

Berean Expositor Volume 1

THE ABRAHAM COVENANT As set forth in the Epistle to the Romans The dispensational position before Acts xxviii. pp. 11-14

In our last article we endeavoured to show that the setting aside of Israel *as a nation* completely altered the dispensational dealings of the Lord. We will now seek to show that prior to the revelation of the mystery hid in God, the blessing upon the Gentiles as well as the Jews was *Abrahamic* and millennial in character, and that Gentile believers were blessed through Israel or not at all.

The Epistle to the Romans, while containing *doctrine* as true to-day as when first written, contains also *dispensational* teaching which has passed away with the pentecostal period. The following list will give some idea as to the prominent position which the Jew occupied before Acts xxviii as compared with the epistles written afterwards:--

Word.	Before ACTS xxviii. No. of Occurrences.	After ACTS xxviii. No. of Occurrences.
Jew.	25	1 "Neither Greek nor Jew" (Col. iii. 11).
Israel.	14	2 (Eph. ii. 12 & Phil. iii. 5).
Israelite.	3	-
Abraham.	19	-
Total.	61	3

When it is observed that the three occurrences are all negative statements, referring back to the past, the contrast will be more clearly seen than ever.

"To the Jew first" (Rom. i. 16; ii. 10).

The use of this expression in Rom. ii. 10 shows that it is not merely stating the historical order of preaching, but shows us the place of precedence assigned to the Jew. This is characteristic of the millennial kingdom, as a reference to Isa. lx. and lxi, Zech. viii. 23, xiv. 12-21, etc., will show. So long as Israel was a people and Jerusalem their city, so long they retained the covenant position, and saved Gentiles came up to Jerusalem to worship, and were linked with the believing remnant by baptism as the channel of their blessing.

Eph.	2	12	That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel , and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel , of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee;
Phil.	3	5	

Rom. iii. 1 anticipates an objection arising out of the very fact of this Jewish pre-eminence. "If what you say is true, where is the hitherto recognised pre-eminence and profit of the Jew and circumcision?" The answer is, "Much every way." But in verse 9, when the Jew would make his *dispensational* privilege a ground of *merit*, when he asks, "Are we *better* than they?" the answer is, "No, in no wise." Dispensational privileges did not alter the Jew personally, and when we come to consider Rom. ix. we shall see that to be deprived of them does not alter one's *standing* in Christ. "Is He the God of the Jews only?" (Rom. iii. 29) goes to show the strong Jewish element even in the church at Rome.

Rom. ix.-xi. deal more particularly with the dispensation obtaining from Acts ii.-xxviii. The Jewish objection of iii. 3 recurs again in ix. 6. The objection of iii. 29 is again met in ix. 24. Chapter x. 21 shows the attitude of the Lord during the period of "Acts," which culminated in their rejection, and the destruction of their city.

We now arrive at Romans ix. This chapter has been very sadly misunderstood, and to understand it is, in large measure, to understand the peculiar dispensation that covered the period of the "Acts." Expositors who have been clear about the subject of the "mystery," have felt a difficulty with regard to this chapter, because they assumed that the dispensational position of Romans (which was before Acts xxviii.) was the same as that of Ephesians (which came after Acts xxviii.).

The figure of the olive tree, and the Gentiles as wild olive branches, is certainly not the same as the "one body." To avoid *apparent* contradiction, the passage has been interpreted of the Gentiles *as such*, whereas it but states the same truth as Gal. iii., namely, that believing Gentiles up to Acts xxviii. were blessed with faithful *Abraham—the father of many nations*. The remnant of Israel, saved from apostasy by electing grace, formed the olive tree into which the believing Gentiles were grafted. This remnant is called the "first-fruit" (verse 16), a pledge of the harvest of "all Israel" of verse 26. The Gentiles addressed are said to have received "*salvation*" (v. 11), "*stand by faith*" (v. 20), and to partake with saved remnant "*of the root and fatness of the olive tree*" (v. 17).

We feel sure that no Bible student who understands grace will say that the Pagan world, the *Gentiles as such*, did then or do now "stand by faith," or enter into any of the blessings set forth in Rom. ix. The apostle further calls the Gentile addressees *Brethren* (verse 25). If we once perceive that *Abrahamic blessing*, and *kingdom anticipations*, were the characteristics of the period covered by the Acts (as they will be once again when the kingdom is set up on earth) no difficulty will remain, and the transitional portions of Romans, Galatians and Corinthians will be better understood.

Rom.	3	1	What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision?
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Rom.	3	3	For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel:
	9	6	
	3	29	Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also: Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?
	9	24	

We must not read into Romans ix. that which had not then been revealed, namely, the “one body” of Ephesians. Some have a difficulty with verses 21 and 22, because they feel that if this passage refers to *saved* Gentiles it contradicts such a passage as Rom. viii. To be clear as to this point it must be remembered that *dispensational privileges* must be distinguished from *personal standing*. With regard to the former—they may be lost; with regard to the latter—they are indefectible. A comparison of Rom. ix. with Gal. iii. will be helpful just here. The “gospel” was never a “mystery hidden away from the ages and generations,” but was preached before unto Abraham; we must beware of confounding the gospel with the mystery.

“Blessed with faithful Abraham” (Gal. iii. 9).

“That the *blessing of Abraham* might come on the Gentiles” (Gal. iii. 14) (the same as Rom. ix.).

“If ye are Christ’s then are ye *Abraham’s* seed, and heirs according to the promise” (Gal. iii. 29).

“Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all” (Gal. iv. 26).

The new Jerusalem was a part of Abrahamic blessing, certainly of Abraham’s faith (see Heb. ix. 14-16). After Acts xxviii., instead of a heavenly city which comes down from heaven, we have “heavenly places in Christ,” and the “citizenship which is in heaven” (Eph. i. 3 and Phil. iii. 20, Greek). We hope (D.V.) in our next issue to consider the teaching of the pentecostal dispensation as to the second coming of Christ; meanwhile, may writer and reader alike seek grace in understanding the Word of truth.

Summarizing, we have found:--

1. Acts xxviii. is the great boundary between the present dispensation and the past.
2. Those epistles written before Acts xxviii., while containing much *doctrinal* teaching which remains truth for to-day, also contain much that is transitional, and much that belongs to a dispensation which has passed away.
3. That dispensation was Abrahamic and not that of the one body, as has been hitherto so generally supposed.

Zech.	8	23	Thus saith the Lord of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you.
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Berean Expositor Volume 1

Acts xxviii. 17-31

Its bearing upon the present dispensation.

*An introductory study to prepare the way for future expositions
on vital dispensational subjects.*

pp.1-7

Many and varied as the numerous attempts after “Unity” may be, there are some things which they all seem to have in common, namely, they go to the Gospels and Acts for their doctrinal and ecclesiastical arguments, emphasize the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, and either imagine they possess, or else desire to possess, “spiritual gifts”. We believe that such are labouring under a false interpretation. Just as a stick appears bent in the water, so our understanding of Scripture will be distorted whilst we ignore the differing medium. In other words, if we stand in the dispensation of the mystery, and try to act as though we were in the dispensation of the kingdom, we shall in “that day”, if not here, be ashamed, through not rightly dividing the Word of truth.

The careful reader of Scripture can hardly fail to have seen the tremendous influence which the people of Israel have had during their history upon the dealings of God with surrounding nations. The histories of Egypt, Assyria, Moab, of Rahab the harlot, of Ruth, etc., etc., are recorded just so far as they touch this wonderful nation. The Lord blesses or judges particularly with reference to their attitude towards His people. He even “set bounds of the nations according to the number of the children of Israel” (Deut. xxxii. 8). If we might put it tersely, we would say that *history* is recorded so long as Israel are recognized as a nation, but *mystery* obtains when Israel become “Lo-Ammi – not My people”.

The times of the Gentiles could not begin until captivity had taken practically the twelve tribes out of the land. The unrecorded interval of the present time between sixty-ninth and seventieth seven of Dan. ix. is a case in point (see also Isa. lxi. 1, 2, with Luke iv 18-20 and Rev. v.). We forbear to give further instances of this well-known subject, but now pass on from the general to the particular – the bearing which *Israel’s national position* has upon the present dispensation and preaching of the mystery.

Between the prophecy of Malachi and the so-called New Testament is an interval of several hundred years, unbroken by the voice of revelation. It has been too easily assumed that Malachi finishes the Old Testament, and the Gospels commence the New.* If we will give a moment’s thought we shall see that the people addressed in Matthew are the same as those in Malachi (i.e. they are their descendants), the same land, city, temple, law, and character, the great mass being superficial, and a few waiting for the consolation of Israel, and thinking on His name; the great and marvellous difference

*As popularly conceived. The new covenant is distinctly connected with Israel and the kingdom.

being this, that whereas Malachi says that Christ the Messiah *shall come*, Matthew shows us that the Messiah *has come*. The Lord Jesus in the two-fold capacity of Son of Abraham and Son of David walks their streets, heralds the good news of the kingdom, is rejected and crucified, to be seen no more by the nation of Israel until they “look upon Him whom they pierced.” The gospel of the kingdom had good news not only for Israel but for the Gentiles, for David’s greater Son was also the Seed in whom *all nations* should be blessed.

Rom. xv. 8, 9 should be here noticed. “Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the *circumcision* for the truth of God, to confirm the *promises* made unto the *fathers*: and that the *Gentiles* might glorify God for His mercy”, etc. Then follow passages which, strictly speaking, are millennial, and will not be fulfilled until the kingdom comes. In full accord with Rom. xv. 8 is Matt. x. 5-15, “*Go not* into the way of the *Gentiles*. . . . but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel”. The gospel of the kingdom was refused, as was the King, and the “*Go not*” is altered to the “*Go ye, disciple all nations*” of Matt. xxviii. This opened the door of mercy to the Gentiles, as is shown in the Acts, where the kingdom is once more proclaimed, and the “uttermost parts of the earth” are taken into its scope.

The Gospels really are a continuation of the Old Testament, with this difference, “God, Who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past *unto the fathers* by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us in His Son” (Heb. i. 1, 2). The King long prophesied was present. Alas! Israel, like all of Adam’s race, needed a Saviour from sin before they could appreciate a kingdom of righteousness, and consequently we read in Matt. xii. 6, 41, 42, that they reject the Lord of glory though greater than any temple, prophet or king. In verses 43-45 the Lord Jesus gives a prophetic picture of Israel’s apostasy and end; in verses 46-50 He disconnects Himself from fleshly ties; and to the faithful remnant in Matt. xiii., He for the *first time* opens up the *mystery* of the kingdom of the heavens.

The *history* of Israel virtually finished when they rejected Christ and *mystery* began, but this was not made open and public until long after when the apostle Paul in Acts xxviii. 26, 27 quoted the same verse *openly* that the Saviour had spoken *privately* to His disciples, namely, Isa. vi. 10, and just as Christ *then* commenced to unfold the mysteries of the kingdom of the heavens, so Paul was enabled to commence the unfolding of a mystery--not the mystery of the kingdom, but the mystery of the one body—the truth for the present time.

Israel, the destined channel of blessing, had for the time failed, and it seems that the apostle Paul in a sense was raised up to do in small measure that which Israel will yet do in fulness when the kingdom comes. The conversion of Saul of Tarsus by the descent of the Son of God is a close parallel to the conversion of Israel “in that day”, as recorded in Zech. xii. 10-14. He speaks of himself as being one born out of due time, and in I Tim. i. 16 he speaks of himself and his conversion as a type of those who shall hereafter believe, the word “hereafter” being often used in connection with the kingdom. In Rom. xi. 1 his argument is, I am saved; I am an Israelite; I am a type and a pledge, not

only of a remnant then, but of “all Israel’ in that day. Isa. lxi. 6 tells us that Israel shall be named “Priests of the Lord”, and Paul, in describing his ministry in Rom. xv. 16, speaks of it in connection with the Gentiles, “that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable.” A change, however, comes over the apostle’s ministry, which was the prelude of the new order of things consequent upon the setting aside of Israel and kingdom things for the time. The first step toward this change is recorded in Acts xix. 8, 9. This is the last synagogue witness, and is followed by the apostle “separating the disciples” and gathering them together, *as a distinct company from the synagogue*, in the school of one Tyrannus.

“To the Jew first” had been the order (see Rom. i. 16), but that order was to give place. “To the Jew first” is not the order for the time present, neither is it an interpretation of the verse to make it an argument for Jewish missionary work. Jews to-day are saved as *sinner*s, just as the Gentiles, with no respect to any *special* Messianic or national privileges. Acts xx. shows us that bonds and afflictions awaited the apostle at Jerusalem, the Ephesian saints should see his face no more. Some say the apostle was self-willed and obstinate, and went up to Jerusalem against the will of the Lord—we reserved any comment until we are able to give an article on the subject of *Apostolic Mistakes!* in some future issue. In Acts xx. 17-27 the apostle looks back upon a past ministry and forward to a future one. The past he summarizes as “testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ”, practically the same ministry as that of John the Baptist and Peter. His future ministry he introduce with a “*but now*”, just as he shows the abeyance of the kingdom in Heb. ii. 8. This new ministry is connected with “bonds and afflictions,” and it is noteworthy that the three great epistles of the mystery written after Acts xxviii. 26-28 refer, each of them, to the fact that the apostle was a prisoner, a prisoner of the Lord, a prisoner for the Gentiles, a prisoner for the gospel. He further describes this future witness in verse 24, “To testify the gospel of the grace of God”.

The apostle now sets out for Jerusalem, and eventually we find him in peril of his life. Now begins a fresh experience. *He is about to enter experimentally* into the particular phase of truth delivered to him comprised in the words, “*with Christ.*” Like his Lord, he is taken before rulers and priests, false witnesses are summoned, his enemies cry out, “Away with him!” He embarks for Rome—a prisoner. The terrible shipwreck teaches him yet more of the “fellowship of His sufferings.” The hiding of sun and stars makes us think of the darkness of Calvary, the condition of salvation to all on the ship being also typical (all with Paul, and altogether as one company); the breaking up of the hinder part of the ship speaks of the bruising of the heel of Christ; the viper, powerless and conquered, like the vanquished serpent—the devil; the healing which took place upon the island, all these speak volumes, and when Paul at length reaches Rome *death* and *resurrection* fellowship with Christ has been wonderfully typified; between him and Jerusalem lies that experience, henceforth till the Lord Jesus come and the kingdom be set up Jerusalem passes from view, and with it Israel and all its influence.

The contrast between the two inspired statements of Acts xxviii. 23 & 31 is most instructive:--

TO THE JEWS.—“To whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning *Jesus*, both out of the law of Moses and the prophets.”

TO THE GENTILES AND ALL WHO CAME TO HIM.—“Preaching the kingdom of God, and *teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ*.”

The contrast is sharp and clear. To the Jews it is “Jesus”; to the Gentiles it is “Lord Jesus Christ”—the title of the epistles to the churches. To the Jews it is Messianic witness, “out of the law and prophets”; to the Gentiles it is not so stated. Other passages show that the apostle was directly taught the mystery by the Lord Himself—it was a revelation. Some deny the difference so patent here, but it is a quarrel not with us but with the Holy Ghost. Christ in resurrection, not as King, but as Lord and Head of the one body is now the theme. We may feel quite sure that the apostle would go over the blessed truths which he penned in Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians to those who came to his own hired house. In Eph. vi. 19 he asked them to pray for him that he might have *boldness* to make known the *mystery* of the gospel for which he was an “ambassador in bonds.” The word “confidence” in Acts xxviii. 31 is the same as the word “boldly” in Eph. vi. 19, and shows how the prayer was answered, if the “two whole years” have any significance they would suggest the period of Israel’s setting aside, as in Hosea vi. 2, 3, during which the Gentiles are the particular objects of the dispensational favours of God.

The concluding verses of Acts xxviii. form the great dividing line between the epistles of the mystery and the epistles that include the remnant of Israel and kingdom hopes and accompaniments. At the moment when Paul quoted Isa. vi. 10, the period of the church’s “babyhood” finished, and the “perfect man” standard was proclaimed. These subjects we hope to deal separately, and we would ask our readers to reserve their judgment until they have the opportunity of taking our statements to the Word of truth, and seeing “whether these things are so.”

The epistles written before the Roman imprisonment are 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Hebrews and Romans. After the imprisonment—Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, and Philemon. It is of the utmost importance to see the difference that exists in these two sets of epistles. In the early ones, Israel as a nation has its influence, millennial prefigurings abound, and, humanly speaking, Israel’s national repentance might bring the kingdom, and with it the Saviour, even in the very lifetime of those to whom the apostle wrote. After Acts xxviii. this was not the case. There was no Israel. The kingdom was entirely in abeyance, Jerusalem was destroyed. The Gentiles, as such, were *aliens* to the commonwealth of Israel, *strangers* to the covenants of promise, and hence if the Lord had any gospel for them it must be a gospel of sovereign grace indeed. This forms the basis of the first epistle of the mystery—Ephesians.

The dispensations that have passed have never ended abruptly, but a certain overlapping has taken place. The Acts of the Apostles *is the history of this transition*,

and the epistles written before Acts xxviii. have much that is *transitional* in them. It is with the view of opening up these subjects that these introductory statements have been necessary. We are fully aware that writers abler than ourselves have given expression to similar things, but having now laid the foundation we hope to go forward in this wonderful field of research, and we go forward alone, so far as any human aid is concerned. Others have felt that which we feel, others have expressed a belief as to the “possibility” of some of these things, but we believe the time has come for a witness to the first lost truths to begin to be sounded. As time goes on, the Lord willing, we shall take up the subject of “The transitional parts of Romans, etc.,” “The gifts of the Spirit,” “The purpose of Hebrews,” “Hebrews vi.,” “The unity of the Spirit,” “Christendom,” and related subjects.

We conclude this introductory article by summarizing:--

1. Israel have always had, and will yet have, the chief place in the dispensational dealings of God, and the prophetic parts of the Old Testament are entirely connected with their national existence.
2. The great dividing line must be looked for not at Matt. i., nor Acts ii., but where Israel as a nation ceases.
3. That dividing line is clearly drawn at Acts xxviii.
4. I, as a saved Gentile, have nothing to do with the Mosaic law, as such; to this most Christians will agree. Neither may I step over the boundary line drawn by the Holy Ghost in Acts xxviii. without causing hopeless confusion, and failure to appreciate the particular blessings and responsibilities that are mine in this dispensation; to this very few will agree.

We would earnestly ask our readers to search the Scriptures and “see whether these things are so,” also to search out their own arguments for their peculiar ecclesiastical or dispensational beliefs, and find whether much has not been brought over from the closing period of a past dispensation.

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We have called this magazine “The Berean Expositor” because we desire our readers to be as noble as the Bereans who:

1. Received the Word with all readiness of mind, and
2. Searched the Scriptures daily, to see
3. Whether those things were so (Acts xvii. 11).

We have called it “The Berean Expositor” because our desire is to open up the Word—“to expose” for our joy, instruction, correction, and edification its wondrous teaching to the glory of the Lord. We shall (D.V.) in each issue have two subjects: 1. Dispensational. 2. Doctrinal. Whether the magazine is strictly “quarterly” will depend, humanly speaking, upon the funds, for we shall not issue No.2 until we have sufficient to pay for it. We shall not print poetry or extracts from other journals, but endeavour to keep strictly to our title. “Brethren, pray for us.”

Dan.	9	24	Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.
		25	Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.
		26	And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.
		27	And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.
Isaiah	61	1	The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;
		2	To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;
Luke	4	18	The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,
		19	To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.
		20	And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him.
Hos.	6	2	After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight.
		3	Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth.
Isaiah	6	10	Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.

Berean Expositor Volume 1

Babes or Full-grown.

A comparison of I Cor. iii. with Heb. v. and vi. and their bearing upon the subject of the mystery.

pp. 29-35

To those who have followed the articles in this magazine hitherto we very earnestly commend the present to their prayerful consideration. The majority of us have been far more zealous for the "traditions of the elders" than for the truth of God, and it is a mercy that we have not been left to follow our blind guides into the ditch of legality and bondage. Our object in writing these articles is to seek to stir up the Lord's people to imitate the Bereans, who "searched the *Scriptures* daily (to see) *whether these things were so.*" Some fellow-Christians have called us hard names (over that we do not worry), but it would have been far more in harmony with the "mind that was in Christ Jesus" to have pointed out to us where they thought we departed from the truth "as it hath been written."

Many have been displeased upon reading that Acts ii. was not the beginning of the present dispensation, still more when we dared to question the scripturalness of applying I Cor. xii., with its "spiritual gifts," to ourselves. We desire to show, as the Lord shall enable us, something of the glory of the grace that has been reserved for us the most unworthy, reserved until the people of Israel, both in the land and among the dispersion, evidence to the full that they were blind of eyes, dull of hearing, and hard of heart, as set forth in the closing words of Acts xxviii. and Matt. xiii. 13-15.

Not till after Acts xxviii. did the apostle receive the divine warrant for *committing to writing* the teaching of the mystery (or secret) as revealed in the Epistle to the Ephesians. Although the apostle did not publicly preach the mystery of the one body, nor put it into writing before the close of Acts xxviii., we believe that he did know of it himself, and did communicate some of its blessed teaching to the more spiritual ones with whom he from time to time had fellowship. I Cor. ii. 7 seems fairly clear as to this, "The wisdom of God in a mystery, the *hidden* wisdom which God ordained *before the world* unto our glory." The expression "*before the world*" is peculiar to the great secret. Eph. i. 4 and II Tim. i. 9, etc., speak of a purpose "*before the world,*" whereas Matt. xxv. 34, and other passages which speak of the kingdom, use the term "*from the foundation,*" or "*since the foundation of the world.*"

Eph. iii. 1-9 and Col. i. 24-27 speak of the mystery being "hid." Let us turn to I Cor. ii. and iii. In ii. 1 the apostle shows how he followed out the teaching of chapter i. 31:--

"He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord: and I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with *excellency of speech*, or of *wisdom*, declaring unto you the testimony of God."

Verse 1 reveals his manner, verse 2 his message, "Christ crucified." A gospel without the atonement is no gospel at all. The cross gives its title to the gospel, "The preaching of the *cross*. . . . the power of God" (I Cor. i. 18). "We preach Christ crucified. . . . the power of God, and the wisdom of God" (verses 23 and 24). It was thus that Paul preached that their "faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God" (ii. 5).

The Corinthian Christians believed this blessed truth, and were saved. Yet the apostle says that they were "carnal," that only a few could get beyond "Christ crucified," and grasp the wonders of "Christ risen." They knew the power of the cross unto *salvation*, but they could not go further into the "hidden wisdom" connected with the risen Lord. If we read verses 2 and 6 together, we shall get the same teaching in clearer form. "For I determined to know nothing *among you*, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." "Howbeit, we speak wisdom *among them* that are perfect."

The church at Corinth was ready for the setting up of the kingdom. The gospel preached before unto Abraham had been received; miraculous gifts abounded; the Lord's supper was prominent in its anticipation of the marriage supper of the Lamb. In I Cor. x. we have the *camp* and "our fathers" (see Hebrews). Chapter x. 2 affords a parallel with the *two baptisms* of pentecostal times. Baptism in water and cloud unto Moses typified the baptism in water and spirit unto Christ, waiting to enter the *promised land* and take the *kingdom*. The question of I Cor. x. 18, "Behold Israel *after the flesh*: are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar?" is echoed in Heb. xiii. 10, "We have an altar, whereof *they* have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle." Failure to recognize that the kingdom is "*not yet*" means failure to "go outside the camp."

The teaching of Heb. xiii. 7-9 should be carefully studied in conjunction with Eph. iv. 13, 14. In the one case the "end of the conversation" of the elders is "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever," the result being "not *carried about* with divers and *strange doctrines*." In Eph. iv. the gifts of pastors and teachers, etc., were given:--

"Till we all come into the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, that we be no more children, tossed to and fro, and *carried about* with every wind of *doctrine*."

In both cases stability in the believer is connected with the fulness and perfectness of the Lord. Those who are carried about are "babes" (*nepios*), and we shall see presently that this was the character of the Corinthian and Hebrew saints in connection with their inability to receive the teaching of the mystery. Rightly understood, Hebrews is a link between the epistles to the Corinthians and to the Ephesians, written after the kingdom had been set aside, exhorting them to leave the things of the kingdom and go outside the camp unto Christ, to be numbered perchance among the members of His body.

We will now endeavour, as grace is given, to show the wonderful parallel which exists between I Cor. iii. and Heb. v. and vi. To whom did the apostle communicate the mystery in I Cor. ii.? To the "perfect," the full-grown Christian. In chapter iii. he writes:--

“And I, brethren, could not speak unto you *as* unto spiritual, but *as* unto carnal, *as* unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk and not with meat. For hitherto ye *were* not able to bear it, neither yet now *are* ye able. For ye are yet carnal; for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk according to man? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?”

This thought is in ii. 10-14. It is quite true that the unsaved cannot understand the things of the Spirit (we are told so in i. 23—“*to the Greeks foolishness*”), but the sad part is that many of the Lord’s people *approximate to the unsaved* in their attitude toward anything beyond what they are pleased to call “the simple gospel!” for in ii. 14 such things are said to be *foolishness* to the natural man. By looking at verse 13, which correctly translated reads, “Explaining (or declaring) to spiritual ones (i.e. spiritual believers), spiritual things,” we see that the Corinthian believers placed themselves on the level of the “natural” man, and had to be addressed *as* unto carnal, and not *as* unto spiritual. The “milk,” or “Christ crucified,” was all they could receive, the “meat” which they could not relish or digest was the preparatory teaching to the great mystery concerning Christ and His church. This could only be presented, at the time of writing, to those who were perfect or full grown.

The apostle goes on in chapter iii. to show how the forgetting of *Christ*, and the magnifying of His *ministers*, was a clear symptom of their failure. It is still the same to-day. Men fight over their denominations, they make little gods of their leaders, they lose sight of Christ in their zeal for ordinances of eating, drinking, and doing, and they are so consumed with eagerness to form their conceptions of unity, that the risen Lord, without whom unity is a farce, is neglected and forgotten.

I Cor. iii. 10, 11 brings us to the one foundation, and bids us give heed as to how we build thereon, for everything except the temple of *God* which is “God’s building” will be destroyed. We know personally many saints, and are quite sure that they are building upon the true foundation, but we are also equally sure that they are building that which God has thrown down, and consequently, through their failure to “rightly divide the Word of truth,” they will have need to be “ashamed,” as workmen who have neglected the plans and instructions of the Great Architect. The writer knows from personal experience a meeting where for fifteen months the message for the Sunday morning was an exposition of the Sermon on the Mount! Would that such zeal could be directed to “know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the holiest.”

Let us now turn to Hebrews v. and vi. Here we meet with a similar state of affairs to that at Corinth. The Hebrew believers were not magnifying Paul, Apollos, or Cephas, but were magnifying angels, Moses, their fathers, their temple, their ritual, their priesthood, and their sacrifices, and the result was equally disastrous, for just as the carnality of the Corinthians rendered them unable to understand the deep things of God, so with the Hebrews.

The predominant note of Hebrews is that “in all things HE might have the pre-eminence.” In chapter i. Christ is seen to be above angels; in iii. above Moses;

in v.-viii. above the Aaronic priesthood; in ix. and x. above the many sacrifices. In xii. 2 we have Christ the “Prince, Leader and Finisher of faith” placed before our eyes after the list of Old Testament heroes of faith in chapter xi. The apostle is pointing them to Christ the risen Lord, just as emphatically as he does in Ephesians. It is the one inspired letter which the apostle to the Gentiles was permitted to pen to his brethren according to the flesh after he had closed the door of kingdom promises in Acts xxviii. It was a last, loving, earnest word of exhortation.

It is in connection with the Melchisedec priesthood of Christ that the apostle had to say in chapter v. very much the same as he said to the Corinthians in I Cor. iii. In speaking of Melchisedec (Heb. v. 11) he says, “Of whom we have many things to say, and hard of interpretation, seeing ye are *dull of hearing*.” The Melchisedec priesthood and the one body are linked together, more perhaps than some of us have discerned. Melchisedec by blessing Abraham showed himself the “greater” (Heb. vii. 7), and the one body has a sphere (“heavenly places in Christ”) unknown to Abraham. True, Abraham looked for a “heavenly city,” but that is to *come down* out of heaven, whereas the believer to-day rejoices in a citizenship which “*is in heaven*,” and in the expectation of the upward call of God” to that city (Phil. iii.).

So again in Heb. v. 12 we read, “For when for the time ye ought to be teachers,” etc. The word “time” suggests (1) they had been Christians long enough to be capable of teaching others; and (2) the *time* had come when the kingdom had been placed aside, and because of that they ought to have been ready to receive, and to pass on, the new teaching of God’s grace. So deleterious was this clinging to the “old things that had passed away,” that they even needed instruction in the “first principles,” a word signifying the A.B.C., and translated “rudiments,” “element,” (Gal. iv., Col. ii.). Verse 13 shows that the “first principles” are likened to “milk,” the food for “babes,” whereas “strong meat” belongeth to “perfect” or “full grown” ones. This word “full age” is the same as the word “perfect” in I Cor. ii. 6, and is used of those to whom the apostle could give the “meat” of the mystery—identical in both cases. Heb. vi. is so important that we propose (D.V.) devoting a future article to the exposition of the first three verses.

However, to complete our parallel with I Cor.iii., we must consider this chapter. Here in Heb. vi. 1 we have mention of “the foundation,” which is not the *one foundation*, Christ Himself, but a foundation of doctrines and ordinances. These “first words of the doctrine of Christ” they are bidden to “*leave*,” not lay again. Verse 7 and 8 speak of the end of the two pieces of land; the one “blessed,” the other “*nigh unto cursing*, whose end is to be burned”—“saved so as through fire.” A field that has been burned is not destroyed, but rendered absolutely naked, just as I Cor. iii., “He himself shall be saved, so as through fire.”

In order to more clearly demonstrate that which we have set forth, we give a list of the parallel key words of both passages:--

I Corinthians ii. and iii.			Hebrews v. and vi.	
1. Babes	iii. 1		Babes	v. 13
2. Milk	iii. 2		Milk	v. 13
3. Meat	iii. 2		Meat	v. 14
4. Perfect	ii. 6		Perfect	v. 14
5. One foundation	iii. 11		Foundation	vi. 1, 2
6. Fire	iii. 13		Fire	vi. 8
7. Six things erected	iii. 12		Sixfold elements	vi. 1, 2

In these two solemn passages we have the reason why the mystery—the glorious privilege of the present dispensation—is not understood. Instead of being a pet subject for a few fanciful speculators, it is vitally connected with the whole evangel. So true is this, that we know those who once held most clearly the doctrines of grace, who now feel obliged to introduce much of the works of the flesh, “the first principles,” simply because they fail to rightly divide the Word of truth. They are so intent upon building upon the one foundation a building according to Acts ii. and the gospel of the kingdom, that they have neither eyes, ears, nor heart for the “heavenlies in Christ.” Christendom knows nothing of the truth of Ephesians, but is engulfed in ordinances, and occupied with temples “made with hands.” Christendom is an anomaly, the offspring of such were at Corinth and among the Hebrews.

Dear readers, where are we? Are we among those who cry “Back to the nursery?” “Back to bondage?” or do we, like the apostle, “forget the things that are behind, and reach forth unto the things that are before?” Our appreciation of the mystery, and the truth contained in Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians, will enable us to decide, as before the Lord, whether we are *babes or full-grown*.

Eph.	i.	4	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:
II Tim.	i.	9	Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,
Matt.	xxv.	34	Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

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Acts xvii. 10, 11

“Study to show thyself approved unto God,
a workman that needeth not to be ashamed,
rightly dividing the Word of truth”
2 Tim. ii. 15

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PREFACE

In the year 1914, with the whole hearted fellowship of F. P. Bringer, we were enabled to issue a reprint of Volume 1 of the Berean Expositor.

In 1927 with an expanding circle of readers we issued a third edition. Now in 1966, through the generosity and appreciation of a friend in the USA, we publish a fourth edition. We are aware that there is much demand for these early volumes, now alas out of print, but the cost of reprinting is prohibitive. It was felt however, that this first volume had a certain historic value that would interest the newer readers of today and it is from these friends we hope our contribution will find response.

At the time of issuing the 8-page pamphlet in 1909, I, Charles H. Welch was at an extraordinarily low level, both of health and wealth, with no recognised place in Christian ministry, but we were convinced of the importance of the Key Principle, "Right Division".

The first lines we ever printed read as follows:

ACTS xxviii. 17-31
It's bearing on the present dispensation.

While this was the main burden of our ministry, we rejoice to observe that in this selfsame Volume 1, as much space is devoted to the Sacrificial Work of Christ, and this two-fold feature has continued ever since.

The Berean Expositor is not the organ of a Sect or Denomination, but is devoted to the exposition of the Scriptures with special emphasis on the need to remember that there are a number of callings, spheres, and dispensations, so that while we rightly rejoice in all the purposes of grace, we should and do seek a clear conception of the "Calling" made known since the setting aside of Israel. Such "calling" is found in the so-called "Prison Epistles", i.e. Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and II Timothy.

May 1966

Charles H. Welch
Stuart Allen

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Christ our Surety.

Gen. xliii. 1-10, and xliv. 18-34.

pp. 49-51

Our readers are doubtless familiar with the passages referred to in our title, and it is our intention to examine them with regard to their typical teaching. The action of Israel with regard to their Messiah is foreshadowed in this historic incident, for Stephen in Acts vii. 51, referring to Israel as “stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, who always resist the Holy Ghost, as their fathers did,” says, “The patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt, but God was with him. . . .and at the *second time* Joseph was made known to his brethren” (Acts vii. 9-13).

Heb. ix. 28 tells us that Christ will appear the *second time* without sin unto salvation. When the Lord Jesus comes again, “they shall look upon Him whom they have pierced, and shall mourn,” even as Joseph’s brethren did when they realized that they were in the presence of one who had been so ill-treated at their hands. We do not desire, however, to emphasize the prophetic type so much, as to draw attention to one of the sublimer truths of the doctrine of the atonement which is herein typified, viz.:--

The suretyship of Christ.

“*I will be surety for Him*” (Gen. xliii. 9).—What is the meaning of a surety? The Hebrew word comes from a word meaning “to mix.” At first sight this may not appear to throw much light upon the subject, but we believe it will as we examine one or two passages of Scripture. The Hebrew word for “evening” is literally “the mixture,” for then the light and darkness appear to mingle together. The same word supplies us with the “woof” (Lev. xiii. 48, &c.) in weaving, the threads which are “intermixed” with the warp in the production of the cloth. It further comes to mean, “To mix or engage with others in trading,” and hence in turn comes to mean, “A place for such intercourse—a market.”

This helps us to see that the great underlying principle of suretyship is to become so identified, or interwoven with the cause of another, as to be treated in his room and stead, to be responsible for his debts and failures, to make good his deficiencies, in short, to fulfil to the letter the wonderful doctrine enshrined in the theological term.

Substitution.

This responsibility is further emphasized by the words of Judah, “Of my hand shalt thou require him.” For illustration read Gen. xxxi. 39, “That which was torn of beasts I brought not unto thee; I *bare the loss* of it; of my hand didst thou *require* it.” See also II Sam. iv. 11. Judah further amplifies this by saying that should he fail in execution of his suretyship, “then let me bear the blame for ever.” The word rendered “blame” is

translated “sin” 165 times in the Old Testament. Hence, looking beyond Judah to the anti-type, we see that if Christ our Surety failed in His work, He must be still bearing sin—a dreadful thought—but, blessed be God, this is effectually disposed of by the resurrection, for “He was delivered because of our offences, and raised again because of our justifying” (Rom. iv. 25). “Sin hath no more dominion over Him.” The substitutionary character of the work of the surety is further emphasized in Gen. xlv. 33, “Let thy servant abide *instead* of the lad.” Precious word “instead.” “That One who knew no sin was made sin (and a sin offering) *for us* (or *on our behalf*), with the object that we might become righteousness of God in Him” (II Cor. v. 21), Christ dying in my stead, and raised from the dead, is pledge of

Irreversible salvation.

Gen. xlv. 34 gives a word which enables us to see that the step downward from heaven’s glory to earth’s shame taken by the Lord Jesus when He made our cause His own, is to be followed by a step upward from earth’s shame to heaven’s glory *with Him*. He who identified Himself with our sorrows has identified us with His joys. Oh, the wonder of it all! Truly “by grace ye are saved”; truly (as one has put it) “the saved are in for favour.” Listen to Judah, but think of Christ, as he says, “How shall I ascend up to *my father*, and the lad be not *with me*?” How can Christ who suffered, died, and rose again, ever be satisfied until those for whom He became surety are safely by His side in the Father’s home?

“*With me.*”—When we contemplate our ruin, our fall, our sin, our doom; what grace, what love, that He, the spotless peerless Son of God should come down and identify Himself “with me!” When we contemplate His glory, His fulness, His holiness, the wonders of the heavenly home, the light of His glorious throne, the nearness to the Father, what transcendent grace and unspeakable mercy do we find in the scripture which tells us that, sinful by nature as we are, we shall one day reach the fruition of redemption by finding ourselves placed securely for all eternity “with Him.”

Let it be repeated and emphasized unremittingly that all is of grace, that He hath “saved us and called us with an holy calling, *not according to our works*, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the *age-times*” (II Tim. i. 9). There are some who are so spiritual (?) that the doctrine of the atoning blood is repulsive to them. We can but pity them. In the sight of God that blood is “precious.” On the pages of Scripture we discover that through that precious blood we have peace; we are justified; we are saved from wrath. We know Him, our great Surety, not only as the One who died, but as the One who was raised from the dead to die no more. Still *for us* He lives; still *for us* He intercedes; soon *for us* He is coming. Soon we shall be with Him.

May those who read these words be led fully to realize the blessedness of the truth contained in the type before us, and unflinchingly and unfalteringly hold fast the truth of *Christ our Surety*.

Gen. xliii.	<p>1. And the famine was sore in the land.</p> <p>2. And it came to pass, when they had eaten up the corn which they had brought out of Egypt, their father said unto them, Go again, buy us a little food.</p> <p>3. And Judah spake unto him, saying, The man did solemnly protest unto us, saying, Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you.</p> <p>4. If thou wilt send our brother with us, we will go down and buy thee food:</p> <p>5. But if thou wilt not send him, we will not go down: for the man said unto us, Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you.</p> <p>6. And Israel said, Wherefore dealt ye so ill with me, as to tell the man whether ye had yet a brother?</p> <p>7. And they said, The man asked us straitly of our state, and of our kindred, saying, Is your father yet alive? have ye another brother? and we told him according to the Tenor of these words: could we certainly know that he would say, Bring your brother down?</p> <p>8. And Judah said unto Israel his father, Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go; that we may live, and not die, both we, and thou, and also our little ones.</p> <p>9. I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him: if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever:</p> <p>10. For except we had lingered, surely now we had returned this second time.</p>
Gen. xliv.	<p>18. Then Judah came near unto him, and said, Oh my lord, let thy servant, I pray thee, speak a word in my lord's ears, and let not thine anger burn against thy servant: for thou art even as Pharaoh.</p> <p>19. My lord asked his servants, saying, Have ye a father, or a brother?</p> <p>20. And we said unto my lord, We have a father, an old man, and a child of his old age, a little one; and his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother, and his father loveth him.</p> <p>21. And thou saidst unto thy servants, Bring him down unto me, that I may set mine eyes upon him.</p> <p>22. And we said unto my lord, The lad cannot leave his father: for if he should leave his father, his father would die.</p> <p>23. And thou saidst unto thy servants, Except your youngest brother come down with you, ye shall see my face no more.</p> <p>24. And it came to pass when we came up unto thy servant my father, we told him the words of my lord.</p> <p>25. And our father said, Go again, and buy us a little food.</p> <p>26. And we said, We cannot go down: if our youngest brother be with us, then will we go down: for we may not see the man's face, except our youngest brother be with us.</p> <p>27. And thy servant my father said unto us, Ye know that my wife bare me two sons:</p> <p>28. And the one went out from me, and I said, Surely he is torn in pieces; and I saw him not since:</p> <p>29. And if ye take this also from me, and mischief befall him, ye shall bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.</p> <p>30. Now therefore when I come to thy servant my father, and the lad be not with us; seeing that his life is bound up in the lad's life;</p> <p>31. It shall come to pass, when he seeth that the lad is not with us, that he will die: and thy servants shall bring down the gray hairs of thy servant our father with sorrow to the grave.</p> <p>32. For thy servant became surety for the lad unto my father, saying, If I bring him not unto thee, then I shall bear the blame to my father for ever.</p> <p>33. Now therefore, I pray thee, let thy servant abide instead of the lad a bondman to my lord; and let the lad go up with his brethren.</p> <p>34. For how shall I go up to my father, and the lad be not with me? lest peradventure I see the evil that shall come on my father.</p>

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Clean every whit.

“He needeth not save to wash his feet” (John xiii. 10).

pp. 35-37

The thirteenth chapter of John’s Gospel marks an important division. The first twelve chapters deal with the Lord’s public witness, with its reception on the part of the few, and its rejection on the part of the many. Chapter i. 11 says, “He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.” Chapter xiii. 1 says, “. . . Having loved *His own* which were in the world, He loved them unto the end.” These “His own,” differ from those in i. 11, for these had received Him, whilst His closing words in chapter xii. 48-50 are concerning those had rejected Him.

The incident that occupies the opening verses of chapter xiii. is well known to most of us, and we particularly wish to draw attention to two of the impetuous remarks of Peter, and the Lord’s answers to them, for our own edification. The Lord, by girding Himself with a towel, took the lowest place of all, that of the menial slave. Truly “He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many.” It will be remembered that Luke xxii. 24 records that at the supper “there was *also* a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest.” Possibly the facts that upon taking their places for the Passover some must necessarily have been found nearer, and some further, from the Lord’s person than others, may have caused this argument to have arisen. The Lord Jesus listened to their words, and in His marvellous love and condescension gave them an impressive rebuke by His lowly action. Think for a moment of the utter depths brought out by reading verses 3 and 4 together. Though—

“Jesus knew that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He was *come from God* (the Apostle), and *went to God* (and Great High Priest of our profession), yet He riseth from supper, and *laid aside* His garments, and took a towel, and girded Himself.”

“(He) Who, being in the form of God, thought it not a thing to be grasped at to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Phil. ii. 6-8).

It seems that no one had volunteered to do the lowly office of washing the feet, and so the Lord Himself stoops down and girds Himself; what a picture of His wonderful grace in our salvation. Not a sound is heard from any until the Lord reaches Peter. He could not keep silent, “Lord, dost *Thou* wash *my* feet? . . . Thou shalt never wash my feet.” The difference between the unworthy Peter and the gracious Lord was too much for him; he felt if others said nothing, he must. The Lord Jesus, pausing in His lowly work, looked at Peter and said, “If I wash thee not, thou hast no part (no portion) *with Me*.” All Peter’s qualms fled before the prospect of not having a part with his beloved Master, and he more than undoes what he had previously said by exclaiming, “Lord, not my feet only,

but also my hands and my head,” rather than forfeit a share with Thee. Again he has to learn the lesson of his own ignorance. This time he goes to the other extreme. The Lord answers him with the words, “He that hath been bathed (*louloumenous*) hath no necessity save to wash (*nipsasthai*) his feet, but is clean every whit.”

What lessons are here? Do we not see that only those who have been washed by the Lord have any share with Him? May every reader know the completeness of the cleansing *once and for ever* that results from the application of the atoning blood of Christ. Peter’s words, “Not my feet only, but my hands and my head,” are echoed daily by many believers, who, seeing their own unworthiness, belittle the fulness that is theirs in Christ, and do not rest upon the gracious words that they are “accepted in the Beloved,” that they are “complete in Him.” To such the reply of the Lord may come with power, “He that hath been bathed is clean every whit.”

Two most important aspects of sanctification are to be found in verse 10:--

1. “He that hath been bathed is clean every whit.”
2. Nevertheless, such an one needs to “wash his feet.”

We are continually forgetting that these two go together. Not only are we in heavenly places in Christ, but we are also still in the body on the earth. Some, realizing that the Scripture teach that the believer is “complete in Christ,” emphasize the first sentence, “they are clean every whit.” These either develop some phase of “sinless perfection,” or irresponsible license. They forget that there will be a continual need for those who are clean every whit to wash their feet. Others, realizing that since their conversion their feet have strayed from the path of truth, forget their unaltered and unalterable perfectness in Christ, and so not only pray for the washing of their feet, but also their head and their hands. They forget that the Lord has “forgiven us *all* trespasses”; that He has made us “new creatures in Christ Jesus,” and that our “walk” here below cannot alter our “position” in the heavenlies in Christ. The first class develop spiritual pride; the second spiritual despair.

Let us remember the *perfectness* of His cleansing, but also the imperfectness of our walk as believers. We shall then be able, like Paul, not only to say, “Oh wretched man that I am,” but also, “There is therefore *now* no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.”

“If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, *and* the blood of Jesus Christ His Son *cleanseth* us from all sin. If we say that we have no sins, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us. My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not, and if any man sin, we have an Advocate (Paraclete) with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous” (I John i. 7-2:1).

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The gifts of the Spirit

The origin, object, use, and cessation of the gifts of the Spirit (I Cor. xii.-xiv.).

“Concerning spiritual gifts, I would not have you ignorant” (I Cor. xii. 1).

pp. 19-21

We sought to show in the article “The Abrahamic Covenant” that the dispensational dealings of God, from Pentecost to the final setting aside of Israel in Acts xxviii., was Abrahamic in character, and anticipatory of the kingdom. We now desire to direct attention to one element which is particularly marked in this period, viz., that of the gifts of the Spirit.

Some teach that these gifts were granted at the commencement of the church, in order to give it a good start off, and that they ceased when the church had obtained a standing. Others teach that the gifts should have continued, but that they were taken away from the church in chastisement. There are many other opinions, but we do not desire to advertise them; “I hate thoughts, but Thy law do I love,” said the Psalmist, and we would echo these words.

Let us open at I Cor. xii. Here is a chapter giving instruction to an assembly of saints, of which each one may expect Satan to be busy. Verse 3 sounds a warning note. To understand it we must also read I John iv. 1-3. Many unsaved ones will say, “Lord, Lord,” but that is not the thought here. The apostle gives a divine test which must be applied to anyone speaking under the influence of a “gift.” Satan’s travesty could go very far, but there was a point at which his servants stayed—they would never confess that Jesus Christ was *Lord*, and this would immediately expose the blasphemous counterfeit. Continuing, the chapter gives a description of these “gifts” and “manifestations” of the Spirit; the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, faith, healing, working of miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, kinds of tongues, the interpretation of tongues.

To prevent either pride, despising, or envying, the apostle likens this gifted assembly to a body. The use of the word body is ecclesiastical and practical, *not dispensational*; the dispensation was Abrahamic, that of the one body not having been revealed by Paul. In I Cor. xii. there are mentioned eyes, nose, ears, &c., showing that the body, *including the head*, was contemplated as being on earth, whereas in Ephesians and Colossians the *Head is in heaven*, and the members, though down here, are viewed as being in the heavenlies also. I Cor. xii. 27 (A.V.) wrongly reads, “Ye are *the* body.” The original omits the word “the.” The words “in particular” (*ek merous*) are translated in I Cor. xiii. 9, 10 by the words “in part,” and are *contrasted* with “that which is perfect.” They have the same meaning in I Cor. xii. 27. The meaning of the passage is this. Although I have used the illustration of the body in connection with the use of these wondrous gifts, you are not yet “the body,” for that which is perfect has not yet come; you are of the nature, essence, or character of the body; that is why I say, “Ye are body of

Christ,” instead of saying, “Ye are *the* body of Christ,” and you are members one of another; but you are only body and members *partially, imperfectly*, the perfect state is yet to be revealed. It *has been* so revealed in Ephesians. There we find “the *perfect* man, the measure of the stature of the fulness of the Christ.”

In the last verse of Chapter xii. the apostle speaks of “a more excellent way” than the best gifts; that way is “love,” and forms the subject of parenthetical chapter xiii. As we read verses 4-7 of chapter xiii. we shall see that in the one word “love” is summed up all the “lowliness and meekness, the long-suffering and forbearance” that are necessary to an endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit (Eph. iv.). After this wonderful definition of “the more excellent way,” the apostle speaks of the temporary character of the “gifts” (verses 8-11). “Tongues” are to cease. The gifts of prophecy and knowledge are to be “done away.” The apostle continues with the illustration of “childish things” being “put away.” The word translated “fail,” “vanish away,” “done away,” and “put away” in verses 8, 10 and 11 are *one and the same in the original*. The argument is one. Seeing that the apostle uses the *self-same* words in connection with “gifts” as with “childish things,” and seeing that “childish things” are contrasted with “becoming a man”; and further, seeing that the “*man*” is parallel to “*that which is perfect*,” which in its turn is contrasted with that which is “in part,” or “*partially*” (I Cor. xii. 27), the teaching must be that *gifts are the accompaniments of the childhood dispensation*, but became obsolete when the present dispensation of the *perfect man* was ushered in. Can we with I Cor. xiii. before us raise the cry, “Back to Pentecost” anymore? Are we not turning back to the nursery, and despising the marvellous grace now opened to sinners of the Gentiles?

I Cor. xiii. 12 is often taken to mean the yet future, but it must be remembered that when we are with the Lord we shall have no more need of hope. The present dispensation is anticipatory of the *new creation*, and similar expressions are used concerning it as of that yet future day. The gift of tongues, according to I Cor. xiv. 21, 22, was for a sign to Israel, “as it is written” in Isa. xxviii. 11, and given for a similar purpose to that of the call of the Gentiles, “to provoke to jealousy” (Rom. x. 19), “to provoke to emulation” (Rom. xi. 14). Israel, however, went on their climax sin, they resisted the Holy Ghost, they “filled up their sins” in connection with this very matter (I Thess. ii. 16), wrath came upon them, Jerusalem was destroyed, Israel scattered, the kingdom became in abeyance, and consequently the need for signs and wonders ceased also.

One word more before closing, and this a word of *solemn warning*. In Heb. ii. 4 we read of signs, wonders, miracles (*semeion teras dunamis*). These refer to the gifts of Pentecost. In II Thess. ii. 9 we read of other “power, signs and lying wonders” (*dunamis semeion teras*), *but these are the work of Satan*. The anti-Christian apostasy will be a marvellous parody of Pentecost. How many thousands will be deceived who are ready to accept the marvellous as a sign of divine approval! May we learn the lesson; “Gifts,” as such, have ceased; the present dispensation is one of *faith apart from sight*, and removed from all connection with “earthly things” and the earthly hopes and blessings of Israel.

I Cor. xii.	3	Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.
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I John iv.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.2. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:3. And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.
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I Cor. xii.	27	Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.
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I Cor. xiii.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">9. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.10. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.
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Berean Expositor Volume 1

The six-fold foundation of Hebrews vi. pp. 37-42

There are many who believe that in Hebrews vi. 1, 2 we have the fundamentals of our faith. There are some who push this further, and teach that no one can be recognised as a teacher who does not hold to and teach these six doctrines. The writer was once among this number, and there are some readers of this magazine who still believe this to be truth. To such we commend this article, and remind them of the *Bereans* who searched the Scriptures to see whether “those things were so.”

In our last article we sought to show by the parallelism of I Cor. ii. and iii. with Heb. v. and vi. that failure to realize Christ as the one foundation led to sectarianism, and prevented the reception of the “deep things of God.” We propose to examine the first three verses of Heb. vi.:--

“Therefore *leaving*. . . . *let us go on*. . . . *not laying again*.”

These Hebrew believers were exhorted to “Go on unto perfection,” and this word occurs in but one other passage, viz., Col. iii. 14 “love, which is the bond of *perfectness*.” In Col. ii. Paul had exhorted them to leave the “doctrines of men” and the “rudiments of the world,” and in Col. iii. he bids them “seek those things which are above. “That which is perfect” is the “perfect man. . . . the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ,” in other words, the “one body.” It was to this that the apostle exhorted them. *Leave* the elements of the pentecostal dispensation now obsolete, and go on unto blessedness of the dispensation of the mystery—the one body. Go outside the camp of Judaism unto the Lord and His church, where there is neither Jew nor Greek, but where Christ is “all and in all.” Heb. vi explains they were to *leave*.

“The principles of the doctrine of Christ.”

Did ever words sound more like heresy than these? Did Paul teach men to *leave* the *principles* of the *doctrine* of *Christ*? The margin of the R.V. gives the literal rendering. “The word of the beginning of Christ.” This means not merely “a word,” but a discourse, a narrative, setting things in order which were believed among them, and delivered by eye-witnesses who were from the *beginning* (Luke 1:1-3). The book of the Acts commences thus, “The former treatise (Luke’s Gospel) have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus *began* both to do and to teach.”

Hebrews opens with the words, “God, Who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son,” and resumes again in the second chapter, “How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation; *which at the first began* to be spoken by the Lord?” In Rom. xv. 8 we read, “Now I say that Jesus Christ was *minister of the circumcision* for the

truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers.” “The word of the beginning of Christ,” which these Hebrews were to “leave,” refers to the “Gospels” and the “Acts” which record the ministry of Christ and the Holy Spirit in connection with the kingdom, Israel, and Jerusalem.

The words “perfect” and “perfection” are from the word *telos*, which means “the end,” and is so translated in verse 8. They were to leave the “word of the *beginning*” of Christ for a later revelation—the *end*, that which is perfect, the teaching of the gospel of the glory of Christ, and the mystery. The *six-fold* foundation of doctrines is specified in verse 1 and 2, and is contrasted with the *seven-fold* perfection as set forth in Eph. iv. which is the “one foundation” of I Cor. iii. These doctrines are arranged in three pairs as follows:--

Repentance.	\	Internal and Doctrinal
Faith.	/	
Baptisms.	\	External and Elemental
Laying on of hands.	/	
Resurrection of the dead.	\	Future
Judgment everlasting.	/	

It is very probable that many readers will be saying, Where are we going? Are we to *leave* repentance and faith? Are we to give up the doctrine of resurrection? Are we to abandon eternal judgment? No! There is a great difference between a careless “drifting away” (Heb. ii.), and the conscientious obedience of faith to “leave,” “not lay again,” and “go on unto perfection” (Heb. vi. 1). Believing that this six-fold summary is divine truth, we nevertheless see that the dispensation has changed, and just as believers can “leave” the divine law given through Moses because they are “in Christ” and “under grace,” so we lay aside these elements of a transitional period and step out into the sphere apportioned for *us* by divine grace. Let us now consider each of these six statements individually:--

1. Repentance from dead works.

Are we then to have no sorrow for sin? No forsaking of evil? Let us not be hasty in our judgment. “Repent!” was the key word of John Baptist’s ministry. “Repent!” was the opening word of the “beginning of Christ.” “Repent!” was the first word of Peter in Acts ii. 38 the moment he saw that his hearers were convinced of sin. “Repent!” “Repent!” is echoed throughout the whole period of kingdom proclamation.

Let our readers now turn to Ephesians. Here is no making light of sin. Here is a full gospel. Here is full prominence given to the atoning blood of Christ, but the words “repent” and “repentance” are *never once used*. To show this is no mere coincidence, the companion epistles of the mystery, Philippians and Colossians, equally exclude the words from their pages! Why is it that these words, so frequent in the Gospels and Acts, are so absolutely excluded from these epistles which opened the present dispensation? Is it not

that the Lord, by the omission of the key word of the kingdom, would lead us to see that we are dealing with the teaching belonging to a different dispensation?

If we turn to Heb. ix.14 we shall find that the apostle, who told them to leave “repentance from dead works,” had a thoroughly satisfactory reason. “How much more shall the *blood of Christ purge your conscience from dead works.*” Reader, which is better? The oft-repeated “repentance” or the *once completed* purgation from dead works by the blood of Christ? This is the teaching of such passages as Col. ii.13, “Having forgiven you *all* trespasses.” We shall not think lightly of sin if we have abandoned all hope of deliverance by our repentance. We shall find as we study these verses that they all turn the eye of the believer away from himself and others unto *the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Shall we not then gladly leave these elements of kingdom truth, and enter into the blessedness of the dispensation of the grace of God to the Gentiles? Shall we not “go on unto perfection,” to find our rest, our peace, our *all* in Christ? “For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from *his own works*” (Heb. iv. 10). Let us realise the fulness of the gospel committed to us. Let us remember that the “god of this age” would fain have us emphasizing repentance, if by so doing he can keep us occupied with anything else than “the gospel of the *glory of Christ*” (II Cor. iv. 4). Let us “*leave*” and “*go on unto perfection.*”

2. Faith toward God.

Here again we must take into consideration the people and the period. We may be perfectly sure that the apostle, who so wonderfully preached justification by faith, is not here advocating its abandonment. Let us look through his other epistles. The epistle to the Galatians is perhaps *the* anti-Judaic letter, Romans being the more lengthy treatise following. Galatians emphasizes the apostle’s meaning in the words, “Leaving .. faith toward God.”

- “The faith of *Jesus Christ*” (Gal. ii. 16).
- “The faith of *the Son of God*” (Gal. ii. 20).
- “By faith of *Jesus Christ*” (Gal. iii. 22).
- “By faith in *Christ Jesus*” (Gal. iii. 26).
- “Your faith in *the Lord Jesus*” (Eph. i. 15).
- “By faith of *Christ*” (Phil. iii. 9).
- “Your faith in *Christ*” (Col. ii. 5).
- “The faith which is in *Christ Jesus*” (I Tim. iii. 13).
- “Through faith which is in *Christ Jesus*” (II Tim. iii. 15).

If the context be read, these passages will show that all the blessings of the gospel are vitally connected with *faith*, but it is faith which *rests in Christ*. The Jews, by their very nationality, laws, and customs, had God, the God of their fathers, continually before them. Jehovah was the God of Israel. Every Jew prided himself on the fact, so much so that Paul had to write, “Is He not the God of the *Gentiles* also?” But this national faith, though it fed their pride, could not save them, nor justify them. In the parable of the Pharisee and Publican we have a vivid example. The pharisee had faith toward God; otherwise he would never have troubled to pray as he did. The publican realized that

mere faith toward God was not sufficient for his need. His faith needed a propitiation, a sacrifice upon which to rest. Listen to his prayer: “God, be propitious (i. e., be merciful upon the ground of sacrifice) to me, the sinner.” The great stumbling block to these Hebrew believers was the levelling character of sin, and the universal need of faith in Christ and His atoning blood; their nationality could not save them. The fact that Abraham was their father could not justify them.

The Gentile, on the other hand, had no national faith to fall back upon, he cast himself upon the unconditional mercy of God through Christ. This was the faith preached by Paul, “The faith of God’s elect. . . upon hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised (i.e., to Christ as the Surety of His people) before the world began.” The Lord Jesus when on earth had said, “Ye believe in God, believe *also* in Me” (John xiv. 1). The great cloud of witnesses in Heb. xi. does not commence with Enoch’s *walk* of faith, nor Noah’s *witness* of faith, but Abels’ *offering*; faith in *atoning blood*.

Following the list of the heroes of faith, Paul in Heb. xii, bids us “look off (or away from all else—even these Old Testament worthies) unto *Jesus* the Author and Finisher of *faith*.” Hebrews reveals Christ as the “one mediator between God and men,” “the priest for ever after the Order of Melchisedec.” All who come unto God for salvation come unto God “by *Him*.” This is not merely faith toward God, not merely a vague trust in the “Almighty,” nor an impersonal Providence, but it is faith which draws near to God by way of the mediation and merits of His Son—“the faith of *Jesus Christ*.”

We must leave the remaining four elements for our next paper.

The six-fold foundation of Hebrews vi. pp. 46-49

3. The doctrine of baptisms.

The order of the words in the original is “the baptisms of instruction.” These baptisms were connected with instruction and reception of it. First let us notice that the word is plural, “baptismS.” This leads us at once to contrast it with the passage in Eph. iv where we are emphatically told that there is *one* baptism. To these Hebrew believers the apostle says, “*leave*. . . the baptismS of instruction.” To the Ephesian believers, those who represent the present position, the apostle says, “keep *one* baptism.” Dear reader, how does your practice agree with these two inspired commands? This particular word “baptisms” is translated in Heb. ix. 9, 10 by the word “washings,” viz.:-

“The first tabernacle ... was a figure ... in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service *perfect*, as pertaining to the *conscience*; (which stood) only in meats and drinks, and *divers baptisms*, and *carnal ordinances*, imposed until the time of reformation. ”

In this passage the Holy Spirit has definitely connected the word “baptisms” with *carnal ordinances*, and contrasted it with that which is *perfect*. This word “baptisms” occurs again in Mark vii. 4, 7 and 8:--

“And when they come from the market, except they baptize, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the *baptisms* of cup, and pots, brasen vessels, and of tables. . . . Howbeit, in vain do they worship Me, teaching for *doctrines* the commandments of men. For *leaving* the commandment of God, ye hold the traditions of men” (The words in italics all occur in Heb. vi.).

What have we seen? Whether imposed by God (Heb. ix.), or imposed by men (Mark vii.), neither were given to make perfect, and neither touched the conscience. A comparison of Heb. ix.9 with Heb. x. 1 and 2 will show the repetition of such words as “conscience,” “perfect,” and that these ordinances, including “baptisms,” were co-temporary with the sacrifices. Hebrews is the first scripture which definitely says that the sacrifices were to cease. It will be remembered that in the millennial kingdom, sacrifices will again be offered, hence until it was revealed that the kingdom and its accompaniments had become in abeyance, the believing Jew had nothing to tell him that sacrifices were to cease. Seeing that these things are so, we feel that we can no more perpetuate the baptisms, than we can the sacrifices.

There is one more thought for our consideration. During the pentecostal period there were *two* baptisms, namely, water and spirit. Before Pentecost there was one baptism, namely, water. During the Acts period there were two, namely, water and spirit. After Acts xxviii we again find one baptism, this time spirit. For the benefit of any who may not have seen the wonderful sevenfold unity of the Spirit set out in Eph. iv., showing by the position of the words that the baptism is that of the Spirit, we give it here:--

4. ONE LORD.
3. ONE HOPE. 5. ONE FAITH.
2. ONE SPIRIT. 6. ONE BAPTISM.
1. ONE BODY. 7. ONE GOD AND FATHER.

This sevenfold unity which we are to *keep* is contrasted with the six-fold foundation of Heb. vi.1 which we are to *leave*. The Acts of the Apostles, and the epistles of that period, are the only Scriptures that record two baptisms. This period had passed away, new things have been given, and among them *one baptism*.

4. The laying on of hands.

This is closely connected with the two baptisms. Acts viii.12 “they were baptized”; 17 and 18, “They laid hands on them, *and they received* holy spirit. And when Simon saw that through *laying on of* the apostle’s *hands* holy spirit was given, &c.” Acts xix.6 “When Paul had laid his hands upon them, holy spirit came on them, and they spake with tongues and prophesied.” Acts xxviii. 8 “Paul prayed, and *laid his hands on* him, and healed him.” I Tim. iv.14 and II Tim. i.6 speak of the “gift” by the laying on of hands.

Acts xiii. 3 and I Tim. v. 22 record recognition of ministries by the laying on of hands. Gifts of the Holy Spirit, tongues, prophecies, miraculous healings, and appointment to office once came through the instrumentality of human hands. We are in a dispensation of things “not made with hands,” and all gifts and graces come from the risen Lord,

without the intervention of hands at all. Like Paul we can say, “not of men, neither by man.” “*He* gave some apostles, &c.” (Eph. iv.8-11). Ministry is now independent of the laying on of hands, so also “healing” and all things else. No man now comes between the believer and his Lord.

5. The resurrection of the dead

At first glance it must seem little short of heresy to teach from Heb. vi. 2 “Leaving...the (doctrine of the) resurrection of the dead.” The difficulty lies in our failure to “prove the things that differ,” and in the looseness of translation in our A.V. We make a great mistake when we assume that the resurrection as held by the Pharisees and the Jews is the same as that taught by the apostles.

Anastasis nekrōn are the words of Heb. vi.2, “The resurrection of the dead.” Paul used these words when he said, “I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee; of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question” (Acts xxiii. 6). So also Acts xxiv. 21. If we read in connection with Acts xxiv. 14, 15, we have the faith expressed of the orthodox Jew. John xi.24 is also parallel, the resurrection of the *last day* being all that was known.

Mark ix. 9 and 10 contain something that will help us to understand Heb. vi.2, “...till the Son of man were risen *from among* the dead (*ek nekrōn*), and they kept *that* saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising *from* the dead should mean.” Surely if the Pharisees believed the resurrection of the dead, the disciples of the Lord did also; their difficulty was not one of unbelief in resurrection, but a failure to understand the import of a little word *ek* introduced by the Lord when He spoke of rising “*out from among* dead ones.” This phrase is used of Lazarus in Luke xvi. 31, “neither will they be persuaded, though one rose *out from among* the dead.” This is the expression used in Acts iv. 1, 2, 10, and Rom. i. 4.

In Phil. iii the apostle gives us a wonderful “Profit and Loss account.” Christ more than compensated to Paul for all that he had forfeited as a Pharisee. Paul had looked for a resurrection *of the* dead; now, as a believer in Christ, he looked for a resurrection *out from* the dead (*exanastasis ek*). This passage demands a fuller exposition than our present knowledge will justify us in attempting, but here we have that for which the apostle could urge the Hebrew believers to leave the resurrection of the dead. Leave the general resurrection for the blessed hope of being raised *out from* the dead—the blessed portion of believers of the present dispensation.

6. Eternal judgment.

Space will not allow of our going much into this last clause. It does not mean that we are to leave the scriptural teaching of the finality of the judgment of God, but to leave the contemplation of the general judgment, as of the general resurrection, and remember the judgment-seat of Christ, which was prominent in the parallel passage to Heb. vi.,

namely, I Cor. iii. 13-15. “Let us go forth without the camp unto *Him*.” “Leaving..let us go on *unto perfection*.”

We are conscious that through limited space our remarks may be difficult to follow. May the Lord lead all readers to search the Scriptures, and see whether these things be so.

Hebrews vi.

1. Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,
2. Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.
3. And this will we do, if God permit.
4. For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,
5. And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,
6. If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.
7. For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God:
8. But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.
9. But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.
10. For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.
11. And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end:
12. That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.
13. For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself,
14. Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee.
15. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.
16. For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife.
17. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath:
18. That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:
19. Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;
20. Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

Heb. ix. 14	How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?
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I Tim. iv. 14	Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.
II Tim. i. 6	Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.

Eph. iv.	8. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. 9. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? 10. He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) 11. And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;
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Acts xxiv.	<p>21. Except it be for this one voice, that I cried standing among them, Touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question by you this day.</p> <p>14. But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets:</p> <p>15. And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.</p>
John xi. 24	<p>Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day..</p>
I Cor. iii.	<p>13. Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.</p> <p>14. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.</p> <p>15. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.</p>

Berean Expositor Volume 1

The Immortality of the Soul and The doctrine of demons. pp. 64-66

The first lie that the Bible records is found in the words of the devil in Gen. iii. 4, "Ye shall not surely die," and this initial conceit, held up before the eyes of our first parents, permeates Philosophy, Paganism, Theosophy, Spiritism, Protestantism and Popery. We do not wish it to be understood that Gen. iii.4 really teaches anything specifically touching upon the question of the immortality of the soul; there it was a blasphemous contradiction of the words of God as uttered in Gen. ii. 17, but so completely did its bait beguile, that the father of lies has ever since sought to confuse the tremendous issues of life and death, which the Bible brings forward on every page, by a conflicting jargon of Theology among believers, and a fruitful seed of error among the unsaved. We ask our readers, as *Berean* believers, to carefully consider the following extracts from *spiritistic seances* and *mediums* quoted from the writings of Mr. Miles Grant (*The Bible Echo*):--

"If a man would become satisfied of modern Spiritism, he must first be satisfied that he is an *immortal being*."

"The visitations and manifestations of the spirit world are to convince you of the immortality of the soul."

"The first, the greatest, and the grandest truth coming through modern Spiritism is the immortality of the soul."

Here it will be seen that Orthodoxy has nothing to say against these doctrines of demons, but rather, in Pulpit, Press, and Song, this great *lie* is echoed and enforced, colouring as it does the whole evangel. We gave in our next quotation a Resolution passed at an important Spiritistic Convention, which shows how important a place this doctrine holds in their Creed:--

"RESOLVED—That Spiritism, according to the modern acceptance of the term, *embraces all those who believe in the immortality of the soul*. . . . Beyond this *common faith*, there is no doctrine or creed necessarily incident to modern Spiritism."

It must come as a great shock to many godly Christians, who constantly pray for the "never dying souls" of men, to find themselves sharing a "common faith" with the enemy of truth! Yet so it is. A spirit says of this doctrine, "When once that is established, this one simple germ knowledge will work out all the rest. The first lie of Satan was, "Ye shall not surely die." This was the "simple germ." It will culminate in the fruition of the second lie, "Ye shall be as God," for Spiritism and its doctrines are the precursors and forerunners of antichrist. Another spirit says:--

"The first great object is to convince sceptics of the immortality of the soul, disrobe death of its terrors, give to men a rational religion, and unite all men in one grand sublime faith, in which angels or spirits of the dead hold intercourse with living men, thus raising the condition of the material world up to that of, and in harmony with, the spiritual. The

design is, through the increase of knowledge and spiritual elevation, to crush, destroy and break in pieces all the existing forms of government on the face of the whole earth. . . . and in place of them build up one common form of government in all the earth, having *one common head*. . . . in this form of government (which will be a Theocratic Democracy) every man will be *his own ruler* and his *natural demands* his *highest law!*"

Look at the "first great object" and trace its results! The whole passage is pregnant with solemn warning. It is antichristian to the last degree. The design is to usurp the prophesied prerogatives of Christ. *He* it is who will "crush, destroy, and break in pieces all existing forms of government" (see Dan. ii. 44 and 45). This, Spiritism would give to the "man" who, energized by satan and inebriated with the false idea of immortality, will dare to challenge the very Lamb of God. Spiritism looks forward to "one common head," and of a truth the signs of the times indicate that the coming of the "son of perdition" is near. The leaven is working very near the surface, but God has given this high place to His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, "that in the dispensation of the fulness of times, He might gather together under one Head all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth" (Eph. i.10).

The absolute lawlessness inculcated in the closing words of the quotation cited above is entirely in harmony with the testimony of the Spirit of truth:--

"This know also, that in the last days there will set in perilous seasons; for men will be lovers of their own selves, covetous, ostentatious, arrogant, defamers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce breakers, intriguers, without self-control, fierce, unfriendly to good, traitors, reckless, highminded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God" (II Tim.iii. 1-4).

Here the last phase of the mystery of lawlessness is confessedly the goal of Spiritism. A "rational religion" is to take place of revealed redemption, and instead of glorious grace man is to be his own saviour, lawgiver, and god, for they say:--

"God is man and man is God. . . . no clearer idea of divine existence can possibly be commended to the mind than the statement that He is one grand universal man."

Once more we ask our readers to examine the root, the "simple germ" of this blasphemy. Upon their own repeated witness, Spiritists declare that the acceptance of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is the seed which, left to itself, produces such envenomed fruit. So also may we learn if we read Gen.3, "Ye shall not surely die. . . ye shall be as God."

We do not intend in this issue to go further into the subject, this we reserve until our next article. We feel that the terrible connection which this doctrine has with the whole antichristian system ought to be clearly seen. During the next few months our readers will have an opportunity of looking to the Word of God which liveth and abideth for ever. There they will find all that is to be known concerning the subject of the soul and of immortality. We might suggest a few questions for those who, Berean-like, will search the Scripture:--

1. Do the Scripture teach that man is immortal?
2. What saith the Scriptures concerning immortality? Who receive it, and when?
3. Collect all the passages which use such terms as, "immortal soul," "never-dying soul," &c., and send the lists on to the Editor.
4. Make a list of the other references to the soul.

We might mention for the guidance of our readers that the Hebrew word for "soul" is *nephesh*, and is translated in the A.V. "soul," "creature," "life," &c. The Greek word is *psuche*, and is referred "soul," "life," &c.

What saith the Scriptures concerning the Immortality of the Soul? **pp. 71-76**

In our last paper we gave a few quotations from Spiritistic sources which were unanimous in their support of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. We would now turn from these "lying spirits" to the word of truth. So powerful is the hold of tradition upon us, that it seems hardly possible for anyone to approach the Scriptures in an unbiased manner; yet believing, as we do, that *all* Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and that *every* word of God is pure, we may confidently turn to this book of books, feeling assured that all that is to be known of the soul will be found within its pages.

The word which the A.V. Old Testament has rendered "soul" is the Hebrew word *nephesh*. *Nephesh* occurs 754 times in the Hebrew of the Old Testament. In the A.V. and R.V., it is translated "soul" 472 times, whilst in the remaining 282 places it is represented by 44 different words and phrases. The English word "soul" is in every occurrence the rendering of the Hebrew *nephesh*, except in Job xxx. 15 and Isa. lvii. 16.

Turning to the New Testament we find that the word rendered "soul" is the Greek word *psuche*. This word occurs in the A.V. 103 times; 58 times it is rendered "soul," 40 times "life," 3 times "mind," once "heart," and once "heartily." No other word but *psuche* is translated "soul" in the A.V. New Testament. The reader is now in possession of the simple facts of the case; we have a full, perfect, and authoritative statement by the creator and redeemer of the soul of man as to its nature.

We trust that our readers sufficiently revere the Scriptures as to be ready to submit to every statement, and so should it once be declared that the soul is immortal, we shall bow before the Word; and now, with the immortality of the soul before us, we commence our investigation of these 857 inspired references. We read many and varied statements as to the soul of man, our search carrying us through book after book of Law, Prophets, Psalms, Gospels, Acts, Epistles, and the Apocalypse, and when the last reference has been made we are confronted with the astounding fact that *not once* in all the 857 verses scattered throughout the whole Bible is there ever found a statement which would lend the remotest colouring to the oft-repeated statement, "*the immortal soul,*" "*the never dying soul.*"

Before prosecuting our studies further we might pause to ask, Is immortality predicated of any one in the Bible? To this we may soon give an answer, as the words do not occur many times in the Scriptures. *Aphthartos* occurs 7 times, rendered “immortal” and “incorruptible”; *aphtharsia* occurs 7 times, rendered “immortality,” “incorruption,” “sincerity”; *athanasia* occurs 3 times, rendered “immortality.” The word is used of God. “The King, eternal, *immortal*, invisible” (I Tim. i. 17), and it is emphatically declared to be His exclusive possession, “Who *only* hath *immortality*” (ITim. vi. 16). Let us remember once again the words of satan, “Ye shall not surely die. . . . ye shall be as God,” and let us take our place with the Word of truth and brand the devil’s words as a *lie*. Immortality can only be possessed by man as a gift from God. Rom. ii.7 shows us the manner of seeking it under law, “To them who by patient continuance in well-doing *seek for* honour, and glory, and *immortality* (God will render) eternal life.”

When we turn to the opening chapters of the Bible we cannot fail to see that a difference is pointedly made between man and the rest of created beings. Gen. i. 24 reads, “And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth.” How different when we come to the creation of man in i. 26, “And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness, and let them have dominion.” The deliberate statement of i. 26 shows the superiority of man over all else of the six days’ creation. Those who would prove immortality from the expression “in Our image, after Our likeness” prove too much. Why stop at immortality? Why not omnipotence, omnipresence, omniscience, why not go to the whole length of man-elevating and God-dishonouring anti-christianity? Gen. ii.7 gives us the detailed account of the creation of man. “And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.” Let us examine this verse carefully. There is nothing very likely to minister to our pride in the first sentence, “the dust of the ground,” but many have seen a warrant for immortality in the second. Apart from the fact to be stated presently, one would have thought that the “nostrils were a most unlikely vehicle for immortality, and would be more likely to have reference to the vivification of the lifeless Adam, who thereby became “a living soul.”

The English Bible gives a false argument in this record of man’s creation, for those able translators, yielding to the traditional teaching which they had imbibed maybe from infancy, veiled the *inspired* connection between man and beast which the Holy Spirit had purposely made. We give therefore every passage occurring in the first nine chapters of Genesis:--

- “The moving creature that hath a *living soul*” (i. 20).
- “Every *living soul* which the waters brought forth” (i. 21).
- “Let the earth bring forth the *living soul*” (i. 24).
- “That creepeth. . . . wherein there is a *living soul*” (i. 30).
- “Man became a *living soul*” (ii. 7).
- “Adam called every *living soul*” (ii. 19).
- “Every *living soul* that is with you” (ix. 10).
- “Between Me and you and every *living soul*” (ix. 12).
- “Every *living soul* of all flesh” (ix. 15).
- “Every *living soul*” (ix. 16).

These passages are in sharp conflict with Theology, for the word “soul” is used of animals as well as man. Moreover, the very expression “breath of life” is also similarly used and explained in Gen. vii. 21, 22:--

“All flesh died that move upon the earth, both of:--
(a) Fowl, (b) Cattle, (c) Beast, \ All in whose nostrils was
(d) Creeping thing, (e) Man. / the *breath of life*.”

This breath of life, which, entering the man at his creation, made him become a living soul, is precisely same breath of life which made the beast of the field and fish of the sea become living souls. Solomon, who wrote with *inspiration equal to* that of Moses or Paul, and who had given him from God a wise and understanding heart, so that there was none like him before or since (I Kings iii. 12), and who, moreover, tells us that “That which was written was upright, even words of truth” (Eccles. xii. 10), declared, “That which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts, as one dieth, so dieth the other, yea, they have all one breath (or spirit, Heb. *ruach*)” (Eccles. iii.19). Cf. Gen. ii.17; iii.19, and Psa. cxlvi.4.

Death comes alike to each. So far as this world is concerned all stand upon a level. “A man hath *no* pre-eminence above a beast, *as* one dieth, *so* dieth the other” (Eccles. iii. 19, 20). Yet a striking difference is indicated between the life of man and beast—we are to *live again*, they are not. “The spirit (translated ‘breath,’ verse 19) of man goeth upward; the spirit of the beast goeth downward” (Eccles. iii. 21). Different in destiny but not in nature, for “all have *one* spirit” (Eccles. iii.19). “Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it” (Eccles. xii. 7).

There are not a few who profess a belief in the inspiration of the Scriptures who, finding their traditions upset by the book of Ecclesiastes, loftily exclaim, Oh! That is “under the sun,” we know better than Solomon! This book specializes, shall we say, on the frailty and vanity of man by nature, and for that reason we should pay heed to its teaching. We might as well refuse to believe what Paul wrote concerning the mystery for fear he was prejudiced, or Moses concerning the law. Away with such pretences. Those who must have the immortality of the soul as part of their creed, let them call God’s truth a *lie* if they dare, and we will, at least, credit them with inconsistency, but let them not prate about belief in inspiration while they perpetuate the teaching of the arch-enemy of *truth*, who ever seeks to minister to the pride of man whose breath is in his nostrils, and to dishonour God “Who *only* hath immortality.”

The New Testament is entirely in agreement with the Old Testament, e.g., read Acts vii. 59. Stephen when dying prayed, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit” (not ‘soul’ as tradition demands, but ‘spirit,’ as Eccles. xii. 7 teaches), that He might keep for him that life till resurrection, “and when he had said this he fell asleep.” How refreshing it is to turn from the assumption of the so-called orthodox teachers to the clear commentary of the apostle Paul on Gen. ii. 7. Man sees in the term, “a living soul,” a synonym for immortality; not so the inspired apostle:--

“There is a natural (*psuchikon*, soul-ical) body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam a life-giving

spirit. Howbeit that was *not first* which is *spiritual*, but that which is natural (soul-lial), and afterward that which is spiritual. The *first man* is of the *earth, earthy*, the second is the Lord from heaven” (I Cor. xv. 44-47).

Note the parallel:--

“The first man Adam was made a *living soul*.”

“The first man is of the *earth, earthy*.”

Immortality is not received through the first Adam: his descendants by nature are all mortals.

Some have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, and these are awaiting *resurrection*, when this corruptible and this mortal shall *put on* immortality. How like the gospel to shut us up to Christ and resurrection for this coveted gift. How like satan and his ministers to preach the natural immortality of man and his independence of God. Death is said to be but the portal into fuller life, and the whole testimony of the Word is thereby set at naught. This doctrine of the immortality of the soul of man is far reaching. It permeates all Theology. It trammels our views of the atonement; it blights our prospects of the future; it is the fruitful source of the Popish purgatory, and the Protestant nightmare of never-ending torment. Manifestly, if one will teach that all souls are immortal, something must be done with them. Consequently, the scriptures which speak of death, destruction, burning like chaff, &c., &c., are tortured and twisted to mean their very opposites, and the passages which refer exclusively to the devil and those who side with antichrist are not only misinterpreted, but mercilessly and indiscriminately applied to all of every age and clime who are without Christ.

Let us not fear what man may say or think, let us hold fast the faithful Word, let us glory in the blessed fact that we once were *dead* can now look away to the right hand of God, and realize that “our life is hid with Christ in God,” going forth with the glad message of the gospel of life for the dead to proclaim Him who is the resurrection and the life, who “shed light on life and immortality through the gospel.”

Berean Expositor Volume 1

The dispensational place of the Lord's Supper. The new covenant. pp. 76-82

Those of our readers who have followed the arguments put forward in this Magazine cannot fail to realize that the re-discovery of the divine dividing line between kingdom and mystery, viz., Acts xxviii., necessarily carries with it changes in accepted doctrine of a rather drastic nature. What effect has this upon the observance of the Lord's Supper? In order that every reader may be in possession of the chronological order of the epistles, we set out again their order and relation to the last chapter of Acts:--

I Thessalonians	52 A.D.	\	
II Thessalonians	53	\	Pentecostal and transitional period.-
I Corinthians	57	\	Kingdom truth and preparatory
II Corinthians	57	/	teaching by Paul for the
Galatians	57	/	impending change.
Romans	58	/	
Acts xxviii. 25-27.	62 A.D.		The dispensational boundary.
Ephesians	62	\	
Colossians	62	\	
Philippians	62	\	The dispensation of the mystery-
I Timothy	67	/	Standard truth for the time.
Titus	67	/	
II Timothy	68	/	

In the first instance we note that we find mention of the Lord's Supper in those scriptures written before the beginning of this dispensation, but not even a hint of it afterwards. We will not, however, limit ourselves to this argument, although, rightly understood, it is final and conclusive. Let us turn to the scriptures where we first read of this institution of the Lord's Supper. When was this ordinance instituted? Matt. xxvi. 26-30 supplies the information:--

“And as they were eating (i.e. the passover, see verses 17 and 19), Jesus took bread (i.e. passover loaf of unleavened bread), and blessed, and brake, and gave to the disciples, and said, Take, eat, this is My body. And He took a cup and gave thanks, and gave to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom. And when they had sung a hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives.”

Matt. xxvi.	17. Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover?
	19. And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and they made ready the passover.

Thus we see that the Lord's Supper is connected with the Jewish feast of the Passover, and by reading I Cor. xi.23-26 we see that henceforth this feast was not merely to remind them of the deliverance from Egypt, but to "show forth the Lord's death till He come," which is further interpreted in I Cor. v.7 by the words, "For even Christ our Passover hath been sacrificed for us." Both Matt. xxvi. and I Cor. xi. tell us that the wine typified the "blood of the *new covenant*." What is this new covenant? Is it connected with the mystery hidden since the age-times? Is the new covenant a secret only revealed now, or is it a matter of Old Testament knowledge? Let us turn to Jer. xxxi.:--

"At the same time (i.e. 'the latter times,' Jer. xxx. 24), saith the Lord, I will be the God of all the families of *Israel*, and they shall be My people. . . . again I will build thee, O virgin of *Israel*. . . . O Lord, save Thy people, the remnant of *Israel*. Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth. . . . for I am a Father to *Israel*. . . . He that scattered *Israel* will gather him for the Lord hath redeemed *Jacob*. . . . Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a NEW COVENANT with the house of *Israel*, and with the house of *Judah*; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them *out of the land of Egypt* (hence the connection between the new covenant, the passover and the Lord's supper). . . . But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of *Israel* (this is God's interpretation of the new covenant). . . . If those ordinances (of the sun, moon and stars) depart from before Me, saith the Lord, then the seed of *Israel* also shall cease from *being a nation* before Me for ever. Thus saith the Lord, if heaven above can be measured, and the foundation of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of *Israel* for all that they have done, saith the Lord."

No one who believes that God *means* what He *says* can help seeing that the new covenant is related to a greater though parallel, exodus than that from Egypt, that it is specifically connected with the future gathering of Israel back to their land, and that the church of the mystery of Eph. iii. finds no place therein whatsoever. The opening words of Exo. xx. teach much the same lesson. "I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." Then follows the first covenant, "which they brake" (Deut. xxix. 25), and, "They have forsaken the *covenant* of the Lord God of their fathers, which He made with them when He brought them forth out of the land of Egypt" (see also Jer. xi. 7, 8; Heb. viii.; Isa. xi. 11, 16).

In Matt. xxvi the Lord Jesus looks forward to "that day," to His "Father's kingdom"; "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done *on earth*"; "I appoint unto you a kingdom, as My Father hath appointed Me, that ye may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the *twelve tribes of Israel*!" (Luke xxii. 29,30). Where in all this is room and place for, or hint of, the church of the mystery? When we pass the dispensational boundary of Acts xxviii we read in Ephesians not of the kingdom of the heavens, nor of the kingdom of the Father, but of "the kingdom of *Christ* and of God" (Eph. v. 5). In Col. i.13 we read, "The kingdom of the Son of His love," which is in operation *now*, and is entirely distinct from the kingdom that hinges upon the restoration of Israel.

Jer. xxx. 24	The fierce anger of the Lord shall not return, until he have done it, and until he have performed the intents of his heart: in the latter days ye shall consider it.
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The word rendered “covenant” is never used in those epistles that were written after Acts xxviii without reference to Israel. II Corinthians was written before Acts xxviii. Hebrews, as its title shows, has a message for those of Israel. The one reference in Eph. ii.12 refers back to “the time past” when these Ephesians believers were aliens and strangers, or at most but guests, with regard to the “covenants of the promise.” No covenant is ever mentioned in relation to the “church which is His body.” There is a promise and a purpose given before the age-time (Titus i. 1-3), but not a covenant, old or new. That is exclusively connected with Israel. The new covenant is God’s gracious provision for the very people who failed under the old covenant.

After the supper we read, “They sang an hymn (the Psalms known as the *Hallel*), and then went out into the Mount of Olives.” The Mount of Olives! The last portion of earth which the Saviour’s feet trod before He ascended, and destined to be the first place touched by His feet when He returns to take the kingdom (Acts i. 12; Zech. xiv. 4). It seems as though everything has been written and arranged to link the Lord’s Supper with the kingdom, and to sever it from the mystery. Who then has blinded the eyes of believers, and made them more zealous concerning a kingdom ordinance, than eager “to know what is the hope of His calling?” Rome has no place for Paul and his doctrine. She has canonised Peter, mutilated the gospel of the circumcision, robbed Israel of their future glory, and finds a stronghold in this ordinance (blasphemously travestied as it is) which belongs to a dispensation past and future. Turning from Matt. xxvi let us consider I Cor. xi.23-26.

This passage at first sight seems to nullify all that has been said before. For twelve months the words “Till He come” prevented us from uttering a word as to our growing conviction of the dispensational character of the Lord’s Supper. We shrunk from touching a subject which appears to deal with the Person of the Saviour, and the loyal affectionate remembrance of His people. We have not arrived at our present conclusions hastily, nor heartlessly, but have sought to know the truth according as it is written. First of all let us consider the statement, “I have received of the Lord.” If we turn to I Cor. xv. 3 we shall read, “For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received”; or Gal. i. 11, 12, “For I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man, for I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.” Paul continually declared his entire independence of man, both as to his apostleship and his doctrine.

Many at Corinth were being led away by Judaizing teachers to doubt or deny his office. “Am I not an apostle?” he cries, “Are not ye my work in the Lord?” (I Cor. ix.1). “In nothing was I behind the very chiefest apostles” (II Cor.xii. 11). The apostle immediately follows his words of censure, “I praise you not” (I Cor. xi. 22), with the reminder of his authority, “For I have received of the Lord.” There is no warrant to make this statement mean more than the immediately preceding context indicates. The institution of the Lord’s Supper was no secret. The apostle Paul received no further teaching regarding it than could be gathered from the records in the Gospels; he emphasizes his words in this way to help the Corinthian believers to be more ready to listen to his rebukes in relation to their *abuse* of the ordinance.

Let us also consider this, that every one of these Corinthian believers who assembled to partake of the Lord's Supper had some spiritual gift. It was not that a few had gifts, but "every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation" (I Cor. xiv. 26). These supernatural gifts were in perfect harmony with the dispensation in which they were given; they were, moreover, equally in harmony with all that we have seen relative to the Lord's Supper. Will those who believe that the Lord's Supper is for them, satisfactorily (i.e. scripturally, not traditionally) explain their lack of these qualifications, which were possessed by those to whom the instructions concerning the Lord's Supper were sent? The "Gifts" and the Lord's Supper ceased at the close of Acts xxviii.; we search in vain for the faintest allusion to the ordinance in the epistles written after Acts xxviii. Why should we pick out one item from I Cor. xi and seek to perpetuate *that*, when we are compelled to confess that the very next verses in chapter xii. are written concerning that to which we can lay no claim?

If we read I Timothy we find the apostle giving Timothy detailed instructions "that he may know how to behave in the house of God." The apostle repeats some of his instructions regarding the ministry of women (cf. I Tim. ii. and I Cor. xi. 1-17), and yet, although the Lord's Supper is the very next item in I Cor. xi., he finds no place for it in his instruction to Timothy. The simple reason is that when the kingdom became in abeyance, everything connected therewith necessarily went with it. Spiritual gifts, the Lord's Supper, the covenants, all went with the kingdom teaching. The apostle was then commissioned to set out the new economy. To him was the grace given "to make *all* see what is the dispensation of the mystery which from all ages hath been hid in God" (Eph. iii. 9, R.V.).

This was a revelation of something entirely new, unforeseen, unprecedented, something not found in the Scriptures, but hidden by God away from all ages. No one could tell us what was to be observed or omitted except the apostle divinely appointed and commissioned. He has told us. The epistles of Paul written after Acts xxviii contain a complete system of doctrine and instruction for the church of the present dispensation. Where anything that obtained under the previous dispensation was to be repeated, we are *told so*. The repetition of the ministry of women (I Cor. xi. & I Tim. ii.) is a case in point. Where a modification or alteration was to be made, we are *told so*. The specific statement as to *one* baptism in Eph. iv definitely sets aside the *two* baptisms (water and spirit) which obtained during the pentecostal period covered by the Acts, and gives us to-day *one* baptism—that of the Spirit.

We do not find a catalogue of things which we are *not* to do, for the list would be too great, and the record unnecessary. In the epistles after Acts xxviii we have all that is necessary for our guidance, comfort and teaching. We *add* to the Word of God sent to us by the apostle to the Gentiles at our peril. Those who desire to enter into the blessed realization of the dispensation of the secret will abide by the revelation of God pertaining thereto. Those who cannot rest satisfied unless they *see* or *do* something, will perpetuate the observance of ordinances, but not without the inevitable consequences that follow "zeal for God, but not according to knowledge." If we are right to introduce, upon our

own initiative, the Lord's Supper into this present dispensation, why not spiritual gifts, tongues, miracles? Why not be thorough? Apart from the silence of the later epistles, the whole weight of their positive testimony is against the introduction or perpetuation of that which was definitely linked with Israel, the new covenant, and the kingdom.

Some reader may interrupt here and say, what do you understand by the words "Till He Come"? The Lord has not come, and it seems that until He does we must perforce continue the observance of this ordinance. This passage is so important that we propose devoting a separate paper to its consideration, rather than hastily deal with it as one point among many.

Of all the Gospels, the one written by John is the one which seems to approach nearer to the truth for the present time than the rest. Nine-tenths of the gospel preaching of to-day is based upon passages from John's Gospel. The hope and comfort of many a believer are enshrined in the sacred words of John xiv.-xvii. There are many who might be willing to go so far as to agree that Matthew was indeed kingdom truth, but, say they, you must leave us John. Is it not striking that the Lord's Supper, so fully described and enjoined in Matthew, the kingdom Gospel, is omitted by John who above all should have taught it if he had a message for believers to-day. It is not as though the feast does not come into the subject of his writing, it does. John xiii tells of the betrayal and many incidents which took place at that supper. This omission must not be lightly set aside; it adds its weight to the evidence we seek to bring from the Word on this important subject.

Let not our faith stand in the wisdom of men; let none give up the Lord's Supper merely because someone has said that it is undispensational. "Search and see," then act according to the teaching of the Word, and though misunderstanding and censure be our portion here, we shall have the joy of being unashamed in that day, through the endeavour to rightly divide the Word of truth.

Titus i.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness;2. In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;3. But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour;
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**The dispensational place of the Lord's Supper.
Till He Come.
pp. 91-96**

In our last paper we considered the relation of the Lord's Supper with the present dispensation, but held over the inquiry into the passage partly quoted in the sub-heading of this article. I Cor. xi.26 says, "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death *till He come*." The natural conclusion upon reading these words is, the Lord has not come, therefore we must continue to observe the Lord's Supper.

Logic operates within certain fixed boundaries. There is a circumstance, not reckoned in this argument, which alters the case completely, viz., the complete cessation of the dispensation in which I Cor. xi found its place. We must remember that we are not at liberty to take a truth revealed at some *later* period back into an *earlier* period in matters of interpretation. To understand the meaning of the words “Till He come,” we must acquaint ourselves with the teaching concerning that coming, which falls within the boundary line of that particular dispensation. If we *read into* I Cor. xi teaching that was *not revealed*, and which was kept an absolute *secret* until some years afterwards, we must expect to reap a harvest of confusion for our pains.

There is a word which runs throughout the Scriptures pertaining to kingdom and pentecostal times, which will help us in our studies; that word is in the original tongue, the word *parousia*, and is translated sometimes “coming,” and sometimes “presence.” It occurs 24 times in the New Testament. Seventeen of these occurrences refer to Christ, and the remaining seven refer to others, Paul, Titus, Timothy, Stephanas, and antichrist (I Cor. xvi.17; II Cor. vii. 6, 7; x.10; Phil. i. 26; ii. 12; II Thess. ii. 9). The first canonical and historical use of the word occurs in Matt. xxiv., and if we allow the canon of interpretation to be true that the first occurrence of any word supplies the key to its meaning, then most certainly *parousia* belongs to the kingdom, and not to the mystery. Let us consider the context of this first occurrence:--

“And as He sat upon the Mount of Olives (inseparably connected with the kingdom, see Zech. xiv. 4; Matt. xxvi. 30; Acts i. 6, 12, etc.), the disciples came to Him privately, saying, Tell us when shall these things be, and what will be the sign of Thy *parousia* (coming), and the *sunteleia* (the ‘ending together’ of events that culminate in the end) of the age?”

The Apocalypse is the inspired record of the *sunteleia of the age*, and with it the *parousia* is connected. In answer to the question “When,” the Lord gives a series of prophetic utterances commencing with the word “Then” (see Matt. xxiv. 9, 10, 16, 21, 23, 30, 40, and xxv. 1). It must be remembered that the word translated “Then” is a definite mark of time, “then at that time.” In Matt. xxiv. 21 we read, “Then shall be *great tribulation*, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.” These words single out this tribulation from any other, consequently Rev. vii. 14 refers to the same period, “These are they which came out of *the tribulation, the great.*” This time of Jacob’s trouble” will be brought to an end by the second coming of the Lord. “For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so also shall the *parousia* be of the Son of man” (Matt. xxiv. 27).

This coming directly in connection with the false messiahs and false prophets, with their “great signs and wonders,” links the passage with II Thess. ii., and consequently with the antichrist. In II Thess. ii. 8, 9 we read:--

“And then shall that wicked one be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His *parousia* (cf. ‘as the lightning,’ Matt. xxiv. 27), even him, whose *parousia* (the travesty of the Lord’s) is after the working of satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders.”

Remember, satan travesties *truth*. The false messiah's *parousia* is connected with "powers, signs and lying wonders." Now these powers, signs, and lying wonders are an exact counterfeit of Pentecost, as a reference to the Greek of Heb. ii. 4 will show, and go to prove that the *parousia* of the Lord Jesus is that spoken of by Peter in Acts iii. 19, 20, connecting it with Israel, the prophet Joel, and the day of the Lord. Matt. xxiv. 29 continues:--

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven, and then shall all the tribes of the land mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."

"Behold, He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him, and all tribes of the land shall wail because of Him" (Rev. i. 7).

Isaiah, speaking of "the day of the Lord" (Rev. i.10) in Isa. xiii. 6-11, says in v.10:--

"For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light; the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine."

See also the following passages, Ezek. xxxii. 7; Joel ii. 30, 31; Amos v. 20; Zeph. i. 14, 15; Acts ii. 19, 20; Rev. vi. 12-17; and again consider the question, *What has all this to do with the church of the mystery?* Interpreted of Israel and the kingdom, all is clear; strained to fit the church of Ephesians, all is confusion. In Matt. xxiv. 37-39 we read:--

"But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the *parousia* of the Son of man be. For, as in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not till the flood came and took them all away; so shall also the *parousia* of the Son of man be."

To what do the words "eating, drinking and marrying" refer, for of themselves these things are right and good? In Exod. xxxii. 6 in connection with the idolatry of the golden calf, we read, "The people sat down to eat and to drink." Further on in the history of Israel we read in Numb. xxv. 1-3:--

"And Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab, and they called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods; and the people did eat, and bowed down to their gods, and Israel joined unto Baal-peor."

The previous chapter gives the record of Balaam, and this throws a lurid light on the prophetic picture of the near future given in Rev.ii. 14, 20:--

"Thou hast there them who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel, *to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.*"

"Thou sufferest that-woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants *to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.*"

The *parousia* of the Son of man will take place when this world has become a very pandemonium of licentiousness and uncleanness (see Rev. iii. 4; ix. 20, 21; xxi. 8, and xxii. 15, where this fearful sin, done under the cloak of a religions observance, is referred

to). Some readers may say, Why refer to this awful subject? Scripture abounds with warnings concerning this characteristic of the end. Spiritism is the present-day forerunner of the counterpart of the days of Noah, even as the “sons of God who saw the daughters of men that they were fair,” etc., in Gen. vi were the cause of the corruption that necessitated the flood. Let us heed the warning, and have nothing whatever to do with this awful thing. Continuing our study of the use of the word *parousia*, in I Thess. iv. 15, 16, we read:--

“For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the *parousia* of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first.”

One archangel is mentioned in Scripture, “Michael *the* archangel” (Jude 9). According to Dan. xii. 1, Michael is “the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people” (see also Dan. x. 13, 21). When Michael stands up there shall be

“a time of trouble, such as *never was* since there was a nation even to that same time, and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall *awake*.”

Here we have the connection between I Thess. iv. and Dan. xii., where the archangel is directly related to the resurrection (even as Jude 9), and the people of the kingdom--Israel. James and Peter refer to this *parousia* of the Lord. Those to whom James wrote attended the synagogue (ii. 2), they were the “twelve tribes scattered abroad” (i.1). Patience during the time of trouble is the exhortation, “Be patient, therefore, brethren, unto the *parousia* of the Lord” (v. 7, 8). Peter speaks of the *parousia* several times in his second epistle:--

“For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and *parousia* of the Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of His majesty, for He received from God the Father honour and glory” (II Pet. i. 16).

This passage has reference to the “Transfiguration” (Matt. xvii. 1). The words, “honour and glory” are terms which belong to the kingdom (see Heb. ii. 6, 7, and Psa. viii.). They further refer to the consecration of the priest in his robes of “glory and beauty.” “We see not yet. . . . but we see Jesus. . . . crowned with glory and honour” (Heb. ii. 8, 9). The “not yet” of Heb. ii. 8 was a difficulty which Peter confessed. In II Pet. iii.1-13 the scoffers are reported as saying, “Where is the (fulfilment of the) promise of His *parousia*?” The apostle assures his hearers that the non-fulfilment of the promise is not the result of “slackness” on the Lord’s part, it was rather His “longsuffering.” He continues by speaking of the day of the Lord coming “as a thief in the night,” exactly as Paul does in I Thess. iv. and v. Peter, however, had to refer his readers to Paul’s epistles, saying:--

“Our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given unto him, hath written unto you, as also *in all his epistles*, speaking in them *of these things*, in which there are some things hard to be understood” (II Pet. iii. 15, 16).

The scoffers knew about the *parousia*; Peter knew of that hoped-for coming, but he did not understand a great deal of the truth committed to Paul, viz., the dispensation of the mystery which comes in the “gap” occasioned by the setting aside of Israel, and the *postponement* of “the promise of His *parousia*.” In I Cor. xv. 22, 23 we read, “Christ the firstfruits, afterward they that are Christ’s in His *parousia*.” In I Thess. iv. the apostle had revealed the fact that some would be “alive, and remain unto the *parousia* of the Lord,” which we saw had a connection with Dan. xii. and Israel. Here in I Cor. xv. he gives further teaching:--

“Behold, I show you a mystery, we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet shall sound (see I Thess. iv. 15, 16), and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.”

Now “when” this shall take place “then” Isa. xxiv. and xxv. 8, 9 will be fulfilled. *Then* “the kingdoms of the world will have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ.” These words are spoken at the sounding of the seventh trumpet. No trumpet is recorded after this, and so we are justified in speaking of this as the “last trump.” If we have to argue that there *may* be another, it suggests that something is wrong with our theology. The effect of the sounding of the seventh trumpet extends to Rev. xx., where we have the first resurrection, the resurrection of those who have gone through the great tribulation, and who share the glory of the millennial reign on earth.

Space will not allow reference to every occurrence of the word *parousia*, but the remaining passages will be found to bear out the conclusions we have drawn. So far we have confined our attention to the Gospel of Matthew, I and II Thessalonians, Peter, James, I Corinthians and Revelation; in other words, we have avoided the special epistles of the mystery. If we want to learn in what respect the *parousia* is connected with the church of the mystery, we shall have to consider the references to it in the Prison Epistles. Our space is exceedingly limited for this most important investigation, but we need not be alarmed, for if we patiently read through Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Timothy, and Titus, *we shall not find a single reference to the parousia of Christ.*

We have found the *parousia* connected with Israel, antichrist, the great tribulation, the day of the Lord, everything to link it with the kingdom. Surely we need no further argument to prove that the second coming, as taught, believed, and hoped for before Acts xxviii., in I Corinthians, and during the “time of the end,” is clearly to be distinguished from “that blessed hope,” which lies before the believer during this present peculiar dispensation of the mystery. “Till He come” must refer to this *parousia* coming; this was the only coming revealed. That coming, like all else connected with the kingdom, has become in abeyance. It has absolutely nothing to do with the members of the one body.

The dispensational place of the Lord’s Supper.

Some further thoughts upon difficult themes.
pp. 107-114

We believe that some of our readers will welcome a further word or two upon the deeply important subjects which have exercised our hearts and minds of late, viz., the Lord's Supper, our present position, and future hope.

We may express the feelings of many in language like this, we have followed the line of teaching set forth in the previous numbers of this Magazine, and have felt that there is truth in the position therein advanced. We see more clearly than ever the distinction between the earthly sphere of redemptive operations—the kingdom, and the heavenly sphere—the church of the mystery. We, moreover, feel that the Lord's Supper does undoubtedly belong to that period when Israel was still a nation, and when kingdom hopes were still possible of fulfillment, yet we are reluctant to give up this sacred ordinance. May we not still continue to drink the wine, and break the bread in loving memory of the Lord Jesus Christ, and His atoning mercy? Moreover, it is certainly a fact that in the epistles of Paul written after Acts xxviii. the apostle does not speak so much of Christ's second coming as the hope of the church, but of the believer's manifestation with Christ "in glory" (Col. iii. 4; Titus ii. 13, 14), yet all this seems so intangible, so vague, that we seem to have let go the reality to grasp the shadow.

Let it be clearly understood that all whose thoughts are echoed in the above words have our deepest sympathy. We would not cause a moment's pain to one believer in our Lord if it could be avoided. "Faithful are the wounds of a friend," saith the Scripture, and if any are wounded by the contents of either the past, present, or future issues of this little witness, it is only because the writer would seek to point readers to the truth of the Word, which Word is likened to a sword that pierces, a hammer that breaks, and a fire that burns, as well as the bread and water of life, and the healing balm for our souls. In the first place, we must not shrink back from obedience to the Word of God simply because we do not see where it leads, or what the goal may be. If we follow the written Word we shall of necessity be led in the way of truth, but we must also be prepared to "walk by faith, and not by sight."

We must have the same faith that was so signally manifested in Abraham, "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out. . . . obeyed." Now notice the character of this obedience of faith, "And he went out *not knowing* whither he went" (Heb. xi. 8). Abraham did not go out blindly, for he knew that the Lord had spoken, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." Some have had "ears to hear" what the Word of the Lord has said. They have sought to act according to that Word. The result is that the bonds of human tradition have severed. They find that "the truth has made them *free*"; free to believe *all* that God has said, free to desire to act according to the testimony of our Lord through Paul, His prisoner, the chosen apostle of the mystery—the dispensation of the grace to the Gentiles. They find that many of their former friends are left behind, that the writings of beloved teachers are of little help, that they can enter into fellowship with the apostle who said, "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto the things which are before, I press toward the mark, for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. iii. 13, 14). It should be no cause for

wonder that those who have thus stepped out should, for a while, be like Abraham, who knew not wither he went.

“One thing we know, that whereas once we were blind, now we see” (John ix. 25).

“One things have we desired of the Lord, that will we seek after” (Psalm xxvii. 4).

“One thing we do, forgetting the things behind, and reaching forth unto the things before, we press goalward” (Phil. iii. 13, 14).

Like the blind man in John ix., we may not be able to answer all the queries and quibbles of the Pharisees, but no arguments on their part, nor failures on our own, can alter the fact that whereas once we were blind, now we see. Like the Psalmist, our goal is the Lord in His temple. Not a temple made with hands, but heaven itself where our citizenship is, and from whence we look for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change this body of our humiliation, that it may be transfigured unto the likeness of the body of His glory (Phil. iii. 20, 21).

An infallible test for doctrine has always been its attitude to the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. “He shall glorify Me” is the Lord’s witness to the Holy Spirit’s teaching. Our forgetting of things behind has made us relinquish ordinances, dogmas, hopes, fears, and many God-given commands and promises, which we have seen were never addressed to us, but our appreciation of the Son of God, our love unto Him, our view of the grandeur and majesty of His heavenly throne, His present and future glory as raised “far above all,” His position as Head of the church which is His body, all these things have become magnified as we have stepped over the boundary line of Acts xxviii. into the epistles of the fulness.” Our own position has also changed from that of babes to that of full-grown men. The things which pertained to the days of childhood are forgotten, and found to be unnecessary and a hindrance. The “milk” of the Word has been exchanged for the “strong meat” (cf. I Cor. ii., iii.; Heb. v. 11-14) of the mystery, which was hidden away from all generations.

Let us consider afresh some items of these deeply important things. The connection between the Lord’s Supper and the new covenant is established in Matt. xxvi. 28. We are not left in doubt as to the meaning of this new covenant. The very latest reference to it is found in Heb. viii., and there its distinctive Jewish and kingdom bearing is fully set forth. The house of Judah and the house of Israel are unequivocally set forth as the subjects of this new covenant, and its relation to the reinstating of Israel and Judah as the people of God is as clearly taught in Heb. viii. as in Jer. xxxi. That the new covenant of II Cor. iii. is the same as that of Jer. xxxi. and Heb. viii. is clear from the evident allusion to Jer. xxxi. in II Cor. iii. 3. We find no covenant, old or new, in Paul’s epistles written after Acts xxviii. The Lord’s Supper was instituted on the night of the Passover, which commemorated the exodus from Egypt. The Lord’s Supper was a pledge and seal of the new covenant promise to lead a redeemed Israel into the promised land under grace, not law.

Heb. v.	11. Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing. 12. For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. 13. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. 14. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.
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Under the old covenant, Israel had to do with the law written on tables of stone (II Cor. iii.), “which covenant they brake” (Jer. xxxi. 32). The new covenant has to do with a sacrifice of infinitely greater worth than the blood of bulls, goats, or lambs; it leads no more to Sinai, and tables of stone, but forward to the inheritance of the land according to the original unconditional covenant made 430 years before the giving of the law (Gal. iii. 17), and to the time when the law of God shall be written upon the fleshy tables of the heart (Heb. viii.; II Cor. iii.).

The church of the mystery is as certainly redeemed by the precious blood of Christ as were the believers of the dispensations past. We love Him because He first loved us. We can enter into the Psalmist’s word of praise, the prophet’s glowing vision, and the preacher’s burning zeal without transgressing the bounds of our inheritance. May we not drink the wine, and break the bread, simply out of loving memory of Him? Dear fellow-believer, it is not a question of love or remembrance. Surely, when we consider what He has done, what grace has accomplished, we need no symbols to keep alive our love or stimulate our hopes; if we do, we have not attained to that position laid down in the epistles of the mystery, which is entirely “in heavenly places in Christ.” The apostle exhorts the believer thus, “Set your affections (or minds) upon things above, not on things on the earth, for ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God” (Col. iii. 3). This is the divine answer to the words of Col. ii. 20, “Wherefore, if ye died with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinance?” What can it mean by the words, “as though living in the world”? We are living in the world, and many times are forcibly reminded of it. It is explained by Col. iii. 3, “Ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God.” This is the ground of the present position, whether it be ecclesiastically, dispensationally, or doctrinally considered, all is on resurrection ground, in heavenly places in Christ. All that pertained to the flesh is dead and buried.

Fellow-believer, if you died with Christ, why are you subject to ordinances? What place can these have on resurrection ground? During a period of types, shadows, parables and symbols, water, wine and bread could set forth clearly the blessed teaching of the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord. The picture book is fitting in the hand of the child; it is not a seemly manual for the full-grown man.

The burden of Col. ii., which has been aptly called “The Christian’s Charter of Liberty,” may be exhibited thus:--

Col. ii. 8-23.

Doctrine and instruction consequent on having died with Christ.

A | 8. Caution

B | 9,10. Christ the Head. The fulness of God.

C | 11-15. Divine ordinances done away in Christ.

A | 16-18. Caution.

B | 19. Christ the Head. The increase of God.

C | 20-23. Human ordinances done away in Christ.

Divine ordinances (e.g. circumcision) have received their fulfilment in Christ. Our circumcision is “made without hands.” Human ordinances, such as “touch not, taste not, handle not,” and all the multifarious rules and regulations of religion, have no power over one who has died with Christ. The ordinances of Believers’ Baptism and of the Lord’s Supper, while directly connected with faith, were also directly associated with the flesh and things seen in a marked manner. The believer, who has entered into the fulness of the gospel as proclaimed in Ephesians, wherein he sees that he has been quickened, raised from the grave of sin, and seated with Christ in the heavenlies, will not need reminders every week of the debt he owes.

We must realize that we cannot disassociate the Lord’s Supper from its typical character, and its dispensational connection with kingdom promises. Nicodemus loved the Lord, or he would not have brought the spices to embalm His body, for by so doing he exposed himself to the hatred of the Sanhedrim. Nicodemus would have loved the Lord better, and with far more reality, if he had believed the Lord’s words that He would rise again the *third day*. The others might have said that Nicodemus did not love the Lord so much had he refrained from sharing in the offices of the *dead*, but he would really have loved his Lord the more if he had believed in and waited for His *resurrection from the dead*. So with ourselves, we love the Lord none the less because we set our affections on things above. Our fellow-believers may chide us with coldness, but what of that! our joy is not resting in the approbation of the most saintly; our joy is found in Him and His approval. We know that if we rightly divide the Word of truth we shall be workmen who will have no need for shame in that day, although much misunderstood in man’s day.

Again, many feel the loss of I Thess. iv. very keenly. Oh, that they may feel the “gain” of Phil. iii. as Paul did. As a Pharisee, and after his conversion, Paul believed that the dead would be raised, and that Messiah would come in glory to take the kingdom. He believed that the archangel Michael would stand up for Israel during their time of trouble, and that there would then take place the resurrection mentioned in Dan. xii. There is only one archangel mentioned in Scripture, and his name is Michael. He is always connected with Israel (Dan. x. and xii.). “*The archangel*” of I Thess. iv. is Michael, and the resurrection there mentioned is the same as that of Dan. xii. I Thess. v connects it with “The day of the Lord.” Paul willingly gave up all these things, and many other hopes which he had entertained after his conversion. When he had the mystery revealed to him he could gladly “count all things but loss” for the things which were before.

Is it nothing that our hope is related to His glory? Is it to be despised that soon we shall exchange these bodies for bodies like unto that of the glorified Lord? Is there nothing “tangible” in a “citizenship in heaven”? Is the promise “vague” that when Christ who is our life shall be manifested we shall be manifested *with Him* in glory? Did Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob suffer so much because of the promise that they should inherit the earth, and shall we speak of “the inheritance of the saints in the light” as something not worthy of comparison? We are all so much of the “earth, earthy” that we do not really enter into “the calling wherewith we have been called.” The traditions of the ages have so blunted our feelings, and blinded our eyes, that we cannot perceive “what is the hope of His calling.” By our attitude we are in reality asking, “What *is* the hope of His calling,

and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the holiest of all"? If our eyes have been enlightened, then we may say the prayer of Eph. i. 18-20. The Lord will make plain the hope, and the riches of the glory.

Daniel (Dan. x.), Isaiah (Isa. vi.), Job (Job xlii.), Paul (Acts ix.), and John (Rev. i.) all testify to the exceeding greatness of the heavenly vision. We must not expect to apprehend all at once the things for which we have been apprehended by Christ (Phil. iii.). We want no "word battles." The apostle in Phil. iii. 15 says:--

"Let us therefore, as many as be perfect (full grown, initiated), be thus minded, and if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you."

We have no commission to "strive." With meekness and gentleness we seek to teach the truth as far as we see it. We seek grace to be patient, to bear up under evil, in meekness instructing those who oppose themselves, peradventure God will give them a change of mind unto the knowledge of the truth. We can no more have two baptisms, if the Lord says to us in the sevenfold unity of the Spirit that there is but one. We can no more observe "Days" or "Sabbaths"; we can no more observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Day of Atonement, the Passover, the Feast of Weeks or Pentecost, for all these things have passed away. So also the Lord's Supper. Instituted to look back (as the Passover looked forward) to the One who shed the blood of the new covenant, it has its place in the dispensation of the kingdom. The Lord's Supper is to the new covenant what the Passover Feast was to the Jew under the old covenant, and first typical deliverance. Those who are "children of faithful Abraham," whether Jews or Gentiles, are looking for the same inheritance as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, whose affections, or minds, are connected with the earth and its blessing; these may, with some show of consistency, perpetuate the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, but those who have been blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ, who died with Christ, and who have been raised together with Him, whose hopes are not linked with a renewed earth, but with a new heaven, whose citizenship is not in the new Jerusalem which "comes down out of heaven," but is in heaven itself, whose destiny is not to sit upon thrones, judging Israel or the nations, but to show in the ages to come, unto principalities and powers in the heavenlies, the Lord's wonderful grace to them, these will find Christ to be their *all*, without the aid of type or symbol.

It is pleasant and refreshing to meet together with the Lord's people. The temptation to remain silent on these things is great. Do we show our love to Him who gave Himself for us by participating in a feast over which we begin to feel uneasy? Do we value opportunities of service above faithfulness? The Lord does not accept our service in this way. Let us be willing to limit our sphere of so-called service if it is to be at the expense of faithfulness. Let us be willing to "go out, not knowing"; let us be willing to suffer the loss of the fellowship of believers; let us be content to be misunderstood and misrepresented. He is with us; He knows; He sees the heart; men only see the outward appearance. Though all forsake us, we may say with Paul, "I know whom I have believed."

With some readers the problem is one of inability to see the teaching of the Word. With these we cannot argue; we pray that if they be otherwise minded, the Lord will show even this unto them. With others, however, it is not so much the inability to *see* the truth, as to *do* it. "If ye *know* these things, happy are ye if ye *do* them." Our hope is bound up in the heavenly glory of the Lord. Our life is hid with Christ our God. Our walk, our service is on resurrection ground. Brethren, let us stand fast in the faith, and stand fast to the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free. Let us not appoint us a captain to return to bondage; let us go up, and possess the heavenly inheritance by faith, and walk in harmony therewith.

Berean Expositor Volume 1

No more. pp. 86-88

The subjects which have been considered in the last few numbers have been of a very controversial character. We do not enter the field of controversy merely for the love of argument, "necessity is laid upon us." We have need for a clear, frank opening up of the Word of truth, regardless of feelings, traditions, or fears. Three occurrences of the phrase "no more" in Heb. x. may provide us with a little help by the way, without entering into the field of controversy.

No more conscience of sins (Heb. x. 2).

What can bring about such a condition as this? Does this mean that the apostle was an advocate of the doctrine known as "sinless perfection"? A careful reading of Rom. vii.; Gal. v. 16-25; I John i. 6-10, and iii. 9 will evidence that the believer is in possession of two natures, one called "*flesh*," and the other called "*spirit*"; one "begotten of God," the other "begotten of the flesh," the one ever at warfare against the other. How then can such an one attain to the condition of "no more conscience of sins"? The whole verse and context supplies the scriptural reason and only answer:--

"For the law having a shadow of the good things to come, not the very image of the things, *can never*, with the same sacrifices which year by year they offered continually, make the comers thereunto perfect; else would they not, in that case, have ceased being offered, by reason of those rendering the divine service having *no more* conscience of sins, *being once for all purified?*" (Heb. x. 1 and 2).

Ah! Yes, the "no more" depends upon the "once for all." This blessed state is not brought about by "turning over new leaves," by belittling sin, by reducing God's holy standard; no, it comes into the very light of the presence of God, it walks in the light as He is in the light, it has fellowship with God, yet never does it say, "I have not sinned," or "I have no sin." The secret of that holy boldness is that "the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin," or (as above) "being once for all purified." This is the testimony of the other occurrences of this word "conscience" in Hebrews. The offering of the blood of bulls and goats never touched the conscience, they "could not make him that did the service perfect, *as pertaining to the conscience*" (Heb. ix. 9). But "if the blood of bulls and goats. . . sanctifieth to the *purifying of the flesh*, how much more shall the blood of Christ who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works" (Heb. ix. 14). Hence Heb. x. 22 says, "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience."

The passage under consideration does not mean that the believer will never be troubled by sin any more, this is not the case at all. As he "grows in grace," his own unworthiness and defilement appear to deepen, but all through he has the glad

consciousness that the blood of Christ has “once for all” settled the whole question of his sin and sins before God.

“It is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins. . . . but this One, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God” (Heb. x. 4-12).

Fellow-believer, He sat down, His work “finished”; can you not rest if He does? Surely nothing more is needed, if He who came to save has “sat down,” for by one offering He hath perfected unto perpetuity them that are sanctified” (Heb. x. 14)

No more remembrance (Heb. x. 17).

What is the result of this wonderful offering? The next verse goes on immediately, “Wherefore. . . . their sins and their iniquities I will remember *no more*.” Oh! The joy of it! The sacrifice of Christ not only breathes its blessed “no more” to our conscience, it also says “no more” to the memory of God. “Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is *covered*” (Psa. xxxii. 1).

No more offering (Heb. x. 18).

Even this is not all. So complete is the offering, so full the forgiveness and the forgetfulness, so perfect the cleansing, that the Lord can add, “Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin” (Heb. x. 18). No more conscience of sin! No more remembrance of sin! No more offering for sin! This speaks to us of perfection. Never through all eternity will that one offering need repetition. Its efficacy avails “to the uttermost.” Sins past, present, and even future (which, O Lord, give grace to reduce) are all met and dealt with by the precious blood of Christ.

Hebrews x.

1. For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.
2. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins.
3. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year.
4. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.
5. Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me:
6. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure.
7. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God.
8. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law;
9. Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.
10. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.
11. And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins:
12. But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;
13. From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.
14. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.
15. Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before,

16. This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them;
17. And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.
18. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.
19. Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,
20. By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;
21. And having an high priest over the house of God;
22. Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.
23. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)
24. And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:
25. Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.
26. For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,
27. But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.
28. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:
29. Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?
30. For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.
31. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.
32. But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions;
33. Partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used.
34. For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance.
35. Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward.
36. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.
37. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.
38. Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.
39. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.

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Bible Numerics. An aid to interpretation. **pp. 88-91**

“Re-nerumerics.—I think a few thoughts would be invaluable. We stand open mouthed, as it were, at the data, but want a little guidance as to how to apply the truth revealed to us.”

Such was the reply of a beloved colleague to an enquiry as to whether a few words regarding the application of “Numerics” to “Interpretation” would be of use in *The Berean Expositor*. Many of our readers will be acquainted with the wonderful findings of *Mr. Ivan Panin*, who has been used of God to show, beyond the faintest possibility of doubt, that the choice of words, grammatical forms, use of vowels, consonants, syllables, and letters in the Originals of the Holy Scriptures are all governed by a most elaborate scheme of numerics. For example, the first eleven verses of Matt.1 have been explored with overwhelming results. We remind our readers of a few only:--

- a. This passage has a vocabulary of 49 words (7*7).
- b. 28 of these *begin* with a vowel (7*4), and
- c. 21 *begin* with a consonant (7*3).
- d. 7 *end* with a vowel (7), and
- e. 42 *end* with a consonant (7*6).
- f. These 49 (7*7) words have 266 letters (7*38).
- g. Of these letters 140 are vowels (7*20), and
- h. 126 are consonants (7*18).

NOTE: * = multiply.

We cannot spare space to go further. We have mentioned eight features of sevens; many of more involved character have been tabulated. What are we to learn from this numerical feature? “The *words* of the Lord (not merely the Word, but the very words) are pure words, as silver tried in a furnace (words of earth, yet) purified SEVEN times” (Psa. xii. 6). In other terms, the Scriptures bear God’s *hall mark*, perfection is stamped upon every syllable, nay, every letter. Thus the knowledge of Bible numerics shows us that the belief in the *full, verbal inspiration* of Scripture is the only consistent attitude of faith possible. No lower or modified inspiration can be entertained.

Let us now turn our attention for a moment to consider how the numerics of a passage throw light upon its meaning. In the term Numerics we include (a) Gematria, (b) Number of occurrences of words or things, and (c) Number of words used for the same idea. Gematria is the ancient name for the numerical value of the letters of the Hebrew and Greek alphabet. Figures were unknown. A stood for 1, B for 2, and G for 3, and so on. Hence the Gematria of the word “bag” would be 6 (2+1+3). Now we find that the

Gematria of “satan,” his title and his agents, in Hebrew and Greek, are continually multiples of 13. Thirteen has always been a number of ill-omen among the superstitious; maybe there is some deeper reason for it than we had supposed. The first occurrence of the number links it with rebellion (Gen. xiv. 4).

The inspired explanation of that old serpent—“who is called the devil and satan” (Rev. xii. 9), is $13*13*13$. Here we see at a glance that, in the Apocalypse, rebellion has reached its zenith in satan. Travelling back from revelation to the Old Testament, we find that the word satan is $13*28$. Here we have further light upon his character. 28 is the number of Gen. i. 1, for that brief verse contains (in Hebrew) 7 words and 28 letters. Seven signifies spiritual perfection, and four is associated with the earth and the creature. The Gematria of the word satan then tells us that into the perfect creation (28) satan introduced rebellion (13). Satan is linked also to man in the awful word “Belial,” for that is $13*6$. The Greek word “serpent” takes us further, for that is $13*60$, while the Gematria of the words, “The son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God,” tells us plainly that antichrist will be man, satan possessed, for the numerical value is $13*13*13*6$.

What shall we say then, when we find that the words “Jesus of Nazareth” have as their Gematria the very same as satan, for it is $13*13*13$! How it emphasises the humiliation of our Lord! Truly we see that “Christ hath redeemed us. . . . being made a *curse*.” How fully He fulfilled His own words, “As Moses lifted up the *serpent* in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up”! Shall we say there is nothing in numerics after this?

Even, this is not all. That offering of Christ as the substitute, though it brought the Lord Jesus under the curse, yet glorified God. Consequently we find the words, “God is glorified in Him,” yielding the same remarkable number, $13*13*13$! Thus even numerics show that satan’s rebellion is overthrown and overruled by the cross to bring glory to God. Joktan (Gen. x.) is the 13th from Shem. He has 13 sons, the Gematria of his own name is a multiple of 13, and so also is the sum of the names of his children. This throws light upon the omission of his name, and the taking up of Peleg, in Gen. xi. The Bible is full of purpose—that is the secret of its interpretation. Surely we must see design in all this.

Take another illustration of the way in which the Gematria of names indicates the character of the owners. The Gematria of the four names, Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japhet is 936, but if we take away the name of Ham, the father of Canaan, the Gematria of Noah, Shem, and Japhet is 888. The number 888 is significantly the numerical value of the word “Jesus,” and stands in contrast to 666, the number of antichrist (Rev. xiii. 18).

The number eleven is worthy of study. Deut. i. 2 tells us that from Horeb to Kadesh-Barnea was a journey of *eleven* days! Now eleven is one short of twelve, the number of Israel. One more day would have seen them in the promised land; as it was they failed. There are *eleven* books in the third section of the Hebrew Old Testament

called the Psalms, or *Kethuveem*, i.e., the Writings. These eleven Books give the inner history of Israel's failure. The central book of the eleven is the book of Lamentations. This book is composed throughout of sets of elevens, its chapters containing 22, 22, 66, 22, and 22 verses, respectively. The number of times a word occurs, or the number of words used of one thing, often assists us in arriving at the true meaning. The absolute character of God's truth is emphasized when we find that, although there are many Hebrew words for "error," there is but one for "truth"! Seven words are used in Leviticus for "gold"—a type of Christ and the Word.

Space will not allow of further examples. The numerics of the Original Scripture provide us with a sure test in the case of disputed readings. If the ancient reading of John i. 18, supported by *Westcott* and *Hort*, be retained, John i. 1-18 presents a wonderful phenomenon of sevens, which is spoiled if the reading as in the A.V. is used. The numeric structure demands the reading, "GOD, only begotten," instead of "Only begotten SON," which is, moreover, brought into harmony structurally with the first verse (John i. 1-18 being arranged as a simple introversion, verse 1 corresponding with verse 18, 2 with 17, etc.), and gives us definite teaching concerning the deity of Christ.

Let us then be willing and ready to believe that the God who has arranged even this system of numerics in His Word, intends that we should use it to His glory, and our enlightenment.

Gen. xiv. 4	Twelve years they served Chedorlaomer, and in the thirteenth year they rebelled.
John i. 18	No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

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Peace with God. pp. 97-99

Peace! What a word is this! How like a balm it soothes and mollifies. How often the apostle was inspired in the opening words of his epistles to wish the saints "Peace!" Peace is one of the Lord's blessings for His people (Psa. xxix. 11). One of the titles of Christ that Isaiah early uses is "The Prince of Peace." Again, it is in Isaiah that we read that comforting passage, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee. Trust ye in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is the *Rock of Ages*" (Isa. xxvi. 3, 4).

A most profitable study would be a consideration of the way in which this word is used by the apostle Paul. In the epistle to the Romans we find the word used more than in any other epistle. There it occurs eleven times. Speaking of man by nature the apostle says, "The way of peace have they not known" (Rom. iii. 17), and he prefaces this with the solemn words, "Destruction and misery are in *their* ways." What a contrast! Their ways, and the way of peace. When we look back upon those ways, what grace, what love it must have been that set our feet in the "way of peace." How accurate is the scripture, "They are all gone out of the way" (the way of peace), singular, whereas "their ways" is plural. Many are the ways of misery and enmity, but one way only is the way of peace. If we would enquire the way of peace, we shall find it stated in chapter v. 1, "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God." The way of peace is not paved with good resolutions; none enter there because they have "turned over a new leaf"; the entrance to this road which leads to life and glory is "justification by faith."

This takes us back again to Rom. iii.; commencing at verse 23 we read, "For all sinned (in the past), and are coming short of the glory of God (in the present)." Here we have the hopeless and helpless condition of the unbeliever and believer alike, in themselves. Notice the words "coming short," and the word "glory." Both are closely connected with the thought of approval. God has a standard, but none have attained to it. Not till 4,000 years had rolled their course since the creation of Adam could the heavens open upon one in whom the Father was well-pleased (Matt.iii. 17). It is interesting to note that the word "well-pleased" (*endokeō*) is connected with the word "glory" (*doxa*). The Lord Jesus alone of all born of women came up to the divine standard; all else have fallen short. In the case of candidates for government posts, to fall short of the required height by half an inch disqualifies as much as a foot; degrees there may be in sins, but not in sin—"All sinned, and are coming short of the glory of God."

The sentence must not be finished here, for this has no word of peace for sinners. It continues, "being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Ah! here is the ground of my peace with God. There is no interval between Rom. iii. 23 and iii. 24; no room for improvement. At the same moment that the sinner is "coming short," that same moment he may be justified. Rom. iv. 5 emphasizes the same

blessed truth, “But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that *justifieth the ungodly*, his faith is counted for righteousness.” Surely we can now appreciate the words of the apostle when he says, “justified freely.”

The words “freely” is translated “without a cause” in John xv. 25. Justified without a cause! surely this is grace indeed, and it is all “through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” Here then is the ground of our peace; this is the “justification by faith” which brings us “peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.” This glorious truth is expanded in Col. i. 20-22:--

“And having made *peace through the blood* of His Cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you that were sometimes alienated and enemies (not knowing peace) in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and unblamable, and unreprouvable in His sight.”

The peace which is the blessed privilege of the believer here is the anticipation of that final dispensation of the reconciliation of all things, when sin and sorrow shall flee away, and peace, perfect peace, will reign and rule (Col. i. 20; Eph. i. 10). Not only is peace connected with the cross of Christ, it is vitally connected with His resurrection. Rom. v. 1 reads on from Rom. iv. 24, 25, “Who was delivered because of our offences, and raised again because of our justifying; therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God.” There is, however, something more to be learned from this verse. The passage may read, “Therefore being justified, by faith let us have peace with God.” We cannot “make our peace” with God (as some erroneously speak), but we may be exhorted, upon the basis of the perfect justification that is ours in Christ, “By faith let us have peace with God.”

Why should anything come between now? sin has been dealt with, the sacrifice has been offered and accepted, “the fruit of righteousness shall be peace,” “righteousness and peace have kissed each other”; therefore, oh believer, enter by faith into that peace which is yours. Let none say you nay when the Lord says that the peace has been made by the blood of His cross. Not only do we find peace through His blood, but we read the glorious words, “But now, in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ; for *He is our peace*.” Let us dwell upon this (not doctrine merely, but Christ Himself), He is our peace. Well might the apostle say, as the yearning of his heart, “To be found in Him.”

If He is our peace, how well we can understand the power that binds together the “Unity of the Spirit”; it is the “binding together of *the peace*.” Man-made bonds cause friction, strife, division; the bond of peace never irritates, never chafes; oh, to know its power more. When men say “Peace,” sudden destruction may be near, but when “the Lord giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?” (Job xxxiv. 29). Let us notice the Lord’s action as recorded in John xx. 19, 20:--

“Then. . . came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you, and when He had so *said* He *showed* unto them His *hands* and His *side*. Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord. ”

The Saviour not only *said* peace, but He pointed to the grounds of peace, the marks of Calvary, and a risen Lord. May we ever see that our peace takes its sole rise from this fount of mercy. May we never lean for peace upon the bruised reeds of man's good works; peace, true lasting peace, is found only by faith in the Lord, who for our sakes died and rose again. This is "peace with God." The peace *of* God is something different, though of course connected. Perhaps some other time we may have an opportunity of considering this other aspect of peace.

Berean Expositor Volume 1

Platform and Programme.

“I believed, and therefore have I spoken.”

“Seeing then that we have such a hope, we use great plainness of speech.”

pp. 60-61

We believe that a word or two would not be amiss, and will certainly answer the queries of some of our readers as to the Purpose, Plan, Platform, and Programme of this little Pamphlet. We believe implicitly, and as a matter beyond dispute, that the original Hebrew and Greek of the Old and New Testaments are *fully* and *verbally* inspired. “All Scripture (*graphe*, meaning that which is *written*) is *God-breathed*” (II Tim. iii. 16). We desire, as grace may be given, to “search the Scriptures daily,” and to publish the results regardless of the approval or the disapproval of any. Let it be once understood, the Bible is *infallible*, but the searcher is *not*. There will doubtless be much of human error, but we write as a *Berean* expositor, for *Berean* readers, trusting that they will test every statement by the Word of truth.

We do not intend to apologize for the Bible, nor for any teaching which may from time to time be brought to light. While we would seek to avoid any appearance of callousness, and would endeavour not to wound the feelings of our brethren, yet we intend, the Lord being our Helper, to turn back for nothing. We desire the same spirit, in at least some measure, that underlies the words of Paul, “None of these things move me.” Some readers have written words of encouragement, some of warning and censure. We thank them all, but would publicly ask them to refrain from warning us as to “*tendencies*,” &c., &c. We wish it to be plainly understood that we desire to be kept absolutely regardless of tendencies, &c., if the consideration of such would prevent us from honestly prosecuting our search in the wonderful Word of God.

We are told that we are robbing the Lord’s children of their Bible, and of much of their possessions, by our teaching that the mystery was not revealed until after Acts xxviii. We are told that our article dealing with Rom. v savours of “Universalism” and other “isms.” We shall be told that we are on “dangerous ground” with regard to the question of the “Immortality of the soul”; we care not for these things, all we ask is that every reader will “search and see whether these things *are so*.” If the soul is immortal—good, let us believe it; if not—still good, let us reject it. We cannot go further with Rom. v. and Genesis iii. until this subject is settled.

One thing more. We wish it to be understood that we are not attempting in this day of corporate failure to organise a primitive church, nor to start another “Meeting,” or circle of “Fellowship.” We do not refrain by reason of indifference, but from our understanding of the Word of truth. The Bible Readings that are given at different places are purely Bible Readings and nothing more, the truth received thereat working its own way in each individual case. All believers are welcome, and some who do come represent widely differing sections of Christendom. We impose no code or terms of fellowship, but we have the joy of seeing widely differing brethren drawn together by the bonds of truth, and of seeing some who were enslaved in the fetters of tradition realizing the force of the words, “the truth shall make you free.”

The enemy is advancing, we have put on the armour of God; let us not “bite and devour one another,” but gathering around the glorious truth of God, “Let us *stand fast* to the *freedom* wherewith Christ has made us free.”

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The special and exclusive character of the Present Dispensation. pp. 66-71

In previous articles we have sought to show that the present dispensation is the “dispensation of the mystery which had been hidden away from the ages by God,” and moreover that it did not commence until Israel was set aside in the last chapter of the Acts. Before Acts xxviii. the section of the kingdom of God was concerning *Jesus*, as related to the law of *Moses*, and the Prophets (Acts xxviii. 23). After the setting aside of Israel, the section of the kingdom of God was concerning the *Lord Jesus Christ*, without reference to Moses or Prophets. There have been several dispensations, each linked to some God-appointed messenger or representative:--

- The dispensation of innocence and federal headship under Adam.
- The dispensation of mercy and mediatorial headship under Christ.
- The dispensation of conscience under the Patriarchs.
- The dispensation of law under Moses.

All these and others have their own marked peculiarities and distinctions. When the dispensation changed a new order took place. Some of the terms of the past maybe were taken over into the successive economy, but some were omitted, some were modified, and some were completely reversed. The apostle Paul stands in relation to the present dispensation and the mystery as Moses did to the dispensation of law. Let us hear what he is inspired to record concerning this, for it is vitally important to us. In the first place we notice in Rom. xv. (the last epistle which Paul wrote before Acts xxviii.) that even there he draws attention to the difference between the ministry of the Lord Jesus when on earth, and that of his servant Paul. For the sake of clearness we quote the passage again:--

“For I say that Christ became a minister of circumcision, in behalf of the truth of God, that he might confirm the promises made unto the fathers, and that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy” (Rom. xv. 8, 9).

In verses 15 and 16 the apostle says of his own ministry:--

“By reason of the grace of God given unto me, that I should be a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, carrying on a priestly service with the glad tidings of God.”

Here it will be observed the apostle has a connection with the ministry of Christ particularly relating to the Gentiles. Peter was more exactly in line with the personal ministry of Christ, for in Gal. ii. 7, 8 we read:--

“When they saw that I had been entrusted with the gospel of the uncircumcision, even as Peter with the gospel of the circumcision, for He who energised Peter with a view to an apostleship of circumcision, energised also in me with a view to the Gentiles.”

Here again we see Paul with a gospel distinct from that of Peter, and an apostleship distinct also. Some may object to the expression, "A gospel distinct from that of Peter." In Gal. ii. 2 we read that Paul "laid before them the gospel which he heralded among the Gentiles," and this gospel is not merely termed the gospel *to* the uncircumcision, but the gospel *of* the uncircumcision. However we will not pause here, these are but hints of the impending change. This difference is not so radical as the next step we indicate. In Eph. iii. Paul writes as "the prisoner of Christ Jesus on behalf of the Gentiles." This imprisonment is connected with the "dispensation of the grace of God which hath been given unto me with a view to you."

"Unto me, the less than the least of all saints, has this grace been given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the untraceable riches of Christ, and to enlighten all as to what is the dispensation of the mystery which hath been hidden away from the ages by God, who did all things create; in order that now, unto the principalities and the authorities in the heavenlies, might be made known, through the church, the exceeding complex wisdom of God, according to the plan of the ages which He made in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Eph. iii. 8-11).

Here words are multiplied to impress us with the secret, hidden, and unsearchable character of the present dispensation.

Here are riches connected with Christ that are. . . *unsearchable* (verse 8).
Here is a dispensation which is one of a *secret* (9).
This dispensation of the secret was effectually . . . *hidden* (9).
The wisdom therein displayed is *very complex* (10).
The whole was only discovered by *revelation* (5).
And Paul was commissioned to *enlighten all* (9).

Words cannot be more emphatic, and yet men will still carry on the work of confusion, endeavouring to "search out" the subject of the mystery in scriptures written before it was revealed, a zeal for God maybe, but not according to knowledge. Let us rather accept the Scriptures, and see that it is in the Prison Epistles of the apostle to the Gentiles that we shall receive "enlightening" as to "what is the dispensation of the secret."

We now turn to Col. i., and there again we read of the same exclusive and peculiar ministry:--

"Of which I ('I' is emphatic here) have become minister, according to the dispensation of God which hath been given unto me to youward, to complete (or fill up) the Word of God, the mystery which hath been hidden away from the ages and from the generations."

Here the apostle makes the same claims, adding one or two distinctive clauses. This dispensation "fills up (or completes) the Word of God." Peter felt the need for some such dispensation to fully explain the long interval that was taking place between the ascension of the Lord and His second coming (see II Peter iii.). Peter himself, however, could not explain it to his readers other than to say that he was assured that it was not "slackness" on the part of the Lord. He refers his readers to the epistles of Paul, for, says he, in *all* his writings he speaks of these things, and some of them are hard to be

understood. Thus it is that the present dispensation “fills up” the gap that would otherwise have existed between the setting aside of Israel and their repentance and restoration.

The apostle had already referred to “this mystery” of Israel’s blindness in Rom. xi. 25, but it is not until after Acts xxviii. that he enters into his special ministry of the present dispensation. In Col. i. 26 he adds one more term, “Hidden away from the ages and the generations.” A reference to Col. i. 6 and 9 will show that *apo* with the genitive can be translated “since.” “*Since* the ages and the generations” would be a good translation of Col. i. 26. The generations will be found to commence in Gen. ii. 4. “The generations of the heavens and the earth.” The mystery with its promise and blessings is connect with the period “*before* the foundation (or overthrow) of the world” (Eph. i. 4), or as in the passages to which we now turn, “before age-times.” In order to help the reader see the connection between these passages we place them side by side:--

Titus i. 1-3.	II Tim. i. 9-11.
<p>“Paul, a servant of God, but an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God’s elect, and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness, upon hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before <i>age-times</i> (<i>chronōn aiōniōn</i>), but hath <i>manifested</i> in its <i>own peculiar</i> seasons His Word by means of the <i>heralding</i> (<i>kerugmata</i>), wherewith I (‘I’ emphatic) am entrusted, according to the commandment of our Saviour God.”</p>	<p>“Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to His own peculiar purpose and grace, which was given to us in Christ Jesus <i>before age-times</i> (<i>chronōn aiōniōn</i>), but hath now been made <i>manifest</i> by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath shed light on immortal life through the gospel, whereunto I (‘I’ emphatic) have been appointed <i>herald</i> (<i>kerux</i>) and apostle and teacher of the Gentiles.”</p>

With these two passages should be read Rom. xvi. 25:--

“Even the heralding (*kerugma*) of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret during age-times (*chronois aiōniois*).”

By comparing the two passages quoted above, we see the “promise” made before age-times paralleled by the “purpose and grace given us in Christ Jesus before the age-times,” which is none other than Eph. i. 3, 4 in other words. We shall also observe how the period before the age-times is linked with the present dispensation and the apostle’s peculiar and exclusive ministry. “Now” is the interpretation of “its own peculiar seasons.” If we had continued our quotation from II Tim. i. we should have found that immediately the apostle mentioned his peculiar ministry, he spoke of suffering in II Tim. i. 12:--

“For *which cause* also I suffer these things; but I am not ashamed (no, indeed, for he rightly divided the Word, ii. 15). For I know *Him whom* I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to guard my deposit (i.e. the dispensation entrusted to Paul) unto that day.”

This same opposition to the special appointment of Paul is manifest in the way in which he interjects almost an oath in I Tim. ii. 6, 7:--

“Who gave Himself on behalf of all, to be testified in its *own peculiar seasons*, whereunto I (‘I’ emphatic) am appointed herald (*kerux*), and apostle (I speak the truth and lie not), a teacher of the Gentiles in *faith and truth*.”

Here again it is manifest that the apostle means much more than that he was merely “one of the twelve,” &c. The last words, veiled in the A.V. by the rendering “faith and verity,” link this passage again with Titus i. 1-3, for there we read of the apostle’s commission as being connected with the *faith* of God’s elect, and the knowledge of the *truth*. The opposition to Paul’s threefold office of herald, apostle, and teacher of the Gentiles, led to the denial of the truth of the mystery, as will be observed in the following passages:--

“All they which are in Asia have *turned away* from ME” (II Tim. i. 15).
“Some shall depart from the *faith*” (I Tim. iv. 1).
“Some have erred concerning the *faith*” (I Tim. vi. 21).
“Who concerning the *truth* have erred” (II Tim. ii. 18).
“They shall turn away their ears from the *truth*” (II Tim. iv. 4).

Among the means that satan employed to lead away from this faith and truth were the “profane and vain babblings” of I Tim. vi. 20, 21; II Tim. iii. 16, 18, 23. In I Tim. i. 4 we read:--

“Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies (cf. Titus i. 10, 14 ‘Jewish,’ and I Tim. i. 7 ‘teachers of law’) which minister arguments rather than (further) a *dispensation of God* which is in (the sphere, not law, nor Jewish fables, but of) *faith*.”

Those who err concerning *the truth*, overturn *the faith* (II Tim. ii. 18). Those who are ever learning and never able to come to a knowledge of *the truth*, these also are disapproved concerning *the faith* (II Tim. iii. 7, 8). Paul urges upon Timothy to “fight the good fight of *the faith*” (I Tim. vi. 12), and to “rightly divide the Word of *truth*” (II Tim. ii. 15), and he could add, “I have contested the good contest. . . . I have kept *the faith*” (II Tim. iv. 7). It is instructive to compare the opening verses of I and II Timothy and Titus:--

“Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by command of God our Saviour, and Christ Jesus our *hope*” (I Tim. i.).
“Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, according to the *promise of life* in Christ Jesus” (II Tim. i.).
“Paul, a servant of God, but an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God’s elect, and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness; upon *hope of eternal life*, which God, who cannot lie, *promised* before age-times” (Titus i.).

All these passages go to show the peculiarly exclusive character of Paul’s commission, and of this present dispensation. Herein lies the reason why the god of this age keeps God’s children busy with the sermon on the mount, the Acts of the Apostles, the gospel of the kingdom even, rather than allow them to realize the truth, the faith, *the* teacher, and *the* dispensation which concerns them so vitally.

We trust that the writer and those associated with him are ready to be misunderstood, misrepresented, forsaken and despised even by the Lord’s dear children, if they can only be instrumental in leading others to see “what is the dispensation of the mystery,” “what

is the hope of His calling,” and to enable them to step out of the bondage of man into the glory and the liberty of the dispensation of grace. While all Scripture is profitable, nothing can make up the loss which we shall sustain, and the harm we shall do, if we dare to be “ashamed of the testimony of the Lord and of Paul His prisoner.” There is much to be said, but we must leave it until a future article. Meanwhile, let us seek grace to “know the things which are freely given us of God.”

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Does “particular redemption” exhaust the sacrifice of Christ? pp. 55-58

Who among us can claim to have pierced the veil that hangs over the fateful past? “The secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong unto us.” Though Scripture is silent respecting many aspects of this tremendous question, there are some phases which are revealed, and they are of greatest importance to us. John viii. 44 declares that the devil was a murderer from the beginning. He it was who deceived Eve into sin, and involved our first parents in far-reaching ruin. Side by side with this we are emphatically told that Christ took upon Himself the likeness of sinful flesh, “in order that He might *destroy* him that had the power of death, that is, the devil” (Heb. ii. 14). And again, “The devil sinneth from the beginning; for this purpose was the Son of God manifested, in order that He might *undo* the *works* of the devil” (I John iii. 8).

The work of Calvary included, among other objects, the *destruction* of the devil, and the *undoing* of his works. The Lord Jesus, as He bowed His blessed head and died, said, “It is finished.” All that he came to do had been accomplished, and even though time were to run its course before the final and complete fruition of His work, we accept the Word of truth, and believe that He did virtually destroy the devil and undo his works “through death.” If our theology does not allow of this, so much the worse for our theology. Turning to Rom. viii. 20, 21, we read:--

“For unto vanity hath creation been made subject. Not by choice, but by reason of Him who made it subject, upon hope that creation itself also shall be freed from the bondage of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the sons of God.”

This passage refers back to Gen. iii. 17, 18, and forward to Rev. xxi. 1-5 and xxii. 3, “Cursed is the ground for thy sake.” “No curse shall be any more.” Literally it is, “And every curse shall be no more.” Here, truly, we see the undoing of the works of the devil.

Turning now to Rom. v. we have further light on this great question. Verses 1-11 lead us on to the love of God which surpasses the highest flights of human love. It was not for “just” ones, or “good” ones that Christ died. God commendeth His love in that whilst we were *yet* without strength, ungodly, sinners, and enemies, Christ died for us (Rom. v. 6-10). But this does not exhaust the love of God; there is a “much more.”

“*Much more* then, having now been declared righteous by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, being enemies, we were reconciled unto God through the death of His Son, *much more*, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life” (Rom. v. 9, 10).

“But not as the offence is the act of free grace. For if by the offence of the *one* the many died, *much more* the grace of God, and the gift by grace, of the *one* man, Jesus Christ, superabounded unto the many.” “Where sin abounded, grace did superabound” (Rom. v. 15, 20).

It will be observed that although there is a marked division v. 12, yet the succeeding verses are connected with the earlier theme, the *much more*, the *superabounding* grace and love of God. The question before us as to the cause of the permission of evil, and as to the federal headship of Adam, receives a partial answer as we consider verse 12. This verse is not isolated or disconnected from verse 11, but is most definitely linked to it by the word “therefore” (Greek *dia touto*==”because of this”). Because of what? The preceding verses have been emphasizing the great love of God and the reconciliation. Scripture would have us link the entrance of sin, the passing through of the guilt and penalty of *one man’s one sin* to the many, with the superabounding *love* of God, and tells us that Adam was a type of the *coming One* (verse 14). Verses 13-17 are parenthetical, dealing with the difference observable between the act of judgment and the act of grace. Verse 18 resumes the statement of verse 12, and verse 19 furnishes us with the real answer to the introductory words “because of this.”

“Hence then as through *one* offence (the sentence was) unto all men unto condemnation, so also through *one* righteousness (the decree of grace was) unto all men unto justification of life. For just as through the disobedience of the one man, the many were constituted sinners, so also through the obedience of the one, the many shall be constituted righteous.”

There are in these verses some statements which are hard for us to accept who have been trained in the traditions of men. Supposing we had no theological views, supposing we received God’s word as little children, how should we understand Romans v.? We should see first of all that the sin and ruin of Adam and his race were somehow connected with God’s final purpose of reconciliation. We should believe, moreover, that when God says “all men” in verse 12, He means “all men” without exception. And further on when we read in verse 18 “all men,” we shall believe the same words in the same verse (linked as they are by the terms of comparison “as” and “so”) to mean the same identically. It will be seen that in verse 18 “all men” are mentioned, while in verse 19 “the many” are found instead. Here is a difference, what does it mean?

In verse 18 “all men” are “condemned.”

In verse 19 “the many” are “constituted sinners.”

In verse 18 “all men” are given “a justification of life.”

In verse 19 “the many” are “constituted righteous.”

Verse 17 also differs from verse 18, but agrees more with verse 19. “Through the offence of one, death *reigned* by the one.” It then says that “those who *receive* the superabounding grace and the free gift of righteousness shall *reign* in life by the one, “Jesus Christ.” In verse 18 “all” without exception are meant, and there is nothing said about “receiving.” In verse 19 “the many” are in view, while only those who “receive” “reign” in verse 17. It does say that “all” in verse 18 “reign in life,” but it does say that they have a “justification of life.” The reader should carefully read Ezek.xxxiv. and xxxvii. in this connection, particularly noticing the emphasis on the word “graves” in xxxvii. 11-14, and the character of those thus raised (xxxvi. 6-12 and 22-38).

We have been far too quick in making a clean sweep of the great majority of men. If orthodox belief is correct, a very small percentage of Adam's children will be constituted righteous, whereas Scripture declares that the "many" shall be so constituted. How many of us have believed and taught that those who stand before the great white throne have no end but the lake of fire, yet Scripture does not so teach. Rev. xx. tells us that all the dead who are not raised at the commencement of the millennium stand before God, and are judged according to their works out of the things written in the books. That is the first step. What their various sentences will be we do not know. We do know that they stand before a righteous Judge who delights in mercy, and will certainly not impose a fraction more than justice demands. *But the judgment according to their works does not decide their eternal destiny.*

Scripture comes down to the individual. Both J. N. Darby and J. R. Rotherham translate correctly, "And if *any one* was not found written in the book of life, *he* was cast into the lake of fire." Instead of the orthodox idea of myriads being cast into the lake of fire, Scripture leads us to see that it is to be an intensely individual matter, depending not upon works, but upon the book of *life*. Do those who are judged according to their works have the justification of life granted them? We ask the question. Readers, maybe, are mentally asking many more. We would not dogmatize here, but we lodge a plea for a closer and fuller study of these tremendous issues. Sin is an intruder. Will it be allowed to mar God's universe for eternity? Many say Yes! What saith the Scripture? Has Christ *undone* the works of the devil? Will God's universe never be really clean again? If not, has not Satan triumphed and Christ failed?

Romans v.

1. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:
2. By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.
3. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;
4. And patience, experience; and experience, hope:
5. And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.
6. For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.
7. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.
8. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.
9. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.
10. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.
11. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.
12. Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:
13. (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.
14. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.
15. But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.
16. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification.
17. For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.)
18. Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.
19. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.
20. Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:
21. That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

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SANCTIFICATION

Its connection with the atonement.

“And the priest shall put of the oil. . . . upon the place of the blood” (Lev. xiv. 28).

pp.9-11

What does Scripture mean by sanctification? We read and hear much about “Sanctification of the Spirit,” of the “Higher Life” and many other expressions. We have “Holiness Meetings,” and “Consecration services,” and we are continually exhorted to “Touch not, taste not, handle not,” until the antichristian “abstaining from meats” (I Tim. iv. 3) seems to be perilously copied.

Again we say, What is sanctification? Is it primarily the sanctity of the believer’s walk, produced by the Holy Spirit in his life by the Word, or is it *first of all* the unqualified perfect possession and blood-bought birthright of every child of God—from the least to the greatest—sanctification wrought by atoning blood? Rome has canonised her “saints,” many believers to-day “make no profession of being saints,” whereas Scripture applies without distinction this wonderful title to *every* redeemed sinner. We give a few out of many passages to illustrate this:--

“To *all* that be in Rome (i.e., all believers), beloved of God, called *saints*” (Rom. i. 7).

“Unto the *church* of God which is at Corinth, to them that are *sanctified* in Christ Jesus, called *saints*” (I Cor. i. 2).

“To the *saints* which are in Ephesus, and faithful ones in Christ Jesus” (Eph. i. 1).

We find next that sanctification, like salvation, is connected with the unalterable, irreversible purpose of electing grace: “He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be *holy* and *without blame* before Him” (Eph. i. 4).

A reference to Eph. v. 27 and Col. i. 22 will show that this purpose has been fully established by the work of Christ.

“That He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be *holy* and *without blemish*.”

“In the body of His flesh through *death* to present you *holy* and *unblameable* and *unreproveable* in His sight.”

Thus it will be seen that the death of Christ procures this wondrous blessing of sanctification, unto which we were chosen before the foundation of the world. In the next scripture it will be seen that the sanctification of the Spirit is directly connected with the blood of Christ, and the Spirit of God NEVER leads to sanctification apart from this.

“Elect according to the foreknowledge of *God the Father*, through sanctification of *the Spirit*, unto obedience and sprinkling of the *blood of Jesus Christ*” (I Pet. i. 2).

This same truth is typically set forth in Lev. xiv. in the cleansing of the leper.

“The priest shall take some of the blood. . . . and put it upon the tip of the right ear. . . . and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot” (v.14).

“The rest of the oil. . . . upon the *blood*”... (v.17).

“The priest shall put the oil. . . . right ear, thumb. . . . great toe. . . . *upon the place of the blood* of the trespass offering” (v.28).

Beware of any so-called sanctification that would apply the OIL without first applying the BLOOD, or would seek to put the OIL on any other place except “*upon the place of the blood.*”

For the benefit of any reader who may not know, the words “saint,” “sanctify,” “holy,” “holiness,” are words from the same root in the original of the New Testament.

We have already referred to I Cor. i., and we turn to it again for further teaching on the subject of sanctification. Verse 29 gives the divine object in the method of salvation. God hath chosen the foolish, the weak, the base, the despised, yea, the things which are not—“That no flesh should glory in His presence.” Verse 31 bears a similar witness, “He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.” Verse 30 comes in between these statements, and reads, “but of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, both righteousness and *sanctification*, and (as well as) redemption.” Christ became unto us sanctification precisely in the same way and degree in which He became unto us righteousness. “He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God *in Him.*” So with sanctification, it is imputed to the believer as absolutely as righteousness is. “If Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory, but not before God.” If the children of God were sanctified by their works, I Cor. i. 31 would be nullified.

The subject of “Progressive Sanctification” is by no means denied by what we have written, any more than the scriptural doctrine of justification by faith means irresponsible living, or that because we are under grace we may continue in sin. What we seek to do is put first things first; to lay the foundation before we build the house. The subject of sanctification is several times referred to in the Epistle to the Hebrews. In chapter x. 10 we read, “By the which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once.”

“*By the which will.*”—What does this mean? We have already seen the pre-determining will of God in the sanctification of the believer, but that is not the thought here. The “which will” makes us look back in the chapter. In verse 9 Christ speaks, “Lo, I come to *do Thy will, O God.*” It is *in (en) the done will* of God--i.e., the obedience of Christ, and *through (dia) the offering* of Christ, that believers are sanctified (see again I Pet. i., “Obedience and sprinkling of blood.”) Their “doing,” and the “presenting of their bodies a living sacrifice,” is the outcome—the fruit of this blessed possession. Verse 14 contains a wonderful truth. “For by one offering He hath *perfected into perpetuity* them that are sanctified;” truly all the glory is the Lord’s.

We must here leave the subject, but shall (D.V.) take it up again in our next paper. Meanwhile, may we, who have died with Christ from the rudiments of the world, hold the Head, remember our completeness *in Him*, set our affections on things above where Christ is, and leave the doctrines and commandments of men, the touch not, taste not, handle not satisfying of the flesh, and confess that ALL OUR SPRINGS, O GOD, ARE IN THEE.

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SANCTIFICATION

Its connection with the resurrection.

“For I through law, to law died, that I might live
Unto God” (Gal. ii. 19).

pp.15-19

In our last article we sought to lay before the reader passages of Scripture which taught that the sanctification of the believer, like justification, is primarily and foundationally connected with and results from the atoning death of Christ. We now seek to show that the resurrection also has a great bearing upon this important subject.

Many of our readers will at once think of Col. iii. Before quoting from this chapter, however, let us see what leads up to its wonderful teaching. The saints at Colosse, like all the redeemed, were “perfect,” “complete” “made meet,” “presented holy” (i. 12-22, ii. 10). Not only had they died with Christ, and had been buried with Him, but they were risen with Him, quickened together with Him (ii. 12, 13), which meant that “the body of the sins of the flesh” had been “put off,” the divine inference from these two passages being, “Let no man, therefore, judge you in meat, or in drink, or of sabbath days” (ii. 16); “Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels” (ii. 18); “Wherefore if ye *died with Christ* from the religious codes of the world, why as though living in the world are ye subject to ordinances?” “Touch not” (see I Cor. viii. 1 for meaning, and compare the same element in the false holiness of the apostasy in the last days of I Tim. iv. 3), “taste not, handle not” (Col. ii. 20, 21).

Here is sufficient to point the contrast between holiness according to God, and holiness according to man. True holiness is only possible in the power of resurrection. The saved sinner looks back to the cross and sees Christ dying in his stead, and says, “I died there too.” He looks up to the right hand of God where Christ sitteth, and says, “I have been raised together with Him.” This is the argument of Col. ii. and iii.:-

“If ye, then, were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things *on the earth* (cf. Phil. iii. 19, 20). For ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory. Mortify, therefore, your members which are *upon the earth*” (Col. iii. 1-5).

In Col. ii. 23 we have the “neglecting of the body” “to the satisfying of the flesh.” This comprises all the “will-worship and humility” of Rome, with its fastings, penances, and other inventions for the manufacture of a creature holiness, right down to the Holiness Conventions that would gain holiness by rules and resolutions. In direct contrast to the “neglecting of the body” in the wrong sense, we have in Col. iii. 5 the “mortifying of the members” in the scriptural sense as being a direct result of being raised with Christ and being occupied with Him. Our *life* is there; our death here. The word translated “mortify” occurs only in two other passages in the New Testament:--

“And without being weakened in faith, he considered his own body now *as good as dead*” (Rom. iv. 19, R.V.).

“Wherefore also there sprang from one, and him *as good as dead*, so many as the stars” (Heb. ix. 12).

This is the lesson in Col. iii. Just as Abraham, we also are to see by faith that our sinful selves are *as good as dead*. To believe God’s verdict that *we died with Christ* from the law of God as a means of justification, from all works of the flesh as a means of sanctification, and from all the rudiments, commandments, and doctrines of men. Instead of the word “mortify” countenancing Romish teaching, it teaches just the opposite. As we feed the new nature we starve the old. As by faith we walk in the power of the “new man,” which has created in true holiness, we shall “put off the old man with his deeds.” Apart from the risen Saviour all sanctification is of the flesh, and is “put on” in a far different sense than that meant by the Scripture.

Some may have observed in a sheltered spot a tree covered with dead leaves, having gone through the winter without actually dropping them to the ground, but when the returning spring forces the new life through the branches, the old leaves must go, being removed by the power of the life within; so to live in the light of Col. iii. 1-4 will of itself bring about the “mortifying” of verse 5. A glance at verses 5-17 of this chapter will show that the believer is called upon to “walk worthily,” but verses 1-4 come first, and as the other side of the question is that which appears most prominent in the sermons and literature of to-day, we seek to give prominence to the foundation of all holiness, trusting that then we may build something more acceptable to God. In the Pentateuch we read of “strange incense” and “strange fire.” Every time the believer forgets the import of the words “accepted *in the Beloved*,” every time he is prompted to lean on something apart from Christ, he is preparing “strange incense” which cannot please God.

Sanctification includes consecration, for resurrection life is pre-eminently a life unto God. How many times have we reviewed our past and mourned that we have not lived unto God? How many times have we resolved to keep down the flesh and “yield ourselves” to God? How many times have we failed? If one may speak for many, we know what a miserable failure it has always been. Let us, therefore, see whether Scripture does not give some surer way of living unto God than we have hitherto discovered.

Of Christ it is written, “For in that He died, He died unto sin once; but in that He liveth (i.e. in resurrection), He *liveth unto God*” (Rom. vi. 10). Of the believer, it

continues, “Likewise *reckon* ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but *alive unto God* through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. vi. 11). The power, then, to live unto God comes through believing implicitly the wonderful fulness of the redemptive work of Christ. It is not *trying*, but reckoning as God has reckoned, and acting accordingly.

“Whether we live we *live unto the Lord*” (Rom. xiv. 8).

This is connected with Christ’s resurrection in verse 9, and with the futility of the judgment of the others upon such an one with respect to “eating” and “observing days,” &c., and all other impositions of men.

“Judging this, that if one on behalf of all died also.”

“He died on behalf of all, with the object that those who live (i.e. in resurrection life) should henceforth not live unto themselves, but *unto Him* who died for them and rose again. Wherefore henceforth know we no man according to the flesh. . . . If any man be in Christ, there is a new creation; old things did pass away; behold, there have come into being new things” (II Cor. v. 14-17).

“For I through law, to law died, with the object that I might *live unto God*; with *Christ* I have been crucified, but I live; yet not I, but there liveth in me *Christ*” (Gal. ii. 19, 20).

These passages of the Word speak more plainly than any comment we can give; life unto God (consecration, sanctification) is found in the sphere of resurrection with Christ.

Rom. vi. 1 commences with the awful question of one who imagines that “free grace” means license. We do not doubt that some who read these pages will likewise question our doctrine, and say it is “dangerous.” What answer does the apostle make to the libertine? Does he water down his strong statements? *No*; he applies them with full force. “How shall we that *died* to sin *live* any longer therein?” It is a matter nothing short of life and death. The question goes deeper, however, in verse 15. “Shall we sin *because* we are not under law, but under grace?” The answer is summarized in verse 22, “But now being made *free* from sin, and become servants to God, *ye have your fruit unto holiness*, and the end everlasting life” (see Col. iii. 3, 4). With this compare verse 13, “Yield yourselves *unto God*, as those that are *alive from the dead*, and your members as instruments of righteousness *unto God*.”

The epistle to the Galatians deals with the same subject. Under law, and in the sphere of the flesh, means bondage, and seeking to be made perfect according to the flesh (Gal. iii. 2, 3; iv. 3-5, 9; v. 1-3). Under grace means liberty and perfection in Christ alone. Again the apostle has to meet those who abuse this liberty. He says, “Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free. . . . For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty,” and then adds:--

“Only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself” (Gal. v. 13, 14).

We have already seen that resurrection life is the answer to the question, How may I find power to live unto God? We see here that in this same blessed sphere we are at liberty to fulfil our duties one to another. We will conclude by a reference to Eph. ii.

There we have the dead sinner raised to life—a new creation. Verse 10 tells us that “we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus upon good works (i.e. Christ’s good works, not ours, form the basis), which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them.” We are to walk in the works and merits of Christ. We are to work *out* that which has been worked *in*; or, as Heb. xiii. 21 puts it, “Make you perfect in every good work to *do* His will, *doing* in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight.”

May the fact of a risen Saviour at the right hand of God, a life hid with Christ, a glorified Head in heaven, our legal death with Christ here, our position as being “raised together, and made to sit together in heavenly places” become more and more to us; and *so* will the dead leaves and deadly ordinances of men fall and fade, leaving us standing and walking by faith, not by sight, looking for that blessed hope of which, by grace, may we seek to walk worthy.

I Cor.	8	1	Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.
I Tim.	4	3	Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.
Col.	2	20	Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances,
		21	(Touch not; taste not; handle not;

Phil.	3	19	Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)
		20	For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

Gal.	3	2	This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?
		3	Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?
	4	3	Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world:
		4	But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,
		5	To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.
	5	1	Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.
		2	Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.
		3	For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.

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Sanctification
Its connection with likeness to Christ.
 “As He is” (1st Epistle of John).
pp.22-25

The reader may remember that in our previous articles we have briefly considered sanctification and its connection with the atonement, and sanctification and its connection

with the resurrection. We now propose to consider the teaching of one or two passages in I John which shew (1) absolute, and (2) the progressive or responsible aspect of sanctification.

“*As He is.*”—Christ is the centre of all the purposes of God’s grace. He is the author, the perfecter, the goal. We have seen the connection between resurrection and sanctification in our last paper. Likeness to our risen Lord is the theme before us now, both during our sojourn here, and in that day when we shall be satisfied upon awaking in His likeness.

First let us briefly “consider Him.” “If we walk in the light *as He is* in the light” (I John i. 7). “*He is in the light.*” Verse 5 declares that “God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.” In the full blaze of the Shekinah glory our Saviour stands. Not only is He there by the right of His own Godhead, but He is there because of the perfectness of His atoning work. Nothing but absolute righteousness and perfect holiness could endure the light in which our great advocate stands. Yet, fellow-believer, weak and failing as we may be in ourselves, *that and nothing less* is our position in Christ.

Chapter ii. 29 tells us that “He is righteous”; iii. 3 tells us “He is pure,” emphasizing that which is involved in the statement quoted above—“He is in the light.” I John i. 7 commences with a “But if”; a condition is therefore attached. Before we consider the conditional aspect, let us turn to the verses that reveal the absolute nature of the believer’s sanctification “in Christ.”

“In this hath been perfected the love with us, in order that boldness we may have in the day of judgment, that *as He is* we also are (though) in this world” (I John iv. 17).

God’s love to us is the subject under consideration in the verse. The words translated “in this,” are of constant occurrence in John’s epistle. In this very chapter they are translated “hereby” (v.13), “herein” (v. 10), and “in this” (v.9). To what does the apostle refer when he says “in this” in verse 17? Does he mean that God’s love is perfected in this—that believers shall have boldness in the day of judgment? Yes—and yet no—for this but a part of the glorious goal. We believe the verse should be read as follows;--

“In this is the love with us perfected (in order that we may have boldness in the day of judgment); that *as He is* so are we in this world.”

The love is *perfected in this* that the believer in Christ is *as He is*. God Himself knows no higher goal for eternity than that the believer shall be *as his Lord*, and when these bodies of our humiliation are changed for bodies like unto the glorified Lord, then perfect love will have found its goal. What “grace wherein we stand!” Every believer equally perfect in Christ. The weakest as the strongest, the babe and the full grown, all are equally and altogether complete *in Him*. There are no “ifs” here. This is no more conditional upon our walk and life than is justification. Results will necessarily follow, but let it always be remembered that they *follow*, not come before. He that *is* righteous (in Christ) doeth righteousness (as a result).

“AS HE IS—WE ARE” (I John iv. 17).

AS HE IS—WE SHALL BE” (I John iii. 2).

“We know that when He shall appear, we shall be *like Him*.” Again we deal with that which is absolute. “We *shall* be like Him,” and perfect love will have reached its goal. Can we not better understand the reason why the apostle introduces this marvellous subject with the words, “Behold *what manner* of love!” What is to be the outcome of this glorious position? “Every one that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure.” According to many, possibly among them some who will see this little magazine, certainty means license. They think that it is presumption to “know” that which God has declared. Scripture does not veil the fact that there will always be those who “turn the grace of God into lasciviousness,” but this by no means alters the relationship established between I John iii. 2 and 3. The reasoning of the heart will be, Am I as He is by grace in Christ? Oh, that I may be more like Him in practice. Am I to be like Him in the future? Oh, for grace to be more like Him now.

Keeping I John iv. 17 in mind we turn to I John ii. 5, 6. Again we shall read of God’s love being perfected, but this time dealing with the conditional side of sanctification:--

“But whoso keepeth His Word, in him verily is the *love of God perfected*. In this know we that we *are in Him*. He that saith he abideth in Him ought Himself also to walk, even as He walked.”

Even in this conditional setting the keeping of the Word is a *proof* of our being in Him; not that the keeping of the Word either places us in that blessed sphere, or secures us when we are there. By comparing I John iv. 17 with I John ii. 5, 6, it will be seen that God’s love to us, and our love to God, meet together in the Lord Jesus Christ as their great goal; both point forward to likeness to Him. The believer’s love to God urges him to seek more conformity to the image as its goal, perfect likeness to Christ in resurrection glory. Be it noted that this verse does *not* say, “We ought to be as He is,” but it says, “We ought to walk as He walked.” Many have gone into all kinds of excesses in their endeavour to “walk as He walked,” forgetting that I John i. 7 must be included, and that henceforth we know Christ according to the flesh no longer. I John i. 7 speaks of walking in the light. *This* is how the Lord Jesus always walked whilst here on earth.

In the very presence of God, in the light of the holiest of all; what a position to be found in! what a position to abide in! No creature preparation or perfectness can avail there, in fact, any attempt at such only shows the failure to appreciate the heights of holiness demanded by that brilliant throne. What is our warrant for daring to walk in the light?

“*As He is we are*.”—Is this “sinless perfection?” No! If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves. If we say we have not sinned we make God a liar. It is not by covering up our sins, neither is it by imagining ourselves to have become sinless, that we draw near to the presence of the Lord. No! it is by reason of the wondrous grace that has made us “accepted in the Beloved,” that has made us “meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.” With all our imperfections still upon us, with all our sins of omission and commission, we may draw near to walk in the light. Do we

make little of sin? No! God does not, but He has made provision. It is not our walk or our talk that will ever keep us fit for His holy presence, but “If we walk in the light. . . . the *blood* of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

Such is some small fragment of the teaching of these verses. Let us glorify God by believing His Word, and, seeing that by His grace *we are* (in Christ) *as He is*, and that *as He is we shall be*, let us seek by grace to *walk as He walked*, to walk in the light, to thankfully confess the glorious efficacy of the blood that cleanseth, and to exemplify in some measure the complete sanctification which is ours in Christ Jesus.

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The Dispensation of the Secret. pp. 52-54

When this series of studies was commenced we desired to set forth the wonderful truth contained in the Prison Epistles (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and II Timothy), but we found it necessary to prepare the way by showing the position of the pentecostal dispensation, its kingdom and Abrahamic connections, and the great division that occurred in the dispensational dealings of God recorded in Acts xxviii.

Election and predestination, a choice that antedates all time, and unconditional purpose are at the very threshold of this dispensation (Eph. i.). Why is this? Let us endeavour to place ourselves in the position of the Gentile believers somewhere about A.D. 68-70. Let us suppose that we have been brought out of heathen darkness into light and liberty through the ministry of the apostle Paul. We had heard of that glorious kingdom which was to be set up over all the earth when the Son of God and Son of man should reign upon the throne of David. We had bowed before the teaching that we were but wild olive branches grafted into the true olive tree; that the "Jew first" was the divine order (Rom. i. 16), and that "in that day" not the Gentiles, but Israel, shall be a kingdom of priests. Very willingly we took our appointed place, glad that we Gentiles should find any place of blessing at all. We earnestly joined our prayers with the apostles that Israel might repent, so that the long promised kingdom, with all its blessing, might be set up.

Imagine our consternation when tidings came to us that the apostle Paul had been inspired by God to pronounce the words of judgment written in Isa. vi. upon the apostate nation. How would this affect us? Could the blessings flow to us if the channel were cut off? What was our dispensational position now? Were we still to look for the return of the Lord, and the setting up of the kingdom? None could answer the question, until one day a letter written by the apostle Paul came to our little assembly (the Epistle to the Ephesians). Therein we read no more of *earthly* blessings, or *Abrahamic* promises, but *heavenly*, and a *secret* purpose hitherto unrevealed. How we praised the infinite wisdom and grace that, out of such apparent failure, could bring forth such a glorious treasure. We did not quibble about predestination; it was the word of our salvation. We did not seek to explain away "chosen in Him before the foundation of the world," for it answered all our misgivings as to our relationship with Abraham. We no longer looked forward to "inheriting the earth," nor to the "heavenly country," nor to the "city that *cometh down out of heaven*," for we read that we were "blessed with *spiritual blessings in the heavens in Christ*, according as He chose us in Him *before* the foundation of the world" (Eph. i. 3, 4). "Who *blessed* us. . . according as He *chose* us."

This is the key to all favour in this dispensation of grace. In whom did He choose us? In Abraham? No! *In Christ*. Abraham is never mentioned by Paul after Acts xxviii. When did He choose us? *Since* the foundation of the world? No! *Before*. What are the blessings? Are they connected with an earthly kingdom? No! They are "*all spiritual*

blessings,” and all “*in the heavenlies.*” Before the apostle could unfold the subject of the great mystery and the truth of the one body, he must first reassure his hearers that their case was not so hopeless as they may have imagined. He had to tell them that although *Scripture itself* was silent as to any hope of blessing apart from Israel, yet that upon Israel’s defection the Lord had revealed a purpose of grace hitherto kept secret, that these things were but the working out of His eternal purpose.

Two mysteries in particular are referred to in Eph. iii. 2-9, viz.:--

1. The mystery of *Christ*.
2. The mystery of the *present dispensation*,

the one being more completely revealed than ever before; the other being revealed for the first time in the history of man. The one, to many apostles and prophets, the other, to one - Paul. Care is required in reading the passage which contains these statement, otherwise we shall be making Scripture contradict itself. We set out the scriptures in their harmony and structure, showing the difference there is between the mystery concerning Christ and His heavenly glories, and the mystery concerning the present dispensation.

“If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward, how that by revelation He made known unto me the mystery,
(as I wrote afore in a few words (viz. Eph. i. and ii.), whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ, which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men as it is now revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit),
that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs and fellow-members of the same body, and fellow-partakers of His promise in Christ by the gospel whereof I was made a minister.”

The structure of the passage will help to show this distinction even more clearly.

- A | 2. The *dispensation* of the grace of God.
- B | 3. The *mystery* made known to Paul.
- C | a | 4. The *mystery* of Christ.
- b | 5. Apostles the ministers (plural).
- C | a / 6. The *mystery* of the dispensation.
- b | 7. Paul the minister (singular).
- B | 8. The *mystery* made known by Paul.
- A | 9. The *dispensation* of the mystery (R.V.).

Vitally connected with the “mystery of Christ,” which involves His ascension *far above* all principalities and powers, is the mystery of the present dispensation, which gives us the standing and hope of believers now. Eph. iii. 6 contains a condensed summary of the essential elements of the “dispensation of the grace of God,” the “dispensation of the mystery” given to Paul.

Those who have access to the original will not have failed to observe the threefold repetition of the little word *sun*, meaning “together with.” “That the Gentiles should be heirs *together*, and a body *together*, and partakers *together* of His promises in Christ through the gospel.” One has only to read such passages as Rom. xi. 24, 25; Isa. lxi. 5, 6, &c., to see that Eph. iii. 6 introduced something entirely new. It was no secret that the

Gentiles should be blessed through Christ, but nowhere in the pages of the Old Testament Scriptures is there anything to lead us to believe that a dispensation was reserved by God in which He would bless Gentiles in entire independence of Israel, and bless them together with any Jewish believers on an entirely equal footing, absolutely ignoring all distinctions of circumcision or uncircumcision, dispensing His favours in pure grace, and lifting the whole sphere above the distinctions of flesh or earth to the possession of spiritual blessings in heavenly places, in harmony with a choice and a promise that was made before the disruption of this world's system—a promise made before the age-times.

Eph. iii. 2-9.

2. If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward:
3. How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words,
4. Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)
5. Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;
6. That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:
7. Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.
8. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;
9. And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:

Rom. xi.	<p>24. For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert graffed contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be graffed into their own olive tree?</p> <p>25. For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.</p>
Isa. lxi.	<p>5. And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers.</p> <p>6. But ye shall be named the Priests of the Lord: men shall call you the Ministers of our God: ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves.</p>

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Some differences between the dispensation before Acts xxviii. and that which followed.

*“When that which is PERFECT is come, then
that which is PARTIAL shall be done away” (I Cor. xiii. 10).*

pp. 25-29

In our preceding articles we have been considering various passages of Scripture which tend to show that the present dispensation began when Israel was set aside by the apostle Paul in Acts xxviii., and the Gentiles became peculiarly the objects of grace. In this article we shall endeavour further to demonstrate the difference between the earlier epistles written before Acts xxviii. and those written later. We first of all call attention to the testimony of the inclusion and exclusion of certain words. Christ is never referred to as “Shepherd” by the apostle Paul, and after Acts xxviii. the Lord’s people are not called a “flock,” or referred to as “sheep,” whilst in the Gospels, Acts, Hebrews, and Peter all these titles are used. Israel were, and will yet be, “the sheep of His pasture.”

The following list speaks for itself, the Holy Spirit definitely keeping certain words and phrases within the bounds of the various dispensations.

Expression used.	Before Acts xxviii.	After Acts xxviii.	
	I & II Thess., I & II Cor., Gal., Romans	Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians.	I Tim., II Tim., Titus.
Jew	25	1	-
Israel	14	2	-
Israelite	3	-	-
Abraham	19	-	-
Moses	9	-	-
To baptize	12	-	-
Baptism (<i>baptisma</i>)	1	2	-
Lord’s Supper	1	-	-
The loaf (in connection with the Lord’s Supper)	7	-	-
The cup (in connection with the Lord’s Supper)	7	-	-
Gifts (<i>charisma</i>) (referring to “Gifts of the Spirit”)	9	-	2
Miracles	4	-	-
Tongues	22	-	-
Interpret, interpretation, interpreter	7	-	-
Healing	3	-	-
Prophesying	13	-	-
Prophesy	4	-	2
To circumcise	8	1	-
Circumcision	23	6	-

Many more could be added, but we feel that this list will be sufficient to make it clear that there is an appreciable difference between the economy obtaining from Pentecost to Acts xxviii., and that commencing at the close of Acts xxviii. and still continuing, which is called by Paul “The dispensation of the grace of God to you-ward” (Gentiles).

It will be remembered that in our last paper we found that in I Cor. xii. the one body was explained as being “partial,” in contrast with the “fulness” of Eph. i. 23. Upon examining this subject more closely we shall see that during the pentecostal or transitional period, the essential elements of the one body are found scattered through these earlier epistles, but not gathered together and invested with the new and full meaning, as is the case in Ephesians. The unity of the Spirit, one hope of our calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father. In this wonderful seven-fold unity the triune God is given His place.

In I Cor. xii. 4-6, in connection with the diversities, administrations, and operations of the gifts which formed the basis of the ecclesiastical body of I Cor. xii. 12-27, we read that it is the same *Spirit*, the same *Lord*, and the same *God* who worketh all in all. In verse 13 we read, “For by *one Spirit* are we *baptized* into *one body*.” In I Cor. viii. 6 we read, “Unto us *one God, the Father*. . . . and *one Lord, Jesus Christ*.” In I Cor. xiii. 13 we read, “And now abideth *faith, hope, and love*.” The words printed in italics are the seven wonderful components of the unity of the Spirit, not yet, however, brought together in order, nor invested with their higher meaning.

I Cor. xii.	<p>4. Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.</p> <p>5. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.</p> <p>6. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.</p> <p>12. For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.</p> <p>13. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.</p> <p>14. For the body is not one member, but many.</p> <p>15. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?</p> <p>16. And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?</p> <p>17. If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?</p> <p>18. But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.</p> <p>19. And if they were all one member, where were the body?</p> <p>20. But now are they many members, yet but one body.</p> <p>21. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.</p> <p>22. Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary:</p> <p>23. And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness.</p> <p>24. For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked:</p> <p>25. That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.</p> <p>26. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.</p> <p>27. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.</p>
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Had the nation of Israel repented, and the kingdom would have come as a consequence, these passages would have exactly fitted the prophecy of Zech. xiv. 9, "And the *Lord* shall be King over all the earth; in that day shall there be *one Lord*, and His name *one*." As it is, the kingdom is in abeyance, and instead of one Lord being *King*, He is exalted as Head of the church, His body; not "over all the earth," but "in the heavenlies," for "earthly things" (John iii. 12) are connected with regeneration and the kingdom of Israel.

The one body of I Cor. xii. is *essentially* and *inseparably* connected with gifts. Such gifts as are there described are absent to-day, and it is as foolish to endeavour to regulate an assembly to-day by I Cor. xii., as it would be to try to navigate a sailing-ship with the regulations and orders suitable for a steamship.

"All these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will, *for as* the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also the Christ; *for* by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body. . . . and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."

The fact that *all* had a gift is compared to a body having *many* and *varied* members, yet *all* composing one body. The words, "all made to drink into one Spirit," refer to the promise of John vii. 38, 39:--

"He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water; but this He spake of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive, for the Holy Ghost was not yet (received), because that Jesus was not yet glorified" (compare Mark 16:14-20; Acts 2:33).

It seems hardly possible that an intelligent Christian should teach that "drinking into *one Spirit*" meant partaking of the Lord's Supper, but we mention it here in order that any reader who may have received this interpretation may give the passage a prayerful and contextual re-consideration.

A question arising out of what we have been considering is, Does the term "The baptism of the Spirit" of the pentecostal dispensation mean the same as the baptism of Eph.4? We sometimes meet a Christian who tells us that he has "received the baptism of the Holy Ghost," or that he is "praying for the second blessing." "Second blessings" are delusions, resulting from undispensational views. The believers' charter *commences* (Eph. i. 3) with the fact that God "*hath* blessed us with *all* spiritual blessings." The book of the Acts gives us very clear data as to what the baptism of the Spirit meant in pentecostal times. Acts i. 5 and xi. 14-16 make it quite clear as to what the term refers:--

"And began to *speak* with other tongues" (Acts 2:1-4).
"When Simon *saw*. . . . the Holy Ghost was given" (Acts 8:18).
"They *heard* them speak with tongues" (Acts 10:44-46).
"They *spoke* with tongues and prophesied" (Acts 19:6).

Almost without exception miraculous gifts followed the baptism of the Spirit, but such is nowhere hinted in the epistles written *after* Acts xxviii. Ministering the spirit and working miracles is connected with *justifying faith* in Gal. iii. 5,6. *Is it so now?* The one

baptism of I Cor. xii. is *essentially* connected with miracles and supernatural gifts. *Is it so now?* Do members of the one body possess the power to prophesy, speak with tongues, take up serpents, and drink deadly things unhurt? *Why not?* Do Christians *really* believe the words to be true of themselves; “They shall *lay hands* on the sick, and they shall recover?”

The baptism of the Spirit in pentecostal times was subsequent to salvation, often by the space of days, weeks and months, whereas Eph. i. 13, 14 says that “we are sealed *upon believing* with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the earnest of our inheritance.” Eph. ii. 15, 16 links the one body with Calvary; “For to make in Himself of twain *one new man.*” “That He might reconcile both unto God in *one body* by the cross.” When the Holy Spirit quickens a dead sinner into life, He *at the same moment* links him for ever *with Christ.* This union with the risen Saviour makes the believer a member of the *one body,* and neither the laying on of hands can confer, nor the excommunication of men take away this blessed grace-given position. This difference between the baptism of the Spirit before and after Acts xxviii needs careful consideration. The one body of I Cor. xii was evidenced by “signs and wonders.” The unity of the Spirit is without any such evidence; it is among the things “not seen” yet “eternal,” which are seen by faith.

Some have made havoc of truth by the failure to realize that the one body of Eph. iv. is not the same as I Cor. xii. If we look for corporate unity on earth we shall be sadly disappointed, but if we obey the Word of truth, and “endeavour to *keep* the unity of the Spirit,” we may expect blessing as a result.

Jn. iii. 12	If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?
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Acts i. 5	For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.
Acts xi.	14. Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved. 15. And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning. 16. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.

Mark	16		14. Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen. 15. And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. 16. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. 17. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; 18. They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. 19. So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. 20. And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.
Acts	2	33	Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the Promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

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The Word was God. pp. 42-46

We propose giving a few words of explanation upon the first verses of the Gospel of John, because upon several occasions, and in different places, friends have asked our opinion about a very subtle interpretation which is being promulgated by a certain section of Christendom, and which leads the reader to think that the inspired original tells us that the *Word was a God!* We do not desire to leave the simple exposition of the Scriptures for declamatory utterances; we would rather allow the truth to come with its own convincing force, but we cannot refrain from remarking that practically every heresy that has arisen in the history of the church, may be found ultimately, if not immediately, to be an attack upon the inspiration of the Scriptures, or the person and work of Christ.

The Edition of the N.T. which contains this evil has both the Greek text and the translation side by side, and we have found it to be our repeated experience, that when pressed upon the point, those who use this edition, and so solemnly and impressively refer to the Greek, confess that they do not understand it, but have swallowed the interpretation of the passage as being truth, and with all the brazenness of ignorance brandish the magic reference to the “inspired original” to degrade Him Who is the glory of that blessed book. We will, however, take a leaf out of their book—so far as method is concerned—by setting the Greek original and literal translation side by side. For the benefit of those who are not conversant with the Greek, we will transliterate the words into English characters, using *e* for *Eta* and *ō* for *Omega*, and (*i*) for *Iōta* subscript.

1. <i>En arche (i) en ho logos kai ho logos en pros ton Theon kai Theos en ho logos.</i>	1. In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with the God and God was the Word.
2. <i>Houtos en en arche (i) pros ton Theon.</i>	2. The same was in the beginning with the God.
3. <i>Panta di'autou egeneto, kai choris autou egeneto oude en, ho gegonen.</i>	3. All things through Him became, and without Him became not one thing, which has become.

The argument brought forward in the interpretation under consideration rests largely upon the use and omission of the Greek article. The Greek article corresponds with our English “the,” and in its varied cases to “of the,” “to the,” &c. The reader will easily follow the order of the words, *ho logos* is “the Word.” When, however, a noun is in the accusative or objective case, the article is declined in sympathy with the noun, and so *ho logos* would become *ton logon*. Now as the word *Theos* (God) is a similar word to *logos*, the last two words in the third line *ton Theon*, are simply *ho Theos* in the accusative case. We mention this not to try to teach Greek, but to prevent misunderstanding on the part of

those who may, *Berean-like*, search out these things, but who may not be possessed of the necessary knowledge to commence their studies. The reader will see that, whilst we have the article before the word “God” in the third line, it is omitted in the “and *the* God,” but “and God.” Thus we may read the sentence:--

The Word was God, or, God was the Word.

The use of the Article, however, determines the true subject of the *sentence*, hence we see that in lines 1 and 4 *ho logos*—“the Word”—is the subject. Now, seeing that we know which is the subject of the sentence, we need not be so careful to place it at the beginning; therefore we find that emphasis is laid upon the subject, “the Word,” by the figure of speech called *Hyperbaton*. This figure is aptly named, because the word means “a stepping over,” and by placing a word out of position renders it more conspicuous. Hence in reading the passage we must emphasize like this—“in the beginning was THE WORD, and God THE WORD was.” No amount of explanation which we may give can have any weight unless it can be seen to be in harmony with the Scriptures of truth, and so we will take the reader to other passages, rather than give cut and dried grammatical rules.

If any of our readers are confronted with one of these exponents of the “Greek original” whose interpretation we are considering, they might ask for an evidence of consistency by reading the translation given of another verse in the self-same chapter, viz., verse 14. If *kai Theos en ho logos* means “and the Word was A GOD,” why should not *kai ho logos sarx egeneto* be translated, “and the Word became A flesh?” Such a translation is manifestly absurd, yet it is based upon precisely the same argument, the absence of the article before the word flesh. We might multiply instances. Does *ho Theos agape estin* mean “The God is A love?”

A moment’s reflection will enable any reader to see the truth of the grammatical rule, that the article is employed to *demonstrate*, whilst its omission *describes*. “*The* God” points out the subject of the sentence, “is love” describes His essence. So “the Word became flesh” describes the sphere into which the Word came, namely flesh. So in John i. 1, “*the* Word” (*demonstrative*) was, so far as His essence is concerned, “God” (*descriptive*). Thus we read the two passages together:--

The Word WAS GOD. The Word BECAME FLESH.

In each case the absence of the article *describes*, whilst the change in the verb tells that in the first instance the condition was one of essential character, “was” (verb “to be”); the other that which He assumed when the fulness of time came, “He became.” Before we deal more fully with these two verbs, there is one more verse in the first chapter that claims our attention. “No one hath seen God at any time” (verse 18). Here again the word *Theos* is without the article, and if treated as in the first verse would be rendered, “No one hath seen A God at any time!” God in His essence no one hath seen, yet such passages as Gen. xxxii. 24-32; Josh. v. 13-15; Ezek. i. 26-28, &c., are inspired truth. If the first verse had read, “the Word was the God,” we should have to exclude both the

Father and the Spirit from the Godhead, for the words being thus placed in apposition would have become exclusive.

We have already mentioned the importance of noting the distinction between the verb “to be” and the verb “to become.” In verses 1 and 2 we have the verb “to be” (*en*), meaning “was,” but in verse 3 we have the verb “to become” (*egeneto*), meaning “became.” The English obscures this distinction, but a consideration of the use of these two verbs in one or two other passages will help us to see how complete the testimony is that “the Word was God.”

In verse 17 we read, “The law through Moses was given (*edothe*), but grace and truth became (*egeneto*) through Jesus Christ.” Thus by a comparison of verse 3 and 17 we find that both in the creation of the universe, and in the spiritual sphere of grace and truth, all things “were made,” or “became,” through Him. When the incarnation is the subject, this same verb is used, the Word *became flesh*; but not so when speaking of the essential deity of the Word—the Word WAS God. He BECAME flesh. This distinction is clearly seen in John viii. 58, *Prin Abraam genesthai, ego eimi*. “Before Abram became (or was made), I, I am.” If the Lord merely intended to say that He had an existence before Abram, He would surely have said, “Before Abram was made, I *was*.” But no, in full consciousness of His Godhead, He says, “I AM.” The words are further emphasized by the pronoun *ego*. The Greek verb carries the pronoun with it; thus *eimi* means “I am.” Hence, if we add *ego* we must read, “I am,” or “I, I am.” Those who can refer to the Septuagint will find further suggestive thought by comparing the words *Ego eimi ho on* of Exod. iii. 14 with John viii. 58, and iii. 13.

Space will not allow our going further with this subject. Abundant evidence is in the Scriptures to disprove on the one hand the statement that “the Word was *a* God,” while everywhere it joyfully renders to the Son the same homage as to the Father, confessing that He is the true God and eternal life. It will be observed that we have kept to the task of expounding the Scriptures, and not attempted to “search out God unto perfection.” It is not our task to endeavour to be wise above that which is written. Mathematics or philosophy can render no tangible illustration or confirmation of the mystery of the Godhead. Suffice it for us that we believe that there is one God, and that there is revealed for our faith the transcendent fact, that, whilst we own one God, we are also called upon to worship God the Father, through our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, as we are quickened and led by God the Holy Spirit.

May we be kept faithful to the Lord and His truth, and believe and rejoice in the fact that the Word who was made flesh and tabernacled among us, was nevertheless the One of whom it is written, THE WORD WAS GOD.

<p>Gen. xxxii.</p> <p>Josh. v.</p> <p>Ezek. i.</p>	<p>24. And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day.</p> <p>25. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him.</p> <p>26. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.</p> <p>27. And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob.</p> <p>28. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.</p> <p>29. And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there.</p> <p>30. And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.</p> <p>31. And as he passed over Penuel the sun rose upon him, and he halted upon his thigh.</p> <p>32. Therefore the children of Israel eat not of the sinew which shrank, which is upon the hollow of the thigh, unto this day: because he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh in the sinew that shrank.</p> <p>13. And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?</p> <p>14. And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the Lord am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant?</p> <p>15. And the captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so.</p> <p>26. And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it.</p> <p>27. And I saw as the colour of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it, from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about.</p> <p>28. As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake.</p>
<p>Ex. iii. 14</p> <p>John viii. 58</p> <p>John iii. 13</p>	<p>And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.</p> <p>Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.</p> <p>And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.</p>

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Tracts for believers. pp. 58-60

Who inspired the Scriptures?

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (II Tim. iii. 16).

How should we esteem the authority of the Bible?

“Not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the Word of God” (I Thess. ii. 13).

Is there any special command with respect to the Scriptures?

Yes! “Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, *rightly dividing* the Word of truth” (II Tim. ii. 15).

What does this term “rightly dividing” involve and mean?

It tells us that Scripture must be interpreted in strict accordance with its dispensational setting. If a passage speaks of the “kingdom of heaven,” of “Israel,” or “Jerusalem,” we must not interpret it as of the “church which is His body.”

What do you mean by the term “dispensational”?

A dispensation is a particular economy or administration of God’s dealings with any particular people, having its own peculiar and distinctive characteristics. For example, there was a dispensation of law under Moses; a dispensation of miraculous gifts during Pentecost. To-day we are in a dispensation of grace, and of the mystery (see Eph. iii.). The right division of truth with regard to the various dispensations is called “dispensational truth”.

When do you believe this dispensation began?

After Acts xxviii. 25-28, when Israel as a nation was set aside.

But the majority of believers teach that the “church began at Pentecost”?

A church began at Pentecost, which differed in many respects from every preceding church, or assembly, but “the church which is His body” is entirely different from this and all else. Peter’s sermon in Acts ii. is largely an exposition of the prophets Joel, and there is certainly nothing about the body of Christ in Joel. The book of the Acts is a *continuation* of the witness concerning the kingdom of heaven (see use of the word “began” in Acts i. 1, and Heb. ii. 3,4). The same people are addressed, the same key-word of “Repent” is heard, and the same miraculous accompaniments as are recorded in Matt. x. 1-10 are there. These continue right to the end of the book. Paul there is inspired to quote Isa. vi. 9 and 10 to the representatives of the Jews of the dispersion, and then to turn to the Gentiles.

Did not Christ come to found the church?

No! He came to save His people from their sins, and to proclaim the near advent of the kingdom, the kingdom promise to David. In Rom. xv. 8 we read, "Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers," which is in harmony with Matt. x. 5, 6 and xv. 24, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." His first ministerial words were, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. iv. 17).

Is there any distinctive teaching in Paul's epistles written after the period you believe terminated the past dispensation?

In Eph. iii. 9 Paul speaks of "The dispensation of the mystery, which from all the ages had been hid in God." The reader should consider Eph. iii. 2-9, Col. i. 25, 26 (R.V.).

Does Paul claim to be the special and exclusive apostle of this present dispensation?

Associated with Paul were others who were called apostles, an Order distinct from the Twelve (see I Cor. xv.5-8 and I Thess. ii.6), which includes Timothy and Silvanus.

Space forbids quotations, but a reference to Titus i. 1-3; II Tim. i. 1; ii. 7; II Tim. i. 9, 10, 11-13; ii. 2-8; iv. 17 and Rom. xvi. 25 will show by the recurrence of such expressions as "*my* gospel," &c., that the apostle does claim in a peculiar manner the dispensation of the grace of God to the Gentiles (see Eph. iii. 2).

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The Wages of Sin. pp. 102-107

In a previous article we sought to exhibit the meaning of the words commonly translated “for ever” and “eternal” in our A.V., and this naturally leads us on to a consideration of the nature of the punishment of the unsaved. It is held by many that “eternal conscious suffering” is a fundamental, and many have been put out of meetings for being what is called “non-eternity” men. A most important reason why we should be convinced of this matter is the awful libel it must be on the name of God should it turn out to be untrue.

If we have taught that God will punish the unsaved throughout the never-ending ages of eternity, that after millions of years spent in writhing and cursing, the God of righteous judgment has only just commenced the dreadful work of punishment on these unhappy creatures, and finally it should prove to be but the tradition of men, what a shameful calumny will be found in our mouths against the God of all grace! If eternal conscious suffering is God’s truth, we can never hold our peace, but must use every possible means to bring before our hearers the horrible doom that awaits the impenitent.

Our minds cannot conceive what eternal torment can mean. Orthodoxy has no room in its dreadful creed for the exercise of the slightest pity. The foul murderer and the simplest child, the ignorant and the debased, all alike are heaped into its horrid “Hell”; all alike are to be placed upon the rack *forever*. We shudder when we gaze upon the instruments of cruelty of bygone days, but they are nothing, absolutely nothing, when compared to the exquisite tortures reserved by the orthodox believers’ God for all the unsaved. It makes one sicken to think of these things; its effect upon those who really believe it may be gathered from such a statement made by Queen Mary years ago:--

“As the souls of heretics are hereafter to be eternally burning in Hell, there can be nothing more proper than for me to imitate the divine vengeance by burning them on earth” (Bishop Burnett).

Of course, she ignored the words, “vengeance is Mine, saith the Lord,” but nevertheless her creed compelled her deed. Dr. Pettingell quotes from Hopkins’ Works, Vol. II., and gives the following comment upon the “smoke of their torment”:-

“This display of the divine character and glory will be *most entertaining*, and give the highest pleasure to those who love God, and raise their *happiness* to ineffable heights.”

Of course, if this is what God will do, His saints must of necessity rejoice therein. He further says that should this fearful scene of torment and unutterable agony

“cease, and this fire be extinguished, it would in a great measure *obscure the light of heaven*, and put an end to a great part of the *happiness and glory of the blessed!*”

Oh, Lord, is this true? our hearts cry out, shall we be so changed that we shall, unmoved, witness this writhing, suffering mass, nay, witness the tortures of some of our own dear ones with calm enjoyment, giving glory to God, can it be? Is this the truth of God? We have not overstated the conceptions of Hell that have been expressed by some of our leading evangelical preachers. Who among us has not at some time or another read with profit the Works of Dr. Jonathan Edwards, yet he is quoted in a pamphlet before us as saying:--

“Imagine yourself to be cast into a fiery oven or a great furnace. . . . Imagine also that your body were to be there for a quarter of an hour, full of fire, and all the while full of quick sense, what horror would you feel at the endurance of such a furnace, and how long would that quarter of an hour seem to u. O, how then would your heart sink if you knew that you must bear it for ever and ever; that there would be no end, that after millions and millions of ages your torment would be no nearer to an end, and that you never, never should be delivered.”

Some reader may say, Why fill your pages with such revolting things? Because, dear reader, we are going to face the truth, to shut our eyes to nothing, and if eternal conscious suffering is truth, we desire to receive it in all its horror, and all its despair. Confident are we that were we to fill ten thousand pages with the most harrowing descriptions that the human mind could conceive, it would be as nothing in comparison to the dreadful reality of eternal conscious suffering.

What saith the Scriptures concerning this subject? Certain it is that we read the words, “everlasting punishment.” Let us consider this passage; it is found in Matt. xxv. 46, “And these shall go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.” We have quoted from the R.V. because it gives the word eternal in both instances. We are often reminded that the duration of the punishment must be the same as the duration of the life mentioned in the same verse, and to this, of course, we most heartily agree. We know of a Mission where the solemn words were exhibited in large characters, “*Everlasting Punishment.*” This method of treating Scriptures is to say the least unfair; let us have the whole truth. If the everlasting punishment of Matt. xxv. is truth for the present time, so also is the everlasting life of Matt. xxv., and upon the *terms* of Matt. xxv., without any man-made alteration. Who are they that receive everlasting life here, and who everlasting punishment?

“When the Son of man shall come in His glory. . . . then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory, and before Him shall be gathered *all nations.*”

The whole passage relates to the judgment of the nations who are on the earth at the end of the period covered by the great tribulation. The gospel of the grace of God is not in view; the kingdom and eternal life are the portion of those who gave meat and drink, clothing and consolation to the *brethren* of the King. Let us then be consistent; let those who apply the everlasting punishment of Matt. xxv. preach everlasting life upon the conditions laid down in that chapter. If they cannot, where is their warrant for thus picking and choosing in this vital matter? Who told them that the method of punishment mentioned here is to be indiscriminately applied to old and young, moral and immoral, sceptic and heathen, during all time and under all circumstances? The whole thing is a piece of unwarrantable and mischievous mutilation of Scripture at the dictation of the

needs of their own horrible traditions. The very ones who emphasize the eternal punishment of Matt. xxv. are among the first to condemn a gospel of works, and yet such are the terms for obtaining eternal life in the self-same chapter. Are not such guilty of partiality?

We have not finished with this passage, however; let us thrash the matter out. What is this word “punishment”? Does the word mean “torment,” “torture,” “suffering”? Yes, say some, all this and more. The word translated “punishment” is *kolasis*, defined as “restraint” in Dr. Young’s Analytical Concordance, and means literally “cutting off,” as in the pruning of a tree. This meaning of the word is further emphasized by a parallel passage of the Old Testament (Psalm xxxvii. 22):--

<i>Psalm xxxvii. 22.</i>	<i>Matt. xxv. 34, 41, 46.</i>
“Such as be <i>blessed</i> of Him shall <i>inherit</i> the earth; and they that be <i>cursed</i> of Him shall be <i>cut off</i> .”	“Come, ye <i>blessed</i> of My Father, <i>inherit</i> the kingdom. Depart from Me, ye <i>cursed</i> into <i>everlasting punishment</i> ” (<i>cutting off</i>).

There are not a few who *tell* us that the passage should read everlasting punishing.” Let us apply the rule which guides them, to such a passage as Heb. ix. 12, “Having obtained eternal redemption.” This should read, if the above is true, “everlasting redeeming.” The work of redemption according to this is never finished; all through eternity we are being redeemed, a doctrine flatly contradicted by both the Scriptures, and by the very same preachers who, to suit their purpose, read “punishing” for “punishment” in Matt. xxv. The punishment here spoken of, both in Psalm xxxvii. and Matthew xxv., is to be “eternally cut off.” To deprive of life and all that conscious existence means is the highest form of punishment that this world knows, and it is called “capital punishment.” It is the punishment prescribed by God to Noah (Gen. ix.), a reflection of the judgment reserved by God Himself for the finally impenitent. How many there are who turn to Rev. xx. 10 as a proof text for eternal torment:--

“And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.”

First let us notice *who* they are that are tormented. Three persons:

THE DEVIL. . . . THE BEAST. . . . AND THE FALSE PROPHET.

That these three are supernatural beings is not difficult to prove (cf. Rev. xvi. 13 and xvii. 8), yet punishment of these three awful beings is indiscriminately meted out to all of every race and age among the unsaved. But a further consideration is necessary, the words are “unto the ages of the ages” (rendered “for ever and ever”). “Unto” does not mean “throughout”; these are punished “unto” the dawning of the “ages of the ages,” but not “throughout” those ages. We also have an indication, that the period covered by this judgment shall come to an end, by the added words “day and night.” Day and night mark the dispensations that lead through from Gen. i. to Rev. xxi., but there comes a time when

the words shall be fulfilled, "There shall be no night there" (Rev. xxi. 25), even as there shall be "no more sea," and "no more curse," &c.

The same clause "day and night" must be allowed its bearing upon other similar passages, e.g., Rev. xiv. 9-11. The expression, "the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever" (Rev. xiv. 11), and "her smoke rose up for ever and ever" (Rev. xix. 3) is also emphasized by many as teaching the doctrine of eternal torment. If we turn, however, to Isaiah xxxiv. 8-10, we shall find the passage which supplies the figure in Revelation for the imagery of the Apocalypse is that with which the Old Testament prophets were quite familiar. Moreover, the period of time mentioned is Isa. xxxiv. points to the period of Revelation, "The day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion" (cf. Rev. i. 10). The judgment pronounced is:--

"The streams thereof shall become burning pitch. . . . it shall *not be quenched* night nor day; *the smoke thereof shall go up for ever*. . . . none shall pass through it for ever."

Let those who will have the passages of Revelation to mean eternity, act honourably with this, and proclaim *faithfully* to their traditions, but in *opposition* to the Scriptures, that in the new heavens and new earth this burning pitch, this unquenchable fire, this ascending smoke will mar the perfection of that ultimate of redeeming love. They have only to read the opening verses of the very next chapter in Isaiah to be confuted, "The parched land shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water."

Another passage, so often quoted in this connection, is Mark ix. 44, "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." Special attention is called to the word "their." We are asked to notice that the Lord does not say "the worm," but "*their* worm." The gnawing of the individual conscience is among the many things that this expression is made to man. The fallacy of the traditional interpretation, and at the same time, the true meaning of the passage, is found by turning to the Old Testament scripture from which the Lord Jesus quotes, viz., Isaiah lxvi. 24:--

"And they shall go forth, and look upon the *carcasses* of the men that have transgressed against Me, for *their* worm shall not die, neither shall *their* fire be quenched, and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh."

Here the Scriptures tell us that *carcasses* are the objects of this worm and fire, and all the learning and argument in the world cannot make us believe that *carcasses* can be subject to conscious suffering, yet the word "their" which is so emphasized is found here twice. Further, when we know that the word "Hell" of Mark ix. 43 is *Gehenna* (the place where the offal and rubbish were *consumed* outside the city), the figure of destruction is all the more emphasized.

We have not touched upon the positive teaching of the Scriptures as to the "wages of sin," but have sought to lay before the reader some of the statements and proof texts which are used to support that which we have become convinced is a *lie*, and most *God-dishonouring doctrine*. In our next article we shall (D.V.) seek to show what the Lord has said with regard to this tremendous subject. Meanwhile, we ask our readers during the next two months to make a collection of the statements of Paul in his epistles

upon this subject, for surely, if eternal conscious suffering is a truth of Scripture, the apostle to the Gentiles will *say so* somewhere. Let us not fear the face of man, but think of the honour of the Lord, the libel upon His sacred name, and the contradiction against His holy Word involved in the Romish (and alas Protestant) doctrine of eternal conscious suffering.

Rev. xvi. 13	And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.
xvii. 8	The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

Isa. xxxiv.	8. For it is the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion. 9. And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch. 10. It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up for ever: from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever.
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THE WHOLE BURNT OFFERING.

“And he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt-offering” (Lev.1:4).

pp.7-8

Leviticus speaks not only of redemption from sin, but *access* to God, and *acceptance* with Him. The first offering mentioned is the whole burnt-offering, something to meet the claims of God, and not so much the needs of man. “Hallowed be Thy name” comes before “Forgive us our trespasses.” The fire upon the altar signifies *holiness satisfied by perfection*; the fire upon the sin-offering outside the camp denotes *wrath, holiness meeting sin*.

The offerer “draws near,” and presents the offering—“without blemish.” The words “of his own voluntary will” should read, “*for his acceptance.*” Similarly, after the all-searching eye of Jehovah has examined the offering, the man puts his hand upon its head, and “it shall be *accepted for him* to make an *atonement for him.*” Where is boasting? it is excluded. No man can really trust in Christ and exalt the flesh or its works. The word “atonement” signifies a “covering.” The blood of Christ covers the sinner from the consequences of his sin, and also with *His own excellency*. This is further shown by the mention of the skin in verse 6. A reference to Gen. iii. 21, Isa. vi. 10, and lxiv. 6 will help to show how this is a type of the righteousness which is imputed to the sinner—the righteousness provided by Christ.

There are two other burnt-offerings in this chapter, a lamb and doves. In one respect they are the same, in another they differ. They represent the varied conceptions held by believers, the varied degrees of faith and appreciation of His wonderful work. In each case (verses 9, 13 and 17) the words are recorded without modification, “It is an offering made by fire of a sweet savour unto the Lord.” We are not accepted according to the measure of our faith, but according to God’s estimate of the perfect offering, but weak faith can mar our enjoyment and assurance.

Only the first offerer (the man who represents the large conception of Christ’s work), only this one “put his hand upon the head” and removed the skin. How few rejoice in imputed righteousness. How few even know of imputed sanctification. To them it is all, “Do this,” “Do that,” or “Touch not, taste not, handle not.” How few know the blessed fact of *identification* with the sacrifice? How few lay their hands upon the work of Christ and say, “I have been crucified *with Christ*, I have died *with Christ*, been buried *with Christ*, am risen *with Christ*, and finally shall be forever with Christ.” Yet this is typified in the act of laying the hand upon the head of the burnt-offering. Further, the word translated “put” means “to lean for support.” In Psa. iii. 5 it is translated “sustain.” Some “lean” upon their “good works,” they “hope” that they are saved. Others “lean” upon their teachers, but there is no certainty here. What a contrast is the man who “*leans*” for

all acceptance, *all* his salvation, *all* his righteousness—for time and eternity—upon the *one great offering*, Jesus Christ the righteous. This is the only true ground of *assurance*. Is it yours?

Gen.	3	21	Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them.
Isa.	61	10	I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.
	64	6	But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

Lev.	1	9	But his inwards and his legs shall he wash in water: and the priest shall burn all on the altar, to be a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the Lord.
		13	But he shall wash the inwards and the legs with water: and the priest shall bring it all, and burn it upon the altar: it is a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the Lord.
		17	And he shall cleave it with the wings thereof, but shall not divide it asunder: and the priest shall burn it upon the altar, upon the wood that is upon the fire: it is a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the Lord.

Psalms	3	5	I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the Lord sustained me.
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Wondrous Meeting Places.

pp. 62-63

It is not our purpose to discuss the merits of any particular "Place of Worship," nor to advocate the attendance, or non-attendance at the meeting place of any one sect or denomination; we desire to "preach Christ," and by so doing we shall strike a more powerful blow at sectarianism than by all the denunciations that we might pour forth, and at the same time feed the Lord's people with the true bread which cometh down from heaven.

This wonderful meeting place to which we wish to draw attention is found in Isaiah liii., being symbolized in Exod. xxv. 21 and 22. Let us turn to Exod. xxv. 16-22. The Ark of the Covenant has placed within it the *unbroken* tables of stone. Let it be remembered that Israel in reality *never received the Ten Commandments*; they were broken before they could be given them. God's answer was, "Make an ark," not "Give them another chance," or "Give them an easier code." Upon this ark is placed the mercy seat, the *propitiatory*, which exactly fitted the ark beneath. Here we have Rom. iii. 21-26 set before our very eyes. Atonement has a broad base of righteousness to rest upon. The blood sprinkled upon the mercy seat covers the perfect and unbroken law within, "That he might be *just*, and the *justifier* of him that believeth in Jesus." This symbol of the perfect work of Christ is the "ground of meeting" in Exod. xxv. 22. "*There* will I meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat." Fellow-believer, "Let us draw nigh"; none can say us nay if He bids us welcome. With this beautiful type in mind let us turn to Isaiah liii.

In Acts viii. 35 we read, "Then Philip opened his mouth and began at the same scripture, and preached unto Him - Jesus." Isaiah liii. is the passage. It is a part of repentant Israel's confession when they look upon Him whom they pierced, when the veil shall be removed, and they shall say:--

"Surely He hath borne *our* griefs, and carried *our* sorrows. . . . All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath *made to meet* on Him the iniquity of us all."

Let us pause and consider this wondrous meeting place. The sufferer is the Son of God; the hands which fashioned the heavens (Heb. i. 10) are nailed to the accursed tree; the brow which is yet to wear "many diadems" is crowned with the thorns that sprang up in consequence of Adam's sin. Why all this? Was there no other way? No! The Lord of glory stepped down from His exalted throne, became a man, a servant, and dies under the imputed guilt which the Lord *made to meet* on Him. What a tremendous thought is here; how it calls upon us to remember that we are upon holy ground! One sin to an infinitely holy Being must be loathsome, but to think of the combined sin of my lifetime being made to converge upon His sacred head is more than heart can conceive. But the writer is not the only one for whom the Saviour died. Thousands more can rejoice in Him as the great sin-bearer for them. But this is not all. Generation after generation have lived, and

sinned, and died, and for many of each the Saviour's blood was shed. Here, like Paul at the end of Rom. xi. (as he goes on to enumerate the multiplied mercy of God), we get out of our depth—we can only bow our heads and say, “O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God.”

This is not all, however, there is still a “much more.” At the end of Isaiah liii. 12 we read of a second meeting place, linked and founded upon the first one in verse 6:--

“He was numbered with the transgressors, and He bare the sin of many, and made a *meeting place* for transgressors.”

He was first made a meeting place for transgressions, and then, having put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, where He ever liveth to make intercession for us, to whom we can go at all times by a new and living way. What a glorious meeting place! But even this does not exhaust the depth, nor scale the height, nor comprehend the love that passeth knowledge. We who by *faith* look back to that solemn meeting place of Calvary, look forward in *hope* to the consummation of it all, as expressed in the words of the apostle to the Thessalonians. Whether I Thess. iv. is to be interpreted of the church of the mystery is a question with which we must deal by and by, but one thing we know, that the redeemed of all ages and dispensations, whether by rapture or resurrection, whether before or after the great tribulation, whether to inherit the heavenly holiest of all or the earthly paradise, they shall all *meet the Lord* (I Thess. iv. 17; I John iii. 1-3; Phil. iii. 20 and 21; Col. iii. 1-4; Titus ii. 13; Rev. xx. 4, and xxii. 4).

Exodus xxv.	<p>16. And thou shalt put into the ark the testimony which I shall give thee.</p> <p>17. And thou shalt make a mercy seat of pure gold: two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof.</p> <p>18. And thou shalt make two cherubims of gold, of beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy seat.</p> <p>19. And make one cherub on the one end, and the other cherub on the other end: even of the mercy seat shall ye make the cherubims on the two ends thereof.</p> <p>20. And the cherubims shall stretch forth their wings on high, covering the mercy seat with their wings, and their faces shall look one to another; toward the mercy seat shall the faces of the cherubims be.</p> <p>21. And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee.</p> <p>22. And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel.</p>
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Berean Expositor Volume 1

WORD STUDIES.

For ever.

An examination of the words thus translated in A.V. and R.V.
pp. 82-86

Following upon the study of the Scriptures as to the question of immortality, we instinctively turn to the following expressions which so often occur, viz., “everlasting,” “forever,” etc. In the great majority of cases the word thus translated is the Greek word *aiōn*, or the Hebrew *olam*. The A.V., has rendered the word *aiōn* by the words “world,” “course,” “age,” “eternal,” and in conjunction with the prepositions *apo* (from), *ek* (out of), and *eis* (into), it gives “since the world began,” “from the beginning of the world,” “forever,” “for evermore,” “for ever and ever,” “while the earth standeth,” “world without end,”; while the adjective *aiōnios* is rendered “eternal” and “everlasting.”

If we have no theology to uphold, and if we count the judgment of man as a “very small thing,” it is possible that we may venture to wonder how it comes about that one word can be translated “since the world *began*,” and also “world *without end*”; or again, how the word can be rendered “world” (which certainly had a beginning), and at the same time mean “for ever” and “eternal.” It has been forced upon us that in all these diverse renderings we have had a good percentage of man’s ideas of accurate and unflinching translation.

Our space is too limited to give many examples, but we draw attention to a few. In Matt.xxiv. 3 we read of “the end of the world.” This clearly shows that the word *aiōn*, translated “world,” may have an *end*. We turn to the very next chapter and find that the word *aiōn*, when it becomes an adjective, *aiōnios*, is translated by the words “eternal” and “everlasting,” words which admittedly allow of no end (Matt. xxv. 46). One thing seems evident, that a true rendering is not found here. Again, there are three important passages where the word *aiōnios* is found with the word *chronos* (time), viz., Rom. xvi. 25; II Tim. i. 9, and Titus i. 2. The A.V. translates thus, “since the world began,” and “before the world began,” while the R.V., going to the other extreme, renders the words, “through times eternal,” and before “times eternal.” What can we make of a word which can mean a limited period and eternity?

Rom. xvi. 25	Now 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, which was kept secret since the world began,
II Tim. i. 9	Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,
Titus i. 2	In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;

There is no doubt whatever but that the word *aiōn* means “an age,” and therefore to interpret it as “forever” is not a translation, but a human comment, which *may* be wrong. If the Translators had rendered the word “age-times” instead of “times eternal”; “this age” instead of “this world”; “unto the ages” instead of “for ever,” it would have been consistent, and would have allowed each passage to speak for itself, instead of saying just what traditional prejudice would make it say.

The mistranslation of the word *aiōn* is but another of the many evidences of man’s foolish pride. Man looks forward into the future, or backward into the past. Age upon age stretch away on either side, and seeing no end, and being unable to conceive of one, he calls the space which exceeds his tiny perspective—*eternity!* Whereas to Him who sitteth in the heavens it is but one link in the vast chain of the ages wherein He deals with men, angels, and the universe. We may learn the meaning of the Greek word *aiōn* by finding out the Hebrew equivalent. The Septuagint Version uses the word *aiōn* to translate the Hebrew word *olam*. Through the careful study of another labourer in the Word we are enabled to give the following list of passages where the Hebrew word *olam* occurs. First we consider the words *me olam*, as translated in the A.V.:--

USED OF GOD.	USED OF MAN.
“Ever of old” (Psa. xxv. 6).	“Of old” (Gen. vi. 4).
“From everlasting” (Psa. xli. 13).	“In old time” (Josh. xxiv. 2).
“From everlasting” (Psa. xc. 2).	“Of old” (I Sam. xxvii. 8).
“From everlasting” (Psa. xciii. 2).	“Of old” (Psa. cxix. 52).
“From everlasting” (Psa. ciii. 17).	“Long time” (Isa. xlii. 14).
“From everlasting” (Isa. xliii. 16).	“Since the beginning of the world” (Isa. lxiv. 4).

These are but a few of the passages, but they are enough to help us to see the fitness of the remark that “there is a startling inconsistency here.” When applied to God it is always “for ever,” or “everlasting,” but when applied to man it is *never* so rendered. *Why?* Because in no case will the sense bear it. Man and his history do *not* stretch back to a dateless past eternity. No nation, no prophet has been “from everlasting.” If a translator would be guilty of tampering with the prerogatives of God should he render *me olam* “from everlasting” when referring to the past of man, why should he be labelled a heretic because he questions, equally, the propriety of using the word *olam* to mean eternity when applied to the future of man? The case of the past is by the nature of things impossible; the future lies before us, and man has ventured his own opinion, tacked it on to the Word of God, and usurping the solemn authority of that holy Word has swayed the minds, influenced the faith, and stifled the consciences of thousands. How many have been embittered by that dread whisper “non-eternity”? How many of God’s most faithful witnesses have been hounded down by these modern shibboleth-mongers?

Let us look at some of the uses of the word *olam*: “If the servant shall say. . . . I will not go out free. . . . he shall serve him *for ever*” (Exod. xxi. 5, 6). Of the same class of Hebrew servant we read in Lev. xxv. 40, “He shall serve thee *unto* the year of jubilee” (when his service ends and he is free to go out not merely alone, but with his wife and

children). Hannah, speaking to Samuel, says, “I will bring him that he may appear before the Lord, and there abide *for ever*” (I Sam. i. 22). In verse 11 she interprets these words thus, “I will give him unto the Lord all the *days of his life*.” There is no room for an “until” in our words “for ever,” yet in Isa. xxxii. 14, 15 we read, “The forts and towers shall be for dens *for ever*. . . . *until* the Spirit be poured upon us.” Here the *for ever* has an end, yet if we dare to suggest that it *may* be so elsewhere, what a shaking of heads and holy indignation we arouse! Scripture never contradicts itself. If our renderings make inconsistencies, let us alter our renderings a thousand times, but let us not tamper with the Scriptures of truth.

Rev. xxi. 22 tells us of a future period when there shall be *no temple*, yet the A.V. teaches that both the temple, priesthood, and sacrifices were to be *for ever* (see Ezek. xxxvii. 26; Exod. xl. 15, and Numb. xviii. 8). We have not finished yet. The word *olam* is followed many times by the words *va ed*. The word *ed* is rendered “till,” “to,” “unto,” “yet,” &c., e.g.:--

“*Till* thou return unto the ground” (Gen. iii. 19).

“Since that time even *until* now” (Ezra v. 16, &c.).

Va is the Hebrew equivalent for “and.” Thus, if we retain the A.V. rendering, the words *le olam va ed* would mean “for ever and still,” “for ever and yet further”! That the Hebrew does contain some idea of a period beyond that covered by *olam* is clear, for the Hebrew Translators of the Septuagint render the words by *ton aiōna kai ep aiōna kai eti* (Exod. xv. 8), which literally translated is, “the age, and upon the age, *and still*”! Fifty-one times the A.V. translates *eti* by the word “yet,” besides “further,” “any longer,” and “still.” Surely these *facts* should make us stop and reconsider this tremendous subject. There is a further consideration which throws its weight against the idea that *aiōn* or *olam* mean eternity, and that is that *aiōn* is frequently found in the plural and the genitive case. If the singular can mean “for ever,” what can the plural mean? (we cannot speak of “for evers”—we never shall arrive at the end of eternity, let alone start another). If we keep to the rendering “age” all is clear. We can then have the expressions “unto the age,” “unto the ages,” and “unto the ages of the ages” without any interference with the divine words, but “eternities of eternities” is absurd.

The root idea of the word *olam* is something secret or hidden (see Psa. xc. 8, “*secret sins*”; Eccles. xii. 14, “*secret thing*”). Because the period is hidden or secret, is undefined or unrevealed, man in his arrogance has jumped to the conclusion that because *he* cannot see the end, therefore there *is* none, forgetting that he has limited knowledge and exceedingly limited vision. *Olam* and *aiōn* signify a period of time whose end is undefined, or which is hidden from man, but which is by no means “everlasting,” for instances such as the Aaronic priesthood, &c., have been given of such periods *coming to an end*, which were “for ever” according to the A.V. Added to this we have the twenty passages which speak of “unto the age of undefined limits and yet further” translated “for ever and ever” by the English, in spite of both Hebrew and Greek.

Let none imagine that the eternal security of the believer is by any means weakened by these facts. This glorious truth is unquestionably settled by such emphatic words as

“incorruptible,” “immortal,” and by the words, “Because I live, ye shall live also,” and “Your life is hid with Christ in God.” Let us believe and love the *truth*, and the truth will make us free; free from the shackles of the traditions of the elders which make void the Word of God; free from the nightmare of Christendom; free from the clogs of error to proclaim “Life to the dead” in the gospel of the glory of Christ.

It is possible that some may be tempted to write to us, and we would anticipate one thing. We have stated facts; we do not hold ourselves responsible for the “words which the Holy Ghost teacheth,” neither do we proffer any apology for upsetting anyone’s theological beliefs, whatever they may be. We would say in the words of one servant of God to another, “You have your Bible, you have your knees, *use them.*”

Huperbole.

A word study.

pp. 100-102

Those of our readers who have a knowledge of “Figures of Speech” will recognise in the title of this study the name of the figure of exaggeration. “Walled up to *heaven*” (Deut. i. 28), “*Hate not* his father” (Luke xiv. 26), “*The world is gone after Him*” (John xii. 19) are examples of its use in Scripture. In the New Testament the Greek verb and noun *huperballō* and *huperbole* occur together some thirteen times, and are variously translated, viz., “exceed,” “excel,” “pass,” “above measure,” “abundance,” “excellency,” “far more exceeding,” “more excellent,” “out of measure.” Let us consider a few of the passages wherein they may be found.

“*The glory that excelleth*” (II Cor. iii. 10). The apostle contrasts the old covenant with the new. The one was inscribed on tables of stone, and was of the letter which killeth; the other was written on the heart of flesh by the Spirit of God, and maketh alive (cf. Ezek. xxxvi. 26). The one was a ministry of condemnation, the other of righteousness; the glory of the one was transient, the other had the “glory that excelleth.” Thus, during the pentecostal period, the apostles sought to emphasize the temporary character of the law, and the permanent character of the new covenant. This is the object of Hebrews and the argument of Galatians iii. The new covenant has no place in the dispensation of the mystery.

“*A more excellent way*” (I Cor. xii. 31), --Better than the “best gifts” is love. The “gifts ceased, but “faith, hope, and love” remained, and are the threefold cord of the present dispensation. Some ignore the words of I Cor. xii. and xiii., and think that tongues, miracles, &c., are the more excellent way. “Love never faileth, but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail, whether there be tongues, they shall cease.” If the reader is not enjoying the “more excellent way” of the dispensation of the grace of God to the Gentiles (Eph. iii. 2), he may be zealous for “pentecostal showers,” but the true blessedness of the “perfect man, the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ” will not be enjoyed by him. We cannot speak as a child, understand as a child, think as a child (I Cor. xiii. 11), and enjoy the pleasures and blessings of full-grown manhood at

the same time. “Babes” cannot understand the “mystery” (I Cor. iii. 1, 2; Heb. v. 11-14; Eph. iv. 14).

In II Cor. i. 8 and iv. 7, 17 there are some important lessons. The words printed in italics represent the word *hyperbole*:--

“We were pressed *out of measure*, beyond power” (i. 8).

“We have this treasure in earthen vessel, that the *excellency* of the power may be of God, and not of us” (iv. 7).

“For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us *a far more exceeding* age-abiding weight of glory, while we look not on the things which are seen” (iv. 17).

How wonderfully the use of this word here emphasizes the grace of God. The heavy pressure of i. 8 becomes light when the “weight” of glory is seen; it is “but for a moment” when compared with the glory “age-abiding.” There is a suggestive lesson for us in noticing that the apostle who here suffered affliction “out of measure” had, in his unconverted days, persecuted the church of God with like intensity. “For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews’ religion, how that *beyond measure* I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it” (Gal. i. 13). In the next verse (14) he speaks of this “religion” as coupled with an exceeding zeal for the traditions of his fathers. This has ever been the case, the traditions of men and religion have ever been the persecuting agencies of Satan. The truth, like love, “suffereth long, and is kind.” They who know the truth are to be “gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patiently bearing up under evil, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves” (II Tim. ii. 24, 25).

Again, in II Cor. xi. 23, the apostle says of himself, “In labours more abundant, in stripes *above measure*.” So it was, that the most zealous persecutor of the church became by grace its greatest champion, and keenest sufferer. Suffering was among the first things mentioned in his commission, “I must show him how great things he must *suffer* for My name’s sake” (Acts ix. 16). The apostle, in the midst of all his sufferings, could look away to “that day” and, as we have seen in II Cor. iv. 17, speak of his “exceeding heavy trials as “light” in comparison with the “weight” of glory. It is noteworthy that the words translated “a far more exceeding” in II Cor. iv. 17 are *hyperbolen eis hyperbolen*, emphasizing the fact that the apostle did not magnify his sorrows, but his hoped-for-joys.

The epistle to the Ephesians has three helpful passages containing this word, viz.:--

“The *exceeding* greatness of His power towards us who believe” (i. 19).

“The *exceeding* riches of His grace” (ii. 7).

“The love of Christ which *passeth* knowledge” (iii. 19).

Here we have faith, hope, and love enriched by this mighty superabundance, for the theme of Eph. i. 19 is faith, and that is the result of resurrection power. Eph. ii. 7 looks forward to the “ages to come,” and the riches of grace, while Eph. iii. 19 leads to the fulness of God in the “knowledge-surpassing love of Christ.” Eph. iii. 19 is the *last* occurrence of the word in Scripture. The first occurrence of the noun is Rom. vii. 13, “exceeding sinful”; the last occurrence of the verb is in Eph. iii. 19, “The love of Christ which *passeth* knowledge.” “Where sin abounded grace did superabound.” Oh, for grace to appreciate the “exceeding riches of his grace

Heavenly Places. pp. 114-117 (end).

In a former article we were considering the “dispensation of the mystery,” and were reminded of its heavenly character. In this present article we desire to consider the references to the heavenly aspect of this mystery a little more closely. Five times does the word translated “heavenly places” occur in the epistle to the Ephesians, and the spiritual significance of five is grace.

The blessed truth connected with the heavenly places is a fitting witness to the “riches of His grace,” and the “glory of His grace.” There are not a few who seek to discredit the emphasis upon the peculiar and exclusive teaching of the Prison Epistles by the remark that the word translated “heavenly places” occurs in other passages of Scripture, particularly in Hebrews. Twenty times in all the word occurs in the New Testament, distributed as follows: in the Gospels, twice; in the Epistles before Acts xxviii., five times (grace); in the Prison Epistles, seven times (spiritual perfection); and in Hebrews, six times (the number of man, imperfection, and of that age which immediately precedes the new creation, viz., the millennial kingdom).

There is, however, a most important distinction to be noticed between the five occurrences in Ephesians, and the fifteen elsewhere. The word in Ephesians is in the dative plural, *en tois epouraniois*, “in the heavenlies”—speaking of locality, whereas the word in the other passages signifies “heavenly,” but not necessarily “in heaven.” Those who tasted of the “heavenly gift” in Heb. vi. 4 certainly did not taste a gift that was up in heaven, but which was heavenly. So the “heavenly” country or city of Heb. xi. 16 will be seen “coming down from God out of heaven”; it will not be enjoyed “in heaven.” The expression “in the heavenlies” (the dative plural) is peculiar to the epistle to the Ephesians. If we deny the distinction, surely we must not resent it if anyone doubts our belief in the inspiration of the Scriptures.

Having seen the unique character of these five passages, we will quote them in their order, and seek to exhibit their blessed meaning. Before we quote the passages, however, we desire to throw light upon the meaning conveyed by this term by reference to another, and then by comparing the passages together we may be enabled to more clearly see the sphere of our blessedness. The word we desire to consider is that translated “saint.” Fifteen times does the word *hagios* (saint) occur in Ephesians. Fifteen is of course 5x3, the superlative of grace (5=grace; 3=completeness, resurrection, &c.), and is consequently connected with the five-fold occurrence of “heavenly places.” To many passages in the A.V. we do not take exception, but there is one form in which this word “saint” occurs that may teach much more than our English Version allows.

The genitive plural of *hagios* is *ton hagiōn*, in masculine, feminine, and neuter. Consequently the context must decide whether the word means “of the saints” (masc. Or

fem.), or “of the holy places or things” (neuter). Heb. ix. 23 and 24 will illustrate our meaning. “Better sacrifices” is the plural of majesty for “the infinitely better sacrifice.” Likewise “holy places” refers to the “most holy place.” Readers have only to refer back in this chapter for ample evidence that the “holiest of all” is meant here. The most holy place made with hands was a type of the true holiest of all, not made with hands, which Scripture declares to be “heaven itself.”

Let us read “of the saints” as “of the heavenly holiest of all” in the following passages, and see how much we learn thereby:--

“Now therefore ye are no more guests* and foreigners, but *fellow-citizens of the heavenly holiest of all*, and of the household of God” (Eph. ii. 19).

This is parallel with Phil. iii. 20, “our citizenship (*politeuma*, fellow-citizen being *sumpolitai*) is in heaven,” heaven itself being the true holiest of all.

“Giving thanks unto the Father, who hath made you sufficient for the inheritance of the holiest of all in the light” (Col. i. 12).

Believers are not going to have “saints” for their inheritance; they have their inheritance in the light, in heaven itself, the true holiest of all. This lifts the believer above the petty things of sense and time. What has he to do with ordinances, types, shadows, when his inheritance is centred in the real, true holiest of all in the light?

Returning now to the statement of Scripture concerning the “heavenly places,” we can see that these, equally, refer to the same position of glory. The five occurrences in Ephesians are related thus:--

A | i. 3. Spiritual blessings.

B | i. 20. Christ raised far above principalities and powers.

C | ii. 6. Christ and His church, raised and seated in the holiest of all.

B | iii. 10. The church a witness to principalities and powers.

A | vi. 12. Spiritual wickedness.

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places (or in the holiest of all) in Christ” (Eph. i. 3).

“Ye see your calling, brethren.” Let us seek to walk worthy of the calling wherewith we have been called. If our inheritance, our blessing, our sphere is “above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God,” let us find our all *there*. Earthly promises, blessings, and inheritances are for the earthly people (Israel), and through them the Abrahamic blessings will flow out unto all nations. For the time being Israel has been set aside, Abrahamic blessings have discontinued, and a mystery, hitherto kept perfect secret, has been made known. Unlike the Abrahamic promises, the Jew takes exactly the same place as the Gentile, both as regards salvation and dispensational blessings.

NOTE: * -- Gentile believers before Acts 28 did not stand upon equality with Israel so far as *dispensational* privileges were concerned (see Rom.9-11).

We are living under an economy of grace that is unparalleled in its riches, and its glories. It reaches out beyond the pale of Judah to the ends of the earth; it includes in its

boundless scope the forgiveness of “all trespasses”; it reaches down to the depths of sin, and places the saved “far above” in the holiest of all; it points the saved sinner away from self unto Him “who hath made us sufficient” for such an inheritance; it shuts the believer up to the Lord of glory, “in whom are hid *all* the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” It enjoins no ritual, no observance, no ceremony of any kind whatsoever. These have all, divine and human, been nailed to, and cancelled by, the cross of Christ. Our endeavour is now to be directed to keeping (not making) the unity of Spirit. *There* faction ends; *there* peace rules; *there* is found no confidence in the flesh; *there* is a blessed condition of absolute independence of all else except the Lord. Once again we repeat,

“Ye see your calling, brethren.”

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenly holiest of all.”