

# The Berean Expositor

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”  
II Tim. ii. 15

VOLUME 2 & 3  
1912 - 1913

THE BEREAN PUBLISHING TRUST  
52a Wilson Street, London EC2A 2ER  
ENGLAND

DEAR FELLOW-BELIEVERS,

By the good hand of God upon us we are privileged to issue a second edition of these Volumes. Grace alone is, and must still be, our support and our provision.

The “Platform and Programme” of the witness may be found in three verses of Psalm cxix.:-

*“I have chosen the way of truth”* (verse 30).

By His grace He chose us, and the response of our hearts has been the choice of the way of truth. It is a rugged pathway, beset with difficulties, obstacles, and hindrances made both by man and satan. Great barriers are erected across this way called “Traditional Views,” etc., but we would rather lose all subscribers, their friendship, and their fellowship, than turn aside from full adherence to every “jot and tittle” of God’s Holy Word. Therefore we repeat the words:--

*“I have stuck unto Thy testimonies”* (verse 31).

In vain we speak of faithfulness, of charity, of zeal, unless we stick to God’s Word *written*. Written, not in the books of men, but in the book of God. If by our sticking to the testimonies of God we appear to make men better than ourselves as liars, we have no alternative. Earnestly we pray, “Remove from me the way of lying,” “I have chosen the way of truth.” Much of the so-called spiritualizing and sermonizing on the Word is nothing more or less than a hiding and distorting of its plain meaning. From such may the Lord ever keep *The Berean Expositor*.

By grace, we have not only *chosen* the way of truth, but we also intend to *stick* to it, and pray that the next clause may also be our own experience:--

*“I will run the way of Thy commandments, when Thou shalt enlarge my heart”* (verse 32).

Verse 45 says, “I will walk at liberty,” and the words “liberty” and “enlarge” are similar in the original. Let us pray for this liberty, freedom from the thralldom of sectarian bias and bitterness, freedom to love all saints, and freedom to believe all that God has written. Let us seek to “adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour.” Let us not only *choose*, and *stick*, but let us also *run*.

Oh for grace to practise what we preach, and for the blessed consistency which enable the apostle Paul to link together his “doctrine, purpose, manner of life.”

Yours for His glory by immutable grace,

July, 1926

CHARLES H. WELCH  
FRED K. P. BRININGER

## INDEX

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS	13, 43, 105, 113
BIBLE SCHOOL AT HOME:--	
Introductory	73
The Scriptures	91
Right Division	108
The Pauline Epistles	124
I Thessalonians	142
DEVOTIONAL ARTICLES:--	
All the frankincense (Lev. ii. 16).	42
Joy of faith (Phil. i. 25).	136
Sacrificial law designed to teach substitution (Lev. xvi. 6, 13).	141
DOCTRINE OF CHRIST, THE	21, 108
GREEK ARTICLE AND PREPOSITIONS	66, 89, 104, 122, 139
LIMITATIONS OF SCRIPTURE, THE	142
MINISTRY OF PAUL, THE:--	
His conversion	2
His commission	14, 43
His two-fold commission	50
The stewardship of the mystery	63
MYSTERY, STUDIES IN EPISTLES OF:--	
Introductory	74
Ephesians as a whole	92
Blessing according to purpose (Eph. i. 3-14).	109
The blessings of the Father (Eph. i. 3).	125
PARABLES OF MATTHEW xiii.:--	
The word parable-its meaning and dispensational setting	26
The Parables of Matthew xiii.	30
The sower	53
The wheat and the darnel	68
The Mustard Tree	79
The hidden Leaven and the hidden Treasure	95
The Pearl of great price	133
The Drag Net	149
PLATFORM AND PROGRAMME	1
REVIEWS:--“All in all, the goal of the Universe”	153
STRUCTURE OF II TIMOTHY	90
WAGES OF SIN, THE	8, 34, 84, 128

## PLATFORM and PROGRAMME

*“Seeing then that we have such a hope,  
we use great plainness of speech” (II Cor. iii. 12).*

### p. 1

In Volume I., page 65, we gave the “Platform and Programme” of *The Berean Expositor*. We would repeat a portion here:--

“We desire, as grace is given, to ‘search the Scriptures’ daily, and to publish the results regardless of the approval, or the disapproval, of any. Let it be at 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 apologise for the Bible, nor for any teaching which may from time to time be brought to light. While few 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 the least some measure) that underlies the words of Paul, ‘*None of these things move me*’.”

Once again we have to thank the many friends who have written to us. We are becoming somewhat used to the expressions “an infallible Pope” and “too dogmatic.” However, as one writer stated he felt better after having relieved his mind, we shall make no objection here.

If God has spoken (and we know what He has said), traditions twice nineteen centuries old should not close our mouths, or prevent the glorious dogmatism of “Thus saith the Lord.”

Let us follow the truth, and the truth shall make us free.

## **All the Frankincense.** **pp. 42-43**

Many precious lessons for the child of God may be gathered by a prayerful study of the types of Leviticus, among them the fulness of blessing which may be discovered in the verse which contains our title--Lev. ii. 16. Speaking of the Meal Offering, which exhibits the moral perfection of the Lord Jesus meeting our great lack of perfectness, the Lord said:--

“And the priest shall burn the memorial of it, part of the beaten corn thereof, and part of the oil thereof, with *all* the frankincense thereof.”

In this offering, as with all others which typified the one great offering of the Saviour, neither leaven nor honey were permitted, but in contrast to this the salt of the covenant and all the frankincense ascended up acceptably unto the Lord. In the beautiful language of the Old Testament, the word for frankincense is *l'bonah—something white*. What a picture of the believer being covered and accepted in all the fragrance of the name of the Lord Jesus. Something white! Nothing but that which is evil and defiled could the Lord see in any of us by ourselves, but, blessed be His name, just as the twelve loaves of shewbread were covered by the frankincense (Lev. xxiv. 5-7), so the believer is covered by all the worthiness of the Son of God.

As we read the book of Numbers and see Israel continually failing, sinning, murmuring, rebelling, and remember all that is written concerning them, this blessed lesson of the covering frankincense is enforced when we read the inspired words of Balaam, “*He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath He seen perverseness in Israel*” (Num. xxiii. 21). There is no other explanation of these remarkable words than the fact that this wayward people were God’s chosen ones, and that He viewed them in Christ. Truly “*all the frankincense*” is here. The sweet savour that ascended to God on behalf of Israel was but a type of the Father’s crowning mercy, as set forth in Eph. i. 3-6, where sinners of the Gentiles, aliens, and enemies who believe are told upon the authority of God in the Word of His grace that they are “accepted in the Beloved.”

Brethren, can we not look up to Him at the right hand of God, and thankfully realize something of the meaning of the words

*all the frankincense.*

### **Lev. xxiv. 5-7.**

5. And thou shalt take fine flour, and bake twelve cakes thereof: two tenth deals shall be in one cake.
6. And thou shalt set them in two rows, six on a row, upon the pure table before the Lord.
7. And thou shalt put pure frankincense upon each row, that it may be on the bread for a memorial, even an offering made by fire unto the Lord.

## **Structure of II Timothy. pp. 90-91**

We have been requested by a reader to give the structure of II Timothy, and have been asked whether we would be willing to give other structures when required. We should be very pleased to be of service in this way if light is given to us upon the passage under notice. We, of course, cannot give structures “to order,” neither our time nor ability being equal to such a demand. We give below the very barest outline of II Timothy. The importance of Paul’s ministry is so emphasized, both negatively and positively, that we felt it would be best to let the structure of each part with its elaboration remain over for some future issue.

Members *A* and *A* emphasize the forsaking of Paul and its effects. Members *B* and *B* link Paul’s words and teaching with suffering and reigning. Members *C* and *C* suggest “rightly dividing the Word of truth” as the safeguard against error, and give illustrations of the danger of not so doing:--

- A | 1:1-18. Paul and his message forsaken. The Lord his keeper.  
Phygellus and Hermogenes, examples of forsakers.  
Onesiphorus, “The Lord give mercy.”
- B | 2:1-13. Teach the things heard of me (exclusive).  
Suffering and reigning. “The crown.”
- C | 2:14-26. Hymenaeus and Philetus have erred concerning the truth.  
“Shun.” “They will increase unto more ungodliness.”
- C | 3:1-9. Jannes and Jambres examples of those who withstand the truth.”  
“Turn away.” “They shall proceed no further.”
- B | 3:10-4:8. “Thou hast fully followed *my teaching*, etc.  
(reference to period before associated with the Twelve).  
Suffering and reigning. “The crown.”
- A | 4:9-22. Paul and his message forsaken. The Lord stood by.  
Demas, example of forsakers.  
Alexander, “The Lord recompense.”



## Answers to Correspondents. pp. 13-14

**G.R., Birminigham.**—“II Cor. v. 17. What more do you want than being ‘in Christ,’ as in the text?”

At first sight it would appear that this verse reaches the zenith, but it is not so. II Corinthians and Galatians are to be read together, and the result is this:--

Doctrinal position. . . . . II Corinthians. . . . . “In Christ.”  
Dispensational position. . . Galatians. . . . . . “With Abraham.”

When we turn to the epistle to the Ephesians we shall find that the dispensational and doctrinal positions are the same, viz.:--

Doctrinal position. . . . . Ephesians 1. . . . . . “In Christ.”  
Dispensational position. . . Ephesians 2. . . . . . “With Christ.”

The use of the terms “doctrinal” and “dispensational” are but arbitrary, they may be ignored. The case is this; once the blessing was “in Christ” and “with Abraham”; now it is both *in and with* Christ. There is no need for us to enlarge on this, or to say which is better.

**II Cor. v. 17.** Therefore if any man be **in Christ**, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

**E.R., Alberta.**—You write, “The term ‘The kingdom is in abeyance’ is contrary to the teaching of the Bible.” You then turn to Rom. xi. 11-25, and Matt. xiii. 30, pointing out the “until” and saying, “Where is the abeyance of this gospel to be found here?”

Our answer is, it is not found in either passage. These words were written before the time for Israel to be set aside and the dispensation of the mystery made known.

Will you apply your own argument to Isa. lxi. 2? You would be the last to conflict with the teaching of Christ (Luke iv. 19, 20), yet He divided this verse, but the division is not seen *there*.

Matt. xiii.	30. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.
Isa. lxi.	2. To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;
Luke iv.	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.

By the time “Hebrews” was written the *abeyance* was a fact, and the apostle could write, “But *now* we see not yet all things put under Him” (Heb. ii. 8). Strictly speaking, the “abeyance of the kingdom” is untrue, for the kingdom has never been set up yet by Christ. We should be more correct in speaking of the abeyance of the hopes and conditions which were connected with the good news of the kingdom. You will surely see that the gospel of Matt. x. 5-8 is *not* the gospel of Eph. i., iii.

You will also see that the terms of Mark xvi. 16-20 were fulfilled right up to Acts xxviii. 1-9, but from that moment they abruptly cease. They are then in abeyance, together with all the other accompaniments of kingdom things.

**D.M., Burntisland.**—Mark xvi. 15-20 and Col. i. 23 have no reference to each other. The one has relation to the kingdom and miracles; the other is connected with neither. The idea that the gospel was preached to animals is absurd, for animals do not believe, neither are they baptized, neither do they hope for resurrection.

The introduction of the word “new” in “new tongues” (which is omitted in the R.V.) ruins the marvellous numerical design of the passage, which is made to teach that the apostles spoke a new kind of language which animals could understand.

### **Answers to Correspondents. pp.105-107**

**F.H., Birmingham.**—“Will you kindly look at Eph. vi. 12, and when you have time express your opinion as to whether the ‘heavenly places’ are here referred to as the location of evil spirits. There appears a difficulty in believing that that region of peace (Holy of Holies?) is disturbed by satan’s emissaries. . . .

In answer to these questions we would say to the first, Yes, “heavenly places” in Eph. vi. 12 are that habitation of evil spirits; but to the second, No, evil spirits have no access to the heavenly holiest of all, where we are blessed with all spiritual blessings.

<b>Eph. vi. 12.</b> For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.
--

Turning to the Word itself we shall find out difficulties vanish in the clear light thrown upon the subject in this epistle. Let us examine *what is said* of these “heavenly places” in Ephesians. The first reference, like the last (the one under notice), does not definitely say anything as to locality; it reads, “Blessed be God. . . . Who hath blessed us with all

spiritual blessings in the heavenly places in Christ” (Eph. i. 3). The “spiritual blessings” are echoed by the “spiritual wickedness” of Eph. vi. 12.

The next reference, however, supplies us with more definite information. It occurs in the prayer of the apostle, where he desires that we should know “what is the exceeding greatness of His power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in ‘heavenly places’ *far above* all principality and power. . . .” (Eph. i. 19-21). Two important items immediately appear upon reading this passage, first that Christ is not only in the heavenly places, but also at the very right hand of God Himself, and secondly that His exaltation has placed Him “far above all.”

This calls upon us to “prove the things that differ,” and to note carefully all that is said before arriving at a conclusion. F.H. lives at Birmingham; the writer lives in London. Both could truthfully say that they live in England, but that would not justify the conclusion, “therefore F.H. and the writer live together.” The other fact which we noticed shows us that in the heavenlies pinnacle of all is occupied by the risen Lord, beneath Whose feet spiritual powers, both good and bad, are placed.

In order more fully to realize the exalted position of the Lord, and incidentally our position “in Him,” let us notice a few more passages:--

Col. iii. 1 tells us that Christ “sitteth on the right hand of God.” Heb. i. 3 tells us that He “sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.” Heb. iv. 14 tells us that He “passed through (*dierchomai*) the heavens.” Heb. vii. 26 tells us that He is “made higher than the heavens.” I Pet. iii. 22 tells us that He “is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God, angels, and authorities, and powers being made subject unto Him.” Eph. iv. 10 tells us that He “ascended up far above all heavens.”

The cumulative evidence of these passages is of great importance, inasmuch as it teaches us to differentiate between those heavenly places which are inhabited by spirit beings, and that exalted position, the sphere of our blessings, *far above all*. When we have read the prayer of Eph. i. 19-23, and realized in some measure the “glory that excelleth,” the second chapter follows with its revelation of grace wherein we learn that the death, resurrection, and high glory of our risen Head is the pledge, pattern, and promise of the death, resurrection, and final glory of every member of His redeemed body.

So Eph. ii. 5, 6 reads, “even when we were dead in sins, hath made us alive together with Christ. . . . and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus.” This third reference to the heavenly places shows us that the sphere of our blessings is beyond the intrusion of “angel, principality, or power,” and “wrestling” in any form whatever is an impossibility.

The fourth reference is Eph. iii. 10, where we read, “unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God.” The conflict of Eph. vi. 12 is confined to the lower section of the heavens, where fallen spirits,

ruled by the “Prince of the power of the air,” wage war against those who, through grace, are destined to share the heavenly glory of the church of the mystery.

Dan. x. shows us the powerful agencies which satan pitted against the revealed purpose of God appertaining to Israel, and Eph. vi. 12 teaches us that this foe of truth still antagonises the purpose of God, and that they who believe the revelation of the mystery “wrestle not with blood and flesh, but with principalities, with powers, with the worldholders of this darkness, with spiritual things of wickedness, in heavenly places.” Our spiritual foes are *beneath the feet* of Christ, let us therefore be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might, realizing that just as our life is hid with Christ in God, so our blessings, likewise, are safely guarded in heaven’s “holiest of all” in the light, where neither moth nor rust corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal—“*far above all.*”

### **Answers to Correspondents. pp. 113-121**

**W.H.G.T., Toronto,** writes:--“I have just read with interest the papers given before the Prophecy Investigation Society, and I observe that your view of Acts and I Thessalonians came in for some criticism. Some time or other I should be glad if you would discuss the point raised by Mr. Hogg, that the Jews had been definitely set aside three years before Paul visited Rome. This point, and also those mentioned, seem to me to call for notice.”

Is it true that the nation of Israel was set aside three years before Paul’s visited Rome? The statement was made and referred to as “a significant *fact*,” and if it is a fact we ought to know it, and keep it constantly in mind as we study the Word with reference to our particular calling.

The passage referred to is the great dispensational section of the epistle to the Romans—chapters ix., x., xi. We will not argue the matter apart from revelation; like the Psalmist let us say, “I hate thoughts, but Thy law do I love.” The great point of emphasis in chapter ix. is the fact that God’s elective purposes overrule all things relative to His purposes. The temptation to linger over the opening verses is great, but must be put aside as we are here reading these chapters to see whether the “significant fact” asserted above is true. The first statement which has a particular bearing upon the question before us is found in verses 27-29:--

“Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, A REMNANT shall be saved. . . . except the Lord of Sabbath had left us a SEED, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha.”

The period of long suffering covered by the Acts of the Apostles was in many ways parallel with the time when Isaiah prophesied. It will be remembered how he opened his prophecy with words of solemn denunciation, showing that Israel had become “a sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil doers.” Why was it that the judgment did not fall at once? Isaiah i. 5-6 shows how utterly corrupt the nation was, verses 7 and 8 show desolation and defection had already begun their chastening yet unheeded course. The answer to the question of long delayed punishment is found in verse 9, the verse quoted by the apostle in Rom. ix. A very small remnant saved the situation. Sodom was destroyed because not even ten righteous ones could be found in it. Israel approximated to Sodom in its sin, but there was by grace a remnant reserved unto the Lord, whose presence kept back the threatened wrath to come.

Rom. x. 21 shows the attitude of the Lord and the character of the people during the period of the Acts. “All day long I have stretched forth My hands unto a disobedient and gain-saying people.” Yet, just as the remnant prevented the nation at that time from being exactly parallel to Sodom, so chapter xi. *immediately* follows this quotation (Rom. x. 21) by again showing us that the people as a people were spared by reason of the elect remnant. “I say, therefore, hath God cast away His people”? This is the point at issue, which was answered in the *affirmative* by the brother quoted in the letter above. The Word of God answers the question in the *negative*, and supplies the reason-- the *remnant*:--

“Hath God cast away His people? Let not my reasoning become so (*me genoito*), for I also am an Israelite. . . . God hath not cast away His people whom He foreknew” (Rom. xi. 1, 2).

Many stop here to argue over the meaning of “foreknew.” Scripture goes on to supply us with a concrete example which is much better:--

“Or know ye not what the scripture says in (the account of) Elijah, when he interceded with God against Israel? Lord, Thy prophets have they slain, Thine altars have they overthrown, and I am left alone, and they are seeking my life” (Rom. xi. 2, 3).

Elijah reckoned, as others have reckoned since, without the Lord:--

“But what saith the answer of God to Him? I have left me seven thousand men who indeed have not bowed a knee unto Baal” (Rom. xi. 4).

Elijah was therefore mistaken in supposing that even in that fearful period of Israel’s history the end of the nation had come. The words which follow emphasize the same truth upon us with regard to the Pentecostal period. Up to the time of writing Rom. xi. Israel had not been “cast away,” the reason being the same as in Isaiah i. and in I Kings xix. We do not give it in our own words, for the whole argument, question, illustration and answer are here before us:--

“Even so (thus, in like manner) in the present season also there is a remnant according to an election of grace” (Rom. xi. 5).

This elect remnant is prominent throughout the Acts, and is contrasted with the

remainder of the nation. It is false to fact and to true interpretation to make the apostle's "present season" mean the year 1913; *he meant* the time then before him, while God's mercy still lingered, and before "wrath came upon them to the uttermost." The "remnant" and the "rest" are again contrasted in verse 7. If we leave out of our reckoning the divine argument of these first seven verses, we shall be unable rightly to understand what follows. Who are meant by "they" who "stumble" in verse 11? Who are meant by "them" who are "cast away" in verse 15? The nation of Israel, say some, and saying so dispose of the whole question in one sweep, arguing to their own satisfaction that Israel was set aside some years before Acts xxviii.

Keeping in mind what we have already seen, we shall perceive that those who "stumbled" and were "cast away" were the "rest," and that the remnant according to the election of grace maintained the position of the people before God for the time. This is clearly stated in verse 17. If they are right who have attempted to discredit the teaching concerning Acts xxviii. being the time when Israel was set aside, they ought to read in Rom. xi. 17, 18 that the olive tree was cut down at the root, or plucked up by the roots, at this time. What do we find, however? Something different from what we might have expected. The bulk of the apostasizing nation is spoken of as "*some of the branches,*" the remnant according to election being still considered as the *olive tree* still rooted, into which the Gentiles were grafted. That is to say, that *no change*, other than the lopping off of "some of the branches," and the grafting in of others, had as yet taken place. A tree is not cut down nor destroyed by the cutting off of "*some of the branches,*" and the fact that into that tree other alien branches had been grafted betokened life—yea the word is "root and *fatness* of the olive tree."

You ask, Why were the branches broken off? The Scripture says, "because of unbelief." Those addressed by the apostle "stood by faith" and were warned that just as these of Israel had forfeited their peculiar privileges through unbelief, so the Gentiles during this same period would also lose the like privileges in the same way. This does not refer to "the love of God which is in Christ Jesus," for "nothing" could separate from that, it refers to dispensational privilege. The difference between standing in grace and dispensational privilege is clearly seen by reading Rom. iii. 1, 2 and 9. "What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? *Much every way.*" This is purely a question of dispensational privilege. "What then? are we better than they? *No, in no wise.*" This is a matter of sin and salvation.

Israel's "advantage" and "profit" are given at length in Rom. ix. 4, 5; these were forfeited through unbelief, and are in view in Rom. xi. Mercy rejoices against judgment throughout this chapter, dark though it may appear. The stumbling of Israel was not "that they should fall," but that salvation might come unto the Gentiles. The God Who cut out "some of the branches" "is able to graft them in again." Election is written large over this wonderful people. Jacob was chosen instead of Esau, without any reference to "either good or evil" (Rom. ix. 11). The remnant stood by faith during the trying period covered by the Acts, because they were "the election," the Gentiles believed because "afore prepared unto glory" (Rom. ix. 23, 24) and the ultimate destiny of "all Israel" (xi. 26) is based upon the selfsame elective grace.

The very ones who as branches were broken off are defined in verse 28 “as concerning the gospel *enemies* for your sakes,” these selfsame enemies “as touching the election are *beloved* for the fathers’ sakes.” Why? “For the gifts and calling of God are *without change of mind*.” There is, behind all, the unchanging God of love and grace. “For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all.” Here you have the whole nation spoken of now not “cast away,” but looking forward to a future restoration.

Rom. ix.-xi. teaches exactly the opposite of the statement quoted above, and the failure to view the remnant as God viewed it (namely as the olive tree), the failure to take God’s estimate, “*some* of the branches,” has led some to think it says all the branches, the stock and root as well. We cannot discover the “significant fact,” and believe more firmly than before that the longsuffering of God waited until the all-day conference of Paul with the elders at Rome, and that it was then that the Pentecostal dispensation ended. The firstfruits (Rom. xi. 16) were a pledge of future harvest, and that harvest shall surely come; meanwhile, between the period of the end of Acts and “the end of the age - the harvest,” God has put into operation an hitherto unrevealed secret which has no reference whatever to the olive tree of Israelitish privilege.

With regard to the other questions raised, we must consider them more briefly. Dealing with the argument from silence the speaker above quoted said:--

“The epistle does not use certain words concerning the coming of the Lord, nor tell us that He is coming at all. Are we to conclude that the Lord is not coming? . . . . Further, I do not find any reference to the Holy Spirit in the epistle to the Colossians. Is there no Holy Spirit, no doctrine of the Holy Spirit for us to-day because there is no reference to it in the Colossians letter? I think, brethren, this argument from silence must be dismissed.”

The argument, however, is not as represented in these words, neither can it be so easily dismissed. When the reader knows that the subject of the conference was entitled, “*The epistles of Paul in connection with the parousia, the epiphaneia, and the apocalupsis of our Lord’s coming*,” he will see that much vital truth is brought to light by considering the presence or absence of either of these words. The usage or non-usage of the word *parousia* (coming) in Paul’s epistles is striking. He uses it repeatedly in I Thess., II Thess., and I Cor. in reference to the Lord’s coming, but *never* uses it when speaking of the Lord’s coming *after* Acts xxviii. The same phenomenon is observed with reference to *apocalupsis* (revelation). *Parousia* links the hope of the Pentecostal believers to the “coming” of Matt. xxiv., and *apocalupsis* links that same hope with the revelation of the Lord as set forth in the Apocalypse, in the Book of the Revelation. *Epiphaneia* used alone does not occur before Acts xxviii., the reference in II Thess. ii. 8 is with reference to the *parousia*, and not of the “appearing” used by itself. II Thess. ii. 8 speaks of “the appearing of the *parousia*,” Titus ii. 13 of “the appearing of the glory,” already explained in Col. iii. 4. These are “significant facts,” which cannot be lightly dismissed.

Further, it must be remembered that Colossians supplements Ephesians, as Ephesians does Colossians. No one has been so absurd as to say that silence in *one* epistle is a basis of argument. This was our brother's man of straw, which alas seemed conclusive to many. *We* have contended that the epistles of Paul are divided into *two sets*, those written after Acts xxviii. having a distinct message, differing not only in degree but also in kind from those written before Acts xxviii.

The speaker further asked a question, "Is it not a *very significant fact* that the Jews have a greater prominence in the epistle than in any other of Paul's writings, save the epistle to the Romans?" Here is another "very significant fact." The first is that several years before the end of the Acts, and consequently before the writing of Ephesians, Israel was set aside, the second is that though set aside they are more prominent in Ephesians than in any other epistle excepting Romans. Strange "facts" these. Our position is that in Romans the Jew is everywhere prominent because Israel had NOT been set aside, but that they are not taken into account in Ephesians because they had then been set aside.

We do not know how our brother makes these two contradictory yet "significant facts" harmonize, and we do not believe there is any more truth in his second statement than in his first.

The following "facts" are supplied by a concordance. "*Jew*," in Romans, eleven occurrences, in I Cor., eight, in II Cor., once, in Gal., five, in I Thess., once, and in Col., once. Evidently we have not struck the right word here, for Ephesians does not even contain the word. Let us try the word "*Israel*," in Romans, eleven occurrences, in I Cor., once, in II Cor., once, in Gal., once, and in Eph., once. Ephesians does certainly *appear* under this heading, but it certainly does not rise above the other epistles.

*Israelite*, in Romans, twice, and in II Cor., once. Let us search further, perhaps we have not lighted upon the word, which when discovered will show how exceedingly Jewish the epistle to the Ephesians really is.

*Circumcision*, in Romans, fifteen occurrences, in I Cor., once, in Gal., seven, in Eph., once, in Phil., once, in Col., four times, and in Titus, once. *To circumcise*, in I Cor., twice, in Gal., six times, and in Col., once. Still we seem to have failed to establish the "very significant fact." Let us try the usage of the "Fathers." *Abraham*, in Romans, nine times, in II Cor., once, and in Gal., nine. *Isaac*, in Romans, twice, and in Gal., once. *Jacob*, in Romans, twice. *Moses*, in Romans, four times, in I Cor., twice, in II Cor., three times, and in II Tim., once.

Our search seems to lead us further away from the conclusions of our brother—the references will have to be overwhelming great soon, or we shall be obliged to "dismiss" the idea in the same way that we do the theory of the evolutionist regarding the missing link—often spoken of and taken for granted, but never produced in evidence. Let us try the city which figures so largely in Israel's history and which was destroyed when Israel was set aside. *Jerusalem*, in Romans, four times, in I Cor., once, and in Gal., four times. We can spare no more space. We fail to establish by this method the idea that Ephesians

gives the Jew greater prominence than any other Pauline epistle save Romans.

It must be evident to all who have read so far that the Jew with all connected with him is abundantly evident in those epistles written before Acts xxviii., but that he becomes a very small quantity afterwards. If we examine the passages in Ephesians it will be found that even when the Jew is spoken of at all it is only set in contrast with the exceedingly more glorious position of the Gentile under the dispensation of the mystery.

Where is the prominence of the Jew in Eph.2:12, “being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel”? The passage tells the Gentiles what they once were in order to let them see by the contrast the grace and glory of their high calling. The context of the passage will emphasize its teaching. Its arrangement is suggestive also:--

- A | Gentiles in the flesh; called uncircumcision.
- B | Without Christ.
- C | Aliens from the commonwealth of Israel.
- C | Strangers from the covenants of promise.
- B | Having no hope.
- A | Without God in the world.

The passage which follows goes on to show that now the Gentile has a position which was not possible before the revelation of the mystery, the middle wall has been abolished, a new man has been made, they are no more strangers and foreigners, but are fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God. This is very different from the position of being “a wild olive branch” grafted in. This is a new order of equality, further explained in Eph. iii. 1-9, specially noting verse 6. Other parts of the epistle place this citizenship in the *heavenly places* where the commonwealth of Israel *never was* placed. These two passages (Eph. ii. 11, 12), the only references to the Jew, are *negative* in character, and forbid any approach to the conclusions put forward as quoted above.

How does the epistle to the Ephesians deal with the law, or the Old Testament Scriptures? Perhaps there is such an overwhelming abundance of quotations that all we have hitherto seen will be put in the shade when we consider this aspect. Let us read through the epistle. Everything is new in the first chapter. *Not a single quotation* from the Old Testament there. The second chapter likewise is revelation without reference to the Old Testament, until we get to verse 17 where a reference to the ministry of Christ occurs which of necessity goes back in time. In verse 20 the precious fact that the church of the mystery is founded upon the selfsame chief corner stone as lies beneath the purpose of the kingdom—yea of all God’s purposes—is not peculiarly Jewish. Chapter iii. contains no quotation, and chapter iii. concludes the purely doctrinal portion. Chapter iv.-vi. contain a few quotations which the reader should turn up and consider as before the Lord.

One thing more. The above quoted speaker says of I Thess. iv. and Phil. iii., “Do they not synchronize and refer to the same thing?” I Thessalonians is full of the hope of the *parousia*. That is explained in Matt. xxiv. as being after the tribulation. I Thess. iv. is

connected with the hope of Israel by the archangel, for the Bible knows but one—namely Michael—and he stands “for the children of *thy people* (the church of the mystery or Israel?), and then shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation. . . . and many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake” (Dan. xii.).

Here we read of the great tribulation, and the resurrection of the sleeping dead, just as we do in I Thess. iv. and v. It is a great mistake to say that the Thessalonians had nothing to do with the day of the Lord—the reason why the apostle had no need to write to them about times and seasons was a very obvious one—they knew perfectly; they knew that the day of the Lord will come as a thief. Knowing this they will be unlike the unwatchful and drunken world, it will not overtake them *as a thief*; it does not say, however, that they would not be overtaken by that day at all. II Thessalonians was written to the selfsame people as I Thessalonians. There they were taught concerning the rise of antichrist, of the coming of the Lord in flaming fire taking vengeance, of deliverance from tribulation. What is there in common between all this and Phil. iii.?

In Phil. iii. our citizenship is said to be IN HEAVEN. The hope of I Thess. iv. was to meet the Lord in the air. This word “meet” surely requires no laboured explanation. Did the brethren who went out to meet Paul in Acts xxviii. 15 stay outside Rome, or did they accompany him on his journey? Did the five wise virgins who heard the cry, “Go ye out to meet him,” delay the bridegroom in the journey, or did they accompany him to the wedding feast? The hope of I Thess. iv. is that joyful meeting of the Lord as He descends to this earth. Phil. iii. on the other hand looks to that heavenly manifestation of glory which precedes this descent (Col. iii. 4 “in glory,” Titus ii. 17 “of the glory”).

The one remaining subject—the question of the judgment seat of Christ—is far too important to be dealt with here; the positive teaching concerning this subject will appear (D.V.) in the exposition of the Prison Epistles, particularly Philippians and II Timothy, now running in *The Berean Expositor*. We have given the points raised this amount of consideration because we felt that it was an attempt to discredit the teaching of the Word regarding the dispensational position of Acts xxviii.

The more we love and read the Word, the more positive evidence we accumulate to show that Acts xxviii., and not Pentecost or any other period, is the true dividing line of the dispensations so far as we are concerned, and that there is a marked difference observable, in the most vital manner, between the two sets of Paul’s epistles which this period makes, and that the teaching for us, saved from the Gentiles during a period when the channel of earthly blessing is temporarily closed up, is found in the epistles written by the apostle Paul during the period covered by his imprisonment.

One “very significant fact” is that three years after Paul wrote Rom. ix.-xi. he said that he was bound with a chain for “the hope of *Israel*”; and further, at the same period he performed those signs which “shall follow” the preaching of the gospel as set forth in Mark xvi. These *are* facts, whatever inferences we may draw from them. Let us test all by the only safe, sure guide—the Word of truth.

We do not in any sense challenge the heartfelt love of the Word of those brethren differing from us in our interpretation, neither are we moved in the least by personal feelings, but we dare not allow such statements as have been examined to pass without bringing them to the touchstone of the Word, and we feel that having weighed them in the balances of the sanctuary they are found wanting, and knowing our own failings and shortcomings we earnestly pray for deliverance from that prejudice which unconsciously reads into the Word that which it desires to see, and for that grace which will enable us to study to show ourselves approved *unto* God, workmen having no cause to be ashamed, because we have rightly divided the Word of truth.

**BEREAN EXPOSITOR VOLUME 2 & 3.**  
**p.142**

**The Bible School at Home #5.**  
**I Thessalonians.**

1. What is the hope set before the believer in this epistle?
2. Collect the references to the Lord's coming, and carefully note all that is said regarding the accompaniment of His coming.
3. The word which is translated "coming" is the Greek word *parousia*.  
Trace the usage of this word in the N.T.
4. What do you learn from the absence of this word relative to the second coming in the epistles of Paul written after Acts 28?
5. What do you learn from the fact that the first occurrences of this word *parousia* are in Matt.24?
6. In I Thess.4 we read of the "Archangel." What is his name? Is he connected with the people of Israel or the church? Where do we first read of him, and where last? What does this teach regarding the hope of I Thessalonians?
7. In I Thess.4 the apostle is ministering comfort to sorrowing and bereaved saints. If the saints who have fallen asleep are in a disembodied state, consciously enjoying the presence of the Lord, why did the apostle omit to mention it? Did he forget it? Did he believe it? Does Scripture warrant it?

## Berean Expositor Volume 2 & 3

### The Doctrine of Christ. pp. 21-25

*“And the high priest stood up in the midst and asked Jesus, saying, ‘Answerest Thou nothing? What is it which these witness against Thee?’ But He held His peace and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked Him, and said unto Him, ‘Art Thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?’ And Jesus said, ‘I am’” (Mark xiv. 60, 61).*

Some of our readers may have received during the month of September, 1911, an “Open Letter” addressed to the writer, having reference to the important subject, “The Deity of Christ.”

Several reasons prevented us from answering the “Open Letter,” one being that in our estimation an Open Letter is a most unfair means of dealing with a fellow worker, and that in many instances it savours of the hand of Sanballat (Neh. vi. 5). Our reply may be summarised in the words of Nehemiah, when he declined a conference, “I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down, why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?” Or, in his prayer after he had received the Open Letter, “Now therefore O God, strengthen my hands.”

We desire no personalities to mar our service, but would seek to answer or refrain, in harmony with the silence or answer as recorded in the above quotation from Mark xiv. We shall not advertise the name of the writer of the Open Letter, but knowing that the question of the Deity of Christ is exercising the minds of so many, and that, moreover, the definitions and creeds of Christendom in their wording often exhibit human folly rather than Divine wisdom, we have felt it right to seek to exhibit the teaching of the Word itself, giving as little argument as possible, so that the reader may see for himself what the Scriptures really teach concerning this tremendous theme. In II John 9 we read:--

“Whosoever leadeth forward (*proagōn*) and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God! He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither greet him, for he that biddeth him rejoice hath fellowship with his wicked works.”

Some teach that by the words, “the doctrine of Christ,” we are to understand all that Christ taught. If this be the meaning, there is not a single believer living who comes up to the standard, none fully abide in the teaching, or even a part of that teaching (for example, the Sermon on the Mount). If this be the meaning, fellowship with any saint is at an end, we should have to excommunicate ourselves. Worse than this, the dreadful words, “hath not God,” would be uttered over every believer. The words, “the doctrine of Christ,” however, do not mean the teaching which Christ gave, but the doctrine of the

Scriptures concerning Christ Himself. This can be seen by turning to I John ii. 22, 23 and iv. 3.

The evil in I John iv. 3 is defined as a denial that “Jesus Christ *has come* in the flesh,” whereas the evil of II John 7 is that “many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ *is coming* in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.” The doctrine of Christ, therefore, has reference not to His teaching, but to the teaching of the Scriptures concerning Himself, both in relation to His first and second advent. How solemn the warning of verse 9, “Whoso leadeth forward.” Think of the “forward movements” of to-day. The modern “Gospels,” the “Humanism,” as well as its kindred “Spiritism,” every one of them seeking to degrade the Lord Jesus Christ to the level of a mere human teacher and example.

Dispensational truth, as compared with the teaching of the times, may be truthfully called, “a leading forward,” but the hall-mark upon the final revelation of God (the revelation which the apostles were not able to bear while our Lord was on earth), is indicated in the words, “*He shall glorify Me*” (John xvi.). In no part of the Scriptures do we find the glory of Christ so prominent a theme, and so transcendently magnificent in its heavenly majesty, as in the epistles of the mystery, the truth for the present time. Not only does the Epistle of John speak concerning Christ’s Person in the 4<sup>th</sup> chapter, but we read in the 5<sup>th</sup> chapter:--

“This is He Who came through water and blood, and it is the Spirit Who beareth witness, because the Spirit is the truth; for three there are that bear witness, the Spirit, and the water and the blood. And these three are with a view to the unity” (I John v. 6-8).

This passage, like the rest of Scripture, has suffered at the hand of believer and unbeliever alike. A mistaken zeal, which sees the “Church” everywhere, robs the Saviour of this three-fold witness, in order to bolster up self-devised systems of Church Fellowship. The *Spirit* is supposed to represent the “gifts” as in I Cor. xii. The *water*, to represent Believer’s Baptism, and the *blood*, the Lord’s Supper. This is supposed to be the “threefold cord” of Church Unity. There is certainly plenty to *do* and *see*, ordinances to be performed, and “gifts” to be hoped for, but *these* are not the “bond of peace” of the only unity worthy the name (Eph. iv.).

Simon’s baptism (Acts viii.), the Lord’s table of I Cor. xi. 18-34, the Spirit’s gifts of Heb. vi. 4, 5, witness to the *divisions of the flesh*, rather than “the unity of the Spirit.” This passage, however, has nothing to do with the Church—it is essentially the “the doctrine of Christ.” In verse 9 we have the Scriptural interpretation of the passage, it is “the witness of God concerning His Son.”

John was bearing testimony against the blasphemy of the Gnostics. They taught that upon a *man*, Jesus, there came the “anointing,” the “Christ,” at His baptism, but that this “anointing,” or “Christ,” left Him before His death on the cross, leaving a *man*, Jesus, to die, thereby denying the Scriptures, which not only emphasise the *manhood* of the Redeemer, but which also say, “The church of *God* which *He* hath purchased with His own blood.” We may now understand why John so definitely says that Jesus was the

Christ before baptism, and after death, “This is He Who came through water and blood, Jesus the Christ.” He was Jesus the Christ before His baptism. A reference to John i. 32-34 will show how vividly this is portrayed in I John v. All the words of verse 34 occur in this epistle, and in the same order. The witness that Jesus was the Christ is in the same manner upheld before, at and after the crucifixion (cf. Matt. xvi. 16; xxvii. 54; John xx. 28, and Rom. i. 4).

The *Spirit* of truth (Matt. iii. 16), the *water* of Jordan (Matt. iii. 13; John i. 31, 32), and the *blood* of the Cross (Acts xx. 28), are the three-fold witness to the Person of Jesus the Christ throughout the whole of that wondrous walk on earth. I John v. 9 declares that this is the witness of God concerning His Son, and verse 10 breaks in with the antichrist’s denial of I John iv. by shewing that they who reject this witness “make God a liar.” Verses 9 and 11 link the truth concerning the Person and work of Christ with the believers’ assurance of eternal life:--

“The witness of God is this, that He hath borne witness concerning His Son” (verse 9).

“The witness is this, that God hath given unto us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life” (verse 11).

Here the apostle gathers up his argument. Chapter i. 1-3 speaks of Christ as “that eternal life.” Christ is our life, and to know this is to have assurance. The final words of I John v. clinch the two-fold teaching of the epistle:--

“We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. *This One is the true God and eternal life.*”

Here we see how the two-fold theme is linked together. He that denies the Son hath not God, and he that hath not the Son hath not life. Let us notice the force of the final words of John’s first epistle. This One, Who is Jesus the Christ, Who came in the flesh, this One is “the true God and eternal life.”

In John xvi. 13-15 and xvii. 1-5 are words which must be remembered in this consideration. “He shall glorify Me” were the words of the promise. This glory is specially connected with the work of redemption. “I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do, and now, O Father, glorify Thou Me” (cf. Also Phil. ii. 6-11 and Heb. xii. 2). In John xvii. 3 Christ links eternal life with the knowledge of God the Father as the only true God, while the Holy Spirit in I John v. 20 as definitely links eternal life with the knowledge of the Son as the only true God.

The Open Letter referred to above says:--

“You have taken the honour, the position, and attributes of my Father—God the Creator—and have given them to His creature and Servant-Son, the man Christ Jesus.”

We believe that to the fair minded reader, a comparison of John xvii. 1-5 with I John v. 20 will shew that this charge must also be laid against the apostle John (and the Holy Spirit Who inspired the epistle), for He too gives the title and honour of God the Father to Jesus Christ the Son; *both* are called “the true God,” and a knowledge of the Father and

the Son are vitally linked with eternal life. These verses should make all who hesitate to ascribe equal honour to the Son as to the Father consider the validity of their claim to eternal life.

The confusion between the great truth that there is one God, and the revelation of the “Persons,” as related to creation and redemption, is to be deplored. We must rid ourselves of the creeds and traditions of men, but we must “hold fast that which is good,” and realize that the Father and the Son equally share the attributes of Deity. The title “Son of God” of course has reference to the mediatorial office of Christ, and sometimes it is difficult for us to distinguish the line of demarcation between His true Deity (“the true God”) and the voluntarily assumed humanity, “Christ come in the flesh.” Nevertheless, it is for us to believe that which is written. “Who by searching can find out God unto perfection?” “God is Spirit,” and has revealed Himself to men in a way that fills the Scriptures with wonder. It is a delight to study passages of Scripture wherein all the attributes of Deity ascribed to the Father, to Jehovah, or to the Creator as such, are equally ascribed to the Son of God, and which effectually give the lie to the words of the Open Letter, “His creature and Servant-Son,” for while the Lord Jesus was man, born of woman, yet He was, nevertheless, according to Holy Writ, “the true God and eternal life.”

The title “Son of God” is used by many to belittle the glory of the Lord Jesus. It is clear from the Scriptures that the Jews understood this title to be a blasphemous claim to Divine attributes. They understood him to claim *equality with God* (John v. 18); and to *make Himself God* (John x. 33).

Some may object and say, “the Jews misunderstood Him, and we must not build a doctrine upon such a frail foundation.” Did they misunderstand Him? It would have been easy for the Lord to have corrected their mistake. It was indeed imperative that He should do so, not only for Himself and for the glory of His Father, but for the sake of these men, who by their mistaken views (if such they were), were thirsting for His blood.

The Lord did not mitigate in one iota the fulness of His claim. He allowed it to remain in all its repulsiveness to the Jewish mind, and died at last upon the cross, giving no sign that His claim had been misunderstood. The Lord Jesus accepted the Jewish interpretation of the title Son of God, and sealed its acceptance with His blood.

## **The Doctrine of Christ. pp. 108-109**

“A Scriptural answer is asked for the following question: If Christ had no being before birth, when did He Who *was rich* become poor for our sakes? When *after* Bethlehem was He *rich*, and when did He *become* poor?” (quoted by Critic-see page 17-from Editor’s reply).

Psalm ii. 8: “Ask of Me, and I will give thee the nations for thine *inheritance*, and the uttermost parts for thy possession.”

John xvii. 9: “I make not request for the world (inheritance).” Satan makes the offer of the kingdoms of the world, but Jesus would not take them from his hand, but renounced them: the way of redemption was by way of the cross. Christ was the “heir of all things,” but he beggared himself of his inheritance! The “world inheritance” was his for the asking, but he would not take it up with death upon it, but he would first of all redeem man from the power of death and the grave, and this he could only do by dying, and in dying he destroyed him that had the power of death.

We have quoted the above from a letter received on the subject of the Deity of Christ. Whilst seeking to respect the convictions of others, we feel that the above answer cannot do anything but harm to the position of those who adopt such teaching.

Psa. ii. 8 is referred to to answer the question quoted at the commencement, but Psa. ii. is quoted by Peter and by Paul with exclusive reference to *resurrection*. Acts xiii. 30-37 has entirely to do with resurrection and its result, and in verse 33 we read, “He hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second Psalm, “Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee.” It is upon this basis, namely, of resurrection, that the words follow, “ask of Me and I will give Thee,” &c.

It is utterly untrue to say that the Lord Jesus could have scripturally “asked” for the inheritance before resurrection, and this being so, we again ask, “When, *after* Bethlehem, was He *rich*? and when did He *become* poor?” We are sorry to have to write in this fashion, but the honour of the Lord must come before our desire for peace, or the consideration of other persons’ feelings. We earnestly ask those who favour the position advocated by the one whose reply we have quoted to reconsider such an answer and see whether it really is Scriptural.

The statements made in the reply are in measure true so far as they refer to redemption, but they contain no answer to the question. Born at Bethlehem, brought up at Nazareth, living for thirty years as an obscure mechanic’s son, “He *became* poor,” but “He *was* rich.” When?

**Help by the Way.**  
**The Greek Article.**  
**pp. 66-67**

The nature of this magazine, and its limited size, precludes the idea of attempting to teach Greek. Many of our readers have, however, commenced this interesting study and so we intend, as occasion offers, to insert a page which, while being of interest to all, will be particularly useful for those commencing N.T. Greek.

**The article “the.”**

Some, through not realizing the accuracy and delicacy of the Greek language, are apt to pass over with scant attention the little word “the.” The A.V. on numerous occasions omits the article where it should be inserted, and inserts it where it should be omitted.

“*The* (one) pinnacle of the temple” becomes “*a* pinnacle” (as though there were many). Instead of “*the* teacher of Israel,” we read of Nicodemus that he was but “*a* teacher.” “*The* virgin,” namely, the one foretold by Isaiah, is translated in Matt. i. 23, “*a* virgin,” thereby losing all the emphasis of fulfilled prophecy. The unwarranted insertion of the article in John iv. 27, “*the* woman,” instead of “*a* woman,” changes the ground of the disciples’ wonder. They knew nothing of the woman’s history. Their surprise was that the Lord (a Jew and a man), should thus freely be speaking to any woman.

Many of us have realized the importance of the article or its omission in such expressions, “The Spirit”—the Giver, and “spirit”—His gifts. The following summary may be useful:--

**The article.**

- (1) Definite. The, that, this. “*The* virgin.” “*This* persuasion” (Gal. v. 8).
- (2) Explanative. “The adoption, *that is to say*, the redemption of our body” (Rom. viii. 23).
- (3) It denotes a class or kind. “*The* poor, *the* man” (mankind, as we say).
- (4) It indicates the subject of a sentence, “*The* Word was God.”
- (5) When the article is present it *demonstrate*, “*That* (Gk. *the*) good thing” (II Tim.1:14).

When the article is absent it *describes* the essence or character.

John i. 14. “*The* Word (demonstrative—one particular person) was made flesh” (i.e. partook of flesh and its characteristics, sin excepted).

We could not say, “The Word was made A flesh,” for that would be absurd, yet many, for their own purposes, translate a similar construction, “The Word was A God,” because the absurdity is not so apparent.

The article is continually used before abstract nouns, such as “repentance,” “righteousness.” The idea is that the abstract word is present before the mind’s eye. The article also shows when words are used in apposition. “*The church which is the body of Him*” (Eph. i. 22, 23). The church and the body are here mutually inclusive.

In the construction of phrases the article is continually employed. There is no word “son,” or “things,” in the phrases, “The (son) of Zebedee,” or “The (things) of Caesar,” “son” and “things” being represented simply by “the” (masculine singular), and “the” (neuter plural).

### **Help by the Way. The Greek Prepositions. pp. 89-90**

“The *prepositions*, in their variety and delicacy, are a most important element of the Greek language” (Rev. A. C. Kendrick, D.D.).

“The usage of the *prepositions* is a matter of no less importance in the interpretation of the New Testament than in the general study of the Greek language” (Rev. T. S. Green, M.A.).

*What is a preposition?* A preposition is a word “placed before” a noun, or its equivalent, forming a qualifying or adverbial phrase. *What is the underlying idea of the prepositions?* Whatever figurative or secondary idea may be conveyed by the usage of the prepositions, the simple, primary, basic idea may be said to be that of (a) rest, or (b) motion. Motion covers the idea of “direction,” for direction implies a motion *towards* or a motion *from* a given point.

*The prepositions arranged under their heading of rest and motion.*

1. *Rest*.—In, *en*; by the side of, *para*; on, *epi*; above, *huper*; under, below, *hupo*; between, among, with, *meta*; before, *pro*; behind, after, *meta*; on the top of, upon, *ana*; around, about, *peri*; over, against, opposite, *anti*.
- 2.
3. *Motion* (direction or motion towards a point).—Into, to, *eis*; towards, down, *kata*; towards, *pros*; upon, *epi*; near by, alongside, *para*; under, *hupo*.
- 4.
5. *Motion* (direction or motion from a point).—Out of, *ek*; from, *apo*; from under, *hupo*; down from, *kata*; from beside, *para*; through, *dia*.

It will be observed that some prepositions which occur in No.1 occur again in No.2, or No.3, and the natural question arises, how can one word mean both rest and motion?

If the preposition is followed by the *Dative* case it usually denotes the primary idea of *rest*, if followed by the *Accusative* case it usually means motion *towards*, and if by the

*Genitive* case the idea of motion *from*, or *out of*. We will endeavour to explain the meaning of these cases as we come to them in the usage of the preposition.

Notice the way in which the preposition makes *all the difference* in the following sentences:--

I am going *into* the room; I am going *out of* the room; I am going *beside* the room; *over* the room; *round* the room, &c., &c.

When we come to examine the teaching of the New Testament we shall find that a thorough grasp of these simple words will be of the utmost importance. We have spoken of the primary or basic idea, having reference to rest or motion. When the subject of writing is placed upon a higher plane (the plane of doctrine for example), the simple idea of “out of,” “into,” &c., is enlarged and takes a figurative signification.

One example must suffice; *peri*, meaning “around,” comes to mean “concerning.” The primary idea is always present, and is beautifully felt in such a passage as, “He was not that light, but was sent to bear witness *concerning* (*peri*) that light” (John i. 8). John’s witness had for its glorious centre “that light”—Christ. His witness revolved “around” Him, keeping Him ever central. This simple illustration must suffice for the time, but we hope to be able to show in the usage of each preposition the importance of remembering the initial idea of the word as set out in this necessarily dry introductory paper.

### **Help by the Way. The Greek Prepositions. pp. 104-105**

In our last paper we sought to show the primary, radical idea of the prepositions, looking at them as a whole. In this paper we commence dealing with them singly. We shall endeavour “to point out with precision the distinctive *primary* power of each, from which all its *secondary* significations emanate as from a common centre; and to trace to this (primary meaning) all the various meanings the preposition may have assumed” (*Winer*).

*Anti*.—The primary, local and literal meaning of *anti* as referring to place is “opposite,” “before,” “over against.” Figuratively and secondarily it means “as the equivalent of,” “for,” “instead of,” “correspondency.” So in Matt. v. 38 we read, “an eye *for* an eye.” The idea of exchange or barter, the giving of one thing *for* another, is clearly seen in Heb. xii. 16, where Esau “for (*anti*) one morsel of meat sold his birthright.” Yet more striking is the usage in Heb. xii. 2, speaking of the Lord Jesus, “Who for (*anti*) the joy that was set before Him endured the cross.” Here the meaning is that the joy of resurrection glory was set *over against* the shame and death of the cross.

The idea of something *equivalent* is clearly seen in Rom. xii. 17, "Render no man evil for (*anti*) evil." Matt. ii. 22 shows the force of the word, "Archelaus did reign. . . . *in the room of his father Herod.*"

The word *anti* enters into composition with other words forming some important theological and doctrinal terms, e.g.:-

Antitype (*antitupon*).—I Pet. iii. 21 translates the word, "the like figure." The resurrection of the Lord and the typical ordinance of baptism were antitypical. They were to the Jewish believer what the ark and the flood were to Noah and his family when they "saved themselves from that untoward generation."

The word occurs again in Heb. ix. 24, "for Christ is not entered into the Most Holy Place (figure of speech—plural of majesty) made with hands, which is the antitype of the true, but into heaven itself." Here we learn that the tabernacle which Moses built was but a copy or a type of the real heavenly holiest of all. Incidentally we learn the meaning of the word "true." "True" often means that which is shadowy, unreal, typical, as well as the opposite of that which is false.

Antichrist (*antichristos*).—This word, rightly understood, throws light on the character of the Man of Sin. He is *anti* (instead of) Christ before he becomes openly against Christ. The travesty of the resurrection in Rev. xiii. 12 is of the same character. The false christs throughout the age have always endeavoured to substitute themselves and their doctrines for Christ and the truth. Perhaps the most precious usage of *anti* is found in Matt. xx. 28 and I Tim. ii. 6. "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life (soul-*psuche*) a ransom for (*anti*) many." What a Substitute! Speaking of the man Christ Jesus as the One Mediator, I Tim. ii. 6 says, "Who gave Himself a ransom on behalf of all (*antilutron huper pantōn*), to be testified in due time." Without entering into a battle of words with those who do not like the term, we cannot refrain from emphasizing the claim which the doctrine of "substitution" has upon the believer, both as regards his own grateful acknowledgment, and its place in the testimony of the gospel of the grace of God.

Let the reader search out the usages of this little word, always bearing in mind the primary idea already noted. There are many other words with which *anti* is combined, and we would suggest that a carefully tabulated index of these prepositions would form an invaluable help to the fuller understanding of the "words which the Holy Ghost teacheth."

**Help by the Way.**  
**The Greek Prepositions.**  
**pp. 122-124**

The reader of this page are reminded that we are not attempting to teach Greek. All that we can hope to do is to point out some of the more obvious things, leaving the deeper study for those who may feel inclined to take up this extremely valuable subject for themselves. Last time we touched upon the preposition *anti*. Another preposition which will repay careful study is *apo*.

*Apo* is followed by what is called the Genitive case, the case which speaks of origin, often represented in English by the insertion of the word “of” or “from.” Its Latin equivalent *ab*, *abs* forms a part of many English words. The first meaning, implying motion, is *from*, *away from*, *down from*. The second meaning, where motion is not so emphatic, *far from*, *at a distance from*.

A meaning yet more remote passes from the primary idea of movement to that of time, and then is represented by *from*, *after or since*. Let us see something of its meaning by turning to the writings of the New Testament. Literal removal is plainly seen in Matt. xxviii. 2 and Luke xxiv. 2, “rolled *away*”; Matt. vii. 23, “depart *from* Me.” In these passages it will be observed that the preposition *apo* occurs in combination with the verb, as well as being used by itself. This usage lends emphasis to the teaching of Col. ii. 20, where the verb “to die” is not *thneskō*, but *apothneskō*, and so makes the complete *separation* from the old order of things the more marked.

It will be remembered that there is an important distinction to be observed between the doctrine of the “peace *of* God.” In Rom. i. 7 we have yet another aspect of peace, namely, “peace *from* (*apo*) God.” Here *apo* indicates the origin from which this blessing flows. Peace comes from God, He is its efficient Cause. The familiar word “apostle” is taken straight from the Greek. It means “one sent *from* another.” Christ Himself is spoken of as “the Apostle,” the sent One, in Heb. iii. 1, and this claim is emphasized in the Gospel of John. No apostle was ever made by man, his title declared that he had been sent by the Lord Himself. So called “apostolic succession” is fittingly connected with the “*imposition* of hands.”

Turning again to the usage of *apo* we find the transition from the idea of place to that of time in such an expression as “*from* a child,” that is, “ever since” you were a child (II Tim. iii. 15). This note of time occurs in that important passage, Eph. iii., where the apostle claims the exclusive stewardship of the present dispensation. In verse 9 he refers to that remote period “*before* the age times,” using *apo* with the meaning of “since.” “And to enlighten all (as to) what (is) the dispensation of the mystery, which hath been hidden away (*apokruptō*) since the ages (*apo tōn aiōniōn*) by the God Who created all things.” J. N. Darby says, “‘from the ages,’ but in the sense of ‘the period lapsed’ not ‘hidden from them’.” The preposition here tells us that since the ages the mystery had been hidden away by God, and was not made known until revealed to the apostle of the Gentiles. Col. i. 26 is a parallel passage. The hiding away since the ages and since the

generations being placed in contrast with the words, “but now made manifest.”

Turning briefly to a few examples of the use of *apo* in combination, we notice:--

*Apekduomai* and *apekdusis*.—“Having stript off the old man” (Col. iii. 9). This “stripping off” is no work of man, it looks back to the sacrifice of Calvary, for the very same word is used in Col. ii. 15, translated “spoiled.” Nor is this all, not only is the glorious truth of the new creation connected with the triumphant putting off of principalities and powers, but Col. ii. 11 declares that in the death of Christ we are circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands “in the stripping off of the body of the flesh in the circumcision of Christ.”

*Apokaluptō* and *apokalupsis*.—This word, which gives us the title of the last book of the Bible, the Apocalypse, indicates the removal of a veil. The early occurrences of *apokaluptō* (Matt. x. 26; xi. 25, 27 and xvi. 17) testify to the fact that revelation is not a process of reasoning, study or foresight, but, as the contexts of such passages as I Cor. ii. 10, Gal. i. 16 and Phil. iii. 15 declare, it is entirely the work of God. The first clause of the first recorded prayer of the Lord’s prisoner was for “a spirit of wisdom and unveiling” (Eph. i. 17). The “revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ” was the hope during that period covered by the “Acts” (I Cor. i. 7), and of the dispersion (I Pet. i. 7) “the appearing.” This deferred hope of Israel will take place as indicated and described in the book of the Revelation, “when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, taking vengeance.” The word is never used of the hope of the church in the prison epistles.

Further, unless the book of the Revelation has been sadly mis-named, the orthodox interpretation must give place to something more worthy of the title. No book seems to have been so enveloped in mystery by tradition as this book, which purports to be an “unveiling.”

*Aphiemi*.—This word means to send away or dismiss, Matt. xiii. 36; to give up the life, Matt. xxvii. 50; to put away, as in divorce, I Cor. vii. 11. How striking is the force of this complete dismissal and divorcement when we remember that this word is translated in the A.V. 47 times by the word “forgive,” e.g., Rom. iv. 7, I John i. 9; ii. 12.

*Aphesis*.—This related word is rendered in the A.V. by “deliverance,” once, “forgiveness,” six times, “liberty,” once, and “remission,” nine times. Thanks be to God for the complete separation from our sin, its defilement and its curse taught by the little word *apo*.

The reader should examine such words as *apostasia*, *apoluō*, *apokeima*, *apokathistemi*, *apostellō*, etc. The epistles particularly should be studied, and the bearing of *apo* upon doctrine, practice and hope carefully noted.

**Helps by the Way.**  
**The Greek Prepositions.**  
**pp. 139-141**

*Dia*--The primary idea of this preposition, governing the genitive case, is expressed by the word "through," and this idea may be seen in the English words which contain it, e.g., diagonal, diameter, diaphragm, &c. The following passages will suffice to show this local meaning of "going through," viz., Matt. xii. 1; xix. 24; John iv. 4; I Cor. x. 1.

The transition is simple from this idea of motion through to the secondary idea of a channel or medium through which the desired result is attained. Examples abound; we cite only a few: John i. 7; Acts i. 2; xiii. 38; Rom. iii. 24; Eph. ii. 8; Col. i. 20. Something is willed and something is accomplished, and the medium through which the will is carried into effect is expressed by the word *dia*. *Winer* observes:--

*"Dia* but rarely indicates the *causa principalis* (I Cor. i. 9), in other words, is but rarely equivalent to *hupo* or *para*. Even when it does indicate the *causa principalis* it does not denote the author as a source of an act as such, but strictly as the individual through whose agency or favour, &c., one has obtained something (without specifying whether it flows *from* him directly or indirectly).

The mediatorial work of Christ in its many phases constantly calls for this preposition (see Rom. v. 1; Eph. i. 7; Phil. i. 11, &c.). Such passages as I Cor. xv. 21; Mark ii. 27; I Cor. xi. 9 should be studied to catch the bearing of this preposition upon the teaching, remembering that I Cor. xv. 21 must not be translated without due consideration of, say, the same preposition in I Cor. xi. 9. (Mark ii. 27 and I Cor. xi. 29 have the accusative case - see below). The *ek pisteōs* and the *dia tes pisteōs* of Rom. iii. 30 show "the uncircumcised as justified by the direct and unqualified instrumentality of the identical faith which operates in the case of the circumcised."

Matt. i. 22 (A.V.) reads, "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet." The English reader could not be positive as to whether the prophet spoke or the Lord spoke. The R.V. attends to the meaning of the prepositions more carefully here and reads, "spoken by (*hupo*) the Lord through (*dia*) the prophet." This witness to the verbal inspiration of Scripture is found in (R.V.) Matt. ii. 5, 15, 23; iv. 14; viii. 17; xii. 17, &c., in all which places "through" is a better rendering of *dia* than "by." "With patience" (Rom. viii. 25), if rendered "through patience," would show that patience is the medium whereby faith and hope are enabled to bridge the interval of waiting (see also Heb. xii. 1).

When *dia* is applied to time the basic idea of *motion through* is still retained, and can be felt in the word "during." See "during all their life" (Heb. ii. 15); "during forty days" (Acts i. 3); "during the night" (Acts v. 19). Sometimes the sense demands the word "after," but even then the idea of going through the stated time is retained. "After three days" (Matt. xxvi. 61, so Mark ii. 1; Gal. ii. 1).

*Dia* governing an accusative case indicates primarily the ground of an action, and the aim or end only in a secondary way. Consider Matt. xv. 3; Rev. xii. 11; Rom. iv. 25.

This last passage contains an important truth. The Lord Jesus was not raised again in order to procure justification, but on the ground that the work of redemption was finished on the cross. Hence the rendering, "raised again *because* of our justification," is preferable.

"For. . . 's sake" is a frequent rendering. See Matt. x. 22; xxiv. 22; Rom. xv. 30; II Cor. iv. 5; II Tim. ii. 10; I John ii. 12, &c. *Dia touto* (literally "through this," or "on the ground of this") is translated "therefore."

As examples which will repay careful study, the reader is directed to Rom. iv. 25 (the two cases); John vi. 57; II Tim. ii. 2; I Tim. iv. 14; Rom. iii. 25; iv. 11; xiv. 14; Gal. iv. 13; I Thess. iv. 14; Phil. i. 15. *Dia* in composition is often emphatic and heightens the original meaning, e.g., *katharizō* means to cleanse, *diakatharizō* means to thoroughly cleanse, to cleanse right through.

The reader should consider *diagnōsis*, *diatheke* (in conjunction with *diatithemi*, and *diathemenos*), *diameno*, &c.

**Studies in the Epistles of the Mystery.**  
**Introductory.**  
**pp.74-79**

**Ephesians.**

*“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God,  
and is profitable” (II Tim. iii. 16).*

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

The above quotations supply us with the very important fact that while all Scripture is *for* us, all Scripture is not necessarily *about* us, and that in order to obtain the truth for any particular period, the dispensational dealings of God for the time must be taken into consideration, in other words, Scripture must be rightly divided or apportioned.

There are some who seek to make an argument against this truth out of the fact that so few realize its importance to-day. They use this as an argument against the endeavour to apportion the Scriptures. We must not forget that the prime cause of the confusion everywhere manifest is found in the fact that, even before the apostle Paul died, those who had heard the word forsook him and his message; a Judaistic and philosophic tendency overcame all else; men left this apostle of all spiritual blessings in heavenly places, and became satisfied with ordinances and the externals of a decadent and undispensational religion.

The Scriptural boundary of this dispensation of the mystery is found at Acts xxviii. 25-28, and we now seek grace to examine those epistles, given by inspiration of God and profitable, which are not only written for our learning, but are also addressed *to* us, and written *about* us.

The epistles written by Paul after the setting aside of Israel are Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, I and II Timothy, Titus, Hebrews and Philemon. The epistle to the Hebrews is primarily addressed to the Jewish believers as a word of exhortation and comfort, seeking to lead them, by the contemplation of the present glory of Christ at the right hand of God, outside the camp, if God permit, to all the grace of God revealed for those who believe during this present interval. Hebrews teaches nothing about the “mystery” itself, it supplies the necessary information which a Jewish believer would require to enable him to step out in faith, and attain to the heavenly\* calling, which then became the one hope of the Jewish remnant. Philemon is an epistle from which we may learn much, and although it was addressed to an individual concerning a runaway slave, it conveys many precious lessons for the child of God to-day. The epistles which are particularly of importance to us are the following :-

NOTE \*: This must be distinguished from the calling of the present time—see succeeding articles.

	A   Eph. The One Body; in the heavenlies; apostles, &c., given; their special work. The dispensation of the mystery. Paul specially appointed.	“The perfecting (or re-adjusting) of the saints.”
Teaching having special reference to the members of the One Body.	B   Phil. No mention of the One Body, the Head, Or the fulness. The saints <i>with</i> the bishops and deacons. Adorn the gospel; have the mind of Christ. Heavenly citizenship and hope, “Discern the things that differ.”	“Unto a work of administration.”
	C   Col. Christ the Head of the Body, the fulness, and the riches of the mystery. No bishops or deacons. Warnings against foes. Charged to hold the Head.	“Unto a building up of the Body of Christ.”
	D   Philemon. Personal application of the truth.	
Teaching having special regard to individual servants with respects to their work of administration while the new teaching was being announced.	A   I Tim. “Abide at Ephesus.” Timothy’s special instructions in view of the dispensational change. Bishops and deacons appointed; their special work. The mystery connected with proper worship. Paul specially appointed.	“Till we all come to the unity of the faith--i.e. the full knowledge of the Son of God.”
	B   Titus. Left in Crete to set in order the things lacking. Bishops appointed to maintain the truth against Judaistic opposition. “Adorn the doctrine.” The present hope.	“Unto a perfect Man.”
	C   II Tim. No bishops or deacon now. The truth of the mystery forsaken. “Rightly divide.” “Opposers of the truth.”	“Unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.”

These epistles are too full for any outline to do more than suggest their content and view point. It will be seen that the first three have relation to the great doctrinal bases of the dispensation of the mystery, while the second three have regard to the history of the

“re-adjustment of the saints and the work of administration, the building up of the body of Christ, until believers arrived at the unity of the faith, the knowledge of the Son of God, the perfect Man, the measure of the stature of the fulness of the Christ.”

The 2<sup>nd</sup> epistle to Timothy supplies us with the sad fact that Paul was allowed to see in his closing days the precious truth committed to him forsaken and forgotten, and gives us the last word for our guidance until “that blessed hope” is realized. The heavenly realities remain untouched and unmoved, blessed be God, but the earthly exhibition of these things has all but vanished. There is no church in a local sense on earth, the only way in which believers to-day can exhibit in any measure the blessings of the present dispensation is for them to

“walk worthy of the calling wherewith they have been called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

It is impossible to understand the “unity of the Spirit” until we know, in some degree, the teaching of the first three chapters of Ephesians which precede it. We will now seek to lay before the reader, therefore, some of the precious things which God has made known in this epistle to the Ephesians.

The first thing to notice is that the epistle is divided into two great sections, chapters i.-iii. being doctrinal, and chapters iv.-vi. being practical. This is not only the order of the epistle, it is the divine order in the gospel. Practice is to flow from doctrine. Good works are to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour. The teaching of the mystery must be preceded by the gospel as preached by Paul, which he describe as

“the preaching of Jesus Christ, in harmony with the revelation of the mystery” (Rom. xvi. 25).

The great fundamentals of the epistle to the Romans are reiterated and enforced in these later epistles. One expression may be written across the doctrinal section, and that is, “the riches of His grace.” Everywhere is seen grace abounding, and the great goal towards which the whole is directed is “glory.” Grace as our evangel, and glory as our hope, with mercy and peace to follow us all the days of our life, and love, full, deep, and real as our everlasting portion.

The first two verses of the epistle are introductory in character, the doctrinal section actually commencing at verse 3. We will briefly consider these opening verses, and clear the way for deeper study in our next issue. Following the Greek Text, as used by the Revisers, we read the first two verses as follows:--

“Paul, apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, to the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus, grace to you, and peace, from God our father, and Lord Jesus Christ.”

The two names with which the first inspired epistle of the present dispensation commences are *Paul* the apostle, and *Christ Jesus* his Lord. Here in the epistle to the Ephesians we shall read “the testimony of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of Paul His prisoner” (II Tim. i. 8). May we never be ashamed of this blessed word.

It is interesting to note in what circumstances the apostle, who was originally known as Saul of Tarsus, is first called Paul. The passage which records the change of name is Acts xiii. We quote from “Dispensational Truth”:

“The opening and closing sections of Paul’s ministry, as recorded in the Acts, are very suggestive. In the opening chapter (xiii.) the Jew is smitten with blindness, and the Gentile believes. Moreover, the Gentile’s name is Paulus, and from this moment onwards the apostle to the Gentiles is known by that name too.”

There is perfect harmony between the record of the opening and closing scenes of Paul’s ministry during the Acts, and this tends to emphasize the peculiar character of his commission, e.g.:

A		a		xiii. 11. Judicial blindness foreshadowed.	\	<b>Antioch.</b>
		b		xiii. 12. A typical Gentiles (Paulus) blessed.	}	Not connected
		c		xiii. 14. Paul's independent ministry.	/	with the twelve.
B		xv.-xxi.		Paul's ministry in connection with <b>Jerusalem</b> and the twelve.		
A		a		xxviii. 25-27. Judicial blindness fulfilled.	\	<b>Rome.</b>
		b		xxviii. 28. The Gentiles blessed.	}	Not connected
		c		xxviii. 30, 31. Paul's independent ministry.	/	with the twelve.

The disposition of the subject helps us to see that the ministry of Paul from Acts xv.-xxi. was parenthetical to his real commission. The independent ministry, unassociated with Jerusalem and the twelve, foreshadowed in Acts xiii., is entered on its fulness in the writing of the epistle under consideration. Let it suffice for us to realize that an apostle is one *sent from* another. He is a legate, a representative. We do not magnify the earthen vessel, but with the Scriptures we “magnify his office.” What Moses, the mediator, was to Israel during the dispensation of law, so Paul is to the present dispensation of grace. Both were servants, yet both had authority and power by virtue of the stewardship entrusted to them.

There is another item worthy of notice. The companion epistles, Philippians and Colossians, open with the names of Paul *and* Timothy. The epistle to the Ephesians stands alone, it is associated with no other instrument than Paul.

The reader will note the change from the A.V. It is not “Jesus Christ,” but “Christ Jesus.” The change is important. The former title points to the man Jesus, Who is the Messiah, whilst the latter looks to the glory, where Christ the Messiah is, and realizes that the glorified One is Jesus.

The reader will be interested to know that the epistle is marked with the same marvellous numeric phenomena that has been brought to light recently through the instrumentality of Mr. Ivan Panin. We are not in a position to publish any discoveries in this direction, but one thing has been established, the words “in Ephesus,” over which such a deal of scholastic effort has been expended, must be retained as part of the sacred text.

Since the publication of Mills' edition of the Greek New Testament, a great many have adopted his opinion that the epistle to the Ephesians was not written to the church of that name. Some said it was addressed to the church of the Laodiceans, whilst others said that a space was left to be filled in—making the epistle a circular letter. Nearly all the ancient MSS. And versions, including the Syriac, Vulgate, Persian and Arabic, agree in including the words “in Ephesus” in the text. We will not take up precious time over this, however, but shall rest assured that the church mentioned in Acts xx. is the one to which, in the first place, this wondrous epistle was sent for their further instruction. The reader may profitably compare Acts xx. 17-38 with the teaching of the epistle.

Returning to Ephesians i. we consider the salutation. The inspired salutation is one which familiarity has in some degree robbed of its preciousness—“*Grace.*” Who can

fathom free unmerited favour? Favour shown to the vile, the worthless, the rebel? Yet so it is. Here in this epistle we shall read of the “riches of His grace,” yea, the “*exceeding* riches of His grace,” love unfathomable, mercy from everlasting to everlasting, and then *peace*. Peace for those who were “children of wrath”! Peace made by the blood of the cross of Christ! Peace, the unifying bond of the present dispensation. Grace was the salutation of the Greek; peace the “*Shalom*” of the Hebrews, and here we find them brought together, the purchase of a Saviour’s blood, standing at the threshold of the epistle to the outcast of the nations, to follow, like “goodness and mercy,” all the days of our life, and to be the ground of acceptance and blessed enjoyment when time shall be no more.

Space prevents us from going further into the teaching of these verses of introduction. Oh for largeness of heart to receive the things freely given by God! In our next article we hope to take up the character of our blessings as taught in Eph. i. 3.

**Studies in the Epistles of the Mystery.**  
**Ephesians as a whole.**  
**pp. 92-95**

In the first article of this series we endeavoured to bring before the reader the seven epistles which include the four called “The Prison Epistles,” and to exhibit in some measure their general scope and relationship. Before we proceed to consider the teaching of Ephesians in detail, we must first of all see the general disposition of its subject matter. It will be found that the doctrinal teaching of the first half is echoed by the practical teaching of the second in such a way that it leaves no doubt as to how we are to seek to “walk worthy of the calling wherewith we have been called.”

This expression “walk worthy,” which comes as the opening word of the practical exhortation, is most fitting, for the word *axiōs*, translated “worthy,” has reference to the beam of a balance, and emphasizes the fact already mentioned, that every doctrine has its corresponding practice. It is sadly possible for a very loud profession of faith to be overturned by wrong practice and walk. Note II Tim. iii. 5, “having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof,” and cf. verse 10, “but thou hast fully known my doctrine manner of life.”

I Tim. v. 8 shows how actions speak louder than words, “If any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.” This denial of the faith is to be traced back to I Tim. iv. 10, where we read that “God is the Saviour of all men, *specially* of those who believe.” The word *specially* in both passages is the same. In I Tim. iv. 12, 13 Timothy is exhorted to be an example in his deeds before being told to give attention to doctrine. So it is with I Tim. iv. 16; vi. 1; and Titus i. 16.

It is our aim to make the spiritual blessings in the heavenlies spiritual realities on the earth by faith, and as a means to this end we direct attention to the

### Structure of Ephesians as a whole.

- A | a | i. 1, 2. Grace and peace to saints and faithful from  
God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.
- b | i. 3-14. “Blessed be God”; all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies.
- B | i. 15-. Paul hears of the Ephesians’ spiritual affairs; result--“thanks.”
- C | c | i. -15. Love to *all saints*.
- d | i. 16-19. Paul’s prayer for the saints. “That He may give”; “that ye mat know.”
- D | i. 20-23. The mighty Power, Principalities, &c. Salvation.
- E | ii. 1-18. (1) Death and life. (2) Distance and nearness. (3) Peace and enmity.  
The two walks. Old and new creation. “Good works.”
- F | ii. 19-22. The temple “fitly framed together” (*sunarmologoumene*).  
The foundation of the Apostles and Prophets—Jesus Christ Himself.
- G | iii. 1-13. | e | The prisoner in the Lord.  
f | The dispensation of the mystery. “The same body” (iii. 6).
- H | iii. 14-21. Paul’s prayer. “The love of Christ which passeth knowledge.”  
“The fulness of God.”  
“Unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus.”
- G | iv. 1-6. | e | The prisoner in the Lord.  
f | The unity of the Spirit, “One body.”
- F | iv. 7-16. The body “fitly joined together” (*sunarmologoumenon*).  
The ministry of the Apostles and Prophets—The Son of God.
- E | iv. 17-vi. 9. (1) Love and lust. (2) Light and darkness. (3) Wisdom and folly.  
The two walks. Old and new creation. “Good works.”
- D | vi. 10-17. The power of His might. Principalities, &c. Conflict.
- C | c | vi. 18. Prayer for *all saints*.
- d | vi. 19, 20. Saints’ prayer for Paul. “may be given”; “make known.”
- B | vi. 21, 22. Ephesians hear of Paul’s affair; result--“comfort.”
- A | a | vi. 23. Peace with love and faith to the brethren from  
God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
- b | vi. 24. Benediction on all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in incorruption.

The harmony of this epistle is evident upon the surface. The spiritual blessings A | b have but one practical answer according to the corresponding member A | b, namely, “love unto the Lord Jesus Christ in incorruption.” All the blessings enumerated in chapter i. 3-14, many of them unknown to the pages of Scripture before, are focussed to one point in the practical issue—sincere love to the Lord. How simple, yet how sublime! Love to all saints in C | c is balanced by prayer for all saints in C | c, a lesson the argument of which needs no more enforcing than its statement. Paul prayed for the saints at Philippi either because he had them in his heart, or they had him in theirs (see various readings of Phil. i. 7). Circumscribed prayer indicates sectarian narrowness and straitened affections.

The might and power exhibited in the resurrection of Christ, and the subjection of all principality and power beneath His feet in D yields a blessed practical word of encouragement in D, for in the “power of His might” (same word as Eph. i. 19) we are

enabled to “stand” against the “principalities and powers” already vanquished by our glorious Head. Salvation becomes an helmet, righteousness a breastplate, and faith a shield. How this exhibits the futility of the attempt to meet our spiritual foes with the arm of flesh! Nothing but resurrection power can overcome in this great conflict. The practical outworking of the gospel of grace is emphasised in the corresponding members E and *E*. death in sin is characterised by “fulfilling the lusts of the flesh.” Life in Christ is at God’s right hand.

In the practical section, in contrast to this “walk according to the age of this world,” we are enjoined to “walk in love.” The lusts of the flesh briefly touched upon in chapter v. 3-5. Just as in Eph. ii. we have two walks and their connection with the old and new creation, so in Eph. iv. 17-25 we have the two walks in connection with the old man “which is corrupt,” and the new man “which is created in righteousness and holiness of truth.” The “afore-prepared good works” of Eph. ii. 10 are echoed by the “working that which is good” of iv. 28. The temple “fitly framed together” of Eph.ii. 19-22 is answered by the practical exhibition of this blessed unity of the One Body “fitly joined together” (same word as in Eph. ii. 21).

The temple is builded together by the Spirit; the practical manifestation down here, after the initial work of the fourfold ministry of iv. 11, builds up itself by love. The foundation laid by the apostles and prophets in Eph. ii. is Jesus Christ Himself, for other foundation can no man lay than this, and these preached not themselves, but Jesus Christ the Lord. This corresponds to the goal of their ministry as set forth in chapter iv.—“the knowledge of the Son of God.” In perfect harmony with the divine plan of this epistle, the apostle in the doctrinal section calls himself “the prisoner of Jesus Christ” (iii. 1), but in the practical section (iv. 1) he calls himself “the prisoner in the *Lord*.”

In the member marked G | f we have the revelation of the mystery, its wonderful teaching concerning the union of Christ and the church during the present dispensation, and the central words of the threefold unity of iii. 6, “the same body.” This mystery is to be given a practical exemplification, and this is explained to us in member G | f where we are told to endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. This is described as a sevenfold unity, commencing with the term “One Body,” and having as its glorious centre “One Lord.”

The central place in the epistle is not given to the subject of the mystery, nor the unity of the Spirit, but to that prayer which revolves around the love of Christ which passeth knowledge. Here we reach the summit. From this conception of “breadth and length and depth and height,” and with this satisfying “fulness,” we may contemplate both the glorious doctrine stretching away on the one hand to its opening words of *grace and peace*, and on the other the practical teaching with its manifestations of unity, its walk in love, and its conflict with spiritual foes, until it too ends with *peace and grace*. We have need of the exhortation given in Heb. vi., “Let us go on unto perfection.” Vast treasures await us, unclaimed possessions are ahead of us, blessings yet unappropriated are contained in these epistles of the mystery. It shall be ours, the Lord being our Helper, to seek to unfold something more of the blessings “exceeding great and precious” which are ours “in Christ.”

**Studies in the Epistles of the Mystery.**  
**Blessing according to Purpose (Eph. i. 3-14).**  
**pp. 109-113**

In our last article we considered the structure of this epistle as a whole. Turning now to the first chapter we find that the epistle proper commences at the third verse, and opens with the words "Blessed be God." Not our blessings but our gratitude marks the threshold of this dispensation. We have nothing to ask for, but everything to praise for, as all things are ours in Christ:--

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ, according as He hath chosen us in Him before the overthrow of the world" (Eph. i. 3, 4).

Before we examine this treasure in detail it will help us if we notice the divine arrangement of the subject matter. Verses 3 to 14 constitute a complete passage, which has a twofold arrangement, (a) to emphasize that our blessings are according to purpose, and (b) that all is the work of our triune God unto the praise of His glory.

**Blessing according to Purpose (Eph. i. 3-14).**

- A1 | 3. *Blessing.* Spiritual and in the heavenlies. *Blessings of the mystery.*
- B1 | 4. *Purpose.* "According as He chose us."
- A2 | 5. *Blessing.* Predestination unto sonship. *Sonship.*
- B2 | 5-8. *Purpose.* "According to good pleasure of His will."
- A3 | 9-. *Blessing.* "Making known the secret of His will" *Revelation of the mystery.*
- B3 | -9,10. *Purpose.* "According to His good pleasure."
- A4 | 11-. *Blessing.* Predestination unto inheritance. *Inheritance.*
- B4 | *Purpose.* "According to the purposes. . . . own will."

As we contemplate this wonderful passage can we not sing with all our hearts:--

"How firm a foundation ye saints of the Lord,  
is laid for your faith in His excellent Word."

Four lines of blessing interlinked with four statements of immutable grace, irreversible will, unfaltering counsel, and unalterable purpose. Notice, also, how the emphasis upon this purpose increases, rather than diminishes as we go on.

- Verse 4. "According as He chose us."
- Verse 5. "According to good pleasure of His will."
- Verse 9. "According to His good pleasure."
- Verse 11. "According to the purposes of Him Who worketh all things according to the counsel of His own will."

What a lesson is here for the believer! Jacob and his mother “believed God” with respect to the truth of the promise regarding the younger son, but they seemed to doubt the ability of God to carry it out. Hence it is that we have that despicable fraud practised upon the old man Isaac. God was not bound to make good that which Jacob stole by deceit. How sadly must the words “plenty of corn and wine” (Gen. xxvii. 28) have echoed in his memory when he sent his sons down to Egypt to buy corn! No! Isaac did *not* bless Jacob then “by faith.” Isaac did bless Jacob later concerning things to come, and the coveted blessing was freely given in God’s own time and way. And Isaac called Jacob and blessed him:--

- (1) “EL SHADDAI (Gen. xvii. 1) bless thee, and
- (2) make thee fruitful, and
- (3) multiply thee,
- (4) that thou mayest be a multitude of people, and
- (5) give the blessing of Abraham to thee, and
- (6) to thy seed with thee, that
- (7) thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham” (Gen. xxviii. 3, 4).

This “blessing of Abraham” is that which God promised, and which God confirmed to Jacob, and will ultimately fulfil in literality in the future. So with regard to our blessings. No amount of scheming, planning or effort can procure them, ratify them or make them more complete. They are ours in Christ, by grace, fully, freely and for ever, or they are not ours at all. May we be found rejoicing in this almighty God of unfaltering purpose, and, like Abraham, may we be “fully persuaded that what God has promised He is able to perform” (Rom. iv. 21).

Before passing on to consider another important aspect of truth as contained in these same verses (3-14), we would further illustrate the important bearing of the will of God in this epistle by showing the arrangement of the occurrences of the word “will.” The word occurs *seven* times as follows:--

- A1. Apostleship (i. 1).
- A2. Doctrine (i. 5, 9, 11).
- A3. Practice (ii. 3, v. 17, vi. 6).

Sections A2 and A3 form a complete structure as follows:--

- A2. Doctrine. | a | i. 5. Good pleasure of His **will** – *Predestination to sonship.*  
b | i. 9. The mystery of His **will** – *Future dispensation.*  
a | i. 11. Counsel of His **will** – *Predestination to inheritance.*
- A3. Practice. | a | ii. 3. Doing the **will** of the flesh – *Children of wrath – once.*  
b | v. 17. The **will** of the Lord – *Rule for present walk.*  
a | vi. 6. Doing the **will** of God – *Servants of Christ – now.*

The relation of these passages is full of suggestive teaching; we leave it without comment, trusting that our reader will be worthy of the title of "Bereans." Let us now consider the second outline of verses 3-14. It will be observed upon reading these verses that the words, "To the praise of His glory," or a somewhat similar phrase, occur at the close of the three divisions to which we are calling attention. We set forth the whole passage as follows:--

### **Ephesians i. 3-14.**

- A1 | 3-6-. The blessings of the Father.
  - B1 | -6. To the praise of the glory of His grace.
- A2 | 7-12-. The blessings of the Son.
  - B2 | -12. To the praise of His glory
- A3 | 13,14-. The blessings of the Spirit.
  - B3 | -14. Unto the praise of His glory.

Just as we have found the emphasis to be upon the almighty and changeless purpose of God, so the emphasis here is the goal towards which that purpose moves, "To the praise of His glory." All spiritual blessings in the heavenlies (holiness and blamelessness before Him, predestination to sonship, and acceptance in the Beloved) are the blessings which are peculiarly connected with "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." They have a relation to that period known as before "the overthrow of the world," and are destined in the ages to come to be to the praise of the glory of His grace, as Eph. ii. 7 declares, "That in ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness towards us in Christ Jesus.

Another very important truth which claims attention is the constant fact that the blessings of the Father are only ours as "in Christ." The spiritual blessings are in the heavenlies, but if they were not also "in Christ" they would be unattainable, for how could we reach them apart from being raised together and seated together in Christ? We were chosen before the overthrow of the world, but that could only be possible "in Christ," for we existed not. We have been predestinated unto sonship, but only "by Jesus Christ." We have been made accepted, but only "in the Beloved." The emphasis is still the same as we consider the blessings which are particularly connected with the Lord Jesus Christ. Redemption is through His blood, forgiveness is according to the riches of His grace. The dispensation of the fulness of times is only glorious inasmuch as all things are gathered together "in Christ," "in Whom" we have obtained an inheritance.

As we appreciate the teaching of the Prison Epistles we shall find that *the glory of Christ* becomes more and more the transcendent theme. A text which could well be written across these epistles is that found in Acts xix. 17, "The name of the Lord Jesus was magnified." The words uttered by John the Baptist, "He must increase," receive added fulness as read in the light of these messages to the Gentiles. May we, viewing the blessings which are ours set forth in these epistles, ever remember with practical application that these blessings should redound to the praise of the glory of Father, Son, and Spirit. In our next paper we hope to exhibit more in detail some of the blessings which are peculiarly ours "in Christ."

**Studies in the Epistles of the Mystery.**  
**The blessings of the Father (Eph. i. 3).**  
**pp. 125-127**

We have seen in our studies of the opening verses of this epistle that the blessings which are for us who believe come from the Father (i. 3-6), the Son (i. 7-12), and the Spirit (i. 13, 14). Let us now consider the One Who blesses and the blessings He gives.

*“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*—Notice the opening words of this epistle. It is not so much our blessings that are to occupy our minds, but it is the overwhelming sense of the grace of God welling up in our hearts that here finds utterance—“Blessed be God!” No petition rises to the throne of grace. No confession, no vows of reform, no statements of failure, but thanks, praise, and worship, full and free, ascend unto the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. “Blessed be God;” He has blessed us with *all* spiritual blessings, therefore we have need to *ask* for nothing, but to *praise* for everything.

*Blessed.*—The word is *eulogetos*, and occurs only once in the epistles of Paul written after Acts xxviii. The same may be said of the related words in the same verse.

*Blessed us with blessings.*—These words are never again used by Paul in his epistles to the Gentiles. Glorious in their unique isolation, standing at the threshold of this dispensation, are these related all-comprehensive words—“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who hath blessed us with all spiritual *blessings*.” Let us remember this witness to the special character of our blessings, and the special character of our note of praise to the Lord.

The word *eulogeō* means to “speak well of.” God has spoken well of such as we are. In Christ He has graced us and accepted us; surely we should “speak well” of Him. No murmuring word should escape our tongue, no reflection should ever cast upon His gracious purposes, no intrusion of man’s distortions should ever sully the clear and glorious light of His grace and glory.

The opening words of blessing to the “dispersion” through the instrumentality of the apostle to the circumcision (I Pet. i. 3) are worthy of comparison here. We place them side by side in order that their points of contacts and divergence may be clearly seen:--

<p><b>The Church of the Mystery.</b> <i>Paul.</i></p>	<p><b>The Remnant of Israel.</b> <i>Peter.</i></p>
<p>“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies (<i>en tois epouraniois</i>) in Christ, according as He hath chosen us in Him before the overthrow of the world” (Eph. i.).</p>	<p>“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from among dead ones, unto an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven (<i>en ouraniois</i>) for you” (I Pet. i.).</p>

When we come to examine the words, “the heavenlies,” of Ephesians, we shall see the distinction between that sphere and the heavens of I Pet. i. Before passing on let us notice the way in which this epistle uses the title, “Father.” The occurrences are eight in number, the number of resurrection, and the order of their occurrence forms an interesting structure.

### “The Father.”

(Eight occurrences – Resurrection).

- A | i. 2. Grace and peace from God our **Father** and the Lord Jesus Christ.
- B | i. 3. Blessed be the God and **Father** of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- C | i. 17. The God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the **Father** of glory.
  - D | ii. 18. Access by one Spirit unto the **Father**.
  - D | iii. 14. I bow my knees unto the **Father**.
- C | iv. 6. One God and **Father** of all.
- B | v. 20. Giving thanks unto God and the **Father**, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- A | vi. 23. Love with faith from God the **Father** and the Lord Jesus Christ.

It will be observed that the central members have reference to access and prayer, which is one of the outstanding ideas in the revelation of the title “Father.” Do we appreciate the fulness of this divine revelation? Think what is implied by the term “father” among men. What a world of self-denying care, patience, forbearance, labour, love, planning and providing is enshrined in that name. The Scriptural conception of a father is somewhat different from that which seems to be accepted to-day. In the vast majority of cases the training of the children falls upon the mother, the father, during the child’s early years, being someone he sees during the week-end, and who will be told if the child is naughty. Modern business life and civilisation have robbed us of more than it has given.

In Eph. vi. 4 the “bringing up” of the children devolves upon the father. The same is true in Heb. xii. So in Psa. ciii. 13, “Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him.” Let us ever remember the magnitude of this title of our God, and let us be fully persuaded that He will always act up to the highest ideal of Fatherhood that we can ever frame. What a difference the full recognition of this would make to prayer. Instead of the paraphernalia of a ritualistic approach, or the trite and rehearsed statements of orthodox utterance, we should go to the Lord as a child to its father, without fear, except filial fear, and without doubt, being fully persuaded that He will hear, and give the very best possible answer. Our worship, too, and our service generally would be equally affected by a real conscious recognition of this wonderful title of our God.

Let us consider the next statement, “*of our Lord Jesus Christ.*” In verse 2 we read of God our Father. God can only be our Father by virtue of redemption. For our sakes “the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us,” and they who beheld Him wrote, “and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth” (John i. 14). Fatherhood implies the act of begetting, even as motherhood does that of giving birth.

The title of God as the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ is directly connected with that miraculous act when “The Word became flesh” and took upon Himself the form of a servant. Through Him we who believe are given the authority to become sons of God (John i. 12), and consequently we read in Eph. i. 2, 3 of this dual relationship as quoted above.

The blessings wherewith He has blessed us are wonderful. It shall be our privilege and joy in our next paper to consider them as set forth in this epistle. Meanwhile, let us not forget that which we have already seen, and in heart and voice may we constantly and unitedly say, “Blessed be God. . . . Who hath blessed us.”

## Berean Expositor Volume 2 & 3

### The Parables.

The word, its meaning and dispensational setting.

pp. 26-34

As the student of Scripture grows in grace and knowledge of the truth, things which once seemed trivial appear of great importance; passages which once he thought he “knew all about” are approached with deepening humility, to be reread and learned afresh. Among our earliest recollections, either as scholars in Sunday Schools or as members of Churches, will be those passages of Scripture known as “The Parables.” The time-worn definition, “An earthly story with a heavenly meaning,” is doubtless familiar to us all. Do we not begin to realize, however, that these parables contain teaching which our teachers never saw, and that the dispensational key, which has turned the lock of so many difficulties and opened doors into such treasuries, may be profitably applied to these “dark sayings”?

The first thing to do is to be sure of the meaning of the word. The word “parable” has been taken over into the English tongue from the Greek word *parabole*. *Para* means “near” or “beside,” and *bole* is from *ballō*, “I cast” or “throw.” Literally it signifies something “cast beside” another, and as applied to discourse it means a method of teaching which demands the use of similitude or comparison.

All the parables of Scripture are weighty and wise sayings. This may be gathered from the words of the proverb, “The legs of a lame man are not equal, so is a parable in the mouth of fools” (Prov. xxvi. 7). *The Companion Bible* gives the meaning, “The clothes of a lame man being lifted up expose his lameness, so a fool exposes his folly in expounding a parable” (see also Prov. xxvi. 9). An American writer has given a very helpful translation of Proverbs. Chapter i. 2-6 reads thus:--

“To know wisdom and admonition; to put a *distinct* meaning into *discriminated* speeches; to accept clear sighted admonition is righteousness and judgment and right behavior.

In order to give subtlety to the simple; to the child knowledge and thorough thought. The wise man will hear and increasingly acquire, and a man already become discerning will gain in capability to guide.

For putting a distinct meaning into a proverb or an enigma; into the words of the wise and their intricate sayings:

The fear of the Lord is the main knowledge, a wisdom and a discipline that fools despise.”

It is in this frame of mind that we approach these “dark sayings,” in the fear of God to learn their “secret.”

In Matt. xiii. 35 the Lord quotes from Psa.lxxviii. 2 in relation to His speaking in parables, and therefore we may expect to find some help in that Psalm to guide us to the right understanding of the purpose of a parable. The heading of the Psalm is “Maschil of

Asaph.” The Hebrew word *Maschil* is from the word *Sakal*, which means, “to look at,” “to scrutinize,” and the term *Maschil* means, “an understanding arising from a deep consideration” (Neh. viii. 8). The title of the Psalm prepares us for deep instruction:--

“Give ear, O my people, to My law,  
Incline your ear to the words of My mouth.  
I will open My mouth in a *parable*,  
I will utter *dark sayings* of old.”

The remaining portion of the Psalm is a rehearsal of the history of Israel from Moses to David, showing the inner reasons of their failures. Take for example verse 9 and 10:--

“The children of Ephraim, armed, carrying bows,  
turned back in the day of battle.”

Why?

“They kept not the covenant of God,  
and refused to walk in His law.”

From this we may infer that a parable urges us to consider deeply the ways of God with His people, and to look for the hidden causes and workings which are veiled from the eyes of the uninstructed.

That a parable has some connection with a secret, a reference to Matt. xiii. will prove. There for the first time in the New Testament do we read the word “mystery” or “secret,” and there for the first time occurs the word “parable.” Further, the Lord Jesus translates the words, “I will utter dark sayings of old,” by the words, “I will utter things which have been kept *secret* since the overthrow (*katabole*) of the world” (Matt. xiii. 35).

The first parable of the Bible is one which concerns the people of Israel in relation to their separate calling as a distinct nation and peculiar people:--

“And he took up his parable and said, ‘Balak king of Moab hath brought me from Aram, out of the mountains of the East, saying, Come, curse me Jacob, and, come, defy Israel. How shall I curse whom God hath not cursed? And how shall I defy whom the Lord hath not defied?’” (Num. xxiii. 7; so also xxiii. 18; xxiv. 3, 15).

In Heb. ix. 9 and xi. 19 we find the word translated, “a figure.” A parable and a proverb are much alike. The parable of Matt. xv. 13-15 might be termed a proverb. Indeed the word translated “proverb” in Luke iv. 23 is really “parable.” The words, “Physician, heal thyself,” are called in the original a “parable.” That a “proverb” carried the same hidden teaching as did the “parable and dark sayings” can be seen by referring to John xvi. 25 and 29:--

“These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs, the hour cometh when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I will shew you *plainly* of the Father.”

In the Old Testament we have “type,” in the Gospels we have “parable,” and in the Epistles we have “doctrine,” as the more prominent features. The parables lead us to contemplate the hidden causes of the failure of Israel in relation to the kingdom, and look forward to the time when all will be put right.

The first occurrence of a word very often decides its fundamental meaning. The first occurrence of the word parable in the New Testament is Matt. xiii. 3. It follows that chapter wherein culminated the rejection of the Messiah by the people in the land. He had been heralded as their Messiah and King. He had vindicated His claims by the fulfilment of numerous prophecies, both with regard to His Person and His works, and in chapter xii. 6, 41, and 42, although greater than the *temple*, greater than the *prophet Jonah*, and greater than *king Solomon*, He yet is “despised and rejected”:-

“The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea side. . . . and He spake many things unto them in parables. . . . and the disciples came, and said unto Him, Why speakest thou in parables? He answered and said unto them, because it is given unto you to know the *mysteries of the kingdom of the heavens*; therefore speak I unto them in parables, because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah which saith, By hearing ye shall hear and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see and shall not perceive: for this people’s heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, that many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them” (Matt. xiii. 1-17).

Such is the setting of the first occurrence of the word parable in the New Testament. The parables were used when Israel manifested that the prophecy of Isa. vi. 10 was fulfilled in them. The parables were not used to make the teaching plainer, but to veil the teaching from the majority. The parables relate to the secrets of the kingdom. They teach things hitherto “kept secret since the overthrow of the world” (Matt. xiii. 35). Prophets desired to see and hear these things, as Matt. xiii. 17 and I Pet. i. 10-12 tell us:-

“Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow.”

Here, as in the majority of Old Testament prophecies, no break is made between the sufferings and the glories. No interval is allowed between “the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God” (Isa. lxi. 2, cf. Luke iv. 19). The rejection of God’s king was only partly seen, the abeyance of the kingdom was a secret. Thus we may place the two passages together:-

“I will open my mouth in parables. I will utter things which have been kept secret since the overthrow of the world” (Matt. xiii. 35).

“Why speakest Thou in parables? Because it is given unto you to know the secrets of the kingdom of the heavens, but to them it is not given” (Matt. xiii. 10, 11).

Everything leads us to expect that just as in Psa. lxxviii. we shall find in these parables some of the inner workings of God’s counsels relative to His purposes in Israel, and that to introduce the doctrinal teaching of the gospel of the grace of God, or the dispensational teaching of the mystery which is not a subject of revelation until over 30 years later

(Eph. iii. 1-10), will be to confound things which differ, and signally to fail rightly to divide the Word of truth.

The parables are particularly dispensational in character. Their object is not to provide a moral lesson or a text for a gospel address. How many have gone astray by reason of this mischievous practice. The parable of the Prodigal Son serves those who have no desire for the retention of the atonement with a “proof” text for the universal Fatherhood of God, and of the reception by Him of all who come, irrespective of the one way of acceptance—the sacrifice of Christ. The parable of the Unforgiving Servant is made to teach, in direct opposition to the doctrine of the epistles, that sins once forgiven may be re-imputed, or that a sinner once saved by grace can fall away again.

Let us remember the Scriptural settings of these parables, the reasons which drew them from the Lord Jesus, the dispensation in which they were uttered, and the people and kingdom about which they speak; we shall then have no need to be ashamed of our testimony.

Thus far we have sought to clear the way for the study of these parables. We shall next endeavour to present to the reader the arrangement of the parables of Matthew xiii. and to enter into the teaching of these parables of the secrets of the kingdom of the heavens.

### **The Parables of Matthew xiii. pp. 30-34**

To understand any passage or verse in the Bible we must take note of the context, otherwise, being ignorant of much that God has written for our guidance, we shall offer “a vision out of our own heart” as the interpretation. In the first place, Matt. xiii. comes in that section which is entirely taken up with the “kingdom” before the Lord had uttered one word of the foundations of the gospel as we know it, namely, His death and resurrection. This fact should deter us from too hastily assuming that in Matt. xiii. we have an elaborate discourse concerning “the gospel.”

In order to show that these parables come (1) in the kingdom section proper, and (2) before the Lord’s revelation of His death and resurrection, we shall have to give the arrangement of subjects, which is as follows:--

- A | Matt. i. 1 - iii. 12. Preparation.
- B | Matt. iii. 16, 17. Voice from heaven—“My beloved Son.”
- C | Matt. xvi. 16. Peter’s confession—“Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God.”
- B | Matt. xvii. 5. Voice out of the cloud—“My beloved Son.”
- C | Matt. xxvii. 54. Centurion’s confession—“Truly this was the Son of God.
- A | Matt. xxviii. Conclusion.

The “time” divisions of Matthew are two-fold, agreeing with the two-fold message from heaven, and confession on earth:--

(1). “*From that time* Jesus began to preach and to say, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand’ (iv. 17).

(2). *From that time* forth began Jesus to shew unto His disciples how that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day” (xvi. 21).

We can now see clearly that the parables of Matt. xiii. comes within the first section of Matthew’s Gospel, which has for its subject exclusively “the kingdom.”

In examining the book still further, we find that it reveals three main discourses, and a due appreciation of their place and teaching is of utmost importance. They are as follows:--

- |   |  |                 |  |                               |  |           |  |                        |
|---|--|-----------------|--|-------------------------------|--|-----------|--|------------------------|
| A |  | Matt.v.-vii.    |  | On a mountain.                |  | Precept.  |  | The kingdom explained. |
|   |  |                 |  | ( <i>Past</i> ).              |  |           |  |                        |
| B |  | Matt.xiii.      |  | Out of the house.             |  | Parable.  |  | The kingdom rejected.  |
|   |  |                 |  | ( <i>Past &amp; Future</i> ). |  |           |  |                        |
| A |  | Matt.xxiv.-xxv. |  | On a mountain.                |  | Prophecy. |  | The kingdom set up.    |
|   |  |                 |  | ( <i>Future</i> ).            |  |           |  |                        |

In the Sermon on the Mount the Lord Jesus, as King, sat upon the mountain, and gave His laws and describes the character of the subjects of His kingdom. In the prophetic chapters of Matt. xxiv. and xxv. the Lord Jesus looks forward to the day when His kingdom shall be set up with power and great glory. The interval between the two “mountain” discourses is filled in by the rejection of the Lord by Israel, and the parables of the secrets of the kingdom. We may expect, therefore, to find something to teach us the character and course of the “kingdom of the heavens” during the period of the rejection of the King. One thing we must be quite clear about, and that is, we shall not find depicted a history of events which were to take place *after* the kingdom of the heavens became in abeyance.

These parables trace the progress of the gospel of the kingdom along its course through the period while the Lord was on the earth, and during the Acts of the Apostles. The present interval of the dispensation of the mystery must of necessity be omitted, and the history of the kingdom be resumed again when God once more takes up His ancient people, for the interpretation of some of these parables takes us to the “end of the age.”

Before we examine the parables in detail, we must examine them together. Some of our readers may be surprised to find us speaking of the eight parables of Matt. xiii. It has become almost sacred to prophetic students to speak of the seven parables of Matt. xiii., so that we shall have to set out the complete arrangement in order to demonstrate the fact that the Lord gave eight parabolic or figurative utterances in connection with the “mysteries (or secrets) of the kingdom.”

### Structures of Matthew xiii.

<p>A   1-9. The SOWER.   The sowing of the seed into four kinds of ground. They (Israel) <i>did not</i> understand.</p>	<p>-\</p> <p>\/</p> <p>\/</p> <p>\/</p> <p>\/</p> <p>--\</p> <p>--\</p> <p>\/</p> <p>\/</p> <p>\/</p>	<p>The first four parables spoken <b>outside</b></p> <p>} the house to great multitudes.</p> <p>} the house to the disciples.</p>
<p>B   24-30. The TARES.   Good and bad together. Separated at the harvest (the end of the age); the bad are cast into a furnace of fire, there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.</p>		
<p>C   31, 32. The MUSTARD TREE.   One Tree.</p>		
<p>D   33. The LEAVEN.   Hid in three measures of meal</p>		
<p>D   44. The TREASURE.   Hid in a field.</p>		
<p>C   45, 46. GOODLY PEARLS.   One pearl.</p>		
<p>B   47-50. The DRAG NET.   Good and bad together. Separated at the end of the age; the bad are cast into a furnace of fire, there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. They (disciples) <i>did</i> understand.</p>		
<p>A   51, 52. The SCRIBE.   The treasure opened to those in the house.</p>		

The harmony that exists between the component parts of this structure is quite evident to all. If we can see the disposition of any passage of Scripture, we are in possession of a help to its interpretation. Sometimes a word may have more than one meaning, and the balance in favour of either rendering may be fairly equal. If we can find its place in the structure, we shall often, by so doing, find its meaning also.

Look, at the central pair of parables. The Leaven “hidden” in three measures of meal finds its corresponding member in the Treasure “hidden” in the field. The parable of the Tares finds its complement in the parable of Drag Net. The parable of the Sower is balanced by that of the Scribe, and the Mustard Seed by the Pearl.

We now have considered the parables in their meaning and signification, and have also looked at the contextual setting of these parables of the secrets of the kingdom, so far as their place in the Gospel of Matthew is concerned. We must now examine the immediate cause of their utterance, and we shall then be ready to consider each parable in detail.

Let us go back as far as the commencement of chapter xi. John the Baptist had said, “He that come after me is mightier than I.” He had seen the heavens open, he had heard the voice of God saying, “This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased.” But in course of time John, for his faithfulness, was cast into prison, there to suffer not only agony of body, but of mind. Had he made a mistake? Why was he not liberated if this one was the Messiah? Why was the kingdom not set up? So John sent two of his disciples, who said, “Art thou He that should come, or do we look for another?” For answer the Lord replied, “Go and show John again those things which ye do see and hear; the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear,

the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached unto them, and blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in Me.”

If the reader will turn to Isa. xxix. 18, 19; xxxv. 5, 6; and xlii. 1-7 he will see how this answer would tend to confirm the languishing forerunner. Everything was being done by the Saviour according to the Word and will of God, but unbelief was bringing this witness of the kingdom to a close, for a little further on, in Matt. xi. 20, He began to “upbraid the cities wherein most of His mighty works were done, because they repented not.” It is evident that if the mighty works were rejected, the gospel or good news that the kingdom of the heavens had drawn nigh would be rejected also, and the cry, “Repent and believe,” would go unheeded.

The Lord Jesus, however, knew that this opposition was to be overruled to the accomplishment of God’s ultimate purpose, and with the words, “Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight,” He awaited the end. It soon came, for in Matt. xii. we reach a climax. There the Lord Jesus is seen “greater than the Temple” (verse 6), “greater than the prophet Jonah” (verse 41), “greater than the king Solomon” (verse 42), and in all these capacities He is rejected. The reason for this rejection is given in verses 43-45.

The captivity of Babylon had cured the Jews of idolatry, but they were like a room “empty, swept and garnished,” inhabited by a spirit more evil than that which bound their idolatrous “fathers”; the last state is worse than the first, for rejecting Christ they reached the climax sin. This leads on to Matt. xiii. with its secrets or mysteries. Up to this point nothing had been secret, but now the Saviour reveals to the hearing ear and seeing eye that the rejection of the King and His message was foreknown, that the efforts of the apostles themselves would meet a similar fate, and that not until the end, when the Lord returns to take the kingdom and deliver Israel, will the sowing of the seed of the kingdom yield its bounteous harvest.

### **The Sower. pp. 53-63**

We now approach the consideration of this initial parable. Initial, not only because it is the first in order of utterance, but because its interpretation supplies a model for the interpretation of all parables, “Know ye not this parables? and how then will ye know all parables?” (Mark iv. 13).

John tells us that although he has recorded eight “signs” to support the particular purpose of his Gospel (John xx. 31), yet the number actually wrought by the Lord far exceeded this, so much so that “if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written” (John xxi. 25). What is true concerning the Lord’s works is also true concerning His words; each Gospel narrative gives a divinely inspired selection of His wonderful teaching. If this is so, what

importance must be placed upon that miracle, parable, or discourse which is repeated twice or even thrice! The parable of the Sower occurs in the three Synoptic Gospels (Matt. xiii. 1-9; Mark iv. 1-9; Luke viii. 4-8). In each record we read of the four sowings, or four kinds of ground. It will be instructive to consider the various ways in which this parable has been recorded.

MATTHEW 13:4-9.	MARK 4:4-9.	LUKE 8:5-8.
“Some fell by the wayside, and the fowls came and devoured them up.”	“Some fell by the wayside, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up.”	“Some fell by the wayside, and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it.”
“Some fell upon stony places where they had not much earth.”	“Some fell upon stony ground where it had not much earth.”	“Some fell upon a rock.”
“Forthwith they sprung up, because they had no depthness of earth, and when the sun was up they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.”	“Immediately it sprung up, because it had no depth of earth; but when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away.”	“As soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture.”
“Some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them.”	“Some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit.”	“Some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it.”
“Other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundred-fold, some sixty-fold, some thirty-fold. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.”	“Other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprung up and increased; and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred. And He said unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.”	“Other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundred fold. And when He had said these things, He cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.”

One of the differences between Matthew’s account and that of Mark is that Matthew speaks always in the plural, “they,” “them,” whereas Mark speaks of the seed in the singular, “it.” Luke adds the words, “and it was trodden down,” in the first sowing, and omits the reference to “no depth of earth” and the effect of the sun, telling us that it withered because it lacked moisture. The addition of the words, “with it,” in Luke’s account of the thorns is also suggestive.

In the interpretation of the parable, the following differences are noteworthy. We print them in tabular form to save space.

John xx. 31	But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.
-------------	--

MATTHEW 13:10-23.	MARK 4:10-20.	LUKE 8:9-15.
<p>“The mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.”</p> <p>“The word of the kingdom.”</p> <p>“The wicked one.”</p> <p>“This is <i>he</i> which received seed by the wayside.”</p> <p>“He that received seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and soon with joy receiveth it; yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while; for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.”</p> <p>“He also that receiveth the seed among the thorns. . . . the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.”</p> <p>“but he that received the seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundred-fold, some sixty and some thirty.”</p>	<p>“The mystery of the kingdom of God.”</p> <p>“The sower soweth the word.”</p> <p>“Satan.”</p> <p>“These are <i>they</i> by the wayside.”</p> <p><i>Similar to Matthew.</i></p> <p><i>Similar to Matthew but add.</i> --“the lust of other things entering in.”</p> <p>“And these are they which are sown on good ground, such as hear the word and receive it.”</p>	<p>“The mystery of the kingdom of God.”</p> <p>“The seed is the Word of God.”</p> <p>“The devil.”</p> <p>“Those by the wayside.”</p> <p>“They on the rock are they which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.”</p> <p>“And that which fell among thorns. . . . choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection.”</p> <p>“But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.”</p>

Such is the divine interpretation. We are not called upon to speculate, but to believe. Those to whom these words were first uttered knew the Scriptures of the Old Testament sufficiently well to follow the figurative allusions far more clearly and with greater suggestiveness than we are able to. Moreover, they had no epistle of church doctrine in their minds. We have, and because we will not discern between the things which differ, we introduce confusion into God’s Word by our traditional ideas. Let us keep church and kingdom separate; let us not read into Matt. xiii. that which was not revealed until years after, then we shall be able to understand something of the “mysteries of the kingdom of the heavens.” The kingdom of God is wider in its scope than the kingdom of the heavens. The latter expression has reference to that Millennial kingdom, when the kingdoms of this world shall be ruled by heaven’s King, when Dan. ii. 44 shall be fulfilled; but the term, “the kingdom of God,” though wider than the kingdom of heaven, is not used in the Gospels to refer to the church of the present dispensation, for at that time the present dispensation was a secret hidden by God, whereas the secrets of Matt. xiii. are to some extent explained.

There is need for us to repeat that which we gave in our last article, for the exclusively Jewish and kingdom setting of Matt. xiii. is evident to every candid reader (cf. Matt. x. 5, 6; and Matt. xv. 24, which are on either side of Matt. xiii.).

The parable tells us of the secret course of the purpose relative to the kingdom. It depicts the apparent failure of the early ministry, but shows in the fourth ground its fruitful consummation. All who are pictured here under the imagery of the various sowings are those who hear and receive the word of God, particularly the word of God relative to the kingdom (Matt. xiii. 19; Luke viii. 11). This cannot refer to the heathen nations, at least not until we reach the fourth ground; for during the ministry of Christ the word of the kingdom was confined to the limits of the Land of Promise:--

“Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matt. x. 5-7).

Perhaps we ought to note some things which the Lord does *not* say. He does *not* say, “The sower is the Son of man”; it is merely “a sower,” in the parable; and in the interpretation nothing is said of the sower other than the fact that “the sower soweth the word.” We have two expositions before us, both of which emphasize that the “sower was the Son of man.”

Again, it does *not* say, “the field is the *world*.” Luke tells us that the various sowings, in various kinds of ground, had reference to the *hearts* of those who heard the word. When we come to examine the parable of the Wheat and Tares, then we are distinctly told that the sower is the Son of man, and that the field is the world, but if we introduce these into the parable of the Sower, we spoil the intended teaching.

The “seed of the kingdom of heaven” was sown by John the Baptist, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the apostles during the Acts period; this ministry, as we know, was humanly speaking a failure, for although they proclaimed the near approach of the kingdom of heaven, that kingdom is now in abeyance. The kingdom purposes, however, cannot fail, hence prophecy clearly indicates a further preaching and sowing of this same gospel seed, which will be fruitful as depicted in the fourth ground. This is one of the “secrets” or “mysteries” of the kingdom of the heavens. Following hard upon the rejection of the Lord Himself (Matt. xii.) comes the revelation of the whole course of kingdom progress. The Lord, with wonderful fitness, depicts the conditions which were predominant in relation to the four periods of kingdom ministry.

The first ministry mentioned in the New Testament is that of John the Baptist. He preached the good news of the kingdom, and baptism unto remission of sins. Each ministry, however, had something of the four kinds of ground represented among its hearers, but the special characteristic of John’s sowing was that it fell upon hearts which, like the wayside, had become hardened with continual treading and tradition, and consequently very few believed his message. Those who heard him “understood not,” and the Lord tells us that the Wicked One “caught away that which was sown in their hearts.”

Before we proceed further it will be necessary to call attention to an interpretation of this parable which has a great deal of truth in it, but which may be pressed too far. There are some who tell us that this parable of the Sower does not refer so much to the word sown in the heart of the hearer, but to the environment in which the hearer (represented by the seed) is placed. We must not summarily dismiss this from our notice, inasmuch as there is certain amount of truth in the statement; but, like so many things, it is not all true. If we use the R.V. instead of the A.V. we shall see a little more clearly that the seed sown not only represents the word of the kingdom, but the children of the kingdom as well.

In Matt. xiii. 18-23 we have the Lord's own interpretation of the parable. Note the words in italics in the following extracts. "This is *he* that was sown by the wayside." "And *he* that was sown upon rocky places, this is *he that heareth* the word." "And *he* that was sown among thorns, this is *he*, &c." "And *he* that was sown upon the good ground, this is *he that heareth* the word." The same intermingling is seen in Mark iv. and Luke viii. Nevertheless, both passages definitely tell us that the "seed" is the "word." The primary meaning of the seed is certainly "the word," for the Lord Himself says so. The inclusion of the hearer within the meaning is rather by implication than by definite statement. It appears, then, that to *fully* understand the parable we must allow its double application. When the application is to those who reject the word, then the seed sown is the word of the kingdom, and the ground represent the characteristics of the hearers. When the application is to those who are really children of the kingdom, then their identity is lost in that of the seed sown—they are linked in type to the truth.

Then, the various grounds speak not of the state of heart of the hearers, but of their environments during the various phases of the history of events. A characteristic example is found in the cases of Peter and Judas. Satan had dealings with each (Matt. xvi. 22, 23; Luke xxii. 3, 31). Peter denied the Lord with oaths and curses; Judas betrayed Him. Peter went out and wept bitterly; Judas went and hanged himself. Peter was a child of the kingdom, but for a while the thorns overcame him. Judas never was a child of the kingdom (John vi. 70, 71), he was one of the thorns, or, as in the next parable, one of the tares, and his heart is represented by the thorny ground itself.

It is evident that the great majority of the Pharisees, and indeed of the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him (Luke iii. 7), did not understand the import of his message and baptism, for looking upon them he cried, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" Their trust was in "Abraham their father," but John bade them "bring forth fruit meet for repentance." These multitudes and Pharisees, who would have submitted to the rite of baptism as some new ceremonial which pleased their ritualistic self-righteousness, were repulsed by the stern rebuke of John, and satan, taking advantage of the moment, snatched the seed away, and occupied their heart the more for his own fell purposes, for later we find the same people, who boasted of being "children of Abraham," called rather the "children of the Wicked One" by the Lord in John viii. 44.

There were stony ground hearers among the followers of John; of them it is written, “Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth. . . . He was a burning and a shining lamp; and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.” These stony ground hearers heard the word, “and anon with joy received it,” yet they had no root, persecution for the sake of the word discovered their shallowness, and soon they were offended. It was for such that the Lord uttered the words, “Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in Me” (Matt. xi. 6).

The prominent characteristic of John’s ministry was, “to prepare the way of the Lord, and make His paths straight.” It was hard work, with little apparent result. Two of his own followers proved to be hearers of the good ground variety, for on the second day of his proclamation, “Behold, the Lamb of God,” they followed the Lord, one of them being Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. The first sowing of the parable of the Sower is peculiarly descriptive of the first preacher of the kingdom—John the Baptist.

Following immediately upon John’s ministry was that of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord commenced his ministry with the same words as John used, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matt. iv. 17 with iii. 2). In association with Himself the Lord sent forth the Twelve (Matt. x.), and the Seventy (Luke x.). This ministry, looked at it from the external standpoint, was not much more successful than that of John the Baptist.

The characteristics of the “stony ground,” the second sowing hearers, are seen everywhere. The stony ground hearers were shallow. The wayside hearers rejected the testimony of God against them, but the stony ground hearers received the word with joy—for a while! In Matt. iv. 17-25 we have the preaching and its effect. “His fame went throughout all Syria”; “and there followed Him great multitudes.” Mark xii. 37 supplies us with a statement which coincides with the character of the stony ground hearers. “The common people heard Him gladly.” “He that received seed into the stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it, yet. . . . by and by he is offended.”

In John vi. we have a record of defection. After the Lord had uttered that marvellous word concerning Himself as the living bread, and how He came to give His life for the life of the world, we read, “many therefore of *His disciples*, when they heard this, said, This is a hard saying, who can hear it”? “From that time many of *His disciples* went back, and walked no more with Him.” In Luke iv. 14-29 we have another illustration of this self-same spirit. After the Lord’s discourse in the Synagogue, we read, “And all bare Him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph’s son?” By the time He had finished His message to them, however, we read, “And all they in the Synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up, and thrust Him out of the city, and led Him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast Him down headlong.”

Herod himself exhibited much the same character. “And when Herod saw Jesus, he was *exceeding glad*, for he was desirous to see Him for a long season, because he had

heard many things of Him, and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by Him. . . . Then Herod with his men of war set Him at nought” (Luke xxiii. 8-11). Matt. xxi. 1-19 furnishes us with another example of the shallowness of the hearers of the word during the ministry of the Lord. “A very great multitude spread their garments in the way. . . . and the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David; Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest.” Within a few days, in the very same city, the multitude, urged by the chief priests and elders, cried out, “Let Him be crucified!”; “His blood be on us, and on our children” (Matt. xxvii. 19-25). Hence it is that in immediate relation to the ride into Jerusalem, and the shout of Hosannah, we read, “And when He saw a fig tree in the way, He came to it, and found nothing thereon, *but leaves only*” (Matt. xxi. 19). It is interesting to note that the words “withered away” of Matt. xxi. 19; xiii. 6; Mark iv. 6; and Luke viii. 6 are the same. Such, to a large extent, was the character of the heart of those who heard the gospel of the kingdom from the lips of the Son of God. Thus, while John’s ministry is represented by the wayside hearers, the Lord’s ministry is likened unto the stony ground hearers.

In immediate succession to the ministry of the Lord Jesus was the ministry of the Twelve in the Acts. This ministry is likened to the sowing of seed among thorns. Peter uses the key word of the gospel of the kingdom, “Repent,” and the kingdom ordinance, “Be baptized” (Acts ii. 38). The preaching of the word at Pentecost and after produced a deeper effect than had been evidenced during the “Gospels” period. There was not so much of that spirit which characterized the wayside hearers, for the good seed found a place in many hearts, neither was the stony ground hearer alone represented. The trouble is seen among those who had “tasted of the heavenly gift,” and who had been “partakers of the holy spirit,” and had “tasted the good word of God and the powers of the world to come.” Heb. vi. is a divine commentary upon the cause of failure during the Acts. The figure of the “thorny ground” is actually repeated in Heb. vi. 8, “But that which beareth thorns and briars is rejected.” Luke tells us that the stony ground hearers “brought no fruit unto perfection.” We find the echo of this in Heb. vi., “Leaving. . . . let us go unto perfection.”

The epistle to the Hebrews was addressed to Jews who had received in some measure the seed of the kingdom, and had accepted the Lord Jesus as Messiah, but who were still “zealous for the law” (Acts xxi. 20). The Jews failed to see the perfection that was to be found alone in Christ. “Cares, riches and pleasures of this life, the deceitfulness of riches and the lust of other things” are referred to in Hebrews in such passages as xi. 25, 26, “Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the *pleasures* of sin for a season, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater *riches* than the treasures in Egypt.” “Ye took joyfully the spoiling of your goods (x. 34). “Be content with such things as ye have, for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee” (xiii. 5).

Ananias and Sapphira (Acts v.), and Simon who believed and was baptized (Acts viii. 13), are examples of the growth of the thorns which eventually choked the good seed. Ananias and Sapphira particularly illustrate the “thorny ground” hearers. They had believed the word, they had evidently been baptized and were recognized by

the apostles as members of the fellowship of believers, yet their sad history shows us that Matt. xiii. 22 and Heb. vi. are commentaries upon the causes of failure during the Pentecostal dispensation. They brought no fruit to perfection. The command, "Cut it down" – long delayed – at length was fulfilled; the olive tree of Abrahamic blessing and Jewish privilege was cut down, to remain in that condition until the end of the age. Then, after the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, "all Israel shall be saved," ungodliness shall be turned away from Jacob by the Deliverer sent to them—the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. xi. 25, 26).

This is represented by the "good ground." "*This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the habitable world (oikoumene—a word relating to the kingdom) (Heb. ii. 5), for a witness unto all the nations, and then shall the end come*" (Matt. xxiv. 14). This final witness leads on to the fulfilment of the commission of Matt. xxviii. 19, 20:--

"Go ye therefore, and make *all nations* disciples, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even unto the consummation of the age."

The final sowing will be fruitful. "Israel shall all be righteous" (Isa. lx. 21), "all Israel shall be saved" (Rom. ix. 26), "they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine" (Hosea xiv. 7). After the tribulation of the last days, the Lord "will send those that escape unto the nations. . . . and they shall declare My glory among the Gentiles" (Isa. lxvi. 19). This is the heart of the New Covenant.

From the days of old (Isa. vi. 10), during the earthly ministry of the Lord (Matt. xiii. 14), and throughout the Acts of the Apostles to its close (Acts xxviii. 27), the heart of Israel had been hard, and had "waxed gross," the "lust of other things" had choked the word; but when the time comes for the final sowing, the Lord will send Elijah, who shall accomplish that which was foreshadowed by John the Baptist; he will make ready a people for the Lord.

"The upright in heart" of the Psalms, and "the pure in heart" of the Sermon on the Mount, are those indicated in the final sowing of the seed of the kingdom. The promise to Israel is, "I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh" (Ezek. xi. 19). This is the blessing of the New Covenant, sealed by the blood of Christ by which alone the kingdom can be made secure (Jer. xxxi. 31-40). In II Cor. iii. 3-6 we have the "heart of flesh" contrasted with the "heart of stone" in relation to the New Covenant.

The days shall come when Israel, now cast off, shall bring forth a hundred-fold. An handful of corn in the top of the mountains shall shake like Lebanon. It was towards this glorious consummation that the Lord Jesus looked as He reviewed the "mysteries of the kingdom of the heavens." He knew that His rejection would but subserve the mighty purpose of God. In due time He came to *die*, and in due time He will come to *reign*.

The parable of the Sower may supply us with many valuable lessons, but to discover the primary teaching is the object of this series. Let us bring the four sowings together, viz.:-

John the Baptist.	Wayside hearers.	“They seeing, see not, neither do they understand.”
The Lord Jesus, the Twelve, and the Seventy.	Stony ground hearers	“Nothing but leaves. . . . it withered away.”
Peter and the Twelve.	Thorny ground hearers.	“No fruit to perfection, “Riches, pleasures, the lust of other things” (Heb. vi.).
The final witness. (Matt. xxiv. 14).	Good ground hearers. (the heart of the New Covenant).	“The honest and good heart.” “Some hundredfold.”

Parallel with this teaching of the Sower is the witness of the same truth in the parables of the Fig Tree (Luke xiii.) and the Great Supper (Luke xiv.), which we must consider after Matt. xiii. is finished. The primary teaching of these parables is not merely to supply a moral or spiritual lesson, but to depict the secret course of the mystery of the kingdom on through its apparent defeat to its glorious close.

The parables of Matt. xiii. which follow supply further details, but have no new subject; all are connected with the rejection of Christ by Israel, and relate to the “mystery of the kingdom of the heavens.” We hope next time to consider the parable of the Wheat and the Tares.

### **The Wheat and the Darnel.**

**pp. 68-73**

In our last article dealing with the Sower, we considered the course of the several ministries, or “sowings,” of the word of the kingdom. We saw how the various grounds depicted not only the state of the human heart universally, but the characteristic of the hearers at different points of the history of the kingdom proclamation. To meet the possible difficulty that might arise as to the reason why the gospel of the kingdom should be so long refused is the purpose of the next parable. The key words are “an enemy hath done this.” The scene is not changed, but the symbols are. We have a wheat field before the mind, as in the previous parable, but now we are definitely told that “the field is the world.” Further, the sower in this instance is “the Son of man.” Let us look at the parable before we consider its interpretation.

First consider its structure:--

**The Wheat and Darnel.**

- |                                   |                   |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| a   A man sowed good seed.        | <i>Statement.</i> |
| b   Enemy sowed darnel.           | <i>Enemy.</i>     |
| c   The blade sprung up.          | <i>Growth.</i>    |
| d   Then appeared the darnel.     | <i>Fruit.</i>     |
| a   Didst thou not sow good seed? | <i>Question.</i>  |
| b   An enemy hath done this.      | <i>Enemy.</i>     |
| c   Shall we gather the darnel?   | <i>Growth.</i>    |
| d   Let both grow till harvest.   | <i>Fruit.</i>     |

The very first thing which we must notice is that whereas the parable of the Sower occurs in the three Synoptic Gospels, the parable of the Tares is found only in Matthew. This enables us to see that this particular parable has *exclusive* reference to the kingdom of the heavens, and must not be applied to outside subjects.

Before going further we will set before the reader a rather more literal rendering than that of the A.V. or the R.V.:--

“Another parable placed He before them, saying, The kingdom of the heavens hath become like a man sowing good seed in his field; but while men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed darnel through the midst of the wheat, and went away. But when the wheat sprang up and brought forth fruit, then appeared the darnel also. Then the servants of the householder came near and said to him, Sir, was it not good seed thou didst sow in thy field, whence then hath it darnel? But he said unto them, A man that is an enemy did this. But the servants said unto him. Wilt thou therefore that we go and gather them together? But he said, No: lest at anytime while gathering the darnel ye uproot along with it the wheat. Let both grow together until the harvest, and in the harvest season I will say unto the harvesters, gather together first the darnel, and bind it into bundles with a view to the burning it up; but the wheat bring together into my barn.”

Our first consideration must be to settle, if possible, the true meaning of the servants, the wheat, and the tares. Christ’s explanation, in answer to the disciples’ question concerning the parable, was as follows:--

<b>Parable.</b>	<b>Interpretation.</b>
“He that sows the good seed. . . . .	is the Son of man.
And the field. . . . .	is the world.
And the good seed. . . . .	are the sons of the kingdom.
And the darnel. . . . .	are the sons of the evil one.
And the enemy that sowed them. . . . .	is the devil.
And the harvest. . . . .	is the consummation ( <i>sunteleia</i> ) of the age.
And the harvesters. . . . .	are the angels.”

“Just as, therefore, the darnel is gathered together, and by fire is burned, so will it be in the consummation of the ages: The Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they will gather together out of His kingdom all cause of offence (*skandalon* means more than a stumbling stone—literally it is ‘the catch of a trap’), and those that are doers of lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.”

This is the inspired explanation of the parable. It does not deal with the gospel, but with the hearers of the gospel. In the parable of the Sower the seed typifies “the word of the kingdom,” while the ground represents the hearts of the various hearers. In the parable of the Tares the whole case is altered. The seed no longer represents the word, but the sons either of the kingdom, or of the wicked one. The ground no longer represents the hearts of the hearers, but the world. Commentaries are worse than valueless, they are positively harmful if they ignore the interpretation given by the Word of God itself.

The parable tells us that the *prime* cause of the defection and apostasy of Israel is to be seen in the attitude and work of satan. Throughout the course of the ages satan has sought to overthrow the purpose of God in Christ. The primeval promise of Gen. iii. 14, 15 introduces the reader to the conflict of the ages. “I will put enmity between thee and the woman, between thy seed and her seed. It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.” The purpose of the ages centres in Christ (Eph. iii. 11, R.V. margin). The antagonism of satan is directed against this purpose. Every step of the way this opposition is seen.

Adam and Eve are placed in the garden. Dominion is given them. They are tempted and fall, and if the penalty had fallen upon them, the coming of the seed must have been frustrated. Cain slays Abel, and God gives Seth “instead,” thereby showing his brother that “Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother because he was righteous,” was the tool in the hand of satan who sought to prevent the coming of the Seed. The irruption of the “sons of God,” and the corruption of the seed of man, ending in the flood (Gen. vi.), was another attempt to prevent the coming of the Seed. As yet satan did not know through which family of the descendants of Adam the promised Seed should come, so he sought to pollute the whole race. Immediately after the flood Noah utters a prophetic word, which pointed out Shem as the chosen one.

Soon Abraham is called, and the promise of the land and of the Seed is given to him. Satan now centres his attack upon this man and this land. Taking advantage of the delay mentioned in Gen. xi. 31, the evil one peopled the land of Canaan with the Nephilim, the Giants, the Sons of Anak and the Rephaim. The reading of Gen. xi. 31 with xii. 5, 6 is very solemn:--

“And they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto *Haran and dwelt there.*”

“And they went forth to go into the land of Canaan, and into the land of Canaan they came. . . . *and the Canaanite was then in the land.*”

The denial of Sarai both in Egypt and Gerar (Gen. xii. 10-20, and xx. 1-10) is connected with Sarai being taken into the harem of the monarch, and with divine interposition and warning. The repetition of these things is not merely to show Abraham's frailty, but to show the two-fold attempt of satan to contaminate the line of the Seed. Space will not allow us to trace the ever central attack through the long course of Israel's history. The massacre of the male children by Pharaoh is echoed by the same evil work of Herod. The parable of the Tares gives us the method adopted by satan when he found that in spite of all his efforts the long promised Seed had come, and that the Messiah had proclaimed the gospel of the kingdom, and that some had received the message.

Referring back again to Gen. iii., we must notice that there are two seeds mentioned. The Seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent. Now as we translate the one, we must in all fairness translate the other. Therefore, if the Seed of the woman is Christ, the seed of the serpent is antichrist; if moreover we may extend the term to include believers, so must we allow the term to include unbelievers. The parable before us exposes the policy of the wicked one. Change of purpose he does not know, but change of tactics he will ever allow, so that he may draw nearer to his end.

Among those who were professedly the religious people of the day, and in their own estimation "sons of the kingdom," were those who were really "sons of the wicked one."

Matt. iii. opens with the ministry of John the Baptist. The voice of the forerunner was heard,

"and Jerusalem and all Judæa, and all the country round about the Jordan went forth unto him, and were being baptized in the river Jordan by him, openly confessing their sins."

By reason of the fact that John proclaimed that "the kingdom of the heavens is at hand," all who came to be baptized were professedly those who desired a place in that long hoped-for kingdom. Here it is that we catch a glimpse of the Devil's seed, ready to be sown among the good wheat:--

"But seeing many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said unto them, Offspring of vipers, who has warned you to flee from the coming wrath?"

We must not be too hasty in concluding that these Pharisees and Sadducees all turned back; John immediately continued:--

"Bring forth fruit worthy of repentance, and do not think to say within yourselves, We have Abraham for our father, for I say unto you that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham."

John warns them that though they may look so much like the wheat so that it would be impossible to distinguish them then, yet when Christ came He would reveal the secrets of many hearts; the *fruit* would manifest which was wheat, and which was darnel, which were the sons of the kingdom, and which the sons of the wicked one. After referring to the exceeding greatness of Christ, John uses a figure which links this passage very suggestively with the parable before us:--

“Whose fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly cleanse His threshing-floor, and will gather together His wheat into the granary, but the chaff will He burn up with fire unquenchable.”

Some may have heeded these stern words, but many we know refused the witness, and became the enemies of the Lord and His work. The words of John to the Pharisees and Sadducees find an echo in the words of Christ in later passages. In the very chapter which precedes this one of kingdom parables, and where the rejection of Christ reached a climax, we find reference to these “tares,” the seed of the wicked one. The subject (chap. xii. 22-37) refers to Satan’s kingdom, and in verses 33, 34 the Lord says:--

“Either make the tree good, and its fruit good, or make the tree corrupt, and its fruit corrupt. *For from the fruit the tree is known.*”

This last sentence is entirely in harmony with the parable. The tares, or darnel, are the Arabian *zowan*, which grows among the corn. Even the native farmers cannot distinguish between the wheat and the tares with sufficient accuracy to enable them to weed out the latter. The moment, however, that the wheat and the *zowan* begin to head out, a child could distinguish between them.

Continuing the quotation of chap. xii. 34 we read:--

“Offspring of vipers, how can ye speak good things, being wicked.”

Again in Matt. xxiii. 33 the Lord says:--

“Serpents, offspring of vipers, how should ye flee away from the judgment of Gehenna?”

In John viii. 30-32 we have the two kinds of believers or disciples:--

“As He was speaking these things, many believed on Him. Jesus said, therefore, unto the Jews who had believed on Him, If ye abide in My word, ye are *truly* My disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

The Lord Jesus “needed not that any one should bear witness concerning man, for He knew what *was in man*” (John ii. 25). His words, addressed to those who had believed exposed their inner selves. “They answered Him, seed of Abraham are we. . . . our father is Abraham.” Here we have a link with the “offspring of vipers” (Matt. iii.), and this is used by the Lord in His reply, “Ye are of your father the Devil, and the lusts of your father ye choose to be doing.” How soon the Lord’s word divided the wheat from the tares! It is the same in John vi. 59-71:--

“Many of His *disciples*, therefore, when they heard, said, This is a hard saying, who can hear it? . . . . There are some among you who do not believe; for Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that did not believe, and who it was would deliver Him up. . . . Did not I make choice of you, the twelve, and yet from among you one is a devil.”

The servants could not distinguish the true from the false, but the Lord knew what was within before it developed its fruit.

Satan's attempt to spoil the kingdom purpose will fail, as all else of creature craft must do if directed against the Lord. The harvest time, however, has not yet taken place, that is reserved until the consummation of the age. Matt. xxiv. 30, 31 gives us the commencement of this great harvest.

“And they will see the Son of man coming upon the clouds of heaven, with great power and glory. *And He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet, and they shall gather together His chosen.*”

Much more could be said, but our space is limited. We believe that sufficient has been produced from Scripture to assist the student in arriving at a true understanding of this parable. The reader should bear in mind the opening words of the parable, “The kingdom of the heavens *has become* like, &c.” The phase which the kingdom *had taken* consequent upon Matt. xii. is here depicted. We shall have opportunity for dealing with the closing words of the interpretation when we consider the corresponding parable of the Drag Net.

May we be thankful for every exhibition of divine knowledge, wisdom and love, over-ruling and defeating the enemy of truth, and may we ever seek to glorify the Lord our God by fruitful lives, shunning, as we would poison, any approximation to the dissembling and hypocritical spirit which is set forth under the figure of the “darnel.”

### **The Mustard Tree.** **pp. 79-83**

A great deal of controversy has taken place concerning the true meaning of the mustard plant mentioned in this parable. Some maintain that it does not refer to the plant known to us as the mustard plant, but to another which is, strictly speaking, a tree. We are quite unable to enter into this argument where learned men and botanists disagree. For us, all that we need will be found in the Word itself, and to that we turn.

The statement of verse 31 of Matt. xiii., “The kingdom of the heavens is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field,” seems to indicate that we have brought before us a plant which would be naturally sown in fields, and disposes of the idea that it refers to a tree and not to the mustard plant—a herb. The difficulty which some have in the statement of verse 32, “which indeed is the least of all seeds,” is easily removed by supplying the ellipsis from verse 31. The seed is the least of all seeds which men sow in their fields.

Before considering the bearing of this parable upon the subject of the “mysteries of the kingdom,” we must refer to parallel uses of the figures here employed, in order to be “thoroughly furnished.” The word *sinapi* (mustard) occurs but five times in the N.T. Matt. xiii. 31, Mark iv. 31, and Luke xiii. 19 are the passages wherein the parable of the mustard seed is found; the two other references are Matt. xvii. 20 and Luke xvii. 6, where

the reference is to “faith like unto a grain of mustard seed.” It would appear that this was a proverbial saying. When, to-day, we speak of a very nominal rent, we sometimes say, “it is a mere pepper-corn,” and in like manner the mustard seed was used to denote any thing very small. Let us then fix the first point first. The *smallness* of the seed must be remembered when considering the interpretation of the parable. The next thing that we must do is to see whether the Lord alluded to any O.T. prophecies, parables, or statements, for if He did the consideration of such passages must help greatly in the elucidation of the parable:--

“There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon” (Psa. lxxii. 16).

“Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image. . . . and become a great mountain, and filled the whole earth” (Dan. ii. 34, 35).

These two passages have reference to the smallness of the kingdom in its beginnings, and the greatness of the kingdom at its close. The first refers to Israel in the Millennium, the second to the kingdom in relation to the Gentiles and satanic monarchies, which commence with Nebuchadnezzar and end with antichrist:--

“I saw, and behold a tree in the midst of the earth, and the height thereof was great. The tree grew, and was strong, and the height thereof reached unto heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth. The leaves thereof were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all: the beasts of the field had shadow under it, and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the boughs thereof, and all flesh was fed by it” (Dan. iv. 10-12).

Daniel interprets the tree thus, “It is thou, O king,” referring to Nebuchadnezzar. There is close parallel here to the statement of the Lord, “The birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.” Ezek. xxxi. 2-18 contains somewhat references to Pharaoh:--

“Behold the Assyrian was a cedar in Lebanon. . . . all the fowls of heaven made their nests in his boughs. . . . “

The expression, “the fowls of the air,” in the parable, would be better translated “the fowls of the heaven”; this establishes more closely the connection between the parable of the Mustard Tree and Daniel iv. and Ezekiel xxi. “The fowls of the heaven” are mentioned in Matt. vi. 26; viii. 20; xiii. 32; Mark iv. 4, 32; Luke viii. 5; ix. 58; and xiii. 19.

In the parable of the Sower as recorded by Matthew and Mark, we simply read “the fowls” came and devoured the seed. In Luke viii. 5, however, we read, “the fowls of the heavens devoured it.” This helps us to see that those who devoured the seed which fell on the wayside are those who found a lodging place in the branches of the tree. Now the interpretation of the Sower is given by the Lord, and He declares that the action of the fowls is to illustrate the work of satan; consequently we are driven to the conclusion that whatever aspect of the kingdom may be represented by the Mustard Tree, we must find place therein for satan and his agents. It will be of service if we now compare the three records of this parable as given by Matthew, Mark and Luke:--

<b>Matthew.</b>	<b>Mark.</b>	<b>Luke.</b>
<p>“Another parable put He before them saying, The kingdom of the heavens is like unto a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field, which indeed is less than all seeds, but when grown is greater than the herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the heaven come and lodge among its branches.”</p>	<p>“And He was saying, How shall we liken the kingdom of God, or in what parable shall we compare it? As a grain of mustard seed, which when it is sown springeth up and becometh greater than all herbs, and produceth large branches, so that under the shade thereof the birds of the heaven may lodge.”</p>	<p>“He went on to say therefore, Whereunto is the kingdom of God like? And whereunto shall I liken it? It is like unto a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and cast into his garden, and it grew and became a (great) tree and the birds of the heaven lodged among its branches.”</p>

The words “How shall we liken?” “Whereunto is the kingdom of God like?” in Mark and Luke suggest that, humanly speaking, the analogy was difficult to frame. The kingdom history had taken such a strange turn that it needed great skill and choice of figures to illustrate the teaching. The first thing we notice is the smallness of the grain of mustard seed. The kingdom purpose of God commenced with the call of one man, Abram, and his descendants. God definitely told Israel that the people cast out of Canaan were “seven nations greater and mightier than thou” (Deut. vii. 1). It is further said:--

“The Lord did not set His love upon you nor choose you because ye were more in number than any people, for ye were the fewest of all people” (Deut. vii. 7).

“Thy fathers went down into Egypt *threescore and ten persons*; and now the Lord thy God hath made them as the stars of heaven for multitude” (Deut. x. 22).

Here we have the teaching of the words, “less than all the seeds.” Let us now consider the growth of this small company of people. Deut. x. 22 has already told us that the seventy sons became as the stars of heaven for multitude. This, however, was not permanent. In between the promise of the unconditional covenant made by God in Gen. xii. came the covenant of law and works of Sinai—“All that the Lord hath spoken we will do.” Thus in Deut. xxvii. and xxviii. we have blessings and cursings uttered with reference to the law. The curses are terrible, and tell us of the removal of all the privileges and blessings attaching to the chosen people. Among the judgments we note the following:--

“And ye shall be left few in number, whereas ye were as the stars of heaven for multitude; because thou wouldest not obey the voice of the Lord thy God” (Deut. xxviii. 62).

Those who are acquainted with the history of Israel know how all these things came to pass. First the ten tribes, and then the two, were removed from their land, and the dominion given to Nebuchadnezzar. With this man commenced the “times of the Gentiles”—“it became a tree.” These times must run their destined course before “all Israel shall be saved” (Rom. xi. 25, 26). This the apostle declares to be a “mystery,” and indeed it is related to the “mystery of the kingdom of the heavens” as recorded in Matt. xiii.

The dominion handed over to Nebuchadnezzar went the same way as it did with Adam and with Israel. From the head of gold it degenerated by stages from silver to brass, from brass to iron, and from iron to clay. We know that Babylon was succeeded

by Medo-Persia, which in its turn was succeeded by Greece. This we know not merely from history, but from Scripture (Dan. viii. 18-27). The question as to whether Rome succeeded Greece may form a profitable consideration at some future time; what we know is that when the Lord Jesus was on earth,

“Satan showed Him the kingdoms of the world (*hoikoumene*) in a moment of time; and the devil said unto Him, All this will I give Thee, and the glory of them (note “Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory’), *for unto me hath it been delivered*, and to whomsoever I will I give it” (Luke iv. 5, 6).

This brings us to the words of the parable again, “the birds of the heavens lodged in its branches.” The parable of the Sower has settled the meaning of the birds—satan and his agents. Dan. x. 13 and 20 show us that satan had an emissary at the courts of Persia and Greece, a principality or power conducting affairs for the “prince of this world.” Inasmuch as idolatry is allied to demons, it seems probable that the dominion given by God to the Gentiles was given up to satan, who is seen in full possession in the days when the Lord Jesus was on earth.

The normal, or true kingdom growth, and the abnormal, or Gentiles-Satanic development, may be better seen by viewing the parable as follows:--

A1   “The seed sown.” <i>Sowing</i> .	The kingdom
B1   “Least of all.” Its beginning—small.	viewed as from
A2   “When it is grown.” <i>Growing</i> .	Abraham to its final
B2   “Greatest of herbs.” Its real end—great herb.	establishment.
A3   “Becometh a tree.” <i>Becoming</i> .	The kingdom as it
B3   “Fowls. . . . in branches.”	became during the
Its end under Gentiles.	“times of the Gentiles.”

Thus the small seed grew into a tree and became a lodging place of satan and his angels. No wonder, then, that the preaching of the kingdom gospel was resisted and ended as it did. The Lord knew that the times of the Gentiles must run their course before the seed would be sown in good ground. Viewed in this light the parable was full of meaning to those anxious hearts who gathered around the Lord in the days of His rejection. Understanding this parable as a revelation of one of the “secrets of the kingdom,” they would be upheld in their, apparently, fruitless ministry.

In the next parable the Lord reveals the last factor in this sad history, but that we must leave for our next paper.

## **The Hidden Leaven and the Hidden Treasure.** **pp. 95-103**

The parable of the Leaven is the last of the four spoken by the Lord outside the house. It reaches a climax and tells us what the end of the external history of the kingdom of the heavens will be—"the whole was leavened."

The parable occurs in Matt. xiii. 33 and Luke xiii. 20, 21. Matt. xiii. 33 says, "Another parable spake He unto them. The kingdom of the heavens is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal until the whole was leavened." Luke xiii. 20, 21 says, "And again He said, Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God? It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal until the whole was leavened." The wording of the two passages is very similar. Luke adds the question, "Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom?" and uses the expression, "The kingdom of God," for "The kingdom of the heavens." The reader will remember that Luke and Mark prefix this question to the parable of the Mustard Tree, and its recurrence is suggestive of something parallel.

Before going further in our investigations we must consider the Scriptural meaning of the word "leaven." The word in Greek is *zume*, and occurs *thirteen* times in Scripture. The significance of thirteen is that of rebellion and the work of satan. Practically all the titles of satan are multiples of 13, and the suggestion that leaven is a type of evil is strengthened by this fact.

Let us notice how the word is used in other N.T. passages. In Matthew's Gospel the Lord uses it as a type of corrupt and corrupting doctrine. "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees. . . . Then understood they how that He bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of *the doctrine* of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees" (Matt. xvi. 6-12). In Mark viii. 15 we read, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod."

A further explanation is given of the meaning of the leaven of the Pharisees in Luke xii. 1, "Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, *which is hypocrisy.*" Scripture affords us therefore the plain statement that the Lord Jesus used the figure of leaven as a type of evil doctrine and hypocrisy. This of itself should be sufficient to dispose of the idea that the leaven in Matt. xiii. is typical of the truth. Every occurrence of the word, moreover, whether in the N.T. or the O.T., bears out the fixed meaning of the symbol. The apostle Paul uses leaven as a figure in I Cor. v. 6, 7, 8, and Gal. v. 9. He speaks of the "leaven of *baseness and wickedness,*" and contrasts it with "the unleavened bread of *sincerity and truth*" (I Cor. v. 8). The passage opens with the words, "Know ye not that a little leaven doth leaven the whole lump? *Purge ye out the old leaven,*" and ends with the words, "*Remove ye the wicked man* from among yourselves" (I Cor. v. 6-13).

In Exod. xii. 15 we read in connection with the Passover, "Ye shall put leaven out of your houses." Exod. xxxiv. 25 and Lev. ii. 11 declare, "Thou shalt not offer the blood of any sacrifice with leaven," and "No meal offering which ye shall bring unto the Lord

shall be made with leaven.” Here we see that both the sacrifice with blood, and the wonderful bloodless meal offering, must alike be free from leaven. Amos, speaking of Israel’s sins, says, “Come to Bethel and transgress. . . . and offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving with leaven. . . . for this liketh you, O ye children of Israel, saith the Lord God” (Amos iv. 4, 5). Leaven is undoubtedly a type of evil as used by the Holy Spirit in the inspired Word.

What of the three measures of meal? They certainly cannot typify the corrupt human heart any more than the corrupting leaven can represent the blessed truth of God. Neither can the three measures of pure meal represent the “Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Greek sections of Christendom.” If they do, then the Protestant expositors who are largely the supporters of this interpretation must confess that Rome is looked upon by the Lord in the same light as their own community, and will finally be “leavened the gospel” (to use their own phraseology), like the Protestant and the Greek. Of course the answer will be that the measures of meal represent “Christendom, the professing church,” not the true church of Christ. This again yields another difficulty. Will “Christendom, the professing church” be so “leavened with the gospel” that at the end it will be true that “the whole was leavened”? When the Son of man cometh, will He find a completely evangelized and believing Christendom? Facts of everyday life as well as prophecy testify to the exact opposite.

Can we find the Scriptural meaning of the three measures of meal? The word meal in the original is *aleuron*, and means by its etymology meal produced by grinding. The word occurs nowhere else in Scripture apart from the parable of the Leaven. In the O.T. meal and fine flour were typical of the spotless purity of the offering of the Lord Jesus, and of the perfect character of the Word of truth. In Lev. ii. we have the “meat offering.” The word “meat” is an old English word for food (we still say “grace before meat”), but there is no flesh or blood in the “meat offering” of Lev. ii. The instructions given in the first verse tell us of the perfect purity of the offering; “his offering shall be of fine flour; and he shall pour oil upon it, and put frankincense thereon. . . . no meat offering which ye shall bring unto the Lord shall be made with leaven” (verse 11).

Meal was used by the prophet Elisha to counteract the “death in the pot” caused by the “wild vine” which had been gathered, symbolizing the deliverance to be wrought by Christ (II Kings iv. 38-41). In Jer. xxiii. we have the Lord’s severe indictment of the false prophets. “They speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Lord” (verse 16). “The prophets. . . . that prophesy lies in my Name. . . . they are prophets of the deceit of their own heart” (vv.25, 26). “I am against the prophets. . . . that steal my words. . . . that use (or smooth) their tongues, and say, *He saith*” (vv.30, 31). “He that hath My Word, let him speak My Word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? Saith the Lord” (verse 28). These passages must suffice to show that corn, meal, or fine flour typify the Word of God, living and written.

There is one other symbol to consider and that is “The woman.” In the preceding parables it is a man who sows the seed, but now the symbol changes. Students of the Scriptures are familiar with the fact that a woman is used many times to represent a

system either good or bad. Thus we have “that woman Jezebel” in Rev. ii. 20, and she is seen very plainly hiding the “leaven” in the meal. “Thou sufferest that woman Jezebel which calleth herself a prophetess to teach and to seduce My servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idols.” Here is corruption; this is the doctrine of Balaam as specified in verse 14. In Rev. xvii. 4, 5 we have another woman:--

“And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abomination and filthiness of her fornication. And upon her forehead was a name written, a secret, *Babylon the Great*, the mother of the harlots and the abominations of the earth.”

The interpretation given by God is that this woman “is that great city” (verse 18), and Babylon, and all that Babylon stands for, is intended here—the great corrupter. The revival of Babylon forms part of Zechariah’s prophecy. In chapter v., under the figure of a lawless woman sitting in the midst of an ephah (a dry measure used for grain, &c.), the prophet depicts the return of wickedness to its original seat—“to build it an house in the land of Shinar.” Many commentators look upon the woman as symbolizing Rome. Romanism is certainly one of the polluted streams, but it is not the fountain head, for idolatry and its accompaniments were doing their deadly work before Rome was built, or Romanism founded. It is interesting to note the efforts now being put forward in Mesopotamia for the revival of this ancient seat of rebellion and corruption.

We have seen that leaven signifies corrupt doctrine. We have seen that the meal represents the perfect offering of Christ and the unadulterated Word of God, and we see that the woman has much to make us feel that Babylonianism is behind this corrupting work. In the parable of the Tares we see the enemy sowing his false seed; in the parable of the Mustard Tree he is found supported by the branches of the abnormal growth which typifies the Gentile epoch; and in the parable of the Leaven he is seen using that great system of corruption, of which he was the founder (Gen. x.), to leaven the pure meal of God.

Coming back to Matt. xiii. we ask, with the disciples, why it is that the kingdom of the heavens is delayed, and the King rejected? The answer is “*An enemy hath done this.*” He has sown his tares, he inhabits the tree, he leavens the truth.

We have already seen the connection between the leaven and the doctrine of the Pharisees, Sadducees and Herodians. Here is leaven enough for the *three* measures of meal. It will be found that this leaven has reference to the Word of God and the Person of Christ. In Matt. xvi. 6-12 the Lord warns His disciples against the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and *immediately* the Scripture records His question, “Who do men say that I, the Son of man, am?” Peter’s wonderful confession is immediately followed by an attack of satan, where the cause of the opposition is the revelation of the fact that the Lord Jesus must suffer, die, and rise again. Peter’s words, “be propitious to Thyself” (verse 22) savoured of men, and were instigated by satan (verse 23).

The Lord had said, further, that the leaven of the Pharisees was hypocrisy. This leaven is exposed in Matt. xxiii. 13, “Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!

For ye shut up the kingdom of the heavens against men.” This is why the King was rejected and the kingdom shut up. In Mark vii. the Lord again unveils their corrupting influence:--

“Well hath Isaiah prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. However, in vain do they worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commands of men. For laying aside the commandment, ye hold the tradition of men. . . . full well ye reject the commandment of God that ye may keep your own tradition” (Mark vii. 6-9).

Space will not allow us to multiply examples, those given are sufficient to show the working of the leaven. The leaven was everywhere making its corrupting way. Distorted views obtained concerning (1) the Messiah, (2) the Kingdom, and (3) the Scriptures. The Lord Jesus, standing in the midst of a people thus already corrupted, prophesied that this leavening would go on its evil course until the whole was leavened. “When the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith in the earth?” The apostle Paul, writing in II Thess. ii. of the rise of antichrist, says:--

“For the mystery of lawlessness already is inwardly working itself, only until He that restraineth become out of the midst, and then shall be revealed the lawless one. . . . because the love of the truth they did not welcome. . . . they believe the lie” (vv. 7-11).

This brings us to the end, “the whole was leavened.” This is the state of things as given in the book of the Revelation. The last parable of the external history of the course of the kingdom is sad indeed. The state of Israel at the “time of the end” is deplorable, and may be summed up under the three heads, Pharisaic, Sadducean, and Herodian. Hypocrisy, infidelity and worldliness “like unto Sodom and Gomorrah.”

We are thankful that this is not the end of these parables. There is another side of the question, there is the divine standpoint, there is the purpose of Him Who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will. This divine aspect is the common link between the next four parables spoken “inside the house” to the disciples. These we must consider in subsequent articles. Before concluding this paper shall we set out the history of the kingdom of the heavens so far as we have seen it at present?

### **The Sower.**

The ministries of John the Baptist, the Lord Jesus, and the Apostles during the “Acts” were to a large extent, externally, failures, but there is yet to be a gloriously fruitful sowing when the time comes for the New Covenant to be put into operation.

### **The Darnel.**

The reason for the delay in the setting up of the kingdom is discovered in the fact that an enemy is at work, and side by side with the true children of the kingdom are the children of the wicked one, but these are not removed until the end of the age.

### **The Mustard Tree.**

The next reason for the delay is that whereas the small seed of Israel should have flourished and filled the earth with fruit, the sovereignty changed hands, and was deposited with the Gentiles, beginning with Nebuchadnezzar, “until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.” This stage is marked by the words, “it becometh a tree, and the fowls lodged in its branches.” That which should have been pre-eminently the kingdom of righteousness, becomes the habitation of satan and his angels.

### **The Leaven.**

The third reason for delay is that the leaven of evil has been put into the meal of God’s truth. This will work its course until the rise of antichrist, and the complete corruption of the visible witness for God.

Thus we see that the Lord Jesus had no idea of the gradual uplifting of the masses, and the permeating influence of the gospel. He saw that man had corrupted his way upon the earth, even as it was in the days of Noah. Hence it is that He uses the same words to represent the end. Blessed be God, that out of all this corruption and apostasy He will yet bring His treasure and display His grace. For this creation groans, and the study of this blessed aspect of the divine purpose shall now be our privilege.

We have considered the first four parables and discovered something of their bearing upon the course of the kingdom of the heavens. A division is now observable, emphasized alike by the structural arrangement, the teaching, and the different place in which they were spoken.

### **The Treasure.**

After the parable of the Leaven the Lord dismissed the multitude, and went into the house. There He explained the parable of the Tares, and then proceeded to unfold the inner or Godward aspect of the kingdom in the four parables that followed. Their relation to each other may be summarized thus:--

- A | The treasure in the field.—The nation of Israel as distinct from the nations.
- B | The one beautiful pearl.—The remnant of Israel as distinct from the nations.
- B | The many fish.—The Gentiles nations as distinct from Israel.
- A | The treasure in the house.—Israel, viewed as a missionary nation, sent to the nations.

The first of this series (the Hid Treasure) is in direct contrast with the Hid Leaven. These four parables are found only in Matthew’s Gospel. “The kingdom of the heavens is like unto a treasure hid in the field, which a man finding, hid, and by reason of his joy, withdraweth and selleth whatsoever he hath, and buyeth that field.” Let us examine the terms of the parable in the light of the subject of the kingdom and the Scriptures relating thereto. Just before this parable the Lord had said, “The field is the world,” hence the field here (not “a field,” as the A.V.) means the world. In this world a treasure was hidden. What is the treasure?

Starting with Gen. xii. we have the inception of the special nation, separated and called to a higher glory than any other nation on the earth. When this people was redeemed from Egypt the Lord said to them, "Now therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a *peculiar treasure (s'gullah)* unto Me above all people: for all the earth is Mine: and ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation" (Exod. xix. 5, 6). No other nation has ever had such a calling or such a title. Deut. xiv. 2 reads, "the Lord hath chosen thee to be a *peculiar (s'gullah)* people unto Himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth." Again, in Deut. xxvi. 18 we read, "The Lord hath avouched thee this day to be His peculiar (*s'gullah*) people. . . . to make thee high above all nations. . . ." In Psa. cxxxv. 4 we read, "The Lord hath chosen. . . . Israel for His *peculiar treasure (s'gullah)*." In Mal. iii. 17 we read, "And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels" (*s'gullah*). The "jewels," or peculiar treasure, represent the whole nation of Israel, secured in their position of final blessing by the unchanging love of God (Mal. iii. 10). But in the day of Israel's blessing one jewel brighter than the rest will be seen—the remnant of faithful ones during the days of Israel's sin and apostasy. This will be considered under the parable of the One Pearl. Psa. lxxxiii. 3, 4 supplies another name for Israel, "Thy hidden ones," which should be considered in this connection.

The next item to notice is the statement, "Which a man finding, *hid.*" The hidden treasure is hidden again until the day when the treasure is claimed. When the Lord Jesus came to this world He limited His ministry to the lost sheep of the house of Israel; He came to seek and to save that which was lost. Israel could never qualify under law to be the treasure; they must be redeemed. They will never be a kingdom of priests by virtue of their own deeds, but solely upon the basis of redemption (cf. Rev. i.). Up till Matt. xvi. the Lord had not spoken of His death, but in verses 20 & 21 He hides the treasure, and declares the great price which He is about to pay for its redemption. That death on the cross secured the treasure and the field. There the Lord Jesus gave His all.

In Luke xix. 11-27 we have further light upon this hiding of the treasure. Lest any should think by His words that the kingdom was to be set up at once, the Lord said, "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return." Thus the second hiding of the treasure is symbolical of the abeyance of the kingdom. The day of manifestation is coming when the words will resound, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign unto the ages of the ages" (Rev. xi. 15). This parable declares that in spite of all opposition God's purpose for Israel and the kingdom will be fulfilled. This would comfort the hearts of the disciples. They would see how irresistible is the purpose of Him, Who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will.

Thus has God declared His answer to the evil one. He had hidden his leaven, but the Lord had hidden His treasure. Soon the day will come when the Lord will remove the stain of sin and the corruption of the enemy: soon He will come to make up His jewels, and then shall Israel be a glorious diadem in the hand of their God.

## **The Pearl of Great Price.** **pp. 133-136**

It will be remembered that in our exposition of the parable of the Hid Treasure we drew attention to the difference which is made in Scripture between "all Israel" and "the remnant." It appears also in the above parable. Both refer to the people of God's choice--Israel, both are referred to under the figure either of a treasure or a pearl of great price. The very Jews who were "enemies because of the gospel" were nevertheless "beloved because of the fathers," but doubly precious in the sight of God has ever been that believing remnant from Abraham onwards. These are an election from among the elect, and these are dealt with in the parable of the Pearl:--

"Again, the kingdom of the heavens is like unto a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, and, finding one very precious pearl, departing, he at once sold all things whatsoever he had and bought it" (Matt. xiii. 45, 46).

Let us briefly consider the words used in this parable.

*Merchant.*--The word is *epmoros* in the original, giving us our emporium, and occurs five times in the N.T., once in the parable, and four times of the merchants connected with Babylon (Rev. xviii.).

*Pearls.*--These are mentioned in the N.T. nine times. Two of these occurrences are in the parable, and five are in the Revelation. The harlot is seen decked with precious stones and pearls, but after her destruction the new Jerusalem, the holy city, is seen with its foundation of precious stones, and every gate a pearl. Merchants and pearls are connected with the two cities, and the two systems, the one being the devil's parody of the other.

The N.T. word for a pearl is *margarites*. Another word, not found in the N.T., but closely resembling the Hebrew word translated "rubies," is the word *pinna*. The R.V. margin of Job xxviii. 18 gives "pearls" as an alternative reading. Bochart is very strong in his belief that the Hebrew word *peninim* (rubies) should be translated pearls. The price of wisdom (Job xxviii. 18; Prov. iii. 15) and the worth of a virtuous woman (Prov. xxxi. 10) are placed above the value of *peninim* or pearls.

Coming now to the meaning of the parable. Right down the ages since the time of Abraham there has been a faithful remnant. These will form one company at the end, and are spoken of as "holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling," "who died in faith, not having received the promise." The reader should turn to the following passages before going further, to learn more concerning this remnant according to the election of grace. Isa. i. 9; Isa. vii. 3 (Shear-jashub, the name translated for us in x. 21 by the words "the remnant shall return"); Isa. xi. 11, 16; Ezek. ix. 4-6; xiv. 22; Joel ii. 32 (compare the remnant on the day of Pentecost); Micah ii. 12; Rom. ix. 27; xi. 5.

The overcomers of the Apocalypse, the 144,000 sealed of the tribes of Israel, the various companies mentioned in Rev. xii. 17; xiv. 1-5; xv. 1-3 and xx. 4 all seem to be

part of this great company denominated by our Lord "The Pearl of Great Price." Pearls are compared with holiness in Matt. vii. 6; the partakers of the heavenly calling are called "*holy brethren*" (Heb. iii. 1), and "saints of the Most High" (Dan. vii. 22). Pearls are compared with wisdom in the O.T., and Dan. xii. 3 tells us that "they that be *wise* shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars unto the age and beyond." These are the seed of Abraham likened to the stars of heaven, the nation itself being likened to the sand of the seashore. These wise ones "understand" and "instruct many" (Dan. ix. 33); they are subjected to tribulation (Dan. xi. 35) before they enter their glory. Wherever we see this elect remnant we find tribulation and suffering. The words of the epistles of Peter and James, so full of admonition and comfort to those of the dispersion who believed and who were passing through the "fiery trial," were addressed to this remnant.

When we read in the book of the Revelation of "The wife" and "The bride," we have the two companies again who are in view in these parables as the Treasure and the Pearl. Israel's relationship to God is that of a wife who, being unfaithful, has been put away, but the return of Israel is to be like the taking back of the penitent wife, nay, so great is God's grace and love that He says it will be "as a young man marrieth a virgin," even though in reality it will be the taking back again of an unfaithful wife (see Isa. lxii. 4, 5 and Hos. ii. 19, 20, &c.). This relationship, which includes "all Israel," is brought before us in Rev. xix. as the marriage of the Lamb, whose "wife hath made herself ready."

After the thousand years' reign, and in connection with the new heaven and the new earth, we read, "And I, John, saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband" (Rev. xxi. 2). In verses 9 and 10 we have this fact repeated. The inhabitants of this city are the partakers of the "heavenly calling," who, like Abraham, desired a better country, that is an heavenly, and for them God hath prepared *a city*. It was this *heavenly calling* (which must be distinguished from the super-celestial calling of the dispensation of the mystery), so plainly understood and believed by Abraham, that enabled him to be a stranger and a pilgrim on the earth, a sojourner in the land of *promise* as in a *strange* country, content with tents and no settled habitation, because he looked for *a city* which hath *the* foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

Such as are children of faithful Abraham, not only according to the flesh but according to the spirit, such constitute the bride and the pearl, an elect remnant out from an elect nation. Israel viewed as a whole is likened to a treasure and a wife. The remnant (which will include believing Gentiles during the "Acts" period) are viewed as a precious pearl and a bride. We may set this out more clearly as follows:--

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>The Elect Nation</b> as distinct from the Nations.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>The Elect Remnant</b> as distinct from the Nation.</p>
<p>A treasure. A wife. Earthly calling, and city. Seed like sand for multitude.</p>	<p>A pearl. A bride. Heavenly calling, and city. Seed like stars for multitude.</p>

Once again we see how fully the Lord was meeting the disciples' need, by showing them the way in which God's purpose concerning Israel was to run its course, and how the very trials and hindrances would be made to contribute to the glorious end in view.

### **The Drag Net. pp. 149-153**

In the preceding parable we had the remnant of Israel likened to that which is the most valuable treasure of the sea – the pearl. We are now to consider two kinds of fish which are gathered from the sea, and to note their meaning. We have pointed out the fact that structurally and in subject the two parables of the Tares and the Net are very similar. The tares indicate the hypocrites, the counterfeit, that which was sown by the Devil in imitation of the true wheat. We observed that this parable had a particular and primary application to Israel and the state of the kingdom.

The net draws to shore fish both “good” and “bad.” So far we see the parallel: the wheat and the tares being two kinds of grain, one good and one bad; the fish being of two kinds, the one good and the other bad. But here comes a noteworthy difference, for whereas it is evident that the tares were intended to counterfeit the wheat, there is not the slightest warrant for supposing that the “bad” fish counterfeited the “good.” Further, the wheat and the tares deal with two kinds of seed, whereas the net “gathered of *every kind.*” Another point to be remembered is the different order given with regard to the separation of the two kinds. Let us carefully consider the interpretation given by our Lord of these two related parables, noticing their points of contact and divergence.

<b>Interpretation of the Tares</b> (Matt. xiii. 37-43).	<b>Interpretation of the Drag Net</b> (Matt. xiii. 49, 50).
<i>Spoken only to disciples.</i>	<i>Spoken only to disciples.</i>
<p>He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man.            The field is the world.            The good seed are the sons of the kingdom.            The tares are the sons of the wicked one.            The enemy that sowed them is the devil.            The harvest is the end of the age.            The reapers are the angels.            As the tares are gathered and burned, so shall it be at the end of the age:            The Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they shall <i>gather out of His kingdom all things that offend</i>, and them that do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire, there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth  <i>Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.</i></p>	<p>So shall it be at the end of the age.             The angels shall come forth, and <i>sever the wicked from among the just</i>, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire, there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.</p>

It will be observed that a more complete explanation is given of the Tares than of the Net, and that in both cases the section dealing with the wicked receives most attention. The wheat and the tares are, the one sons of the kingdom, the other sons of the devil. The good and bad fish are not placed under either heading. Before considering the dispensational teaching of this parable, let us consider more carefully some of the figures that are used.

*The Net.*—Scripture mentions three different nets:--

1. The cast net (*diktuon*), cf. John xxi. 11.
2. The circular net (*amphiblestron*), cf. Matt. iv. 18.
3. The drag net (*sagene*), only used in this parable.

*The Fish.*—There are 40 different kinds of fish in the Sea of Galilee: of these there are two common kinds, one a good fish, the bream, the other a fish without scales, and therefore an abomination, having neither fins nor scales (Lev. xi. 10), the flesh of which was salted and sold to the port of Rome, where it received the name of “stinking sheat fish.”

*The Sea.*—The sea is continually used as a type of the nations, particularly in a tumultuous state. “The waters. . . . are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues” (Rev. xvii. 15).

Let us now look at the parable in the light of prophecy. The drawing of the net to shore at the end of the age is parallel with the gathering of the living nations to the land of Israel. Note, in the parable and in the prophecy, that the fish and the nations are living and not dead. This is not dealing with the judgment of those who are raised from the dead, but that of the living nations, whose relation with the kingdom is to be decided.

Scripture is emphatic upon the fact that towards the end of the age Jerusalem and the land of Israel shall become a “burdensome stone to the nations.” The “Eastern Question” already gathers around Asia Minor, and the Powers of Europe jealously regard each other in reference to Jerusalem—the key to the East. Listen to the words of the Prophets:--

“For behold, in those days and in that time, WHEN I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, I WILL ALSO GATHER ALL NATIONS, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for My people and for My heritage Israel, whom they have *scattered* among the nations, and *parted My land*” (Joel iii. 1, 2).

“Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee, for I WILL GATHER ALL NATIONS against Jerusalem to battle” (Zech. xiv.1, 2).

“My determination is to GATHER THE NATIONS, THAT I MAY ASSEMBLE THE KINGDOMS, to pour upon them My indignation” (Zeph. iii. 8).

“Haste ye and come, ALL YE NATIONS round about, and gather yourselves together; thither cause THY MIGHTY ONES (i.e. the angels) TO COME DOWN, O Lord. Let the nations bestir themselves and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat, for there will I SIT TO JUDGE ALL NATIONS round about” (Joel iii. 11, 12).

“When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory, and before Him shall be gathered ALL NATIONS, and He shall separate them” (Matt. xxv. 31-33).

As we read these prophecies it is abundantly manifested that the gathering of the nations is to be expected at the time of the end. Matt. xxv. shows that the nations who have well treated the “brethren” of the King shall enter into the kingdom, while the nations who have ill-treated the Jew are an offence, and are gathered out of that kingdom. Matt. xxv. is *national*. As nations they enter the kingdom, or as nations they are debarred. It is quite contrary to the teaching of the passage to make the kind acts of the nations a basis for “doing all things unto the Lord,” for these nations did not *consciously* do what they did to Israel for Christ’s sake at all; they only learn that when they stand before His throne.

The peculiar time of Israel’s trouble, which is coming, will be a great temptation to all the nations to take advantage of the helplessness of this down-trodden people, but the Lord will reward that nation which acts kindly to His people. “Come ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom”; “the righteous into age-abiding life” (Matt. xxv.34, 46) is typified in the parable by the putting of the good fish into the vessels. “*For every one that is left* of all the nations that came against Jerusalem, shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles” (Zech. xiv. 16).

These are the good fish of the parable. The nations who are thus blessed will have a blessed portion in the kingdom; many, however, will forfeit their place when Satan is unbound at the end. Israel’s pre-eminent position in the kingdom is emphasized in the parable of the Tares, for of them it adds, “Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.” Thus, at the end of the age there will be two siftings and two gatherings in connection with the kingdom. First from Israel itself (as indicated in the “Tares”), He shall thoroughly purge His floor—hypocrites and sons of the wicked one, those who say they are Jews and are not, but who are of the synagogue of Satan (Rev. iii. 9)—and then from the nations round about as already seen in the quotations from the Prophets and Matt. xxv.

These parables show us that great care is necessary in reading the Word that we do not overlook the divisions that are made among various classes in the kingdom. We have the “Treasure,” Israel, as distinct from the nations. We have the “One Pearl,” the Remnant, as distinct from the nation. We have the good and bad fish, the division made among the nations themselves.

Evil shall not always reign. That kingdom so long looked for will come, and then shall begin the final step towards the goal—“A new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.”

**Berean Expositor Volume 2 & 3.**  
**pp.153-156 (End)**

**Review.**

We have received for review a booklet (126 pp.) entitled "All in all, the goal of the Universe," published at the Office of "Unsearchable Riches," 2823, E. Sixth Street, Los Angeles, Cal., price 20c.

Whatever difference there may be between the writers of this booklet and the reviewer, however plainly we may speak with regard to any passages which we may feel have not been truthfully interpreted, we desire, even at the risk of appearing unduly solicitous, to discountenance any idea that our love for the brethren concerned is altered, or that we attribute to them any conscious misdealing with the Word of truth. Pioneers of necessity have many difficulties undreamed of by those who sit securely at home, and seeing that *The Berean Expositor* is also traversing neglected paths and untrod territory, we very really sympathize with all true "Bereans," fallible though they may be as ourselves. Our review must of necessity be brief, but as the subject herein discussed is on our programme to follow the series on the "Wages of Sin," we shall be able to give a more extended commendation or criticism in those articles as we deal with the various sections.

The booklet appears to fall under two headings. The first, for which we thank God, is expository, the second, with which we cannot associate ourselves, is arrived at by a process of deduction and inference. The chapters dealing with the "Ages" contain much that is of the first importance. They set before the reader every passage wherein the Greek words *aiōn* and *aiōnios* occur, classified into groups. With this method of research *The Berean Expositor* (if true to its title) must of necessity be at one. Whether we agree with all the inferences drawn is, however, another question. While there is this commendable element of exposition, its value is marred somewhat by the assumptions and deductions which form a large portion of the argument.

On page 53 the writer speaks of Heb.ix.26 as "a puzzling passage." We are certain that the attempted explanation of the passage will prove a greater puzzle to most readers. "The puzzle" is the result of the assumption that one age, and one only, must be considered as covering the period from the Flood to the Day of the Lord. Right through the book the good exposition is spoiled by the fact that the writers have a theory already formed in their minds. Where direct exposition is of service they are powerful, where they need to go beyond what is written, they fall into the very error which they justly condemn.

Page 6 contains the following true statement, ". . . and in His Word has given us all necessary knowledge concerning 'things to come'." Page 9 says, "Speculation—the mother of assumption. . . simply a wild hazard at possible truth." These two sentences seem to contain a summary of the book that contains them. Where the writers are content to go no further than *what is written*, they do us service, beyond that, all must be "a wild hazard at possible truth," and that is harmful. The awful error of eternal

conscious suffering is effectually disposed of in the opening pages, and for this we are indeed thankful.

One of the weakest passages, from an expository standpoint, is that dealing with I Cor.xv. The writer says:--

“It is generally conceded that in verses 23 and 24 resurrection is spoken of as taking place in the three grand divisions or companies.”

*Generally conceded!* True Bereans concede nothing. And (to quote again from page 9):--

“When erroneous speculation crystallizes into unquestioned dogma, when its assumptions are foolishly and blindly accepted as incontrovertible fragments of absolute truth, then it acquires an authority, and wields a tyrannous despotism, to which it can advance no rightful claim. . . . this very practice of accepting certain assumptions as being so obviously true as to require no proof. Many a scientific dogma has collapsed the moment its assumptive basis was called into question.”

This baneful practice, so rightly condemned on pages 9 and 10, is adopted on pages 31 and 32. “It is generally conceded” on page 31 leads to the astounding assertion on page 32 that the words of I Cor.xv.24, “the end,” mean the resurrection of all who become Christ’s in the “ages of the ages.” This unwarranted assertion, this “wild hazard at possible truth” “crystallizes into unquestioned dogma” on page 63. On the other hand, things which are expressly written for our learning seem to have escaped the attention of the writers. For example, at the foot of page 64 we are told that “those who appear before its (the Great White Throne) awful light shall not live, but die the second death.”

A careful reading of Rev.xx. will reveal a state of things entirely contrary to this. The writers “assume” that all who stand before the Great White Throne are cast into the Lake of Fire, and so have to further “assume” that those who are thus cast into the Lake of Fire will be raised out of it again! Scripture is full of evidence on the subject of the resurrection of the dead, but there is no single passage of Scripture written to warrant the idea of a resurrection from the Lake of Fire. We do not see in the book a reason given as to why Death and Hades were cast into the Lake of Fire. If we believed the writers’ theories we might hazard a guess that Death and Hades also, together with Satan, his angels, the Beast, and the False Prophet, were to emerge from its dread hold. One may be permitted the equal liberty of believing that Death and Hades, being done with, are cast into the Lake of Fire to be destroyed prior to the new heavens and the new earth.

Another speculation which is quietly assumed as “truth” is found on page 63. “Not only did it (death) come through Adam to his posterity, but its dark stream overflowed to the creatures *below* as well as the creatures *above*” (our italics). Even supposing the reading of Heb.ii.9 advocated were to prove the true one, the translation given does not stand the test of the concordance (see *chōris* in Hebrews). What Scripture is there from Genesis to Revelation which teaches that Adam’s death passed beyond the dominion committed to him?

The passing reference to Isa.xxvi.14 is exceedingly weak and unfair. We are taken to Psa.i.5 to show that “rise” in Isa.xxvi.14 does not mean rise, but “stand up”; why were we not taken to the context, to the same word in Isa.xxvi.19? “Thy dead men shall live, *together with* my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust.” The parallelism of “live,” “arise,” “awake,” “death,” and “dust” are proof enough that the reference is to resurrection. The truth is that the “Rephaim,” together with “every plant which My heavenly Father hath not planted,” “the generation of vipers,” “the children of the wicked one,” “those whose names are not written in the Book of Life,” must be carefully considered together, and kept separate from the normal descendants of Adam.

As we said at the beginning, there is much food for thought, and matter for earnest enquiry suggested in this booklet. The argument on Rom.v. is one demanding the utmost attention. Likewise the “alls” of other passages.

A deeply important passage is found in Col.i.15-21, where *ta panta* is used both of creation and reconciliation. “The moment, however, that we question its universality, we also question the universality of His creation” (page 124). With this should be read the passage on page 82, where the *sea* and its teeming millions of creatures (“The sea is His, and He made it”) do not enter the reconciliation. “And there was no more sea.” At once we are confronted with the fact that creation is *wider* than reconciliation, and all the theories which have been invented to “harmonize” the apparent discrepancies must take this fact into consideration. The sea and its inhabitants form a part of Adamic headship, cf. “and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.” Psa.viii. includes “the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea,” yet in the final reconciliation of all things “there was no more sea.” The idea contained in the words concerning the creation of the sea, “they were put in there afterwards,” would also rule out Adam and his descendants, for they, too, were put there afterwards. The parallel suggested between the omission of the sea, and of the underworld, from the reconciliation is not clearly stated. The trend of the book, however, would go to show that those in the underworld are finally delivered. Is the parallel true of the sea and its inhabitants?

Space forbids further comment; we are thankful for much that the writers of “*All in All*” have written. We only wish that they would have been content to keep within the bounds of what God has written—we should then have welcomed the fruit of their labours. As it is they have gone beyond the revealed Word, and there we leave them. The idea that mortal man can safely “infer” and “deduce” is a common failing. Who among us could have “inferred” or “deduced” the dispensation of the mystery from the data given in Scripture prior to the end of Acts? The revelation of the secret given in the Prison Epistles must have overturned the “wild hazard at possible truth” of many. So will it be when the Lord reveals that which He has wisely withheld from the Scriptures. The assumptions of this booklet do sadly enough “wield a tyrannous despotism,” and though we love the writers for their witness for truth, and for their fight against tradition in the past, here at least we yield subjection, no, not for an hour, and if needs be prefer to go on alone rather than countenance these things, or put our necks again into the yoke of man’s doctrines.

Quoting again the words of the booklet (p. 15), “We must let God speak for Himself, and instead of moulding His words into conformity with our philosophies, rather mould and fashion all our thinking into harmony with His truth.” If the writers had only followed this salutary principle, and kept close to what is written, we should have had no cause for criticism.

**BEREAN EXPOSITOR VOLUME 2 & 3.**  
**pp.141-142**

**The sacrificial law designed to teach Substitution.**

*Lev.16:6*--Before Aaron could offer a sacrifice for the sins of others, he needed one for himself; hence it is plain that if *he could not offer* a sacrifice till *he had offered one*, the law was either an inexplicable tangle, or it taught substitution.

*Lev.16:13*--The cloud of incense, not the blood, preserved Aaron from death. Hence, although the typical teaching is, no access to God apart from atonement by blood, yet, for Aaron's personal safety, incense is provided. Incense is a type of prayer (Rev.8:3,4). Prayer must rest upon a sacrifice; there is no drawing near without the mercy seat (Num.7:89, cf. Luke 18:13, Be propitious - be merciful - because of atonement), hence, the incense that preserved Aaron must have received its efficacy by virtue of a far greater sacrifice, namely, that of Christ (cf. Rom.3:24-27). It follows, then, that (a) One who needs a sacrifice cannot make one, and (b) One who can make one does not need one. Hence, it must be made by a righteous one *for* unrighteous ones, which, blessed be God, has been done (II Cor.5:21; I Pet.3:18).

The blemishlessness of the animal was typical of the righteousness required for transference in the true sacrifice.

**BEREAN EXPOSITOR VOLUME 2 & 3**  
**pp.136-139**

**The Joy of Faith.**

We have heard of the "work of faith," and realize increasingly the necessity there is to remember that "faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone." We have heard that "faith worketh patience," and can understand even by our own small experience that as we realize by faith all the goodness, grace and glory laid up by virtue of redemption, patience is no effort, but is rather one of the precious fruits of faith.

We seem, however, to hear little of the "joy of faith." All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable. All Scripture comes to us with a demand for conformity to its teaching. What of the "joy of faith"? Can we have the real faith of the epistles if it is a joyless faith? We know the "faiths" or "creeds" of man's construction (even though framed with the Word in view) often become grievous burdens, and shackle those who subscribe to them as with fetters of iron. We want none of these joyless creeds, but still let us ask, Do we know experimentally "the joy of faith"?

The expression is found in Phil.1:25. The apostle writes, "I know that I shall abide and continue with you all, for your furtherance and joy of the faith." J. N. Darby in a note says, "Progress and joy go together, not 'progress--and joy in faith'." Whatever the exact meaning of the apostle may be in this passage, the truth which we feel we must emphasize is that to believe the truth of the mystery, to realize the fact of acceptance in the Beloved, to know that we have been raised together and made to sit together in the heavenlies, in Christ, to know that we have been delivered out of the authority of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of the beloved Son of God, this "faith" surely must bring "joy" with it (the very writing of the words stirs our heart with joy), and a furtherance or progress in this faith, while it may deepen our love, increase our sympathy, perhaps cause us much conflict and many tears, yet seeing of Whom it speaks, and the untold riches of grace and glory that it reveals, cannot but bring with it joy.

Already in Rom.15:23, with reference to other things, the apostle had written, "Now the God of the hope (namely of verse 12, trust being hope) fill you with all joy and peace in believing." Or again, in II Cor.1:24, he had written, "Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are fellow-workers of your joy, for by faith ye stand." "Joy" is a fruit of the Spirit mentioned early in the wondrous cluster, "love, joy, peace," &c. Peter was not a stranger to the "joy of faith," for speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ he said, "Whom having not seen, ye love, in Whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory."

What is the ground of this joy? A reading of either Philippians, or I Peter, will dispel the idea that external circumstances contributed to this joy of faith. In both epistles suffering and sorrow are emphatic, yet in the midst of it all there breathes a pure unconquerable joy. "Joy" and "rejoice" are keywords of Philippians.

One point of deepest significance, which must not pass unnoticed, arises out of the connection of the theme of the "joy of the faith" with the peculiar object of this epistle. "Philippians" assume that the blessed teaching of "Ephesians" is known and believed. On that basis the apostle speaks of working out our own salvation with fear and trembling (working out, not working for), and has in prospect a prize not attained but sought. It is not until he wrote II Timothy that he knew he had finished his course, and that henceforth there was laid up for him a crown. In Acts 20 he had said that he counted not his life dear unto himself, but that he desired to finish his course with joy. This therefore is the reason why in Philippians the apostle passes from salvation by faith, or justification by faith, to speak of the joy of faith, the anticipation of the crown or prize. The idea may be found in the well-known words of Matt. 25:--

"Well done, good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

This joy, connected as it is with reward for faithfulness, may be seen in Heb.12:1,2:--

"Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, Who for the joy that was set before Him endured a cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

When the apostle spoke of the fulfilling of his joy it was in respect to the good of others, and not of his own ease or comfort. "Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord" (Phil.2:2). Or again in 4:1, "Therefore, my brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved." Look at the first six occurrences in the prison epistles of the word "rejoice."

"What then? Notwithstanding every way (and some of these ways were humanly hard to endure), whether in pretence or in truth: Christ is preached, and therein I do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice" (Phil.1:18).

Had the apostle thought of himself, thought upon the baseness and ingratitude that moved some in their preaching to suppose they thereby added affliction to his bonds, what cause would he have found for rejoicing? He had learned, however, a little of the mind that was in Christ Jesus, he thought of others rather than of himself. He who could say, "Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or death," could rejoice in the fact that Christ was preached, even though some who preached sought his injury. Again, this utter regardlessness of self is manifested in his words of 2:17,18:--

"Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all. For this cause also do ye joy and rejoice with me."

What words are here! The apostle willing to be poured out as a drink offering over the sacrifice and service of their faith, and they, seeing his utter abandonment to the service and glory of his Lord, rejoicing together with him. Can earth furnish such a joy as this? A joy which no tears can blind, but which, the rather, through those tears will take on added lustre as the rainbow from the storm. His "finally" is still the same blessed theme, "Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord" (3:1); "and again I say, rejoice" (4:4). If we

rejoice in our attainments we shall fall into grievous error and sorrow. If we rejoice even in the increased light shed upon the Word we must remember the One Who alone is to be praised for the opened eye to see. Let our rejoicing be "in the Lord," then it will be real and full.

Are we joyful enough? We seek grace to manifest the fact that we are fellow-members of the One Body, we seek grace to exhibit all lowliness and meekness, to walk worthy of the calling, but let us not forget "joy." We may in times past have been misled into believing that a solemn face, a funereal air, a joyless, sunless, rigid demeanour, glorified the Lord. Thanks be to God for deliverance from such things. Let us be glad and rejoice in the Lord. The faith which is ours to hold is full enough to fill us all to the brim with "joy unspeakable." We need not be trivial, frivolous, or emotional to experience and shed abroad something of the radiance that should be evident in those who "rejoice in the Lord alway," and who have received the truth in the love of it, and the faith in some measure of its joy.

Moses "wist not that his face shone," but it was evident he had been with the Lord. So, in like manner, may it be ours to reflect something of the radiance of the "joy of faith."

## BEREAN EXPOSITOR VOLUME 2 & 3.

### The Limitations of Scripture.

pp.142-149

**"For I am conscious of nothing in myself, nevertheless am I not justified. . . . So then do not judge anything before the time, until the Lord shall come. . . . Learn in us the lesson of not letting your thoughts go beyond the things that are written" (I Cor.iv.4-6).**

We can imagine that some of our readers will read the title of this article with some misgivings, and we hasten to explain our meaning so as to avoid giving unnecessary pain or anxiety to those who love the Word of God. To say what we do not mean will help us to make clear what we do mean by the title. We do not mean to suggest the slightest distrust in the Word of God. We rejoice to be able out of a full heart to say that we believe "All Scriptures is God-breathed." We believe that not only is Scripture inspired in its general outline, but that divine inspiration extends to the very language and choice of individual words and phrases.

What do we mean then by the limitations of Scripture? We mean that the Scriptures nowhere claim that they contain the record of all God's purposes and ways, but that such glimpses of those unfathomable depths and infinite heights are given us as our finite capabilities will allow. If I turn to the writings of men I find that many of them deal with subjects which go entirely beyond the inspired limits of Scripture. Revelation starts with God as Creator, "In (*the*) beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Gen.i:1). Man's theology is not content with this, it must probe into that over which God has drawn a veil. Man's theology and philosophy come to us and say, "God never had a beginning." Within the limits of human experience and reason *that which never had a beginning does not exist*. In vain we attempt to conceive otherwise. The blessed fact we would point out is that God Himself has never burdened our minds with such a statement. He Who on earth could say, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now," has also, in the wider scope of the complete Scriptures, given us just so much as we are capable of understanding here.

Have we never felt when searching the Scriptures upon some theme the desire for some further explanation which God has been pleased to withhold? Is there no truth in the words of Zophar the Naamathite, "Canst thou by searching find out God?" Do we not need the rebuke of Job xxxvi.26, "Behold, God is great, and we know Him not, neither can the number of His years be searched out." Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? In the highest revelation given to us are there not "unsearchable riches"? Are we not endeavouring to get to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge? Did not the apostle, when concluding the revelation of God's ways with Israel, rightly says:--

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How *unsearchable* are His judgments, and His ways *past finding out*. For who hath known the mind of the Lord (knowledge)? Or who hath been His counsellor (wisdom). Or who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again (riches)?"

Is there no suggestion of mystery in the destiny of such an one as Pharaoh, or of Esau as recorded in Rom.ix.? Does not inspiration anticipate our natural desire to find out more than is revealed, and does it not meet it with the words, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" There are many who speak as though the Bible deals with eternity; *it does no such thing*. It begins and ends with time. It is the inspired revelation of some of God's ways and purposes relative to and during the AGES. What took place before the age times began we know very little, and of what will take place when these ages have run their allotted course we know comparatively nothing. Is it not wiser, better, and more befitting us as those who have been saved by grace, to recognize the wisdom and the kindness which underlie this withholding of information?

Think of the errors which have clustered around the wrong translation of *aiōn*. Instead of honestly rendering the word "age," the translators assumed that it must refer to eternity, and so wherever possible they rendered it by words which indicate eternity, and that which is everlasting. Has not the book of Ecclesiastes been written in order that we may be led to see the utter impossibility of pushing beyond that which it has pleased God to reveal to us? "He hath set the world (*olam*, the age) in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh *from the beginning to the end*" (Eccles.iii.11). Is there no word for us here? Are we quite sure that we, if taught by the Spirit of God, can hope to find out the work that God maketh *from the beginning to the end*? Some of God's children appear to think so. With all our heart we sympathize with them. Problems press hard upon us all. Believing implicitly in the full inspiration of Scripture, and believing, moreover, that outside its sacred pages there is found no light upon these matters, many have come to the conclusion that by prayerful painstaking study, by careful collocation, the whole range of God's purposes will at length be discovered. Indeed this is no longer a supposition. Many of our readers will have read already articles from the pens of earnest Bible students who believe that they have pieced the whole together, and who do not hesitate to teach us what is to take place after Satan, and those whose names are not found written in the Book of Life, are cast into the Lake of Fire. At this point exposition ceases, and inference enters. There is no written revelation given us as to anything happening to those who are thus consigned to the second death. True, passages of tremendous import are brought to bear upon the subject, but it is only by way of deduction. This immediately puts the whole subject beyond the limits of inspiration, and we distrust our own hearts too much to allow ourselves to be drawn beyond the divine limits.

When the reader opens the sacred volume he soon becomes aware that much must have taken place which is unrecorded. He can discover by what is written in Isa.xlv.18 that the earth was not created "without form and void," but that it *became* so. He can further discover that "the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished" (II Pet.iii.5,6), but he will not find recorded the many details which his natural mind would lead him to enquire into. In the third chapter of Genesis the Serpent, who is afterwards discovered to be Satan, is introduced without any explanation as to how he came to be in the condition of enmity against God that we find to be the case. The Scriptures reveal glimpses into the exalted rank, awful ambition, and fearful fall of Satan,

but *why* he was thus allowed to sin and all the many problems of the philosopher regarding the origin of evil remain unsolved.

Is it for us, when Scripture is silent, to attempt to force an answer by turning to the oracles of philosophy and human reason? If God has hidden, shall we not rather bow the knee in submission? Must we know all? Is there no room for faith? Are not the words of Job xlii.1-6 a more fitting attitude of mind? Job was troubled by the problem of evil. His friends sought to administer comfort, but in vain. He never received an answer to the problem. All that we can learn is recorded by James, “that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.”

There are many expressions in Ecclesiastes which teach us that a calm rest in the Lord, whether we fully understand all His ways or not, is His will for us here. “God shall judge the righteous and the wicked, for there is a time THERE for every purpose and for every work” (Eccles.iii.17). “Surely oppression maketh a wise man mad” (Eccles.vii.7). Those who fail to see that God’s purpose is over all must, when they contemplate the oppression on every hand, feel driven almost to desperation, but the consciousness that though HERE evil prospers, there is a time THERE for every purpose and for every work, this will keep us in the right attitude before God. The reason of the dissatisfaction of the writer of Ecclesiastes is recorded in vii.25-29. It is written as an example and a warning. He did not abide by what was written; no, he would find out “the *reason* of things.” What did he find? He found, by a bitter experience that wrecked his whole career, that which he could have known by what had been written for his guidance in the Proverbs. In those proverbs written for the guidance of the young Solomon we read again and again warnings about the flattering woman. Solomon had given to him, in Prov.xxxi.10-31, a description of the woman God would have him choose for his wife. Instead of this he wanted to know by experience the “wickedness of folly,” and he says:--

“I find more bitter than death the woman whose heart is snares and net, and her hands as bands” (Eccles.vii.26).

“Behold this I have found, saith the preacher, counting one by one to find out the account, which yet my soul seeketh, but I find not: one man among a thousand have I found; but a woman among all those I not found” (Eccles.vii.27,28).

Poor Solomon! We see him with his “three score queens and four score concubines, and virgins without number” (Song of Sol.vi.8) still unsatisfied (I Kings xi.3 reveals the fact that Solomon had 700 wives and 300 concubines, making a thousand in all). What a pitiable object lesson! In the last chapter the preacher gives the “conclusion of the whole matter.”

“Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole (duty) of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing whether it be good, or whether it be evil (Eccles.xii.13,14).

All the searching, reasoning and speculating led him no further into truth, but rather entangled him in confusion. Believers to-day, under an entirely different dispensation, and with the added advantage of a complete Bible, are equally frail and human, and the moment we leave what is written for deductions based upon our own limited and

prejudiced observations, we too must inevitably make shipwreck. Solomon failed, even though he retained the wisdom which was given him by God. Are we wiser than Solomon when we venture beyond the written Word? We are so conscious of our limited knowledge in view of these tremendous themes, that we dare not assume finality in any one particular doctrine. Our only hope is to keep absolutely loyal to what *God had said*, and to remember that the moment we go beyond and supplement God's revelation by our deductions and theories, the moment we criticize His right to hide as well as to reveal, that moment we embark on a voyage chartless and rudderless, saved from shipwreck only by a miracle of grace.

Yet one more consideration. In Dan.x.21 and xi.2 there is a statement which is worthy of careful study.

“And I will shew thee that which is noted in the Scripture of truth.”

“And now will I shew thee the truth.”

The angel proceeds to give a most marvellously detailed account, first of the events which were about to take place within a comparatively short time of this announcement, and then of the yet future events of the time of the end, or as he says in Dan.x.14, “Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days.” The point to which we would direct the reader's attention is that what the angel came to tell Daniel was already “noted (writing, v.24,25; sign, vi.8,9) in the Scripture of truth.” What Scripture? The events foretold in Dan.xi. are not found written in any of the Scriptures which had been given up to the time of Daniel. If this be so, the expression suggests the idea that there may be Scriptures of truth to which the angels have access, and that the Scriptures which we possess contain selections, given by God at different intervals, from that heavenly scroll which contains possibly ever so much more than we can as yet grasp. The angels do not know everything. Principalities and powers are learning now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God.

We certainly do not possess a complete account of all God's purposes. Dan.xi. shews us that He knew fully, and had recorded in the Scriptures to which the angel had access the doings of the kings of Persia and of Greece. We are sure that His knowledge was not limited in the least, and that He knew the complete course of the history of Greece and Persia, although the Scriptures we have received do not treat of their histories beyond the scope of the particular purpose for which they have been written. Our Bible centres around Israel and Jerusalem. Whenever a nation came into touch with Israel, they came within the scope of revelation. Is it not certain that the One who wrote the history of Israel from start to finish could write the history of England or France equally as well? Certainly, and for aught we know the Scriptures of truth from which the angel took the small portion given in Dan.xi. recorded the rise and fall of the Roman Empire, and the complete histories of all the nations of the earth.

At once we see how limited the Scriptures really are, and that by divine appointment. There are lines of truth which enter the sacred record in Genesis which commenced a long way back before the record of Genesis begins. When we read that Satan abode not in the truth, we have a statement which we believe, but we are all only too conscious that the revelation is also exceedingly limited. We do not know anything of Satan's sin or

circumstances; if it had been necessary and right for us to have known, the Lord could have given us a most graphic and detailed account. Ezek.xxviii.17 suggests that by pride he fell. The lesson is clear, but details which would minister to our curiosity are withheld. When the risen Lord spoke His wondrous words to the disciples, as recorded in Luke xxiv., we read that He began at Moses and the Prophets (verse 27). He could have begun much earlier. He could have told of the time when Satan fell, and even have given definite instructions regarding the many problems upon which the minds of men have speculated for all time. He could have settled in a few words the problem of the introduction, permission and purpose of evil. We are not told that He did any such thing, but “beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded (or interpreted) unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.”

From our reading of the Word we have come to see that *eternity* is nowhere its theme. The Bible is entirely taken up with the purpose of the ages. Even then we have to see that the Bible largely passes over much that we would like to know within the limits even of the ages, and focuses our attention first upon the chosen people of Israel, and for a short space upon the church of the present dispensation. Its object is not so much to explain all to us, but to guide us during this our pilgrimage with the happy knowledge that in resurrection glory we shall have time and opportunity to become acquainted with the wider revelation of God’s purpose and ways.

Let us not attempt to force back the roll beyond the appointed limits. Let us be content to say of some things that we do not know, because God has not told us. We shall be more pleasing to Him by so doing, than if we take the responsibility upon ourselves of completing the revelation which He has purposely left unfinished. Once more we would remark that in all that we have said we desire it to be understood that we are not questioning or doubting God’s Holy Word, but rather bow before His sovereignty, acknowledging equally the sovereign wisdom that lies behind the withholding of much that we might have expected to be written.

Let us keep close to what is written. Let us be content with what God *has* said, and if some lines of truth *appear* to conflict, let us not attempt to reconcile them, for the very attempt savours of unbelief, but let us be assured that when we see the complete purpose unfolded, all will be perfect and harmonious, and transcend the highest flight of our present imaginations.

## Berean Expositor Volume 2 & 3

### The Ministry of Paul Its relation to dispensational truth His Conversion

*“It pleased God. . . . to reveal His Son in me” (Gal. i. 15, 16).*

**pp. 2-7**

It has been our endeavour during the last few years to emphasize the claims of the apostle Paul upon believers of the present time; not that Paul is anything of himself, but because to him was given the dispensation of the mystery (Eph. iii. 2-10).

In the endeavour rightly to divide the Word of truth we are sure to have difficulties, one great reason being that centuries of neglect and tradition have left us prejudiced in favour of a system foreign to the teaching of Paul, and further, the low spiritual state of the church as a whole has rendered it incapacitated for the reception of the mystery (I Cor. iii. 1-3).

Those who have had the eyes of their heart enlightened (Eph. i. 18), still find many difficulties and problems, which we must all expect while in the flesh, and among the many causes of difficulty is the fact that the ministry of Paul has a two-fold aspect; in one case he is seen severed from the teaching of the twelve, while in another he is found working in harmony with them. His epistles, covering a space of some sixteen years, are not confined to one period, some epistles being written while he worked in fellowship with Jerusalem, and some being written after Israel was set aside and Paul was a prisoner at Rome.

The book of the Acts records the conversion and early labours of the apostle Paul, so let us turn to the book to learn something more concerning this wonderful ministry. Three cities constitute the three turning points of dispensational interest in the Acts, viz., *Jerusalem, Antioch, and Rome*. Two ministries occupy the bulk of the record, those of Peter and Paul. Peter's ministry commences at Jerusalem and ends (so far as the record is concerned) with imprisonment. Paul's definite ministry commences at Antioch and ends (so far as the record is concerned) with his imprisonment at Rome.

The Acts commences with “the Jew first” and closes with the Jew set aside. The opening and closing verses are worthy of careful study:--

A   i. 1 - 11.   a   Christ teaching concerning the kingdom of God.	\ The Jew
b   “Wilt thou restore the kingdom to Israel?”	/ prominent
B   i. 12 - xii. Peter's ministry and imprisonment.	
B   xiii. - xxvii. Paul's ministry and imprisonment.	
A   xxviii. 25 - 31.   a   Paul preaching concerning the kingdom of God.	\ The Jew
b   “Salvation of God <i>sent</i> to the Gentiles.”	/ set aside

It will be seen that the Acts opens with the Lord Jesus giving instructions to the apostles concerning the kingdom of God. In answer to their enquiry as to the restoration of the kingdom to Israel, He bids them tarry at Jerusalem until they be endued with power from on high. The closing section reveals Paul as a prisoner at Rome, the final witness to Israel being given, Isaiah vi. 10 quoted for the last time, the door of the kingdom shut to Israel, and the present dispensation of the mystery ushered in.

It is not our purpose in this article to consider the book of the Acts, so we will consider without further introduction the ministry of the apostle, and its bearing upon dispensational truth. The apostle Paul is first introduced upon page of Scripture at the time of the death of Stephen. Stephen seems to have anticipated the teaching given to Paul. The accusation made against him was:--

“This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place and the law, for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us” (Acts vi. 14).

This same charge was preferred against Paul in after years:--

“They are informed of these that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs” (Acts xxi. 21).

The infuriated Jews who stoned Stephen for his faithfulness found a champion for their traditions in the young man Saul of Tarsus:--

“The witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man’s feet, whose name was Saul; and they stoned Stephen. . . . and Saul was consenting unto his death” (Acts vii. 58 - viii. 1).

What sort of man was this who would consent to the death of such a saint? The secret of his blind, ignorant cruelty was “a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.” Many of the Pharisees knew that Jesus was the Christ. They had said, “This is the heir, come let us kill him.” Paul, however, tells us that what he did, he did it “ignorantly and in unbelief” (I Tim. i. 13).

To the English reader, separated by centuries from the period of the Gospels, the term “Pharisee” has taken upon itself a colouring more or less traditional. All Pharisees were not alike, however, even as all Scribes or all Priests were not alike in their zeal or character. The Talmud tells us of seven classes of Pharisees. It speaks of the *Shechemite* Pharisee, who obeyed for self interest; the *tumbling* Pharisee (*nifki*), who paraded humility; the *bleeding* Pharisee (*kinai*), who, rather than risk outraging his modesty by seeing a woman, risked a broken skull by walking with his eyes shut; the *mortar* Pharisee (*medukia*), who covered his eyes, as with a mortar, for similar reasons; the *timid* Pharisee, who was actuated by motives of fear; the *tell-me-another-duty-and-I-will-do-it* Pharisee; and the seventh class, *the Pharisee from love*. Saul of Tarsus was of the sixth order enumerated above, for in Gal. i. 14 we read:--

“I was going ahead (a metaphor taken from a ship at sea), in Judaism above many of my co-temporaries in mine own nation, being more vehemently a zealot for the traditions handed down from my fathers.”

The choice of the word *zelōtes* confirms this. The *Zelōtai* were a sect which possessed great attachment to the Jewish institutions, and undertook to punish, without trial, those guilty of violating them. It was this bigoted or fanatical temper which moved the young man Saul to associate with the murderers of Stephen, and to personally conduct a campaign, with the idea of exterminating the heresy of the Nazarenes. Such was the character of the “chosen vessel” who was destined, by grace, to shake traditionalism and legalism to their fall, and to stand alone with God, preaching “the faith which once he destroyed” (Gal. i. 23).

To stay here, however, would be but to give a one-sided view of the character of Saul of Tarsus. Writing by inspiration of God, in the full light of his acceptance in the Beloved, he says concerning his past, “Touching the righteousness which is in the law, *blameless*” (Phil. iii. 6).

According to the teaching of the rabbis, there were 248 commands and 365 prohibitions of the Mosaic law, which formed part of the “Hedge of the law.” These laws and prohibitions, without exception, in letter as well as spirit, and with the almost infinite number of inferences which were deducted from such laws, were to be obeyed. This was the blameless righteousness of the law. The belief was current that if only one person could attain unto this perfection for but one day, the Messiah would come, and the glory of Israel be ensured. This hope then, together with a nature which must spend and be spent upon that to which for time being the possessor is attached, was the force which actuated Saul of Tarsus, and through him breathed out threatenings and slaughter.

In eight separate passages does Scripture refer to the terrible persecutions with which Saul of Tarsus was prominently associated. It is written, “He made *havoc* of the church.” The word used here is that used in the LXX of Psalm lxxx. 13 of the uprooting by wild boars. He dragged men and women to judgment and prison; he *devastated* in Jerusalem those that called upon the name of Jesus. In the epistle to the Galatians the apostle tells us how he persecuted the early saints beyond measure. To the Corinthians (I Cor. xv. 9), and to the Philippians (Phil. iii. 6), he recounts with sorrow how he *persecuted the church*. To the day of his death he never forgot that grace which had changed a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious bigot (I Tim. i. 13), the very chief of sinners, into the chiefest of the apostles. Truly, he “persecuted this way *unto the death*” (Acts xxii. 4).

How fully he was permitted to enter into the sufferings and afflictions of the faith the Scriptures amply testify. Alone, forsaken by all earthly friends, he was permitted to drain to the dregs the bitter cup of religious persecution. Stoned and left for dead, beaten with rods on *five* occasions by the order of some ruler of the synagogue, imprisoned, betrayed, suffering the anguish of hunger, thirst, nakedness, shipwreck, and finally martyrdom, he fulfilled the opening words of his commission, “I will show him how great things he must *suffer* for My name’s sake” (Acts ix. 16).

As Saul of Tarsus, or Paul the apostle, this man was not content to do things half-heartedly. His zeal had for the time stamped out the activity at least of the heresy of the Nazarenes in Jerusalem, but from the other cities news arrived that this pernicious weed had taken root. Unsated by the blood of the saints shed in Jerusalem, he desired to vindicate his Pharisaic claims by uprooting the Christian faith in the distant city of Damascus. Armed with the necessary warrant from the high priest, the persecutor started upon his journey of 150 miles in a frame of mind expressed in the unparalleled term, "breathing out threatenings and slaughter." How long the journey took we do not know; but taking the nature of the roads, the climate, and the eastern method of travelling, authorities have estimated that it occupied the better part of a week.

What were the thoughts of this man during this week's travel? Nothing is recorded in the Scriptures to tell us, except the words of the Searcher of hearts, "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks" (or ox goads). Saul, during that fateful journey, had been "kicking against the goads," as the rebellious oxen do in the plough. The whirl of the city, the excitement of the persecutions and scourgings gave place to the isolated meditation of the Damascus journey. The ox goads against which Saul had kicked were of a similar nature, though perhaps of much deeper intensity, to those which many believers and readers of this little witness have had.

Could it be possible that such men as Peter and Stephen were right, and with the whole Sanhedrin were wrong? Pride rose against such a thought; those who spoke against the law and the temple must certainly be accursed. Thus would he reason; he could not give expression to these thoughts to those with him, for that would be suicidal. Did the angel face of Stephen haunt his steps along the road? We know not. Was Gamaliel, his teacher, right in even suggesting that such action as his *might* prove to be fighting against God? We cannot tell. What we do know is this. Spurred on by the goads of an uneasy conscience, Saul urged his followers to abandon the wonted noon-day rest and press on to the city of their desires.

Then, suddenly, the persecutor was changed into the preacher, the infuriated bigot into the apostle of grace. A light, which eclipsed the Syrian noon-day sun as the gospel did the traditions so tenaciously held by Saul, shone about them. He was struck to the earth; something awful had happened. One man alone knew its solemn meaning and intelligently heard the words from heaven; into the darkened heart of Saul of Tarsus had entered "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ." God had revealed His Son in him. That was the turning-point of his life, for he had seen the Lord.

After the blinding flash of heavenly light there came a voice from heaven speaking in the Hebrew tongue, saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me, it is hard for thee to kick against the goads?" In answer to the trembling cry "Who art Thou Lord?" the voice replied, "I am *Jesus of Nazareth*, whom thou persecutest." Oh wondrous revelation! Had the voice said "I am Israel's Messiah," or "I am the Son of God," the apostle would have denied the charge, but in the revelation from the heavenly glory that he was persecuting Jesus of Nazareth, and that He indeed was the Lord, the Messiah of Israel, all

his hopes, his pride, his tenacious hold upon the traditions of the elders, his self-righteousness and meritorious zeal, all vanished and left him naked and destitute.

What are the few words which Saul as a believer shall utter? They form a key note to his after life, "Lord, what wilt *Thou* have me to do?" From henceforth he served the Lord Christ; from this time onward for him to live was Christ. He had fallen to the earth a proud, persecuting fanatic; he rose a humble and gracious follower of Christ. How different to what he had dreamed was his actual entry into Damascus and departure therefrom. No longer breathing threatenings and slaughter, but breathing prayers and supplications, for it is written, "Behold, he prayeth!" Not leaving the city with the trophies of his inquisition and the applause of the orthodox, but let out of the city by stealth, in a basket from the wall! After the darkness and the visit of Ananias came the light, for "there fell from his eyes as it had been scales."

The importance of this man's conversion and commission cannot be under-estimated without imperilling the truth committed to him. In our next article we hope to take up the varying commissions of this apostle to the Gentiles, and to show how the right appreciation of his ministry illuminates the Word of truth. Till then, may we all realize in ourselves increasingly the grace that super-abounds.

**The Ministry of Paul**  
**Its relation to dispensational truth**  
**His Commission #1.**

*"A chosen vessel. . . . to bear My name" (Acts ix. 15).*  
**pp. 14-20**

In our last article we sought to examine the record of Saul of Tarsus. We now seek to understand his commission as an apostle.

We have already called attention to Acts ix. No record is given us there of what the Lord told Paul other than that he was to go into the city of Damascus and there receive instruction. No word is recorded of the feelings of this stricken man during the three days' blindness in the house of Judas. It is not at all improbable that we get a reminiscence of his feelings in Rom. vii. At the end of Rom. vii. we hear the agonizing prayer, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" In Acts ix. 11 it is written, "Behold, he prayeth"!

In answer to this prayer the Lord sent a certain disciple named Ananias. Ananias was at first loath to go to the man who had persecuted and ravaged the church, but the Lord said unto him, "Go thy way, for he is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel; for I will shew him how great things he must suffer for My name's sake." The one emphatic note in the commission is the *name* of the Lord. This name Paul was to bear, and for this name he was to suffer. Nothing is said here about apostleship, preaching or teaching, but just bearing and suffering in

relation to that very name he had so intensely hated. From henceforth the name of, “The Hung” (the name of reproach heaped upon Christ by the Rabbis) was his glory. The “Crucified” was henceforth Master and Lord.

We are allowed a glimpse of Saul in Damascus and we can see that the same zealous, consuming temperament is there, but sanctified and mellowed by saving grace and overwhelming mercy. We see in Paul the apostle, not only the impetuous eagerness and vehemence of Saul the Pharisee, but we discern something to which Saul was stranger—humility. That distrust of self and of his gifts and powers, that consciousness of some humiliating appearance, the shrinking and tender spirit that pervades his earnest messages, all tell of the marvellous change. “And straightway he preached in the synagogues *Jesus* (R.V.), that He is the Son of God.” *The name* of Jesus was the object of his uncovered hatred, the spring of his converted effort, and the cause of the suffering which he bore.

The Jews at Damascus tolerated such men as Ananias, but they sought to kill such as Paul. One able writer has said:--

“It was, throughout life, Paul’s unhappy fate to kindle the most virulent animosities, because, though conciliatory and courteous by temperament, he yet carried into his arguments that intensity and downrightness that awakens dormant opposition. A languid controversialist will always meet with languid tolerance, but any controversialist whose honest belief in his own doctrines make him terribly in earnest, may count on a life embittered by the anger of those on whom he has forced the disagreeable task of re-considering their own assumptions. . . . Out of their own Scriptures, by their own methods of exegesis, in their own style of dialectics, by the interpretation of prophecies of which they did not dispute the validity, he simply confounded them. He could now apply the same principles which in the mouth of Stephen he had found it impossible to resist.”

Take the word “name” in Acts ix. above, and notice the witness of the word:--

Verse 14. Saul has authority to bind all who call on *the name*.

Verse 15. He is chosen to bear *the name*.

Verse 16. He is to suffer for *the name*.

Verse 21. He destroys those who call on *this name*.

Verse 27. At Damascus he preaches boldly in *the name* of Jesus.

Verse 29. At Jerusalem he speaks boldly in *the name* of the Lord Jesus.

When besought not to go up to Jerusalem Paul said, “What mean ye to weep and break mine heart? For I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the *name* of the Lord Jesus” (Acts xxi. 13). When recounting before King Agrippa the days of his unregeneracy, he prefaces the account of his violence by the words, “I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to *the name* of Jesus of Nazareth” (Acts xxvi. 9). The very memory of the persecutions which he had directed against the believers was rendered odious to him ever after by the recollection of the words from heaven, “I am Jesus Whom thou persecutest.”

In Rom. i. 5 he tells of his apostleship with a loving touch, “for *His name*.” The carnal believers at Corinth were loved, for they called upon “*the name* of Jesus Christ our Lord”; and when the apostle would beseech them to be “perfectly joined together,” he knows no term more powerful than, “by *the name* of our Lord Jesus Christ” (I Cor. i. 10). How he must have rejoiced as he wrote the words of Eph. i. 21, that Christ was raised above “every *name* that is named.” How he must have looked forward to that day when, “in *the name* of Jesus every knee should bow” (Phil. ii. 10). Or, turning to the practical side, he could enter with all his heart into the exhortation of Col. iii. 17, “Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in *the name* of the Lord Jesus.”

His last recorded use of the word emphasizes the fact that that name has lost none of its power or its sweetness. “Let every one that nameth *the name* of Christ, depart from iniquity.” The use of the word “name” in the epistles of the mystery which have reference to Christ is instructive.

- A | Eph. i. 21. Every *name* that is named. Resurrection (noun and verb).
- B | Eph. v. 20. Giving thanks. . . . in the *name*. Thanksgiving.
- C | Phil. ii. 9. The *name* above every name. Exaltation.
- C | Phil. ii. 10. In the *name* of Jesus. . . . bow. . . . confess. Exaltation.
- B | Col. iii. 17. Do all in the *name*. . . . giving thanks. Thanksgiving.
- A | II Tim. ii. 19. Nameth the *name*. Resurrection (noun and verb).

In this last reference Paul seems to look back to Acts ix. 15, and the connection between the “vessel” and the “name” (II Tim. ii. 19-21) is suggestive.

Ananias was told that Saul was to bear the name of the Lord Jesus before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. The word “Gentile” is used in a bad sense in the two occurrences in Acts prior to chapter ix. “Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles” (Acts iv. 27). “The Gentiles, whom God drove out before the face of our fathers” (Acts vii. 45). The Jew is prominent in the early chapters of the Acts, and it is not until the stoning of Stephen that the first step *Gentileward* is definitely taken.

The persecution in Jerusalem sent the believers into Judea and Samaria, where they preached the Word, but this did not in any sense indicate that the scattered believers preached to the Gentiles, such a thing was undreamed of by them. Should any reader object to this statement of fact, he has only to read Acts xi. 19:--

“Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen, travelled as far as Phenice and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the Word to none but unto *the Jews only*” (The “Grecians” of vi. 1, ix. 29, and xi. 20 refer to Greek-speaking Jews, Hellenists. They used the Septuagint instead of the original Hebrew).

Peter and his associates were “astonished” to find that the holy spirit was poured out upon Cornelius and his household; the ministry of Peter was strictly to the circumcision (Gal. ii. 7, 8), the case of Cornelius, being exceptional and for a special purpose. Cornelius, however, was not a Gentiles in the sense of the word as applied to Paul’s

apostleship, Cornelius was a “Proselyte of the Gate,” he gave alms and prayed, and was held in good report “among all the *nation of the Jews*” (Acts x. 1, 2, 22).

It was reserved for Saul of Tarsus, a man who was an Hebrew of the Hebrews, who would sooner have died than associate with a dog of a Gentile, to be the chosen vessel of grace to the barbarian and Scythian, the bond and the free, the Greek as well as the Jew. That which would have been looked upon as his lowest degradation is looked upon as his highest glory.

“I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office” (Rom. xi. 13).

“That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles” (Rom. xv. 16).

“He that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles” (Gal. ii. 8).

“Unto me. . . is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ” (Eph. iii. 8).

“I am ordained a preacher and an apostle (I speak the truth in Christ and lie not), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth” (I Tim. ii. 7).

The last reference to the Gentiles in the Acts is in that solemn passage, where, quoting the sixth of Isaiah to the elders of Israel at Rome, Paul closed the door of the kingdom, and opened the door of the mystery. “The salvation of God is *sent* unto the Gentiles, and they will hear it” (Acts xxviii. 28). Henceforth he was the “prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles.” In view of his approaching death, he wrote to Timothy his last message, thanking the Lord Who had stood with him and strengthened him to finish his course, that *by him* the preaching might be fully known, and that all the *Gentiles* might hear (II Tim. iv. 17). Have we thanked the Lord for His gift to men? He gave some apostles, and in Paul we have the chiefest sinner made to be the chiefest of the apostles, and the champion of grace.

Not only does the passage in Acts ix. tell us of Paul’s commission to the Gentiles, but it also adds, “and kings.” Paul, as we well know, was brought before king Agrippa, and nobly testified to the saving grace of the name of Christ. His appeal unto Caesar gave him audience with the emperor at Rome, and although we have no record of his witness, we feel sure that he delivered himself of his testimony in the power of the name of his Lord. That his witness was faithful is evidenced by that marvellous expression in Phil. iv. 22, “The saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Caesar’s household.” Saints in *Caesar’s* household! Saints in the employ of that monster! How this rebukes us! If there could be saints *there*, saints can be found *anywhere*. Dear troubled brother or sister, your business, your home, your surroundings surely are not *quite* so bad as was the case of those slaves of Caesar. Let us take courage from their example.

The last clause of the commission which we will consider here is “and the children of Israel.” One has but to read the record of the Acts, or the Epistles written during that period, to see how large a place Israel had in the heart of the apostle to the Gentiles. Such passages as Acts xiii. 14; xiv. 1; xvii. 2; xviii. 4, 9; xix. 8; xxvi. 20, and xxviii. 17 will demonstrate how faithful the apostle was to the terms of Rom. i. 16, “to the Jew first.” The prominence given to the Jew by Paul in the early Epistles may be demonstrated as follows:--

<b>Before Acts xxviii.</b> (Six Epistles).		<b>After Acts xxviii.</b> (Six Epistles).	
Jew	occurs 25 times.	Jew	occurs once. (neither Greek nor Jew).
Israel	14	Israel	twice. (Eph. ii. 12; Phil. iii. 5).
Israelite	3	Israelite	none.
Abraham	19	Abraham	none.
Occurrences 61		Total: 3.	

Paul's peculiar dispensation of the grace of God to the Gentiles depended, humanly speaking, upon the foreseen defection of Israel, and had a gospel whose terms did not commend it to Jewish exclusiveness. This laid him open to many bitter attacks. His sensitiveness is everywhere apparent. They said his gospel was of his own invention, hence the moment he mentions it in Rom. i. 1, 2 he adds, "which He had before promised by His prophets in the Holy Scriptures;" so also in Rom. iii. 21. This accounts for the solemn introduction to Rom. ix.:-

"I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart for my brethren, my kinsmen, according to the flesh (for I used to wish myself to be a cursed thing from Christ)."

His own experience taught him to pity rather than to chide. His own experiences, typical of Israel in each case, figure also in Rom. x. 1-4 and xi. 1, 2. The next few verses of Rom.9 bear witness to pre-eminent position of Israel.

### **Israel's dispensational privileges (Rom. ix. 3-5).**

- A | According to the flesh (*kata sarka*). Brethren.
- B | Who are Israelites (descendants of Jacob).
- C | To whom the sonship.
- D | Glory.
- E | Covenants.
- E | Legislation.
- D | Service.
- C | Promises.
- B | Whose are the fathers (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob).
- A | According to the flesh (*kata sarka*). The Messiah.

The time for the cutting down of the olive tree of Israel's favour was seen by the apostle to be approaching nearer and nearer. He tells us, however, that God's purposes are by no means thwarted. Israel shall yet be righteous, even though but a remnant believed during the transitional period:--

"For the gifts and calling of God are not subject to a change of mind; for as indeed ye were formerly not believing in God, but now have been objects of mercy, by reason of the unbelief of others (Jews), so they too have now become unbelieving, that they may also obtain mercy, by reason of the mercy shown to you" (Rom. xi. 29-31).

Here the apostle witnesses to mystery of grace and magnificent mercy beyond our wildest dreams. Truly, our God *delighteth* in mercy. The Jews gave occasion for greater mercy by their unbelief, the Gentiles by their faith. The promises are yet to be fulfilled. God hath not cast away His foreknown people. All Israel shall yet be saved, ungodliness shall be turned away from Jacob. “As regards the gospel, they are enemies on your (Gentiles) account, but as regards the election, *beloved because of the fathers*” (xi. 28). Here are God’s own words. Here are the words of the One Who is working out His mighty purpose. “Blinded,” “hardened,” “broken off,” “scattered,” wanderers for centuries, yet “*beloved because of the fathers.*” They were not forgotten, “for God hath shut up *all* in unbelief;” Why? Orthodoxy would say, “In order to pour out upon them His wrath,” but God says, “that He might show mercy upon *all*”—and the “all” is the same in each case. No wonder, in such a sea of grace, the apostle should feel out of his depth. It was beyond him, he could not trace it out, but he rejoiced in it, and added his hearty, Amen:--

- A | “Oh the depth of the riches (*riches*),
- B | both of the wisdom (*wisdom*),
- C | and knowledge of God (*knowledge*),
- D | how unsearchable are His judgments (*unsearchable*),
- D | and His ways past finding out (*untraceable*).
- C | For who hath known the mind of the Lord? (*knowledge*).
- B | or who hath been His counsellor? (*wisdom*).
- A | or who first gave to Him and it shall be recompensed unto him again? (*riches*).

for *of* Him, and *through* Him, and *to* Him, are all things,  
*to* Him be glory for ever and ever, Amen” (Rom.11:33-36).

We must leave the final clause of the commission for consideration next time. Meanwhile, may many be stirred up to follow Paul in so far as he followed his Lord.

**The Ministry of Paul**  
**Its relation to dispensational truth**  
**His Commission #2.**

*“I will show him how great things he must suffer  
for My name’s sake” (Acts ix. 16).*

**pp. 43-50**

In our last study of the ministry of Paul we finished at the clause which spoke of his testimony to the children of Israel. We would now seek to understand the second clause—the suffering for the sake of Christ’s name. There is no word “great” in the passage, the expression is rather “how much,” or “how many things,” he must suffer. The word “must” is important. “It is necessary,” “it must needs be” is the meaning (cf. John iii. 7, 14, 30). There was a Divine necessity that Paul suffer as well as preach, and he himself in his last epistle has written that all who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

The epistle that gives us an insight into the heart of the apostle more than any other is the second epistle to the Corinthians. The predominant note of this epistle is affliction or tribulation. In 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians the apostle sought by the application of sound doctrine and sanctified argument to bring back the wayward Corinthians to the path of virtue; in 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians we find him maintaining with all the zeal of his nature his apostolic claims, so that this epistle becomes the most striking instance of what is the case more or less with all his writings, “a new philosophy of life poured forth, not through systematic treatises, but through occasional burst of human feelings.” We shall find that the sufferings of Paul, as recorded in 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians, arose from several causes, among them that embittering source of affliction—*misrepresentation*.

Everything he did seemed to afford but fresh opportunity for the calumniator. Judaistic feeling ran very high at Corinth. Cepas was exalted at the expense of Paul. They said among themselves, “His letters are weighty and powerful, but his bodily presence is weak and his speech contemptible” (II Cor. x. 10). Why did not this Paul rectify the wrongs of the church as Peter had done in connection with Ananias and Sapphira? The fact that he refrained from receiving financial help was misinterpreted. What depth of feeling must there be in his words, “I will very gladly spend and be spent for you, though the more abundantly I love you, the less I am loved. But be it so. I did not burden you, nevertheless being crafty, I caught you with guile” (II Cor. xii. 15, 16). This insinuation he immediately repudiates, “Did I make a gain of you?”

Again, his apostolic authority was questioned. This was a matter of great delicacy and yet of superabounding importance. As we read, for example, the two opening chapters of Galatians, we realize as never before that the defence of Paul’s claims to apostleship was nothing less than a defence of “the truth of the gospel.” The “certain men which came down from Judea” could possibly produce their “letters of commendation,” and “remember with advantage” before the Corinthians their personal acquaintances among the “pillars at Jerusalem.” This Paul *could* not and *would* not do. He had *not* been

appointed by the twelve. He had *not* received his authority from Jerusalem. The difficulty of proving his claim, to such a nature as Paul's, must indeed have been great. He tells them that they compel him to be a fool on his boasting:--

“Are we beginning again to commend ourselves? or have we need, like some, of commendatory letters unto you, or from you?” (II Cor. iii. 1).

“We commend not ourselves unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that you may have somewhat to answer them which glory in appearance and not in heart. For whether we have been beside ourselves (they had said that he was demented), it hath been for God, or whether we are sober-minded (they had complained of the severe tone in his letters), it is for you, for the love of Christ constraineth us” (II Cor. v. 12-14).

“Since ye seek a *proof* of Christ speaking in me, . . . be trying *yourselves* whether ye are in faith, be putting *yourselves* to the test! or do ye not recognize yourselves (this uncharitable attitude had destroyed their vision), seeing that Jesus Christ is in you, unless perhaps ye fail in the testing. I hope however that ye shall come to know that *we* fail not in the testing” (II Cor. xiii. 3-6).

The way in which the other apostles were magnified to the detriment of Paul and his authority may be gathered from the strange colloquialism, *tōn huperlian apostolōn*, “the extra-super apostles” (II Cor. xi. 5). The indignation of this sarcastic title is levelled not at the twelve, but at those who sought to gain authority and to displace Paul by emphasizing the claims of the twelve at Jerusalem. The apostle, with many interjected disparagements of the cause of apparent boastfulness, lays before the Corinthians at least six different points wherein he compared favourably with the twelve, viz., in knowledge (xi. 5, 6), self-denial (7-21), privileges of birth and race (22), labours and sufferings (23-33), the pre-eminent character of his revelation (xii. 1-10), and the signs of his apostleship (11, 12). They are arranged as follows:--

- A | xi. 5, 6. Not one whit behind the extra-super apostles in knowledge.
- B | xi. 7-21. Contrast with the false apostles and messengers of satan.
- C | xi. 22. Favourable comparison with their higher claims (birth and race).
- C | xi. 23-33. Favourable comparison by reason of superabounding sufferings.
- B | xii.1-10. Vision of such magnitude, that a messenger of satan is sent of buffet him.
- A | xii. 11,12. Not one whit behind the extra-super apostles in miraculous signs.

One writer has said that 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians is the least systematic of all Paul's writings, yet, upon examination, the most impassioned and personal sections bear witness to that “inspiration of God” which lifts them above the words of man to the authoritative “thus saith the Lord.”

Examining the structure more closely we find:--

A (II Cor. xi. 5, 6).—The apostle concedes that the other apostles may be his superiors in eloquence, but he yielded no point with regard to his knowledge. “And even if uncultured in my discourse, certainly not in my knowledge.”

B (II Cor. xi. 7-21).—Other churches he had taken from readily (it wounded his sensitive nature to have to do it), but though he was in positive want among them he was

not burdensome to anyone. “And in everything without burden unto you I kept myself—and will keep.” This boast he declares no one shall silence, not because he loved them not (God knew), but that he may cut off any handle or occasion from those who seek it.

The false apostles had pointed out the fact that they did not require support, and the apostle declares that so far as that is concerned, they meet on equal terms. How loathsome to such a high spirit as Paul must all this self-vindication have appeared. “What I am saying, not according to the Lord am I saying, but as to foolishness, in this my boastful confidence! Since many are boasting after the flesh, I also will boast” (xi. 17, 18). He continues by saying that since the Corinthians were so discreet, they would surely tolerate this boasting of a mere fool, since they tolerated such as enslaved them, or devoured them, or took them in, or who assumed the most arrogant pretensions, or who even smote them! “By way of disparagement I am speaking; it shows how weak and foolish I was in not adopting similar tactics. Yet, when one comes to compare their foolish claims with mine (continues the apostle), I can meet them. Whereas in whatsoever any one dareth (in foolishness I speak), I also dare.”

C (II Cor. xi. 22).—So far as birth and race privileges were concerned, Paul was their equal:--

“Are they Hebrews?	<i>I also.</i>
Are they Israelites?	<i>I also.</i>
Are they seed of Abraham?	<i>I also.”</i>

C (II Cor. xi. 23-33).—When it came however to that ministry which resulted from grace rather than race, the apostle could say, “I something more.” Then follows one of the most wonderful biographies ever written. The sufferings of the martyrs with all their harrowing details cannot compare with the sufferings of this chosen vessel. Besides, we know that this list is but a fragment; how much and how many things he suffered, “that day” alone will disclose:--

“In labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in death oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned. Thrice I suffered shipwreck (this is before Acts xxvii.). A night and a day I have been in the deep. In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren. In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches” (II Cor. xi. 23-33).

What depths are here! It seems that the apostle would have these Corinthians see that the anxiety for the churches, and for their’s among them, was harder to bear than the perils and dangers which were without. He seems to have had this external and internal trouble before him when he wrote:--

“For, even when we came into Macedonia, no relief at all had our flesh, but in every way we in tribulation, without were fightings, within were fears, but He who encourageth them that are brought low, encouraged us, even God, by the presence of Titus” (II Cor. vii. 5, 6).

“If to boast is needful,” adds the apostle, “in the things that concern my weakness will I boast,” and then he recounts his ignominious escape from Damascus. This event seems to have impressed itself upon his mind, for he gives this special prominence, after mentioning the long list of perils and sufferings encountered afterwards.

*B* (II Cor. xii. 1-11).—The apostle now turns to the visions and revelations which he received, and here, once again, suffering was an inevitable result:--

“On behalf of myself will I not boast, save in my weakness. . . . but I forbear, lest anyone should reckon unto me above what he beholdeth me to be, or heareth from me, even by the exceeding greatness of the revelations. Wherefore, lest I should be unduly lifted up, there was given to me a stake in the flesh, a messenger of satan that he might buffet me. . . . most gladly, therefore, will I boast in my weakness, that the power of Christ may spread a tent over me. wherefore, I take pleasure in weaknesses, in insults, in necessities, in persecutions, in pressure of circumstances, for Christ’s sake, for when I am weak, then am I strong. I have become foolish, ye compelled me. I, in fact, ought by you to have been commended” (II Cor. xii. 5-11).

*A* (II Cor. xii. 11, 12).—

“For not a whit have I become behind the extra-super apostles; even if I am nothing. . . . the signs indeed of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, both in signs, and wonders, and in mighty works” (II Cor. xii. 11, 12).

In connection with his claim to be “an ambassador for Christ,” we find the same undercurrent of opposition:--

“In everything commending ourselves as God’s ministers, in much endurance, in tribulations, in necessities, in pressure of circumstances, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in toilings, in spells of sleeplessness, in fastings, in sanctity, in knowledge, in long suffering, in kindness, in holy spirit, in love unfeigned, in the word of truth, in the power of God; through the armour of righteousness on the right hand and left, through glory and dishonour, through ill report and good report; as deceivers, and yet true, as being ignored, and yet recognised, as dying, and behold we live; as being chastened, yet not being slain, as grieving, yet ever rejoicing, as destitute, yet making many rich, as having nothing, yet as having all things in full possession” (II Cor. vi. 4-10).

The apostle appeals to this outburst of feeling to show how indeed his mouth and his heart are opened and enlarged towards them, and urges them to give up the narrow jealousies, “straitened in their hearts’ affections” (II Cor. vi. 12), to dissolve their unseemly unity with darkness and infidels, and, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord, let them “receive us, for no one have we wronged, no one have we corrupted, no one have we defrauded.” All such are black calumnies, not repeated here to condemn, “for I have already told you that ye are in our heart to live and die together” (II Cor. vi. 13 - vii. 3).

Ever before the apostle is the desire to vindicate the sacred office which he held, and the truth committed unto him, yet at the same time to count *himself* as nothing. He was a *chosen* vessel, but an *earthen* vessel too. “We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the surpassing greatness of the power may be of God, and not from ourselves.” Weak in themselves, yet strong in the Lord, on every side:--

“pressed hard,  
perplexed,  
persecuted,  
flung down,

but not crushed,  
but not in despair,  
but not abandoned,  
but not destroyed.”

We may now be better able to appreciate the opening of this second epistle, with its emphasis upon tribulation and consolation:--

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and God of all consolation, Who consoleth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to console those who are in any tribulation by the consolation wherewith we ourselves are consoled by God” (II Cor. i. 3, 4).

“For we do not wish you to be ignorant, brethren, as to our tribulation which happened in Asia, that exceedingly beyond power were we weighed down, so that we despaired even of life. But we ourselves, within ourselves, have had the sentence of death, that we might rest our confidence not upon ourselves, but upon *God Who raiseth the dead*” (II Cor. i. 8, 9).

Here is the key to the problem of Paul’s sufferings, all were to direct his attention and hope to resurrection. Resurrection and its power are prominent in such a passage as Phil. iii. 10, 11:--

“That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death, if by any means I may attain unto the out-resurrection out from among the dead.”

Here, it will be observed, resurrection *power* and resurrection *hope* stand on either side of the sufferings. It is the same in II Cor. iv. 17 - v. 1:--

“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 at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are age-abiding; for we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved; we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, age-abiding in the heavens.”

“Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal body” (II Cor. iv. 10).

The sufferings of Paul, moreover, had close connection with His peculiar ministry of the dispensation of the mystery:--

“Whereunto I am appointed a preacher. . . . for which cause I also suffer” (II Tim. i. 11, 12).  
“Remember. . . . *my* gospel, wherein I suffer” (II Tim. ii. 8, 9).

His sufferings, moreover, had a special connection with the church of the one body and the present dispensation:--

“Therefore I endure all things for the elect’s sake, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, with age-abiding glory” (II Tim. ii. 10).

“Who now rejoice in my sufferings *for you*, and fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His body’s sake, which is the church, whereof I was made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which was given me to you-ward, to fill up the word of God, even the mystery which hath been hid since the ages and since the generations” (Col. i. 24-26).

One word more. The suffering apostle, though neglected, forsaken and forgotten, and having to write in his old age the sad facts that all in Asia had left him, and that all men had forsaken him (II Tim. i. 15; iv. 16), desiring Timothy to bring his rough sleeveless travelling cloak (II Tim. iv. 13), realized that the last drops of his heart's blood were soon to be poured out as a libation (II Tim. iv. 6), yet above it all his eyes beheld the "crown of righteousness." He had written, "If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him" (II Tim. ii. 12); now the race was nearly finished, the fight nearly over, the glorious "henceforth" gilded his last moments, and his hopes were centred in "His appearing" (II Tim. iv. 8).

May we who believe the same precious truth be made willing to endure, in some degree, the "afflictions of the gospel," realizing that they are after all but "*light*," and "*but for a moment*," in comparison with the age-abiding weight of glory.

**The Ministry of Paul**  
**Its relation to dispensational truth**  
**His two-fold Commission.**  
*"For the hope of Israel" (Acts xxviii. 20).*  
*"For you Gentiles" (Eph. iii. 1).*  
**pp. 50-53**

In preceding papers we have pointed out that the words addressed to Paul by the Lord on the road to Damascus are not recorded in Acts ix. The reason for this is that it was not expedient that the peculiar mission of Paul should be made known until Israel had had every opportunity to repent and believe. It is not until we read Acts xxvi., and find Paul a prisoner, his synagogue witness over, his face turned toward Gentile Rome, it is not till then that we have revealed the actual commission received by him from the ascended Lord. The apostle says:--

"At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun. . . . I heard a voice speaking unto me. . . . and I said, Who art Thou, Lord? And He said, I am Jesus Whom thou persecutest. But rise, and stand upon thy feet, for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness *both* of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee. To open their eyes (Eph. i. 18), to turn them from darkness to light, and from the authority of satan unto God (Col. i. 13), that they may receive forgiveness of sins (Eph. i. 7), and inheritance among them which are sanctified (Eph. i. 11; Col. i. 12) by faith that is in Me (Eph. i. 13, 14)" (Acts xxvi. 13-18).

The apostle here speaks of a two-fold ministry, unless the word "both" has lost its meaning. He was to witness concerning:--

- (1). The things which he had seen, and
- (2). Those things in the which the Lord promised to appear unto him.

The first part of this ministry is described in verse 20. At Damascus, Jerusalem, Judæa, and then to the Gentiles, the apostle proclaimed repentance. This constituted the first part of his commission. The second part, which depended upon a revelation subsequent to the visitation on the Damascus road, now lay before the apostle, and is epitomized in verse 18. This verse contains a wonderful summary of the blessings opened up during the present dispensation of the grace of God to the Gentiles, and is very different from the summary given in verse 20.

In verse 22 he discloses that up till the day in which he was speaking he had said “none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come.” When we read the epistles of the mystery (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, &c.), we read many things concerning which the prophets and Moses said nothing, for the apostle there opens up the secret which had been hidden by God since the ages and generations, and revealed to him for the first time, as recorded in Eph. iii. 8, 9, “Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given. . . . to enlighten all as to what is the dispensation of the mystery.”

A similar passage to this one of Acts xxvi. is Acts xx. There the apostle is contemplating imprisonment, and there he alludes to the two-fold character of his commission. Calling together the elders of the church of Ephesus (verse 17), he reminded them of the nature of his ministry, “testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.” The parallel with Acts xxvi. is further seen by reading verse 27. “I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.” He had said *nothing* beyond that which Moses had said, and had declared *all* the counsel of God. Yet the epistles of the mystery not only contain much concerning which Moses says nothing, but reveal a counsel and a purpose which are entirely distinct from anything hitherto proclaimed in Scripture. Either we must join the ranks of those who by mistaken zeal attempt to “harmonize” the Word of God, or we must see that the apostle contemplated a yet future and distinctive ministry. This change is indicated in verses 22-24:--

“And now, behold, I go *bound* in the spirit unto Jerusalem. . . . *bonds*. . . . abide me. but none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.”

Here, with bondage before him, the apostle contemplates this new ministry, the “those things” of Acts xxvi., the “prison ministry” of the prisoner of the Lord for the Gentiles. That this does contemplate a future ministry is further confirmed by the fact that at the end of the ministry of the apostle in relation to the dispensation of the mystery, his prayer is answered, and he can say, “I have finished my course” (II Tim. iv. 7). If we will but clearly distinguish between the first part of Paul’s ministry, which occupies the period covered by the Acts, and the subsequent ministry into which he entered when Israel was set aside in Acts xxviii., we shall be enabled to see more clearly what our own course must be.

His earlier epistles are necessarily connected with kingdom hopes, Abrahamic blessings, and Jewish teaching. We do not speak thus slightingly, far from it. God, Who inspired the apostle's writings, intended that they should thus accord with the times. From Ephesians onward, however, all these things are dropped. Not two baptisms, but one, and that, not water baptism. No longer blessed with faithful Abraham, but blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies. No longer related to the earth and earthly hopes, for all our hopes and blessings belong to that other sphere of redemptive purposes—the super-heavenly. No more ordinances, observances, fasts, feasts, and days; all gone, and the Lord Jesus Christ, the Alpha and Omega, the All in All.

**The Ministry of Paul**  
**Its relation to dispensational truth**  
**The stewardship of the mystery.**

*“If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God  
which is given me to you-ward” (Eph. iii. 2).*

**pp. 63-66**

In our last paper we considered some passages of Scripture which threw light upon the twofold ministry of the apostle Paul. We saw that there was a ministry which Paul fulfilled during the Pentecostal dispensation, and that towards the end of the Acts, when imprisonment and Rome lay before him, indications are given of an approaching change in his ministry. To this new ministry we now address ourselves.

The title “apostle” is applied to Paul *seven* times in the epistles of the mystery (Eph. i. 1; Col. i. 1; I Tim. i. 1; ii. 7; II Tim. i. 1, 11; Titus i. 1). In two passages the title “apostle” comes in combination with two others, viz., “herald and teacher of the Gentiles” (I Tim. ii. 7; II Tim. i. 11).

Another title, one which is peculiar to the present dispensation, is, “the prisoner.” In Eph. iii. 1 he calls himself “the *prisoner* of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles,” in Eph. iv. 1, “the *prisoner* of the Lord,” in II Tim. i. 8, “. . . the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His *prisoner*,” and in Philemon 1 and 9, “a *prisoner* of Jesus Christ.”

In three passages the apostle refers to himself as a “minister,” and in each case the context indicates something peculiar and exclusive. The passages are Eph. iii. 7; Col. i. 23, 25. Each of them commences with the expression, “whereof I was made a *minister*” (R.V.). For some reason the A.V. has rendered the same verb, “was made” in Eph. iii., and “am made” in Col. i. Of what does the apostle speak? of what was he made a minister? Eph. iii. 7 and Col. i. 23 say, “the gospel,” and Col. i. 25 says, “the church.” To leave the matter here, however, would be worse than useless, it would be misleading. The contexts of these passages indicate that the apostle is not speaking in

general terms, but is making a most emphatic and exclusive claim.

To understand any passage of Scripture we must discover the meaning of the context, we must know what it is all about. For the benefit of those who may not have past numbers of *The Berean Expositor*, we will show the arrangement of the verses which include the passage under consideration, viz., Eph. iii. 7:--

- A | 2. The dispensation of the grace of God.
- B | 3. The mystery made known *to* Paul.
- C | a | 4. The mystery of Christ—Personal.
  - b | 5. Apostles and prophets (Plural).
- C | a | 6. The mystery of Christ—Mystical.
  - b | 7. Paul (Singular).
- B | 8. The mystery made known *by* Paul.
- A | 9. The dispensation of the mystery (R.V.).

It will be seen that verse 7 comes in that section wherein the apostle, as distinct from the apostles and prophets, lays claim to an exclusive revelation, and a peculiar ministry. The three-fold fellowship, defined in verse 6, is connected with the promise in Christ by the gospel whereof Paul was made a minister, and is to be distinguished from those promises in the gospel whereof Peter was made a minister. With this passage the reader should compare II Tim. i. 10, 11, “. . . through the gospel, whereunto I am appointed an herald,” and II Tim. ii. 8, “Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel.”

The other claim, in Col. i. 25, 26, is no less definite, “. . . for His body’s sake, which is the church, of which I became a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me with a view to you, to complete the Word of God, the mystery, which has been hidden since the ages and since the generations, but now is made manifest to His saints.” The present interval, or gap, occasioned by the temporary abeyance of the Abrahamic promises is “filled” by the dispensation of the mystery, of which the apostle Paul was the special minister.

Not only does the apostle speak of “my gospel,” but he also refers to himself and his message in a very special manner. Regarding teachers he writes, “the things that thou hast heard *of me*. . . *the same* commit thou to faithful men” (II Tim. ii. 2). Still more exclusively he refers to himself and his doctrine by the use of a word which occurs nowhere else in Scripture. The passages are I Tim. i. 16 and II Tim. i. 13. The peculiar word is *hupotupōsis*, and is translated “pattern” and “form.” Its real meaning is, “a preliminary draft before the completed design.” In the first passage the apostle refers to his salvation as the Lord’s sketch—the type or pattern of the rich grace which is so signally manifest throughout the epistles. In the second passage the apostle refers to his doctrine, “Have a pattern (or sketch) of sound words, which thou hast heard *of me*.” This pattern is that to which we have already referred in II Tim. ii. 2.

Immediately after speaking of his doctrine, the apostle says, “all they which are in Asia be turned away from me,” and so in chapter iv. 3 he uses the same word “sound” as

he used regarding his own teaching in II Tim. i. 13, “the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine.” If they left the apostle who alone received, by revelation, the teaching of the mystery, they would soon leave the doctrine which he preached. Timothy is exhorted, nevertheless, to preach the word—that word which Paul enjoined in II Tim. i. 13, even though few gave heed. So to-day, let us in some small measure stand in the breach and proclaim the despised word of the neglected apostle, nay, the testimony of our Lord through Paul His prisoner.

## Berean Expositor Volume 2 & 3.

### The Wages of Sin

“Not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth,  
but which the Holy Spirit teacheth” (I Cor. ii. 13).

pp. 8-12

On page 111 of Volume I, we commenced the consideration of the subject of eternal punishment, giving room for some quotations from the writings of the exponents of the doctrine of eternal conscious suffering, and adding a few words upon some texts often misquoted, misinterpreted or mis-applied in the writings and discourses of orthodox believers. We now desire to leave the traditions of men and the phraseology of the schools, to consider the words of God Himself upon this great subject.

As we are all aware, the Bible is written in Hebrew and Greek, from which the various translations have been made. It is utter folly to bolster up arguments and doctrines by words occurring in a translation, our only appeal and absolute authority must be the words of the original Scriptures. We therefore propose to bring under review the various words used in the Scriptures, seeking to explain their meaning not merely from the dictionaries or lexicons, but from the usage of the words themselves within the bounds of written Word.

For the sake of clearness we shall use English letters as equivalents for the Hebrew and Greek, believing that those who desire a fuller acquaintance with the originals will be able to discover the words quite easily. The first word which we will consider is the word *abad*. It is translated “perish” 79 times in the Old Testament (A.V.); other renderings are as follows, “be perished,” 12 times; “be ready to perish,” 4 times; “cause to perish,” 3 times; “make to perish,” twice; “destroy, be destroyed, destruction,” 63 times; “be lost,” 8 times. Other translations of only one or two occurrences are, “be broken;” “be done;” “be void of;” “fail;” “lose” and “spend.”

Let us now consider some of the passages where in this word occurs. “Ye shall perish among the heathen” (Lev. xxvi. 38). The context speaks of “they that are left.” The word may not mean utter extinction here, but for the purposes for which Israel were chosen and placed in their land, they are as good as dead, perished. The next reference, however, is quite clear in its usage of the word. “They. . . went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them, and they perished from among the congregation” (Numb. xvi. 33). This doom is spoken of by Moses in verse 29, “If these die the common death of all men.” They went down alive into the pit, but not to *live* therein, for they died an uncommon death, and thereby *perished* from among the congregation.

Again in Numbers xvii. 12, 13 the word “perish” is used synonymously with dying, “Behold we die, we perish. . . shall we be consumed with dying?” The words are

used with full unequivocal meaning by Esther, when she had dared, unbidden, to enter the presence of the king, "If I perish, I perish" (Esther iv. 16). The *perishing* here is again explained by the words of verse 11, "All the king's servants. . . . do know that whosoever. . . . shall come unto the king into the inner court, who is not called, there is one law of his to put him to death, except such to whom the king shall hold out the golden sceptre, that he may live." Esther dared the death penalty, and expressed her feelings by the words quoted, "If I perish, I perish." The multiplication of terms in Esther vii. 4 is striking, "For we are sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish. But if we had been sold for bondmen and bondwomen, I had held my tongue." Here it is evident that *perishing* is much more than the horrors of eastern slavery; it is used in connection with destruction and death, not life in misery.

In Jonah i. 14 the cry of the storm tossed sailors is no jugglery with words when they said, "Let us not perish for this man's life." They did not intrude any idle speculation concerning "after death," they knew they were in immediate peril of drowning, hence their cry. So also with the gourd which sprang up over Jonah, "which came up in a night and perished in a night." The gourd had withered, and as far as its purpose was concerned it was the same as if it had been destroyed by fire.

In Deut. ix. 4 we read, "How He made the water of the Red Sea to overflow them. . . . and how the Lord hath *destroyed them unto this day.*" What this destruction was like we may read in Exod. xiv. 28, "There remained not so much as one of them." *They* had perished, *they* had been destroyed, although their bodies were seen by the Israelites "dead upon the sea shore." We say nothing about "annihilation;" that word is used by those who wish to cast a slur upon the teaching of the Word in order to keep their own traditions. The dead bodies were there, but life, conscious being, enmity or love, sorrow or joy, were gone; as conscious beings they were *destroyed*, even although their carcasses lined the sea shore.

Turn again to another passage, Deut. xii. 2, "Ye shall *utterly destroy* all the places, wherein the nations which ye shall possess served their gods." How were they to destroy them? Were they to sit down and argue concerning the "indestructibility of matter"? Certainly not; their instructions were definite, "Ye shall *overthrow* their altars, and *break* their pillars, and *burn* their groves with fire, and ye shall *hew down* the graven images of their gods, and *destroy* the names of them out of that place" (verse 3). Surely words cannot be more explicit.

When Athaliah waded through a sea of blood to the throne, we are told that she "destroyed all the seed royal." When we hear the doom of the "cherub of the anointing" (satan) uttered in Ezek. xxviii. 16, we find the words are, "I will destroy thee, oh covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire," but this destruction is explained in verses 18 and 19 by these words, "I will bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall *devour* thee, and I will bring thee to *ashes* upon the earth. . . . and *never shalt thou be any more!*"

Is there any need to continue the study of this word to confirm us in its simple and primary meaning? The instances of Korah and his company, of Esther and her people, of the sailors in the vessel with Jonah, of the overthrow of Pharaoh and his host, and the burning, breaking down, hewing down, and overthrowing of the heathen places of worship, supply us with God's own usage of the word, against which all the sophistry of man is as nothing. As is the case with all languages, words take secondary and even more remote meanings, but none of these can ever lessen the bearing of the primary sense, or alter their original force. Thus we find the word *abad* translated "lost," as in the case of the lost asses of I Sam. ix. 3, or the lost sheep of Psalm cxix. 176; and again "fail," in Psalm cxlii. 4, "refuge failed me," or "every vision faileth" (Ezek. xii. 22).

The use of this word, translated "spendeth" in Prov. xxix. 3, is full of power. "He that keepeth company with harlots *spendeth* his substance." This word *abad*, bearing the meaning the foregoing passages indicate, is used by the Lord as one of the many descriptions of the wages of sin, e.g.:--

"The way of the ungodly shall *perish*" (Psalm i. 6).

"The wicked shall *perish*, and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs; they shall consume; into the smoke shall they consume away" (Psalm xxxvii. 20).

"As wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked *perish* at the presence of God" (Psalm lxxviii. 2).

"His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth, *in that very day his thoughts perish*" (Psalm cxlvi. 4).

We shall consider the figures used by the Lord under a separate head, but we cannot help drawing attention to God's simile in Psalm lxxviii. 2, or Psalm xxxvii. 20. *Melting wax* and *consuming fire* are quite consistent with the teaching of the Scriptures, and the meaning of the word *abad*. Never-ending torments, and a deathless state are utterly foreign to the meaning of the word, and antagonistic to the figures used by the Lord, or the historic usages of the word. John iii. 16, so often quoted yet so little believed, gives *perishing* as the alternative to "everlasting life." So far, we are able to see that the Scriptural expression, "the wages of sin is death," needs no modification. As applied to *abad* it entirely coincides with its meaning and usage.

Before we leave the consideration of this word we would draw attention to the way in which it enters into the name of the king of the supernatural beings mentioned in Rev. ix. 11, "whose name in the Hebrew tongue is *Abaddon*, but in the Greek tongue hath his name *Apollyon*." This is of the utmost importance, for it fixes the meaning of the Greek word rendered "destroy," "perish," &c. (which we shall, D.V., consider in subsequent issues), as being equivalent to the word *abad*. The word *abaddon* is translated "destruction" in the following passages: Job xxvi. 6; xxviii. 22; xxxi. 12; Psalm lxxxviii. 11; Prov. xv. 11 and xxvii. 20. Note the connection with "Sheol" and "Death."

Another Hebrew word which we must consider is *shamad*. This word is translated "destroy," 66 times; "be destroyed," 19 times; once only by the following, "destruction;" "be overthrown;" "perish;" "bring to nought;" "pluck down;" and twice "utterly." It will be seen that just as the word *abad* was translated the greater number of times by the

word “perish,” so *shamad* is translated in the majority of cases (86 out of a possible 92 occurrences) by the word “destroy.” It occurs in Deut. ix. 3, and is the result of a *consuming fire*. Again in Deut. ix. 14 it is threatened against Israel, and explained as being the words of God, “Let Me alone, that I may *destroy* them and blot out their name from under heaven.” This reference will show the awful fulness of the word *shamad*. It is this word which comes first in the decree of the Jews’ enemy, “to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish” (Esther iii. 13).

When the Lord spoke concerning Israel and its punishment He said, “I will destroy it from off the face of the earth; saving that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith the Lord” (Amos ix. 8). Here the Lord makes a provision, an exception, a clause which does not follow the threatened destruction of the sinner. Jacob used the word “destroy” in Gen. xxxiv. 30 to mean the effect of being killed (see for further reference such passages as Lev. xxvi. 30; Numb. xxxiii. 52; Deut. i. 27, and Judges xxi. 16). To destroy, abolish, or demolish is the meaning of the word. This is the fate of the wicked, e.g.:-

“All the wicked will He *destroy*” (Psalm cxiv. 20).

“The transgressors shall be *destroyed* together” (Psalm xxxvii. 38).

“When the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish, it is that they shall be *destroyed* for ever” (Psalm xcii. 7).

Again we submit that the cumulative witness of the use of these two words confirms the Scriptural statement that “the wages of sin is *death*,” and that the idea of eternal conscious suffering is as foreign to the meaning and usage of *shamad* as it is to the meaning and usage of *abad*.

There are one or two more Hebrew words which we must consider together; these we must leave for another occasion. We trust our readers will not think the time or space wasted in thrashing out the true meaning of these words. It is our only way of gaining the truth. Man-made definitions are all contaminated by tradition, for which we have neither regard nor respect, from which we ask no quarter, and to which, for the sake of the truth, “we yield subjection, no, not for an hour” (Gal. ii. 5).

### **The Wages of Sin.**

“Not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth,  
but which the Holy Spirit teacheth” (I Cor. ii. 13).

**pp. 34-41**

In our last paper upon this important theme we submitted to the reader the *Scriptural* meaning and usage of two Hebrew words, viz., *abad* and *shamad*, and found that in the first case the word “perish” was an unequivocal and true rendering, and that in the second instance the meaning was “to destroy,” or “to be destroyed.”

There is another word which is translated “to destroy,” and that is the Hebrew word *tsamath*. The following is a list of the renderings in the A.V., with the number of occurrences: “cut off,” 8 times; “consume,” once; “destroy,” 5 times; “vanish,” once; “for ever,” twice.

In Psa. ci. 8 we read, “Morning by morning I will *destroy* all the wicked of the land” (R.V. margin). The Psalm has for its theme, “The coming King and His rule.” In that day sin will be summarily dealt with, even as we have a foreshadowing of the kingdom in the judgment which fell upon Ananias and Sapphira, as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. The Scriptures enlarge upon this meaning in no uncertain way in II Sam. xxii. 41, 43:--

“Thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies, that I might *destroy* them that hate me. . . . then did I beat them as small as the dust of the earth, I did stamp them as the mire of the street, and did spread them abroad.”

Making all due allowance for the figurative language of the passage, the meaning is evident to all. There is an interesting illustration of its use in Lev. xxv. 23, 30, the word translated “for ever” being the feminine form of *tsamath*. “The land shall not be sold *for ever* (A.V. margin, ‘To be quite cut off’) for the land is Mine.” The land belonged to the Lord, and all transactions relative to its sale were limited by the number of years to the Jubilee, when the possession reverted to the original owner. The case of a “dwelling house in a walled city,” however, was different, that was man’s erection:--

“If a man sell a dwelling house in a walled city, then he may redeem it within a whole year after it is sold. . . . and if it be not redeemed within the space of a full year, then the house that is within a walled city shall be established *for ever* to him that bought it throughout his generations, it shall not go out in the Jubilee” (Lev. xxv. 29, 30).

The use of this word translated “for ever” is striking; when once the house passes beyond redemption it is absolutely beyond recovery. So far as the original ownership is concerned it is “cut off,” it has passed away.

Let us think of this when we read Psa. xciv. 23, “He shall bring upon them their own iniquity, and shall *cut them off* in their own wickedness, yea, the Lord our God shall *cut them off*.” Beyond redemption! Cut off! What a word is this! Jeremiah when cast into the dungeon said, “They have cut off my life in the dungeon, and cast a stone upon me” (Lam. iii. 53). Jeremiah realized that unless the Lord came to his help, he was shut up in that which would prove to be his tomb. Praise be to God, we are taught not to fear those that, after having killed the body, have no more that they can do, but rather to fear Him that is able to destroy both body and soul in Gehenna. Job vi. supplies us with one more illustration. Verses 14-21 of this chapter deal with Job’s estimate of his friends:--

“My brethren have dealt deceitfully as a brook, and as the stream of brooks they pass away. . . . what time they wax warm, they vanish; when it is hot they are consumed out of their place. The paths of their way are turned aside; they go to nothing, and perish.”

Job uses a powerful illustration here. The transitory character of the mountain stream, which lasts only until it waxes warm, and then vanishes into the atmosphere. This word

“vanish” is the word *tsamath*, and once again we are not left in doubt as to its meaning. Reviewing, we find that this word means, “to be cut off,” “to be deprived” either of being, existence, identity, or relationship. This is one of the words used to describe the sinner’s end. He is to be *cut off* (*tsamath*) from the living God, he will be *destroyed* (*shamad*), and he will consequently *perish* (*abad*).

We will now turn our attention to another Hebrew word, namely, *karath*. In its various forms it is translated in the A.V. “cut off,” 88 times, “be cut off,” 59 times, “cut down,” 19 times, and “cut,” “destroy,” “hewn down,” “perish.” It is further rendered “covenant,” twice, and “make a covenant,” 84 times. Its primary meaning is “to cut off” as a branch (Num. xiii. 23), “to cut down” as a tree (Isa. xxxvii. 24). The word *kerithuth*—a feminine noun from *karath*—is translated “divorce” and “divorcement” in Deut. xxiv. 1, 3; Isa. I. 1; Jer. iii. 8.

*Karath* is used continually with reference to the cutting up of the bodies of the animals slain for sacrificial purposes (Jer. xxxiv. 18). Psa. I. 5 literally rendered is, “those who have cut in pieces My victim in sacrifice.” Gen. xv. 9-17 is an illustration of the practice of cutting or dividing the bodies of the victims, but in this passage another word is used instead of *karath*. This word *karath* is used in that solemn prophecy of Dan. ix. 26, “Messiah shall be *cut off* and shall have nothing.” This cutting off was the death on the Cross. “He was cut off (*gazer*) out of the land of the living.”

The repeated threat found in the law against offenders is, “that soul shall be cut off from among his people” (Ex. xii. 15; Lev. xix. 8; Num. xv. 30, &c.). The words of Jer. xlvi. 2, “Come, let us cut it off from being a nation,” give us some idea of the force of the word, but when we read it in Gen. xi. 11 in reference to the Flood, we realize how tremendous this cutting off really is. There in Gen. ix. the words “cut off” correspond to the words “destroy” and “die” of vi. 17 and ix. 11, and “curse” and “smite” of Gen. viii. 21.

Turning from these historical references we find that this severe judgment is held over the head of impenitent sinners:--

“Evil doers shall be *cut off*” (Psa. xxxvii. 9).

“The end of the wicked shall be *cut off*” (Psa. xxxvii. 38).

We have already said that the primary meaning of the word *karath* had reference to the cutting down of a tree. This is clearly substantiated by reading the closing verses of Psa. xxxvii. The words “cut off” occur five times in this Psalm (verses 9, 22, 28, 34, 38). If in verse 9 we read that the evildoers shall be cut off, we read in verse 10, “For but a little while, and the wicked shall not be,” and lest the reader should object to this strong term indicative of extinction, the Scripture continues, “Yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be.”

Verse 28 says, “The seed of the wicked shall be cut off”; the antithesis is given in the sentence before concerning the saints, “They are *preserved* for ever.” Verse 34 says, “When the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it.” We are not left to our own speculation

as to what the saints shall see, for verses 35, 36 continue and give us the figure of the wicked “like a green bay tree—yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not, yea, I sought him, but he could not be found.” The “end” of the righteous is “peace,” but the transgressors shall be *destroyed* together and the *end* of the wicked shall be *cut off*.”

Again, by referring to verses 9, 22, 28, and 34 we shall see the wicked shall be “cut off” from the *inheritance*:--

“For evildoers shall be cut off, but those that wait on the Lord, they shall inherit the earth.”

“For such as be blessed of Him shall inherit the earth.”

“And they that be cursed of Him shall be cut off” (cf. Matt. xxv. 34-36).

“The seed of the wicked shall be cut off.”

“The righteous shall inherit the land.”

“He shall exalt thee to inherit the land.”

“When the wicked shall be cut off, thou shalt see it.”

This judgment, then, deprives those upon whom it falls not only of any share in the kingdom of the heavens and the peace of God (verses 11 and 37), but blots them out, or cuts them down as a tree, so effectually that twice in this Psalm the words indicative of extinction are used (verses 10 and 36). The reference to a tree is also found in the next occurrence (Prov. ii. 22). “The wicked shall be *cut off* from the earth, and the transgressors shall be rooted out of it.” The one passage in the A.V. wherein the word *karath* is rendered “perish” has reference to the vegetation of the country perishing by reason of famine, viz., Gen. xli. 36, “that the land perish not through famine.”

Again we pause to consider the testimony of this word to the doctrine before us. What are the wages of sin? *Abad*, to perish; *shamad*, to be destroyed; *tsamath*, to be cut off. Every figure used concerning the last two words considered in this present article enforce the meaning. The *divorcement* of man and wife; the *complete loss* of the unredeemed dwelling house; the *vanishing* of the stream; the *extinction* of the tree whose very place could not be found, all alike testify to the truth of the Scriptures, that the wages of sin is *death*, and give the lie to the vain deceitful philosophy which says, “There is no death, what seems so is transition,” which tells us that death is but life in another place. Oh to believe God! Let men call us what they will. It is required in stewards that a man be found faithful.

We have now considered four of the most important Hebrew words used by God in connection with the wages of sin, viz., *abad*, *shamd*, *tsamath*, and *karath*. One or two more words of less frequent usage will complete our studies in this section, and then we must turn to the Greek words used in the N.T.

*Kalah*.—This word is translated by a great many different English words. We give a few of the most important: “to consume, be consumed, consume away,” 60 times. Other renderings include, “be accomplished”; “be finished,” “cease”; “destroy utterly”; “utter end.”

Let us look at the way the word is used, apart from the question of future punishment. “On the seventh day God *ended* His work which He had made” (Gen. ii. 2). Comment is

unnecessary here. Totality and completion are clearly expressed by the context in every passage. “And He *left off* talking with him, and God went up from Abraham” (Gen. xvii. 22). “The famine shall *consume* the land” (Gen. xli. 30). “The water was *spent* in the bottle” (Gen. xxi. 15). “My soul *fainteth* for Thy salvation. . . . mine eyes *fail* for Thy Word” (Psa. cxix. 81, 82). “I will not make a *full end* with you” (Jer. v. 18; xxx. 11). “The *consumption* decreed shall overflow in righteousness” (Isa. x. 22). Until the day and night *come to an end*” (Job xxvi. 10).

The underlying idea of the word *kalah* may be seen in the fact that *kol* is the Hebrew word for “all” and “every.” It signifies, as we have observed, totality and the utter end. It is the word used by the Lord when He said to Moses, “Let Me alone, that I may consume them” (Exod. xxxii. 10), or as in Num. xvi. 21, 41, “That I may consume them in a moment.” The Psalmist uses this word when speaking of the ungodly. “*Consume* them in wrath, *consume* them *that they may not be*” (Psa. lix. 13). The added words, “that they may not be” amplify the inherent meaning of the word “consume.” Again, in Psa. xxxvii. we read, “But the wicked shall perish (*abad*) and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs; they shall consume (*kalah*), into smoke shall they consume away” (*kalah*). Here we have not only the figure of the utter consumption of fat by fire, but also the parallel word “perish,” which we have considered together in the first paper of this series.

Perhaps the passage in the A.V. which gives a complete idea of the nature of the word is Zeph. i. 18, “Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord’s wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured (*akal*) by the fire of His jealousy; for He shall make a speedy riddance of all that dwell in the land.”

Evil is not to be forever; God’s universe is to be cleansed; He shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend; He will make a speedy *riddance* of evil. Again we pause to consider yet another word used by the Lord in relation to the wages of sin, and again the unfailing testimony is borne by the Scriptures to the fact, that to *perish*, to *destroy*, and to *consume*, in their primary meanings are everywhere the words used by God to describe the penalty of sin.

*Nathats*.—This word is translated, “beat down,” 3 times; “break down,” 22 times; and once or twice “cast down”; “pull down”; “throw down”; &c., and “destroy,” 5 times. The primary meaning is, “to break down,” “to demolish.” It is applied to altars (Exod. xxxiv. 13; Deut. xii. 3). To houses, towns, cities, walls (Lev. xiv. 45; Judges xiii. 9; ix. 45; II Kings x. 27, &c.). In Psa. lii. 5 we find the word translated “destroy. . . . take away. . . . root out. . . . pluck out.” The Psalm, originally written with reference to Doeg the Edomite, has prophetic reference to the antichrist, “the man who made not the Lord his strength” (verse 7). It is interesting to note that the gematria (the numerical value) of this sentence is 2,197, or 13\*13\*13, the number of satan and rebellion. When dealing with the doom of antichrist we shall have to remember this passage and the primary meaning of the word.

*Muth.*—Let us now examine the word which is translated “death.” Scripture declares in both Testaments that the wages of sin is *death*. Much has been written to show that death means everything else except death. The current conception seems to be that death, as a punishment for sin, is endless life in misery. Presumably if tradition had its way it would alter the Scriptures, and would declare that “he that believeth hath everlasting life in happiness, and the wages of sin is everlasting life in misery.” The Bible, however, knows no such doctrine.

We have already examined several words and find that the wages of sin is destruction, perishing, a full end, consumption, riddance, death. The oft quoted John iii. 16 declares unmistakably that the alternative to everlasting life is *perishing*. However, our present studies are devoted to the consideration of the Hebrew words themselves. How is the Hebrew word *muth* rendered in the A.V.? It is translated “to die,” 420 times; “be dead,” 60 times; “be put to death,” 57 times; “put to death,” 60 times; “death,” 62 times; “kill,” 32 times; “slay,” 81 times; and “dead body,” “worthy of death,” “destroy,” “destroyed.” We have enough in such a number of occurrences to provide to a demonstration the meaning and usage of the word *muth*. Let us examine a few passages.

“And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years, and he died” (Gen. v. 5). The word is used throughout Genesis to record the deaths of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, &c. It is used of the death of animals (Exod. vii. 18; viii. 13; Lev. xi. 39, &c.). It is this self-same word that is used in Ezek. xviii. 4, “The soul that sinneth, it shall *die*.” Moses used this word in Deut. iv. 22, “I must *die* in this land.” The word *muth* is used to describe a corpse. “Abraham stood up from before his *dead*” (Gen. xxiii. 3). “Bury therefore thy *dead*” (Gen. xxiii. 15). It is precisely the same word “death” in Gen. xxi. 16 as in Ezek. xviii. 32.

Death, physical and inflicted death, was continually presented to the mind of the Jew under the law. “He that smiteth a man. . . shall be. . . *put to death*” (Exod. xxi. 12), so he that smiteth his father, stealeth, or curseth (Exod. xxi. 15, 16, 17). Murder, adultery, witchcraft (Num. xxxv. 16; Lev. xx. 10 and xx.17) were similarly punished. Nowhere, throughout the whole range of inspiration, is man ever told to torture, torment, or in any way foreshadow the horrors of the traditional penalty of sin; the extreme penalty is always *death*. Thus was it so in the beginning. In Gen. ii. 17 the penalty for disobedience was, “in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely *die*.” We are fully aware that this passage has been made to mean death, spiritual and eternal, which in orthodox teaching comes to mean life in conscious torment.

What was the penalty threatened in Gen. ii. 17? “Dying thou shalt die.” This is the same idiomatic construction as is translated “freely eat,” viz., “eating thou mayest eat” (Gen. ii. 16). It is of frequent occurrence in the Old Testament (cf. Gen. xxvi. 28; xxvii. 30; xliii. 3, 7, 20), and it is false to seek to make the Hebrew idiom (Gen. ii. 17) speak of a process of “dying”! Adam, who was of the earth, earthy, who was not a spiritual being as is so often taught (cf. I Cor. xv. 45-47), was treated by God upon a plane suitable to his nature. His obedience would have meant a continuance in the state

of innocence and the temporal blessings of Eden, while his disobedience involved himself and his descendants in the forfeiture of these blessings. What is true concerning the first death is true of the second death also. If the second death means eternal conscious agony, it cannot be justly named the *second* death, for it differs in its every character. Into the second death God will cast *Hades* (i.e. gravedom), and death, the last enemy to be *destroyed*.

The lake of fire is God's great destructor. All things that offend are gathered out of God's kingdom, not to be perpetuated by constant miracle, but to be destroyed, root and branch. We hope to prove this definitely when we have considered the N.T. words. Space will not allow us to go further in this issue. *Muth*, death, is the expression of *abad*, periaish, *shamad*, destroy, *tsamath*, cut off, *karath*, cut off, and *kalah*, to make an utter end.

In our next paper we shall have to refer to *muth* again, as we shall therein consider the word "hell" in the O.T. Meanwhile, let us not rest in the words of man, but let us see to it that our faith rests in the "words which the Holy Ghost teacheth."

### **The Wages of Sin.**

"Add thou not unto His words, lest He reprove thee,  
and thou be found a liar" (Prov. xxx. 6).

**pp. 84-88**

We desire to draw attention in this paper to the word which in the Old Testament is translated "hell," and to show its close connection with the word *muth* (death) which we considered in our last article. The word in its original is *sheol*. It is translated "grave" 31 times, "hell" 31 times, and "pit" 3 times. The word *sheol* is derived from the verb *shaal*, meaning "to ask" or "to enquire."

Moses used the word *sheol* 7 times. The first 6 occurrences the A.V. renders by "the grave" and "pit," the last by the word "hell." The passages are as follows:--

"I will go down into *sheol* (A.V. the grave), unto my son mourning" (Gen. xxxvii. 35).

"Then shall ye bring down my grey hairs with sorrow to *sheol*" (A.V. the grave) (Gen. xlii. 38).

"My grey hairs with sorrow to *sheol*" (A.V. the grave) (Gen. xliv. 29).

"His grey hairs to *sheol*" (A.V. the grave) (Gen. xliv. 31).

"If the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up. . . . and they go down quick (alive) unto *sheol*" (A.V. the pit) (Num. xvi. 30).

"They went down alive unto *sheol*" (A.V. the pit) (Num. xvi. 33).

"For a fire is kindled in Mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest *sheol* (A.V. hell), and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains" (Deut. xxxii. 22).

Let the reader try the word "hell" in place of "grave," as used by Jacob and his sons, and then let him ask whether Deut. xxxii. 22 has been translated fairly.

The bias that lies behind this selection of words may be discerned by comparing such passages as Job xiv. 13 with Psa. ix. 17. The former reads, "Oh that Thou wouldst hide me in the *grave*," whereas the latter reads, "The wicked shall be turned into *hell*." Let the reader put the word "hell" into the prayer of Job, and its utter absurdity will be evident. The word translated "turned" (Psa. ix. 17) is really "returned" (see *Lange*), and the meaning is that the second death is the final doom of the "wicked" and the "nations" who forget God. Or again, compare the following:--

"Thou hast brought up my soul from the *grave*" (Psa. xxx. 3).  
"For Thou wilt not leave my soul in *hell*" (Psa. xvi. 10).

The context of these passages confirms the Scriptural meaning ("the *grave*"), and refutes the traditional error ("*hell*"). Psa. xxx. 3 reads:--

"Oh Lord, Thou hast brought up my soul from the *grave*, Thou hast kept me *alive*, that I should not go down into the pit,"

while Psa. xvi. 9, 10 says:--

"My *flesh* also shall rest in hope, for Thou wilt not leave my *soul* in the *grave* (A.V. *hell*): neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see *corruption*."

The Hebrew parallel in both cases proves to all that *sheol* means the grave, and not the orthodox hell. Eccles. ix. 10 declares that "there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave (*sheol*) whither thou goest." Why did not the translators render this, "hell"? It certainly would have opened the eyes of many to see that the agony, torment and gnawing of conscience of the orthodox "hell" were false; so in this place we have "grave" as the rendering of *sheol*.

I Sam. ii. 6 bears ample testimony that *sheol* is to be read as antithetical to life:--

"The Lord killeth, and maketh alive: He bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up."

Again in II Sam. xxii. 6 the Hebrew parallelism is strongly marked:--

"The *cords* of the grave (A.V. *hell*), compassed me about, the *snares* of death prevented me."

The *cords* of the grave and the *snares* of death are a beautiful example of parallelism in Hebrew poetry, and at the same time confirm the meaning of the words *sheol* and *muth* (death). *Sheol* is spoken of as a place of darkness and silence; the Psalmist speaks of "making his bed" there (Psa. cxxxix. 8). The A.V. reads, "If I make my bed in hell"—a monstrous distortion, the bed speaking of the sleep of death until resurrection. This the A.V. itself admits by rendering the parallel passage in Job xvii. 13-16 thus:--

"If I wait, the grave (*sheol*) is mine house: I have made my bed in the darkness. I have said to *corruption*, Thou art my father; to the *worm*, Thou art my mother, and my sister. And where is now my hope, who shall see it? They shall go down to the bars of the pit (*sheol*), when our rest (cf. made my bed) together is in the dust."

No one can deny that *sheol* here means the grave; so also it means the same in Psa. cxxxix. 8. Once again notice Isa. xxviii. 15 and Prov. vii. 27:--

“We have made a covenant with *death*, and with the *grave* (A.V. hell) are we at agreement.”

“Her house is the way to the *grave* (A.V. hell), going down to the chambers of *death*” (Prov. vii. 27).

Look at Ezek. xxxi. 14, 15:--

“They are all delivered unto *death*, to the nether parts of the earth, in the midst of the children of men, with them that go down to the pit. . . . in the day that he went down to *sheol* (A.V. grave).”

Now notice the utter disregard for adherence to the letter of Scripture in the verses which follow (16 and 17):--

“When I cast him down to *sheol* (A.V. hell) with them that descend into the pit. . . . they also went down into *sheol* (A.V. hell) with him.”

In Hosea xiii. 14 we read, “I will ransom them from the power of the grave (*sheol*); I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave (*sheol*), I will be thy destruction”:--

- A | Sheol. . . . . ransomed from.
- B | Death. . . . . redeemed from.
- B | Death. . . . . plagued.
- A | Sheol. . . . . destroyed.

Here we read of the destruction of *sheol*—the grave. Orthodoxy would not permit “hell” here for obvious reasons—the orthodox hell will never be destroyed.

Sufficient, we trust, has been brought forward to warrant the statement that *sheol* means the grave. We must not confound it, however, with *keber*, a grave (Gen. xxiii. 4), or *bor*, a pit, rock hewn (Gen. xxxvii. 20-29), for *sheol* means THE GRAVE, or Gravedom, rather than a specific burying place.

The word “hell” is an old English word derived from the Saxon *hillan* or *helan*, “to hide,” or “to cover.” The word occurs in Old English literature with this meaning; *helling* a house meant thatching or covering a house. This is the idea in the word “helmet,” which is a *covering* for the head. The word “heal” also is derived from the same word, the broken flesh of a wound being healed or covered over. In Cornwall and Somerset a thatcher or slater is called a “healer” or “hellier,” while in Berkshire and Wiltshire the words “yelming” or “helming” are used for thatching. If *this* be the meaning of “hell” in modern English, we may let it stand as a translation in our Bibles of the word *sheol*, but we all know that this is by no means the case; “hell” stands for endless and unutterable torment, and we hesitate not to brand the rendering as a lie.

Some readers complain of our “dogmatism” and of “rudeness.” Much as we would desire to consider the susceptibilities of all believers, much as we would ever remember how insignificant we are in comparison with the teachers whose doctrines we deny, yet we would rather be liable to the charge of rudeness than of unfaithfulness. Paul treated those who were his fellow-labourers with courtesy and respect, yet in his defence of the “truth of the gospel” he did not hesitate to speak of the “Somewhats” at the Conference at Jerusalem, when he championed, by grace, the cause of Christian liberty (Gal. ii.). “We use great plainness of speech,” he wrote upon another occasion; so would we also. Greek philosophy rather than the written Word of God permeates and dominates the theology concerning the soul, death, the intermediate state and hell.

*Sheol* is never described except under the imagery of terror, and is always regarded as an evil. Never do we find it likened to the portal of heaven, or the passport to immediate bliss. It is described as an awful abyss and a land of darkness and forgetfulness. The parallels used in relation to *sheol* (such as destruction, corruption, &c.) confirm the teaching that has already been advanced in the previous papers, that the wages of sin is death (destruction—perishing) and that the dogma of eternal conscious suffering is a libel and a lie.

While dealing with *sheol* we would draw attention to another word, *Tophet*. The derivation of this word is somewhat doubtful. It is a name given to a part of the valley of the children of Hinnom which was outside the city of Jerusalem. The idolatrous worship of Molech had been practised in this place and had rendered it odious. When Josiah was raised up to stamp out, for the time, the idolatry of Israel, we read:--

“He defiled Topeth, which is in the valley of the children of Hinnom, that no man might make his son or his daughter to pass through the fire to Molech” (II Kings xxiii. 10).

This fearful practice is mentioned and prohibited in Lev. xviii. 21:--

“Thou shalt not let any of thy seed pass through the fire to Molech.”

The disgusting idolatry seems to have had a powerful hold over the people, for in Jer. vii. 31 we read:--

“And they have built the high places of *Tophet*, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire, which I commanded them not, *neither came into My heart.*”

The diabolical institution that inflicted the agonies of the fire for a few moments is repudiated in a manner worthy of our attention. Not only does the Lord say that He did *not* command such practices, but that they never came *into His heart*. If this be the case, and analogy be allowed any place, what shall the Lord say of that doctrine so tenaciously held by thousands, of not merely temporary suffering as in the worship of Molech, but an eternal *Tophet* where the victims writhe and groan in never-ending agonies? The Lord overturns the worship of Molech and says that He will use *Tophet* as a burying place (Jer. vii. 32), speaking of it as a place of defilement (Jer. xix. 13).

Antichrist, under the figure of the Assyrian, is consigned to *Tophet* (Isa. xxx. 33), where “the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone,” is parallel to the passage in II Thess. ii. 8. It is this valley of the son of Hinnom (used as the place for the worship of Molech, afterwards defiled and used as the place for the destruction of offal, refuse, and the dead bodies of criminals), which supplies the word *Gehenna*, twelve times translated “hell,” in the New Testament.

The witness of every passage in the Old Testament is unanimous; it says with one voice that,

“The wages of sin is *death*” (Rom. vi. 23).

“The candle of the wicked shall be *put out*” (Prov. xxiv. 20).

“The wicked is reserved unto the day of *destruction*” (Job xxi. 30).

“As wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked *perish* at the presence of God”  
(Psalm lxxviii. 2).

“For yet a little while and the wicked *shall not be*” (Psalm xxxvii. 10).

“He is like the beast that *perish*” (Psalm xlix. 12).

“Let the sinners be consumed out of the land, and let the wicked *be no more*”  
(Psalm civ. 35).

“They shall be *as though they had not been*” (Obadiah 16).

“They shall be *as nothing*” (Isa. xli. 11).

“To the law and the testimony, if they speak not according to *this Word*, it is because there is no light in them.”

## **The Wages of Sin .**

### **A consideration of the words used in the Greek New Testaments.**

#### **pp.128-130**

In the preceding papers of this series we have submitted to a careful examination some of the words most frequently used in the Hebrew Scriptures to denote or to describe the end of the unsaved. We now would direct the reader to the New Testament, and the examination of the words used therein in the teaching, warning, or demonstration of the wages of sin.

*Apollumi*.—This word is translated in the A.V. as follows: "Destroy," 23 times; "lose," 21 times; "be destroyed," 3 times; "be lost," 10 times; "be marred," once; "die," once; and "perish," 33 times.

In examining "the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth" we must ever remember that the literal sense of the words is *primâ facie* their true sense. It is this literal sense which is the common, ordinary, fundamental basis of all language, and accurate communication of thought. "Labour not for the meat which *perisheth*, but for that meat which *endureth* to age-abiding life" (John vi. 27). "They shall *perish*, but Thou *remainest*" (Heb. i. 11). None can fail to see that the word *perish* in these passages is the opposite of *enduring* or

*remaining*. By what system of controversies do men seek to explain the Bible when the object of perishing is the sinner? Why should perishing in this special case mean remaining or enduring in conscious suffering? Dean Alford is responsible for the following statement:--

"A canon of interpretation which should be constantly borne in mind is that a figurative sense of words is never admissible except when required by the context."

To this all will heartily agree who believe that God's Word is His revelation, and to this we seek to adhere. When we read in Heb. xi. 31, "By faith, the harlot Rahab *perished* not with them that believed not," we do not understand the word "perish" to signify living in agony or remorse, but that Rahab was saved from the fate which awaited the inhabitants of the city of Jericho. Let God be true, though it makes every man a liar. Let Scripture tell us what "perishing" in Heb. xi. 31 means:--

"And they utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both man and woman, young and old, ox and sheep and ass, with the edge of the sword. . . . and they burnt the city with fire, and all that was therein. . . . and Joshua saved Rahab the harlot alive" (Josh. vi.21-25).

Here inspired comment is absolutely opposite to the orthodox teaching concerning this word "perish."

In Luke vi. 9 the Lord Jesus, speaking with reference to healing on the Sabbath Day, says, "Is it lawful. . . .to save life or to destroy it?" Here the word "destroy" (*apollumi*) is used in its simple primary meaning, and is contrasted with "save." A reference to Matt. xii. will show, further, that the Lord used as an illustration the case of saving the life of an animal. In Luke xvii. 27 the same word is used of the flood which "destroyed them all," and in verse 29 of the effect of the fire and brimstone which fell upon Sodom and "destroyed them all." When we read Luke ix. 56, "For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to *save* them," why should we distort the meaning of the word? why not believe that the Lord used a fit and proper word, indeed the most suitable word which the language provided?

It is the same word translated "perish" that occurs in that oft-quoted passage John iii. 16, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not *perish*, but have everlasting life." Here the subject is lifted to the highest level. Here is no ambiguous phraseology, neither figure, nor parable, but plain gospel spoken in solemn earnestness by the Lord Jesus Himself. He says that there are two alternatives before men, the one - life everlasting, the other - perishing, utter destruction (Heb. ix., Josh. vi.), and from this doom He came to save those who believed in Him. Hence we read in Luke xix. 10, "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was *lost* (*apollumi*). Man by nature was on the road which leadeth to destruction.

The primary meaning "perish," or "destroy," becomes changed in the transition of language to the derived and secondary meaning "lost." Thus we read of the "lost" sheep, and the "lost" son in the parables of Luke xv., and in the "lost" sheep of the house of Israel in Matt. x. The fragments left over after the miraculous feeding of the five thousand were gathered so that nothing should be "lost" (John vi. 12). It is pitiable to

hear those who should know better arguing that because we read of a "lost" sheep, which could not mean a "destroyed" sheep, that therefore the plain, primary meaning of the word must be ignored and the secondary derived meaning be understood in such clear, solemn passages as John iii. 16, &c.

Notice the way in which the Lord uses the word in Matt. x. 28. "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul, but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both body and soul in hell (*gehenna*)." Here we have an argument which proceeds from the lesser to the greater. Man can only kill the body. God can destroy body and soul. Man may kill, but he cannot prevent resurrection. The murdered man will as surely rise in the resurrection as the one who dies of natural causes. It is different, however, with God. He can cast men into the lake of fire, which is the *second death*, from which there is no resurrection. Those who are thus cast in are destroyed body and soul, as being no more fit to live.

The parallel passage to this, Luke xii. 4, 5, shows that to "cast into gehenna" is to be taken as synonymous with "to destroy," or "to perish." This is further evidenced by Matt. v. 29, "It is profitable for thee that one of thy members should *perish*, and not that thy whole body should be cast into gehenna." Here the plain meaning is that it is better that a limb should perish than that the whole body should perish. There is no thought of agony and torment, for the Lord would have used the word in Matt. x. 28, "Fear Him who is *able to torment* both body and soul in hell," had He meant to convey such teaching.

The fact that men are "perishing" and need salvation is emphasised again and again. We have noticed the word in John iii. 16. In I Cor. i. 18 we read, "for the preaching of the cross is to them *who are perishing*--foolishness, but unto them who are being saved--unto us it is given the power of God." It is the same word (translated "lost" in A.V.) in II Cor. iv. 3, "If our gospel is veiled, to them who are perishing it is veiled."

Yet again in I Cor. xv. 18 we read, "If Christ hath not been raised, to no purpose is your faith, ye are yet in your sins, hence also they who are fallen asleep in Christ have perished." What does this mean? Does it mean that believers, apart from the resurrection of Christ, are at this moment suffering the agonies of hell fire? Certainly not. It means exactly what it says. Without resurrection the believer, like the unbeliever, will have perished, will have passed out of being, will have been destroyed. The idea of a conscious intermediate state, with departments in some mythological hades, is foreign to the Scriptures and antagonistic to this passage. Death ends life, and apart from resurrection death means utter destruction. Praise be to God for this blessed hope. Resurrection, which is everywhere the one theme of hope in the Scriptures, is set aside by orthodoxy, and death instead is eulogised as the gate to life.

We have yet further evidence as to the meaning of this word *apollumi* by considering the inspired interpretation of the word *Apollyon* (Rev. ix. 11), which is a derivative of *apollumi*. The passage gives us the Hebrew equivalent of *apollumi*, it is the word *Abaddon*, from *abad*, which we considered on page 8 of this Volume. The unmistakable meaning of *abad* is to *destroy*, and thus we are given, to confirm our faith, the divine warrant that the word under consideration means to "destroy." In the context of Rev. ix. 11 the locusts, whose king is *Apollyon*, are definitely withheld from destroying or

killing (their normal work), and are only permitted to torment men for five months, after which other horsemen receive power to kill those who had not the seal of God in their foreheads. Before passing on to the consideration of the next word, we would like to quote the primary meaning of *apollumi* as given by Liddell and Scott:--

"*Apollumi*. To destroy utterly, to kill, slay: of things, to demolish, to lay waste, to lose utterly."

*Apōleia*.--This word is a noun derived from the word *apollumi*, and means destruction. It is rendered by the A.V. as follows: "damnation," once; "damnable," once; "destruction," 5 times; "to die," once; "perdition," 8 times; "pernicious ways," once; and with *eimi eis* and accusative, "perish," once; "waste," twice. The words "damnation" and "damnable" both occur in II Pet. ii. 1, 3, "damnable heresies," and "their damnation." The same word is rendered "pernicious ways" in verse 2, and "destruction" in verse 1. Here the one word *apōleia* is rendered by the four words in those verses. The R.V. renders the word "destruction," and destruction consistently (the word "pernicious" in verse 2 is not *apōleia* in the best Greek MSS and is rendered "lascivious doings" in R.V.). In II Pet. iii. 7 the word occurs again, translated "perdition," and finally in verse 16 it is translated "destruction," which passage the R.V. renders as in the second chapter - "destruction."

Once again we shall find that this word, like *apollumi*, is contrasted with life, "Broad is the way that leadeth to destruction. . . narrow is the way that leadeth unto life" (Matt. vii. 13, 14). The context immediately continues, "Beware of false prophets," which connects this passage with its inspired exposition in II Pet. ii. 3. In John xvii. 12 we have a solemn passage wherein the Lord uses both *apollumi* and *apōleia*. "None of them is lost, but the son of perdition." This is also the title of antichrist in II Thess. ii. 3. Again the word occurs in Acts viii. 20, "Thy money go with thee to destruction." In Rom. ix. 22 we read of "vessels of wrath fitted to destruction." The apostle uses the word twice in Philippians, "token of perdition" (i. 28), and "whose end is destruction" (iii. 19). In I Tim. vi. 9 we have a collection of words, of which the Greek language does not possess any stronger, to express literal death and extinction of being. Hurtful lusts which *drown* men in destruction (*olethros*) and perdition (*apōleia*). Does it not appear unreasonable to say continually that men will perish or be destroyed if they are, in fact, to be kept alive in suffering, and that they are to be miraculously preserved from perishing or from being destroyed?

There is one more point which we must bring forward before closing this article. The subject of the soul, its nature and immortality, is discussed at great length by Plato in the *Phædon*, a dialogue on Immortality, and therein is discussed the question of the literal destruction and extinction of the soul. Plato wrote in Greek, his native tongue, and the *Phædon* became the great classic treatise on the subject of Immortality, read, studied and debated throughout the Greek-speaking world during the four hundred years between its writing and the ministry of Christ. Plato's words practically stereotyped the philosophical phraseology of the time. The purpose of the dialogue is to show that in death the soul does not become extinct, that it cannot die, perish, or be destroyed. Modern orthodoxy, therefore, is found ranged with Plato against the Word of God. These words of Plato were known and of fixed meaning in the days of Christ and the apostles. Christ came to reveal the truth. Shall we say that, knowing as He did the meaning of the words used on

the subject of the soul, He wilfully, and without explanation, took those *very words* concerning the *very same subject*, and used them in an altogether contradictory sense! The idea is impossible. With reference to the philosophic usage of *apollumi*, we give the following extract from the Phædon:--

"Socrates, having said these things, Cebes answered: I agree Socrates, in the greater part of what you say. But in what relates to the soul men are apt to be incredulous, they fear. . . . that on the very day of death she may be destroyed and perish. . . . blown away and *perishes* immediately on quitting the body, as the many say? That can never be. . . . the soul may utterly perish. . . . the soul might perish. . . . if the immortal be also perishable. The soul when attacked by death cannot perish."

To those who knew these words, who taught them, and argued about them, was sent a "teacher from God," and standing in their midst He reiterated the fact that *Plato was wrong*, that the soul could be *destroyed*, that it would *perish*. What would any of that day have thought of the suggestion to make such words convey the sense of endless misery, so diametrically opposed to their meaning? Would he not have been justified in replying in the language of a well-known public school headmaster:--

"My mind fails to conceive a grosser misinterpretation of language than when the five or six strongest words which the Greek tongue possesses, signifying 'destroy,' or 'destruction,' are explained to mean maintaining an everlasting but wretched existence. To translate black as white is nothing to this."

We believe sufficient has been shown to establish the fact that, in the usage and meaning of *apollumi* and *apôleia*, destruction, utter and real, is the true meaning, and that this is the wages of sin.