satisfy us with such relationship. We could never have dreamed of it. Not one of the angels could ever have called God "Father." God wanted to surround Himself with those who could cry "Abba, Father," surrounded by the children of His love. But we are in the position of sons. The distinction between sons and children is very hard to bring out in English. I am a child by relationship, I am a son by position, which is a contrast with the angels place. We are children by being begotten. It is worthy of note that in verse 6 the Spirit of God changes the keynote in the chapter "To the praise and the glory of His grace wherein He has made us accepted in the Beloved." Previously we are spoken of as in Christ. God wants us to know that we are in the same place as His Son. We might have thought that such a special place was reserved for Him only, but He has reserved nothing. In John 17:1-26. Jesus says, "O Father, glorify thou Me with thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was." The last verse of that same chapter tells us the provision He has made for knowing the Father's name. The revelation of the Father's heart is a present thing. He loves to bring the consciousness of His love into our hearts which gives us the strength and capacity to enjoy the wonderful place we have in the Father's love. What a great thing it is to be walking in the consciousness that we are as dear to the Father as the Lord Jesus Christ. In the next verse we have redemption through His blood according to the riches of His grace. That is the way He has met us in our need. The poverty of our need required the riches of His grace. There is such a revelation in that name of the blessing contained in that wonderful revelation. He was known by a new name, not Jehovah which was the name he was known to poor failing Israel. He was now to be known as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Surely it must be in the spirit of worship we enter into that sphere of blessing. We are blessed with all spiritual blessings. We could not be more blessed! The Spirit of God descended and abode upon Jesus. It had never

descended upon any other man in this world, without blood. Redemption having been effected through His blood, the forgiveness of sins and the tidings of salvation reached us. We have received the seal of His own delight upon us. The Father sealed the Son by the same blessed Spirit we have received, and so it is with us the moment that we receive the glad tidings, we are sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession. The next scene opens in Matthew 4:1-25, where the Lord is led into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. He was brought into direct conflict with the power of Satan. It is wonderful to think of it, yet it is what we may expect. We have no sooner been put into the place given us by accomplished redemption than we meet the power of Satan. It is in Ephesians which gives us such a revelation of God in His fulness, that we are instructed as to meeting the powers of wickedness. We are to put on the whole armour of God that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil, whose whole object is to cast us down from our excellency. We are thus provided with the complete armour to withstand. The Lord was led of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted. He fasted forty days. Satan, as the subtle tempter, seizes the opportunity. It is a contrast with what happened to Adam and Eve. He hoped that in human weakness he would achieve the same success as with the first man. Man's place is to obey. Christ had previously been in the place of God, but He answered every attack with, "It is written." It is well to observe that. But there is more than the idea of direction, there is the question of living. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." The Word of God is to form our life. Do you study the Word of God to seek to enter into the truth, and to be ready to meet Satan, having treasured up the Word within you? It should be noted also that the devil can quote Scripture, but in doing so he left out the cardinal point in the passage to which he referred, viz., "In all thy ways." It is no part of God's will for anyone to commit suicide, and when baffled again by the Word of God "It is written," Satan changes the ground to worship. His whole aim is to displace God. He has not the power actually to give all the kingdoms of the world and the glory, but he is able to present them in such a way as to dazzle the eyes and to gain the heart. But Jesus was again proof against the tempter through using the word, "It is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and Him only shalt thou serve."

097 The Spirit, Initial and Resident.

The Spirit, Initial and Resident.

J. S. Bertram. In the night scene in John 3:1-36 we learn from the Lord Jesus that the door of entry into the Kingdom of God is completely barred to man even at his best, and that to come under the moral sway of God necessitates a new moral being, which as He shows is the prerogative of the Spirit to bring into being in and for man. Here the sovereignty and grace of the Spirit comes into view, "the wind bloweth where it listeth." In his fallen state, man could never at any time have a point of contact with God, "that which is born of the flesh is flesh, the natural man is not subject to the law of God neither indeed can be, so if he was to be suitable to God here he must be born anew; having another origin. The prophets spoke of it (Isaiah 44:3; Ezekiel 36:25-27). The Lord confirmed the matter, "we speak that we do know." If man was incapable of apprehending the earthly side of things (1:e., new birth), he was much more so relative to heavenly things. From the outset, the Lord knew and accepted His rejection, and that of the Kingdom. In John 6:1-71 they would have made Him king to secure their own ease. Although the kingdom in manifestation is held over meantime, and it now has a moral bearing in which sphere the Authority and goodness of God are recognised. The thought of what is heavenly is now introduced, and such could only be brought to light by One who came down from heaven, and it was incumbent upon Him in view of such to take up the sin question, so He becomes the antitype of the brazen serpent. Sin must be judged and put away before eternal life could be offered, and in so doing a loving and giving God comes to light. For God so loved that He gave! The acceptance of such a testimony brings the individual into the possession of eternal life (this matter is developed in the succeeding chapters), the rejection of the testimony brings condemnation now, to say nothing of the future, which involves what is eternal. Verse 16 refers to God's love to the world in its widest sense but in verse 36 we read "The Father loveth the Son and hath given all things into His hand." It was true of Him here in manhood, but He could only function in the fulness of His commission consequent upon the cross, although what follows in John 4:1-54 gives a perfect sample of the present. As the Lord weary, with His journey, sat by Sychar's well (the possessor of all things) asks a drink from a woman of the city, and eager to dispense to her the bounty of heaven He said to her, "If thou knewest the gift of God and who it is that saith to thee give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of Him and He would have given thee living water." Marvellous! the Son in humiliation, the giver of living water; that would be in her a fountain of water springing up into eternal life, the water typifies the Spirit, the new power or spring of life resident in the believer; the power and capacity by which eternal life is now enjoyed: which is in the knowledge of the Father and the Son. This involves a new relationship maintained in righteousness (1:e., opposite to the woman's previous course), formative in its result bringing into correspondence to Christ. Thirst and dissatisfaction are unknown in the order, but we are apt to allow the things of earth to choke up the springing well as in Genesis 26:1-35. Her conscience is reached. The matter of worship is next introduced, and the Lord has something specific to say to her on that matter, that it neither appertains to Jerusalem nor Samaria. The hour was then present when the true worshipper must worship the Father in Spirit

and according to the truth, so that the person in whom the Spirit dwells stands in relation to the Faith; the Spirit conducts such to the Father and worship is according to the truth, 1:e., the revelation of the Father whom the Son makes known. "I will declare Thy name unto my brethren." Under Christ's leadership and in the Spirit's power we join in the singing which He leadeth, in the atmosphere of holy love, where the Father loves the Son; such is the measure of His love to us, the many sons, His brethren.

"Rise our heart and bless the Father, Ceaseless song e'en here begun;

Endless praise and adoration To the Father and the Son."

098 Stephen and Joseph

Stephen and Joseph

Acts 7:1-60.

Notes of an address by P. R. Phare at Hawick 1/1/1898.

During 4,000 years, the responsible man had broken down completely under trial. Stephen's indictment of the Jewish leaders was crushing. It was summed up under four heads, viz., the law broken, the prophets persecuted, the Just One slain, and the Holy Ghost slighted. That was a terse statement of fearful import. But the climax of his arraignment came in the words, "Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost!"

Joseph is described in the prophetic witness of Jacob as a fruitful bough, yet hated and separated from his brethren, on the other hand taken up by God as a type, passing through long trying experience and ultimately blessed in a wonderful place of exaltation. Jacob's love for Joseph was typical of the delight of God in Christ. Joseph's brethren after the flesh were envious and could not brook their father's obvious preference. Joseph was despised, ill-treated and sold for 20 silver pieces. We read that it was for envy that the chief priests delivered the Lord to Pilate (Mark 15:10). Christ was robbed of His kingly glory and Messianic rights, sold for 30 silver pieces and separated from his earthly connections. So the only perfect link between God and man of that order was completely severed in the death of Christ. Notwithstanding that on feast days the world celebrates the birth and death of Christ, He is really rejected here. There is no place in this poor world for Christ! But although rejected here He has been received in the glory by God, from whence He is the dispenser of blessing to the whole universe. The devil stepped on to the virgin soil of God's fair creation and inserted a lie in the mind of the first man. But God raised up another man, viz., Christ, who was here completely for the good pleasure and glory of God. The devil could not stand such a display from God and he did not rest until he succeeded in inducing man to put Christ out of the world by way of the Cross. He thought that he had quenched the light of the world permanently, but in the act he completely outwitted himself. Christ is still the light of the world in an exalted sphere and He has countless thousands of light-bearers reflecting that light to illuminate the darkness of the world! Even as every knee had to bow to Joseph and he was the supreme administrator of all the resources of Egypt, so God has decreed that every knee must bow to Jesus owning Him as Lord, and He is the administrator of all the wealth of heaven! In Genesis 45:1-28. we see the affection of Joseph in revealing himself to his brethren and that every Egyptian had to go out from his presence while he was doing so. No matter how cultured the Egyptian was he could not enter in to that affection. So to-day the Lord makes Himself known to His own whom He loves to the end. No philosophic conception can understand that love! The Spirit of God is charged with the mission of revealing to us the glory of that Blessed One. Stephen beheld the heavens opened to enable him to look up into the glory of God and to see Jesus as if ready to come back. Hebrews 2:1-18 presents him to the eye of faith as the centre of all God's administration. There are two parts of the purpose of God concerning Christ. He is already set

over everything, although everything is not yet put under His feet, but by faith we see Jesus as the One crowned with glory and honour. He is the true antitype of the High Priest clothed with the garments of glory and beauty of the Old Testament. The Hebrews epistle takes us much further in the development of the doctrine presented in Acts 7:1-60. There we are told about God's purpose concerning us showing how God is occupied in bringing many sons to glory. He is taking us home to the place of sonship. Stephen became a reflection of his Master, in the brief moment before he was stoned to death. As the first martyr he became the pattern for the long line of witnesses loyal unto death, who were filled with the Holy Ghost and with the vision of the opened heavens and the Glory of God and Jesus there. What a wonderful effect the knowledge of that will have upon us. Otherwise we will be in this benighted and confused world as a ship without a rudder!

099 Two Aspects of the Testimony.

Two Aspects of the Testimony.

Summary W. T. Turpin "the Voice," 1889.

It is important that we should apprehend the significance of the words of the Lord Jesus Christ in John 15:26-27. Having pointed out the hatred of the Jews to Him and His words and how they were without excuse for their sin and that hating Him was hating His Father also, He returned to the subject of the Holy Ghost. In John 14:1-31, the Spirit is spoken of as sent by the Father in answer to the desire of Christ, the Holy Ghost would teach them and bring to their remembrance. In John 15:1-27, the ascended Christ Himself is the sender of the Spirit! In John 16:1-33, the Spirit is present on earth without reference to the sender. The frightful wickedness of man did not hinder the manifestation of divine grace in the gift. Next His exalted position is brought before us. The Lord spoke of Himself as ascended. From Him, the Holy Ghost would come to maintain His glory which had been cast down. Further the Comforter would be the witness to the exalted glories of Christ. Israel boasted of Jehovah as their God, and on that ground would have received the Messiah. But to know the Father revealed in His true character by the Son was entirely different! If He had been manifested only in part they would have had excuse, but they had sin and hated both the Father and the Son.

Two kinds of testimony are set before us:- (1) that of the Holy Ghost, (2) that of the disciples. The distinction between these is important. It is not denied that the Holy Ghost energised and guided them in their testimony, but nevertheless the new and heavenly testimony is rendered by the Comforter, the One who came from the Son on high as the competent witness of His heavenly glory, as well as the bearer of a new testimony as to it. The ways and works of Jesus on earth to which the disciples bore witness are shown beautifully in detail. They relate to Him on earth, but the new supplementary witness relates to Him in heaven. This is connected specially with our calling. The heart clings to earth and lingers in its native air and we resent interference with our rights. It is another thing to leave the scene in spirit in company with our unerring guide, the true servant of our heavenly Isaac, to enter into the glories and receive tidings concerning Him on high. We may well challenge our hearts how far we possess and are governed by such a testimony! "He shall testify of Me." That has all the value of Christ's exalted glory. They had been "with Him from the beginning," and could testify of His moral qualities while here.

100 "The Throne of the Universe."

"The Throne of the Universe."

Revised Notes of an address by J. S. Bertram. In days of uncertainty and distress when kingdoms rise and fall in a decade, when men's hearts fail because of "the terror that flieth by night," how comforting it is to have a divine link with the throne established in the heavens, and relationship with its Occupant! In Psalms 11:4, we read of the throne of omnipotence established in the heavens, now that fact could only be communicated by God, for no man has ascended to heaven; man's speculation and research could never have discovered this, it is beyond his reach and his lust for power. Moreover, he is totally incapable of administrative position. We learn the eternal nature of that throne from Psalms 93:2, "the throne is from everlasting," it is not something raised up in an emergency; it is the eternal throne of the Eternal God, as Psalms 47:8 states that "God sitteth on the throne of His holiness," here we have the Occupant of that throne in all His majesty, the sole governor of the universe. He holds the reins of government, and the hearts of all men in His hand. The throne is supreme; he ruleth in the kingdom of men. He raises one and overthrows another. In Ezekiel 21:27, He says, "I will overturn." We seem to be in one of the overturning periods now. But all must be well, for God is on the throne of His holiness! Psalms 89:14, says, "Justice and judgment are the habitation of Thy throne," that tells us its character. Where there is perfect discrimination, and eternal right-acting, the throne is upheld in absolute righteousness (in contrast to man's expediency), else the whole moral and physical creation would fall to pieces.

Whatever happens beyond our powers of comprehension we can confidently say, "Shall not the judge of all the earth do right." Ezekiel got a vision of the throne in its heavenly enduring character as the sapphire stone suggests (Ezekiel 1:26), but he also saw the appearance of a man above upon the throne; a wonderful vision, premature in point of time, but there is nothing future with God who inhabits eternity. For the interpretation of the vision we are entirely dependent on N.T. revelation. In Matthew 1:1-25., we read of the birth of Jesus Emmanuel (God with us), oh, wonder of wonders, such a mighty stoop was taken by the Great God of eternity from the throne of the heavens to the manger of weakness. God over all, blessed for ever, came into manhood. Great is the mystery of Godliness, God manifest in flesh! In manhood, yet essentially God in all the glory of His being, sea, waves, wind, disease, demons and death were subject to Him. As man He was asleep in the boat, a weary, thirsty stranger. Foxes had their holes, birds their nests, but the Son of Man had nowhere to lay His head. He came here to meet the claims of the throne in regard to sin. These claims were met at the cross of Calvary, bearing that name Jesus given to Him at His birth. Although we fain would linger we hasten from the cross to the tomb where we see the power of His might, relative to the seal of Rome and the stronghold of death; He who descended is the same also who ascended. He was carried up; He went up in triumph. In Acts 1:1-26 the two men in white said, "This same Jesus shall so come in like manner." He has gone to the throne a glorified man. Ezekiel's vision is true to faith in the saints today (Hebrews 2:9). We see Jesus crowned with glory and honour, and so get the present benefit to our souls of His place there. There is much in our lives about which we often ask the reason; but everything is in the hand of the One who loves us

and He is on the throne. We await the day when we shall be with Him. Everything will be visibly put under Him. All heaven adores Him! Ere long the groaning creation will own her Lord and come under the beneficent administration of the throne of His glory. What refreshment shall flow forth to the redeemed creation from the throne, for the pure river of the water of life proceeds out of the throne (Revelation 22:1). All creation shall take up the note of triumph and everything that hath breath shall praise the Lord; then earth shall be in accord with heaven!

101 The Rent and the Unrent Veils.

The Rent and the Unrent Veils.

J. Wilson. A comparison of Matthew 27:51 with Hebrews 10:20 might serve the purpose of creating exercise as to the two deeply important truths of revelation and approach, the former dealing with God's side and the latter with ours. It will be obvious on the ground of Scripture, that revelation is the primary and approach the secondary consideration, for this is the way in which they are presented in the Tabernacle system of Exodus. In Exodus 25:1-40. having proposed that the people should make a sanctuary so that He could dwell among them, God instructed Moses in detail as to the Tabernacle, describing first of all the furniture dealing with revelation, viz.:- the Ark, the Mercy-seat, the Table, the Candle-stick (all of which speak of Christ), the Tabernacle itself and lastly the Altar of burnt-offering which was a witness to both of the truths which are being considered, in fact, the point where one embraced the other. Then came the consecration of the priests, clearly showing that approach could only be made through that medium, followed by the vessels speaking of approach, viz.:- the Altar of incense and the brazen laver.

If God, then, in His wisdom distinguishes in this way in the typical teaching of Old Testament Scripture, surely as those upon whom the revenues of the ages have come (1 Corinthians 10:11) we do well to follow the distinction into the New Testament! It would seem that the two truths are seen shining clearly from the references to the veil of the Temple in Matthew 27:1-66 and the veil of the Tabernacle in Hebrews 10:1-39. The former, let it be noted, was rent in twain (showing the completeness of the revelation) from the top to the bottom (showing the origin of the revelation and its extent). There has thus been the complete revelation of God as to nature and character, for the Cross has come in and this was the only means by which the complete outshining of God could be effected (1 John 4:10; Romans 3:21-26). It is a stupendous thought that everything in connection with God has been told out, nothing else remains to be revealed and the one who has believed the Gospel of his salvation has the power and capacity for the apprehension of what flows therefrom. "Ye have an unction from the Holy One and ye know all things." Where this is understood the believer has the Witness on the line of approach for in turning to Hebrews we find it is the Tabernacle and not the Temple which is largely taken up (Hebrews 9:24). Hebrews 10:19 shows the title the believer has to enter into the Holiest which is an individual matter and verse 20 would perhaps indicate the conditions which surround entrance. It is by a new and living way which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say His flesh. On our side it would be the acceptance of death conditions to self (1 Corinthians 1:29). Where entrance is practised, flowing as it does from state on the part of the individual, it will lead to what is collective as the chapter goes on to develop. May the Lord help us to make an abundant entrance into these precious truths!

102 Waiting for Christ.

Waiting for Christ.

J. N. Darby. — From "Christian Friend," 1882.

What a strengthening thing is the waiting for Christ! I do not think much of an uncomfortable inn, if I know that I am only to be there for two or three days on the way. Perhaps I might wish it were better, but I do not trouble much about it. Because I am not going to live there. I am not living in this world, I am dying here. My life is hid with Christ in God. I am waiting for the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ, God's Son from Heaven, Who is going to take us there to an incorruptible inheritance that fadeth not away. All that we pass through here is merely exercise of heart which God sees to be needed to bring us there. There is nothing more practically important for everyday work and service than our waiting for God's Son from Heaven. If you want to know what this world is and to get comfort for your soul you will be waiting for Him. If I belong to the world, I cannot have comfort. If we are getting ease in it, we shall find His discipline. But the moment I am waiting for God's Son from Heaven, my life is but the dealings of God with the object, that it should be to praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. Here I am passing through in heaviness because of manifold temptations, but He will come and take me out of it to Himself, or would it surprise you, finding you with a number of things to be left behind. Where is your heart with respect to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ? Would that find you with much to throw overboard or with the feeling that here is an end of all exercise of heart! But He for whom I have been waiting will take me to Himself. If my whole life is founded on His will being the motive and spring of it I shall find the exercises and the needed trials. But He is coming to take me to Himself.

103 The Wondrous Works of God.

The Wondrous Works of God.

Job 37:14-16; Job 38:47; 1 John 3:8; John 17:4; John 6:27-29.

Notes of an address by J. S. Bertram at Galashiels, 23/11/40. The outstanding feature in all these Scriptures is that of works! In the first a halt is called and Job is instructed to hearken, stand still and consider the wonderful works of God. Whenever God has something important to communicate He calls man to stand still and listen. The wonderful works in creation (revealing God) are described in Job 37:1-24; Job 38:1-41; Job 39:1-30. Everything in creation is an evidence of God! In Romans 1:1-32 we read that the things that are made evince His eternal power and Godhead, so that men everywhere are left without excuse. No one can plead ignorance. Every whit in creation declares the Glory of God. Nothing has appeared by chance, but by design and that of God. Genesis 1:2, shows that chaos and darkness were everywhere and the Spirit of God brooded upon the face of the waters and everything was brought into order by the word of God, and finally life appeared. God's power is shown in every line of creation and as a copestone to creation, God formed man. His work being accomplished He rested on the seventh day. "The sons of God shouted for joy" (Job 38:7). From Ezekiel we learn that there were other created intelligences. Satan was presented in the guise of the King of Tyre. In such a dignified person pride was resident and as a consequence he fell and with him vast hosts of angelic beings. In an early moment in the world's history that mighty being had introduced himself into God's fair creation and inserted a lie in the minds of our first parents and they succumbed to his temptation. The beautiful harmony which had been established was spoiled by Satan. The devil's ingenuity has always been directed to securing his own glory! The seed which he sowed in men's minds was soon manifested by the fruit thereof. Creation came to be marked by the works of the devil. Murder and general wickedness were rampant, so that God had to sweep His creation with a flood; but that did not eradicate the works of the devil. The earth which emerged from the cleansing power of the Flood soon manifested a continuance of the features which had permeated the antediluvian world. The Son of God was manifested to annul the works of the devil, and not only so but ultimately Satan himself. Satan tried his wiles on Christ. He suggested "if Thou be the Son of God, etc.," but the latter's power was not to be in evidence to please Satan. He was here dependent on God and was an overcomer! Immediately the Lord commenced to relieve those under the power of Satan. Relative to His power there is love shown, e.g., in the relief of the demoniac and the woman with the issue of blood. He relieved the captives of Satan; but while on earth his work had relation to time. Yet when He came forth from the Father He had an eternal work in view. "I have finished the work that Thou gavest me to do" (John 17:4). This work outshone creation's glory. That will redound to the Glory of God for all eternity! His own glory was in harmony with that glory. He set his face steadfastly to go to the Cross and the work was completely accomplished at Calvary as distinct from the works which bore witness to the Father. On His last journey from Jericho to Jerusalem He was dispensing blessing to His creatures although the Cross was before him and He knew all that would befall Him at Jerusalem. The whole

prophetic word of the Old Testament pointed forward unmistakably to that moment. To what indignities He was subjected! The callous indifference, the gambling and jibing manifested the bitter hatred residing in man's heart. What meekness and love were manifested as He went forth bearing His cross! Satan thought that he had secured a permanent triumph. But when man had done his worst, that last word "finished" was the triumphal shout of a victor and He dismissed His spirit. That finished work was that by which propitiation has been made and sin removed from the eye of God, while a universe of bliss can be formed on the sure basis of that redemption. The work completed and God glorified, in virtue of the value of His work He has taken His rightful place at the right hand of God. What a rich revenue of glory has accrued to God in consequence! A mercy seat has been established as the only meeting place of the sinner with God and the Holy Ghost has come down to make good the truth in souls and so effect the wondrous work of God. The work of God is to believe on Him whom God has sent (John 6:29). That belief produced by the Holy Spirit brings life and salvation. (There is also a belief which is purely mental!) Faith cometh by hearing and that by the word of God! The Holy Ghost is brooding over the darkness and chaos in the souls of men, working in a moral way, awakening them to their true condition before God. The result is a new condition which answers to God. If we have been freed by His power, there is also that created which will withstand all the wiles of Satan's ingenuity and abide as an everlasting witness to the wondrous work of God.

104 Worship.

Worship.

John 12:1-2.

Abridged D. T. Grimston in "Words of Truth," 1871.

She came not to hear a sermon although the first of teachers was there; nor to sit at His feet and hear His word (Luke 10:39). She came not to make her requests known to Him; time was when in deepest submission to His will she had fallen at His feet, saying, "Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died" (John 11:32). Nor to pour out her supplications to Him was now her thought, for her brother was seated at the table. She came not to meet the saints though precious saints were there, for "Jesus loved Martha . . . and Lazarus." Fellowship with them was blessed and of frequent occurrence, but that was not her object now. She came not after the weariness of a week's battling with the world to be refreshed from Him, though like every saint she had learned the trials of the wilderness, and knew the blessed springs of refreshment in Him. But she came at the moment when the world was expressing deepest hatred of Him to pour out what she had treasured up, the most valuable thing she had on earth, upon the person of the One Whose love had made her heart captive and absorbed her affections. "Jesus only" filled her soul; her heart beat true to Him, and she "anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair." Adoration, homage, worship, blessing was her thought in honour of the One who was all in all to her. Surely such worship refreshed Him! The unspiritual might murmur, but He upheld her cause and appreciated the grateful tribute of a heart that knew His worth and preciousness. Thus a lasting record is preserved of what worship really is! If every eye were on the Lord alone, every heart true to Him, each determined to see "no man save Jesus only," what full praise there would be. Not with alabaster boxes now, but our bodies filled with the Holy Ghost, a stream of thanksgiving and highest worship would ascend in honour of the blessed One who now adorns the glory, as He once adorned the earth. Be it ours thus to worship Him in Spirit and in truth.

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